

THE NEW AGE

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THE critical situation on the Western front, which is not likely to be resolved for some time, makes it advisable to remind ourselves of the issues of the war. Already some people are talking of taking advantage of the next lull in the military field to attempt a peace by negotiation; and we may be sure that by the time the enemy has consolidated his present gains he, too, will be not indisposed to obtain by negotiation, if he can, what he will never secure by military means. The first condition of present negotiation upon the Allied side, however, must be their recognition of the Prussian hegemony of Europe; for we cannot conceive that upon any other terms the present German Government would be prepared to make peace. Yet is this admission of a Prussian hegemony of Europe a condition the Allies can afford to make, even for peace? With its recognition would disappear not only the last trace of the historical policy of the European balance of power, but any prospect the world ever had of a prolonged peace. For the hegemony of Europe is but the preliminary to the attempted hegemony of the world; and from a peace by negotiation which would result in it a century of wars would flow. All this is so clear that we think a plain answer is demanded of our pacifists concerning their policy. They have presumably come to some conclusion about it, and have speculated, more or less definitely, concerning its probable outcome. Would they, then, tell us whether they propose to abandon Europe to the hegemony of Prussia, and, if so, with what prospect in view? Or, in the alternative, can they give us any reason for believing that Germany is prepared to make peace upon any less threatening terms?

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The arguments with which we are most familiar are the impossibility of a complete Allied victory, the ruinous period of time its pursuit involves, and the certainty (so it is said) that even such a victory would prove to be useless in view of the economic and other efficiency of the German nation. But all of these arguments appear to us to be rather excuses than reasons; and they can be shown to have little or no substance. To begin with, let us ask what is meant by winning

the war on behalf of the Allies. It is assuredly not the accomplishment of any positive object or war-aim, for, as Mr. Asquith has said upon several occasions, the Allies have no positive war-aim whatever. It is Prussia that has a positive war-aim, namely, the establishment of her hegemony in Europe; and all the aim the Allies can be said to entertain is the aim of preventing Prussia from accomplishing hers. But in this sense it will be seen that it is not at all "impossible" that the Allies may win a complete victory. They have, though at terrible cost, to continue their present demonstration that they will neither be forced nor persuaded into admitting the hegemony of Prussia to convince in the end Germany itself. And when once Germany has been convinced that her Prussian war-aim can never be accomplished, the war of our defence has been won. In the second place, to put a time-limit upon our pursuit of a moral purpose is to fall into the corruption of expediency. Are we to inform the angel that we shall wrestle with him for so long and no longer? To say that we will struggle against the Prussianisation of Europe for four years, but not for five, is to estimate our future liberty in terms of our present amenities. It is to say that we will consider the interests of the coming generations only so far as that consideration does not require more than a defined present sacrifice. For it is not the case by any means that the national sacrifices have as yet reached the heroic limit. When all is said, the spectacle that England presents is not yet that even of Germany. We have not, that is, paid as dearly for the defence of our liberty as Prussia has made Germany pay for her attack upon it. To draw a line at this moment, therefore, and to say that we have wrestled enough for honour, while all the world is witness that England is still a paradise for the rich and a purgatory for the able, is to announce that our plutocracy is unequal in the spirit of sacrifice to the militarism of Prussia. It is to declare that though Prussia may be willing to sacrifice everything for conquest, our wealthy classes (a section of whom are at the back of the pacifist movement) are unwilling to sacrifice more than a tithe, or, let us say, a third..

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In the last of the objections above enumerated, there is an implication well worth making explicit. It is

urged with a certain amount of reason that Prussia may lose the actual war—in other words, may fail in her *immediate* object of establishing here and now her hegemony of Europe—and, nevertheless, leave the world in such a state that by means of her economic and other power she may look to obtain the same end after the war itself. What will have been the use, it is asked, of struggling successfully against the present actuality of a Prussian hegemony, if the end of the struggle leaves Prussia with a potentiality of hegemony? And how can we deny that this potentiality is prospective in the exhaustion that will undoubtedly supervene in all her neighbours upon the conclusion of the war? Assuming, therefore, that by the world's united efforts we succeed in staying off the immediate actualisation of Prussia's purpose, is it not still probable that Prussia will be left to actualise her aim at leisure—and will it not prove unpreventable? We reach here a problem of something more than military power; it is, in fact, the problem of statesmanship to which General Smuts alluded the other day to the scandal of the ignorant. Much more than the military defeat of Prussia is necessary, he said—we must defeat her future as well as her present. But upon what factors, let us ask, does Prussia's future depend; upon what would she rely for the fulfilment of her aim of hegemony even in the event of her present military means being proved ineffective? Clearly upon two factors: her own economic strength and the economic weakness of her neighbours. Assuming the war to end without materially reducing the economic *potentiality* of Prussia, and, at the same time, while having materially reduced the economic potentiality of her neighbours (Russia, Belgium, France, Italy, England, etc.), Prussia's actual situation after the war would be distinctly favourable, and she could expect to accomplish by policy what she had only begun to affect by war. To put an end to this hope, therefore, there are clearly two courses to be pursued: on the one hand, to weaken Prussia (or, rather, Prussianism) permanently; and, on the other hand, to strengthen her neighbours and our Allies not merely for the duration of the war, but radically and permanently. What, in short, we need, in order not only to win the war but to keep it won, is the permanent weakening of Prussianism and the simultaneous permanent strengthening of the other nations of Europe.

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We cannot believe that this vital consideration has entered as deeply as it should into the calculations of our statesmen, or we should not now be in the confusion of policy that is manifested in our dealings with Russia. Russia, we need scarcely repeat, is the key of the future of Europe. Upon the ability of Russia to consolidate herself with the help of the Allies and to become economically and in every other sense a Great Power again, depends the permanence of our immediate defeat of Prussia's aim of hegemony. Yet, in spite of this admitted and obvious fact, to which President Wilson has borne the most emphatic witness, there are people in this country who would cut off their future to spite their present, and in wild revenge for the defection of Russia from the present military war deny her the assistance necessary to enabling her to make our victory secure. With their sentimental impulses it is possible for us to sympathise; but their policy is, nevertheless, fatal; and it is all the worse for being dictated by superficial political as well as sentimental considerations. It is said, for instance, that it is our business to see that a stable Government is set up in Russia, that the Bolshevik Government cannot last, and that we should be unwise to recognise it. But this, besides ignoring the fact that in all probability the Bolsheviks will retain control as long as the war lasts, is to expect the cart to draw the horse; and a political consequence to determine its economic cause.

What has actually happened in Russia is not very clear; but we are certain of this, that not profound political changes merely have taken place, but still more profound economic changes. And we are not less certain that it is upon the basis of these economic changes, in so far as they are likely to prove permanent, that the ultimate political form of Russian government will be erected. Our most far-sighted policy in Russia is, therefore, to encourage whatever economic development is already going on in that country, to give it all the moral, intellectual and material assistance in our power, and, in the meanwhile, to be indifferent both to the immediate military value of Russia and to the political form of her Government. By this means we may not succeed, it is true, in actualising Russia for our present needs. Indeed, it must plainly be to our present sacrifice, since it must be without any hope of immediate return that Russia must be helped at this moment. But we shall be ensuring our future and the future of Europe by thus increasing the economic potentiality of one of our most important defences against a future Prussian hegemony.

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Much the same considerations may be said to apply to Ireland, though here also the material facts for statesmanship have been obscured by sentimental and political notions of no more than a transient importance. That it is desirable that Ireland should take an active part in the military war we do not, of course, deny, either in the interests of the war itself, or, still less, in the interests of Ireland. Ireland will discover, indeed, if she should remain out of the war, that she will have had her way at the cost of her soul. But what we should like to urge is that her present military assistance is by no means all the importance that Ireland has for the Allies. As in the case of Russia, Ireland's potentiality is only second in value—and that, too, in point of time alone—to her present actuality. For the Allies, therefore, it is not only a question of obtaining Ireland's immediate good-will in the actual conduct of the war, but a question still more of securing both her good-will and her power for the morrow of the war. To jeopardise the future for the present would be a most unwise policy to pursue even if the present advantages to be derived were certain; but when, as it appears, by attempting to extract by force an immediate advantage, we should miss both the present and the future, the policy would be positive folly. Our aim should be to secure Ireland's immediate assistance if possible; but, in any case, to secure her future assistance. By themselves alone the Allies, let us hope, will be able to frustrate the immediate accomplishment of the Prussian object; but it is certain that it will take a world of strength to defeat that object when it passes again from the military to the economic arena.

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In view of the foregoing considerations, the attempt to impose conscription on a resisting Ireland must appear more than commonly ill-advised. Even supposing that it could be made to yield—which we doubt—any military result whatever, the sacrifice of potentiality to actuality, of the future to the present, would be disproportionate. For the sake of a division to-day we should be sacrificing the probability of a whole nation to-morrow; and for a to-morrow, we repeat, of at least as great a peril, it may be, as to-day's. The proposal, moreover, ought to be discredited as much on the ground of its authors as upon the ground we have just stated; for the personnel of the party that advocates conscription for Ireland is assuredly not above suspicion of thinking more of turning out Mr. Lloyd George, or of saving Ulster than of either winning or securing victory. The chief of the party, at any rate in the weekly Press, is none other than Mr. Strachey, of the "Spectator." But

Mr. Lloyd George must surely be aware by this time that Mr. Strachey's subconscious object (if not his conscious design) is as much his defeat as any purpose directly connected with the war. Upon how many occasions has Mr. Strachey said that "Mr. Lloyd George must go"? What petty party aim could more completely possess him? Yet it is precisely Mr. Strachey and the men belonging to his set who are now urging Mr. Lloyd George to conscript Ireland with the implied promise that this policy will restore his reputation in their eyes, who yet, all the time, must know that this policy will certainly ruin him. His ruin, indeed, is their chief object; and it can be brought about by no means more certainly than by conscripting Ireland in its present temper. They are greasing the stairs for his fall. To vary the metaphor, in vain, however, is the net spread in the sight of so old a bird as Mr. Lloyd George; and we trust him to distrust the Mr. Stracheys who come bearing advice. And when, as in the present case, that advice is obviously bad even on its disinterested merits, its association with Mr. Strachey only still further discredit it.

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In forecasting the possibilities of the situation as it may be left even after an Allied military victory, we have omitted to mention a contingency, which, if it should be realised, would transform the entire problem, namely, the democratisation of Germany. As we have often said, given the democratisation of Germany and we would not urge that the war should be carried on a moment longer. Given the democratisation of Germany and we should even be prepared to risk her economic hegemony of Europe. What less uninviting prospect would, indeed, be before us, in the event of such a transformation of the ideology of Germany, than her commission to assist in the renewal of the order and civilisation of central and eastern Europe? We could easily imagine a worse fate for the world than to witness a renescent Germany intent on distinguishing herself in the arts of peace. But such a contingency, we are told, is not only improbable, it is impossible; and we are told this, moreover, by pacifists like Lord Buckmaster, as well as by mænads like Miss Christabel Pankhurst. To expect the dethronement of the Hohenzollerns during the present war is, according to Lord Buckmaster, to expect a miracle; and Miss Christabel Pankhurst affirms in the style now expected of her that to attempt to discriminate between the German people and the Prussian General Staff is not only dangerous but criminal. Well, there are worse crimes and more dangerous illusions than to share with President Wilson his belief in the democracy of the German people. Moreover, it is not the case that we regard our confidence as absolute. It is contingent and relative, and represents only our hope that the war may end better than these people think. For what is the alternative to the democratisation of Germany? It is either the virtual extinction of the German Empire by force—Miss Pankhurst's happy thought—or the permanent militarisation of the rest of the world to keep Prussia under—which appears to be Lord Buckmaster's plan. Is it criminal to entertain the hope that there may be a better way, or dangerous to pursue it? The risks, at any rate, are not greater than are involved in the alternative just named.

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It must be admitted, however, that there appears to be no great enthusiasm in the Allied countries for the democratisation of Germany. Fully aware, as they must, or ought to be, that it offers us the *only* escape from one of the two policies above mentioned, our pacifists are yet so wanting in imagination or idle in execution that they either oppose or neglect the necessary means, and, in the meanwhile, spend what other strength they possess in denouncing the alternatives which they more than anybody make plausible. For

let us repeat that unless Germany is democratised, either the extinction of Prussia or her permanent military subjection is certain to be attempted; and not all the protests of the pacifists, in the absence of any positive counter-proposal, will be of the smallest avail. Rather, indeed, they will advertise them. Under these circumstances it appears to us that the very first duty of pacifists (we should say humanists in this connection), and their *only* duty at this moment, is to adopt every possible means of democratising Germany. "Carry on the war," they should say to our militarists, "even prepare to crush Prussia and to keep her crushed; but give us the privilege of making your terrible task unnecessary by allowing us to attempt to democratise Germany." Far, however, from adopting this obvious course, not only, as we say, have they so far attempted nothing of the kind themselves, but, almost without a protest, they have, amongst other disasters, consented to the appointment of Lord Northcliffe to the direction of "propaganda in enemy countries." Lord Northcliffe, if we may judge from the "Times," is as much convinced as Miss Christabel Pankhurst that to discriminate between the Prussian caste and the German people is a crime. He may, therefore, be supposed to be carrying on no propaganda that makes this criminal assumption. His object, in short, is—what? We leave the answer to the imagination of our readers; for if it is not the democratisation of Germany it is nothing that matters.

* * *

But if pacifists will not face the facts, neither will the other parties with the clearness necessary to dealing with them. We do not expect of the mere scatter-brains any realisation of the cost of carrying on the war, and of what cost here really means, but the responsible persons in the war-party should understand that the pursuit of their policy involves not merely a year or two of war-expenditure, but a generation of it. In the words of Mr. Bonar Law, the wealthy and well-to-do classes in particular must be made to realise that in the future "their lives must be lived more simply." Nothing less than a drastic and permanent reduction of the standard of living in these classes is imperative if the war-aims of Prussia are to be defeated by force. The democratisation of Germany, as we have said, would save us a great deal of trouble. It would even enable the wealthy classes to resume their extravagance without imperilling more than their own and the national morale. But if they will not strive for the democratisation of Germany, they must at least be prepared to pay in other sacrifices for the only alternative course.

THE WOODS.

My Woods are sad to-night.
See where the firs rear solemn heads and proud
Against the coldly-gleaming Autumn sky,
Darkly, like glooming distant spires that crowd
With slender chiselled shoulders sharp against the light
Upon a far horizon.

Hear them sigh.

My Woods are sad to-night.

Under the blue dusk's veil the little birches droop their
hair,
Shrinking a little closer to the ancient beech that sweep
A mighty arm about them.

Everywhere

The Woods can feel the stealthy feet of sorrows creep.

There are tears in your eyes, O my Woods,
And your tawny, tangled tresses scatter heedlessly their
gold

Upon the hushful bosom of your solitudes.

In all the world are none so sad and wise

As you, O beeches old.

Woods of mine, the tears are in your eyes.

N. C. HERMON-HODGE.

Foreign Affairs,

By S. Verdad.

FOR several months the "Fortnightly Review" has given the first place to a series of "Obiter Scripta" by Mr. Frederic Harrison, which other survivors of his generation no doubt amuse themselves by reading. Modern readers of the "Fortnightly" may, of course, skip Mr. Harrison's comments; and I confess that a certain respect for this English interpreter of Comte—an achievement associated with Mr. Frederic Harrison's remote past—and for his age also, prevented me many a time from expressing disagreement with him. But in the new (June) issue of the "Fortnightly" there is an opening paragraph by Mr. Harrison of such a character that mention of it here can hardly be avoided. The writer's argument is made quite clear. If Great Britain should fail to defeat Kaiserism, says Mr. Harrison, "the cause of failure will be our superstitious belief in a House of Commons as the only possible government in war." This is followed by an attack on our political system which I give in Mr. Harrison's own words:—

To Britons that House has become a sacred fetish in which they put absolute faith, and which they vaunt as the principle of Democracy. As the German race are ready to sacrifice their nation to the Army, their Kaiser, and Kultur, as Irishmen seem ready to sacrifice Ireland to revenge, so Britons will see England go down rather than doubt the collective wisdom of Parliament. All our disasters and our blunders can be ultimately traced to this: that from the inveterate tradition of centuries we put trust in the majesty of Parliament, we can only think parliamentarily, and look to parliamentary tactics as the road to victory. It would be idle to raise an academic argument about parliamentary government in peace and normal times. In war and revolution, I say, it means disaster, confusion, ruin. And we are in war and in revolution. . . . Prime Minister, War Council, Cabinet, and Ministers, however much invested with arbitrary power, exercise their office under rigid conditions of parliamentary tactics. . . . Mr. Lloyd George is in no sense a real dictator. At any rate, he is living from day to day at the mercy of a hostile division, as Clemenceau is not, as Wilson is not—much less Hindenburg is not. Hindenburg finds the Reichstag useful to blow off steam. Clemenceau is master of the Chamber, as Wilson is far more master of Congress. . . . Our most famous Parliamentary Ministers—Walpole, North, W. Pitt, Gladstone—in European policy led us into a series of disasters. We were only successful in war when men like Cromwell, Churchill, Chatham, and Wellington broke the parliamentary fetters.

This is blowing off steam with a vengeance, to use Mr. Harrison's expression—a purpose for which he appears to find the "Fortnightly" useful and its readers tolerant. It is amazing that, after nearly four years of war, in which time the distinction between Parliamentary government and autocratic government or dictatorship has become more and more emphasised, there are still writers among us, however venerable in years, who can be found to put this rubbish on paper and get it published. However much one may like to see both sides of a question discussed, there are limits, and Mr. Harrison has exceeded them. I do not propose, at this time of day, to justify a political system for which two-thirds of the world is fighting against a powerful, stubborn, reactionary fraction. Look at Mr. Harrison's misstatements by implication. The average reader might well be led to believe that Clemenceau and Wilson can carry into effect such war measures as they please without reckoning with the Chamber and Senate in the one case and with Congress in the other. A more fantastic assumption I should find it difficult to conceive. All readers of the American newspapers are aware of the delicate arrangements entered into between Mr. Wilson and Congress during the last twelvemonth, and how no power was yielded by the representatives of the

American people without the imposition of a series of checks on the acts of otherwise unfettered officials. As for M. Clemenceau, his influence is purely personal—like so much influence in French politics—and, far from being in control either of the Chamber or of the Senate, he is even more at their mercy than Mr. Lloyd George is at the mercy of the House of Commons. A more than usually savage air-raid on Paris, an unexpected German success at some part of the line, and M. Clemenceau would go out as suddenly as a candle in a gale. Mark it, Mr. Harrison.

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In a different connection—for Mr. Harrison ranges over all space and time in his comments—we find a sentence relating to the scientific treatises of Bishop Wilkins (1614-1672), apropos of which Mr. Harrison remarks: "It required some two centuries before even men of science were quite certain that the earth moved round the sun." Original thought, it appears, was in the bondage of ancient fetters. What fetters is Mr. Harrison's thought in, and how long will it take him to realise that there is something to be said for Parliamentary government, even in war?

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One more reference only to Mr. Harrison, for there is something more important to discuss. "Our venerable formulæ about Hampden, Pym, Somers, Pitt, and Fox are leading us straight to ruin. . . . In the death-grapple of the nation there must be *one* head; in a world-war strategy belongs to trained soldiers—not to orators." We can read this sort of thing in the "Mail" for a penny. As a matter of fact, an agreement has only just been announced which will enable the nation—decrepit philosophers excepted—to realise that in the course of this war our authorities, by the use of purely political, diplomatic, non-autocratic methods have accomplished much more in the essential matters of conducting the war than could have been accomplished by those military dictators for which more than one school among us has been crying. The agreement I have in mind is that with Sweden, which will enable us to acquire the use of 300,000 tons of Swedish shipping in return for a few food concessions. Further, Swedish exports of iron-ore to Germany are to be diminished. Have critics of our Parliamentary system ever considered what it has enabled us to do? Admittedly, we took a very high hand with American trade in the early part of the war—long before America had come to hold the Germans guilty of aiming at world-empire, and when pro-German and anti-British propaganda was very strong. The "give us a strong man" school would unhesitatingly have declared war on the United States by way of reply to the first few Notes we had from Washington; and they came very near saying so in their newspapers. The "strong man" school, again, would have landed us in a war with Holland, and probably with Sweden also, in the autumn of 1915 or the early spring of 1916. Yet observe what has been accomplished by peaceful means! We reasoned politely with the United States until Germany's arrogance overswept all bounds and could not be concealed; and by so doing we brought her, and most of Central and South America as well, into the war on our side—not bad for Parliamentary government, when you come to think of it. We have been able to come to an agreement with Holland which permits us to use Dutch shipping as we are now to use Swedish shipping; and, by arrangement with the United States—an arrangement only possible with the consent of the United States—we are able to ration the essential imports (food and raw materials) of Switzerland, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Spain. Every diplomatist recognises that if the "strong man" school had been in power we should almost certainly have been at war with some of these countries a couple of years ago.

Towards National Guilds.

As great a problem as was ever set before economists is contained in the question: Why is it that the war has been economically good for the wage-earning classes? That, economically considered, it has been good nobody will deny. It is true that in many instances wages have scarcely kept pace with the cost of living; it is also true that where wages have exceeded prices the men would rather have had both remain stable. The fact remains that in general the war has brought economic prosperity to the class of the wage-earners. Now there is something so extraordinary and so surprising in this that every intelligent person should be curious to discover the reason of it. The paradox out-paradoxes Mr. G. K. Chesterton—that war should be a good season for Labour; and it is so surprising that practically everybody who dealt in prophecy before the war has been proved utterly false. Our Sidney Webbs and other experts confidently predicted unemployment, low wages and starvation as inevitable accompaniments of war. They even went so far as to say that no modern war could last more than a week or two on account of the labour troubles it would cause. The facts, however, are that the war has lasted over three years, during the whole of which time labour has been so scarce that its price or wages has been steadily increasing. On economic grounds the war has proved to be a windfall for Labour.

What is the reason of it? How has it come about? The question is very important, since if we can only find the proper answer, it may prove to be the recipe for labour prosperity. What would Labour not give to be always in its present state of demand? As it is, employers are competing with each other for Labour; there are two jobs open to every single labourer in the country; employers are on their knees to Labour. In these days—from an economic point of view—it is bliss for Labour to be alive. If, then, we can find the explanation of this state of things, perhaps, as we say, we can find the recipe of prosperity and so perpetuate the golden age of labour beyond the period of the war.

Let us begin with a little supposition. Suppose that in the year before the war there had suddenly emerged from the bottom of the Atlantic that old island of Atlantis, the submergence of which is related in a myth by Plato. And let us suppose that it re-emerged from the depths of the ocean with its whole population alive and kicking on it. And let us suppose, again, that every inhabitant of the island found himself after his long bath with an unlimited number of Bank of England notes in his possession. And, finally, let us suppose that the whole population had come shopping to this country with their bank-notes in their pockets. Are you ready to imagine the economic consequences? Accepting their bank-notes as money, all of us would find ourselves twice as busy as we were before. Our factories and workshops would be working night and day to satisfy the demands of the new-comers; and Labour, to keep the factories going, would be everywhere in demand. None of us would need to be idle or unemployed. As long as the strangers continued to demand goods and to pay us in good bank-notes our energies would be all employed in serving them. In fact, we should be lucky if we made anything for ourselves while the Atlanteans were in the market; for while we should be willing to pay only what we used to pay for our goods, the strangers would be willing to pay much more. It is, therefore, certain that they would be satisfied first.

That, of course, is another myth, and not so fine a one as Plato's! But *is* it a myth? Think again (and forgive our impertinent pertinacity)—is it, we ask once more, altogether a myth? What was it that happened in August, 1914, if not (from an economic point of view) precisely some such miraculous emergence from

nowhere of a new and tremendous customer into our market? Before August, 1914, our War Office was simply an ordinary customer with an ordinary capacity. But suddenly from that date the demand of the War Office began to swell and swell, until in a very little while the War Office was spending in our market as much per day as the whole of the rest of the nation together. It was as if England had suddenly been doubled in consumptive capacity; for before the war we were spending 2,000 millions a year, while immediately the war began, we started spending at the rate of 4,000 millions a year. The War Office, in other words, suddenly became a customer equal in the amount of its purchases to the whole of the nation previously. A new Atlantis had arisen in our midst. The myth we have imagined, therefore, turns out to be no myth at all, but a solid fact. We have only to substitute the War Office for Atlantis to make our myth a piece of actual history.

The explanation of the prosperity of Labour during the war is now seen to be simple. Setting aside other considerations and thinking only in terms of economics, it is all the same to Labour whether an increased demand for its services arises from war, from the sudden appearance of an Atlantis, or from any other phenomenon. All that matters is that there shall be such an increase of demand that factories and workshops, instead of discharging Labour or employing Labour casually, shall be running after Labour to enable them to satisfy the demand made upon them. Theoretically, we say, it is indifferent to Labour how the demand arises. Any increased demand for goods, no matter whence it comes nor for what kind of goods the demand exists, is, at the same time, a demand for Labour; for goods imply labour. Hence, we have only to increase the demand for goods to increase the demand for Labour; and by increasing the demand for Labour, to make Labour prosperous. Is not our recipe for Labour's prosperity now clear? Increase the demand for goods—*any* goods—and Labour benefits by it. And, since the War Office has certainly doubled the demand for goods, we may say that war has doubled the demand for labour, and, hence, that Labour has prospered in consequence of the war.

But there are flies in the ointment; and we will now proceed to pick them out. To return for a moment to our myth. Suppose that after supplying our Atlantean customers with goods for a year or so we should then discover that their bank-notes were worthless in Atlantis itself! We should have parted with our goods, but the paper we had obtained in their place would fetch nothing from Atlantis. Here, among ourselves, the bank-notes would still be current; and the holders of them would be able to continue to buy our goods with them. But, as a country, we should be poorer by the amount of goods we had exported to Atlantis for mere paper. Now back to the War Office—with what else than paper has the War Office been paying for the goods it has been obtaining of us during the last three years? Can the War Office give us equivalent goods for our goods? It cannot, and it does not profess to be able to do so. On the contrary, it has destroyed the goods obtained from us, and, in the end, has nothing to show for it. It has no means of redeeming its paper, for it has produced nothing. We have, therefore, not only given it our goods for nothing; but, in addition, we owe to the holders of its bank-notes recompense in goods for all the notes they hold. In other words, it is we who have to redeem the paper scattered about by the spendthrift War Office. Were that paper to be destroyed, the holders would suffer, but the country, as a whole, would benefit by it. As long, however, as those notes exist, they represent a debt we must pay, in addition to the loss of our goods. So much for fly one in the ointment. We'll pick out another later.

NATIONAL GUILDSMEN.

Out of School.

THE chief disease from which civilisation suffers is a certain insolence of the conscious mind. It has the effrontery to pretend that it is the whole mind; and we have the stupidity to be bluffed by it. It is in alliance with the body in a jealousy of the soul, which it gratifies by denying the soul, either crudely and completely, or, with subtler effect, in partitive detail—accepting the soul as a pious hypothesis, and then denying to it any and every function and attribute with which it might, in any given case, be credited. The mind that has adopted this method cannot be convinced of the soul, because it will not look at the evidence for it as a unity. Any body of evidence can be destroyed (like anything else) if you separate its parts into small enough fractions, and destroy the relations between them; for the relations are the reality. So we destroy the reality of the soul by denying its functions seriatim; while, as a rule, we keep up a simulacrum of a soul, an unreality, and think we believe in it, provided that it shall not incommode us by doing anything.

Why this reflex action of denial, on each separate, and separated, point that would suggest soul-function? For the denial is not conscious; it merely happens, and to almost all civilised people who do not take special thought and care that it shall not happen. The reflex springs from the subconscious, and we can infer that the subconscious is playing its familiar part, as in dream life, of nurse and protector to the conscious. But, like a foolish nurse, it can protect too much; and we need to trace and criticise its reason for defending us from the superconscious, or soul, in order to see whether it is really defence that is offered to us, or only coddling. We can make out a very fair case for the subconscious—which, be it remembered, is the older-evolved, habitual-animal self, charged with the business of holding intact the basis of livelihood that our animal evolution has built up. The wish of the soul is at once so intense and so far beyond the realities of the conscious life that the subconscious dreads, for us, the discomfort of realising the gap. Realisation—such is the general subconscious sense of Ordinary/Man—would make malcontents of us all. (Note the difficulty of discussing this without taking sides: at one moment, soul and mind are in alliance to damn instinct; at the next, instinct and mind have made it up again, and renewed their resistance to soul. We shall only get ahead by resolving the conflict, and bringing about an alliance of all three.)

I have lately studied, and cured—so far as it is accurate to call such cures one's own—a neurosis that was on the point of causing complete submergence of the rational self. In this case, there had been an unusual amount of spontaneous superconscious functioning—veridical intuitions, clairaudience, precognition—throughout the life-history. This had caused perpetual stress and worry, long before the breakdown: the patient had been alarmed at "knowing things about people" by direct intuition, had not understood the faculty, and had lived a life of continual guerilla warfare against it. Psychoanalysis revealed nothing, beyond this strain, adequate to account for the trouble. The case had gone from bad to worse under repressive treatment and the attempt to divert thought from the superconscious workings; these were degenerating into incoherent symbolism, certainly suggestive of a morbidity that should be discouraged, to anyone who did not know how to interpret it. Hypnotism, by a specialist of the *sich imponiren* school, had produced no effect at all. The remaining method, reached by a process of exhaustion that had almost exhausted the patient's last reserves of sanity, was to liberate the superconscious urgency, in all its crazy scatter of symbolisms, interpret it as clearly as possible, and trust to its promptings for a cure. This method

worked, as any student of Jung and the "teleological unconscious" would expect: the symbolisms became rapidly clear and intelligible, passing into direct and accurate self-diagnosis which made the cure quite an elementary undertaking. The cure, in fact, consisted in treating the superconsciousness with common respect and understanding.

I have given only the bare bones of this case, leaving out a quantity of supernormal incident that gives much food for thought, so as to dwell only upon its main importance as an object lesson. It shows up, in extreme form, the crime which I believe we are always committing against the soul. We are all more or less afflicted with a neurosis which Professor Robieson has diagnosed as the entanglement of soul in the subconscious. I should prefer to stick to my attempt at a convenient exactitude of terms, and to say that it is the unconscious, as a whole, which displays (or conceals) this entanglement, and that it is our business to distinguish the superconsciousness, or element of soul, from the subconsciousness, or element of reflex instinct, as far as in us lies; but, words apart, I agree to the principle unreservedly. It is, in fact, a branch of my own thesis, brought to better expression than mine.

But how is the soul to be disentangled? I wish Professor Robieson would elaborate his objection to my thesis that education for fellowship is an essential part of the cure, and his own thesis that the doctrine, "all good is social" is obsolete. I have never seen even a plausible reason for denying that all good is social, or for setting this aspect of truth cock-fighting with the complementary aspect, that all value is impersonal. The antithesis reminds me of the man who asked a policeman, "Is this Regent Street, or Tuesday?" Value is one category of good; personality—having life, and having it more abundantly—is another. If I had said, or meant, that "value should include as many persons as possible," I might as well have put forward a doctrine that Regent Street should include as many Tuesdays as possible. What I tried to suggest was that developing personality has to include, or, rather, to interrelate, as many persons as possible. The patient, whose case I have just outlined, could not get out of the wood without finding someone with whom to look at and understand the marks on the trees.

I will not pursue this as a matter of debate, in case I am repaying the generosity and insight of my critic by misunderstanding an objection which he had not room to develop; but I will put down the general suggestion, for whom it may concern, that the isolation of good in the single category of impersonal value is one of the subtler ways of inhibiting soul-function. It is a tempting process, because it offers an apparent short cut to a resolution of the paradox of life, and provides a comfortable illusion that the intellect has at last comprehended reality. But it leads the superconscious pathway to reality round into an intellectual closed circle; and from within this closed circle liberty, and everything connected with liberty, becomes an incomprehensible—and a source of irritation. (cf. Mr. de Maetzu and "A. E. R.," *passim*.) The converse illusion, however, is quite as deep a pitfall: the attempt to run away from the authoritarian aspect of good, and take refuge in a nebulous sociality—fellowship without an object, which is not fellowship. Fellowship is one of the personal means for attaining to impersonal values, and for putting up with the fact that our attainment can be only partial and fugitive as yet, if it is the real and the complete values that we are after. "The consequences of the suppression of a social group are singularly like those of driving underground a group of impulses or ideas"; the suppression is a failure of fellowship, or of the tolerance and attempt at understanding which is the first step to

fellowship. Unity of the understanding is a fellowship of ideas within the mind; and, since none of our ideas is wholly individual, it cannot come about except in conjunction with a fellowship of minds. To be intolerant of a social group is to suppress, and turn into a complex, a corresponding group of ideas in one's own mind.

KENNETH RICHMOND.

The Problem of Genius.

By Janko Lavrin.

In general, the difference between talent and genius consists in the proportion of their entire consciousness to their intellect. A talent develops by enlarging his special intellectual faculties, a genius by enlarging his intuitive faculties. The former exploits chiefly his intellectual energy, while the latter uses in a creative way all the accumulated latent energy of the unconscious domain of his consciousness just as one exploits electricity to produce a titanic energy. A very close contact with the Unconscious may lead him to quite new and "pathological" dimensions of life; however, the pathology of a real genius is directed, not towards degenerative regression, but towards a higher type of human personality and consciousness. Therefore, a genius is rather *supernormal* than abnormal. From the point of view of the average normal, both cases may be equally pathologic. None the less, their directions are opposite; the one leads towards a degenerate type, the other towards the consciousness of superman and genius. Supernormality is thus a privilege of the latter. That is why the creative ways and methods of a genius are different from those of talent. A talent sees and knows many things, a genius feels and lives them. The former endeavours to conquer truths, while the latter is being himself conquered by them; that is why he can be a synthetic medium of great ideas, while talents are only their intermediaries. A genius has immediate (intuitive) knowledge of things, while a talent acquires all his knowledge through learning and "erudition"; he usually has more erudition than real knowledge. Therefore, a talented man is more clever than wise, while a genius is more wise than clever; moreover: he may be very wise without being clever at all (many people are not wise—because they are too clever). In other words: genius is more instinct than "intellect."

Thus, the centres of gravity of a talent and of a genius are on different planes. Geniuses are possible without any talent, as well as talents without any genius. They may even be struggling in one and the same individual, and too great a portion of talent may sometimes paralyse and even kill—genius. Many people would have genius if they were less talented, and—vice versa. . . . Besides, not only in single individuals, but also in cultural evolution in general, one sees a more or less suppressed antagonism between talents and geniuses, as well as an everlasting unconscious mistrust and hatred between them. That is the reason why all the great geniuses fled away from the "talents" either into deserts or to the people, i.e., to the "poor in spirit." And, indeed, every true genius is not so much persecuted by the ignorant mob of people as by the erudite and omniscient mob of talents.

Thus, genius is usually the victim—of the "talents." The latter want to crucify him and thus to take revenge on nature. To save himself from "talents," as well as from the burden of his own consciousness, a man of genius often tries to reduce himself to a mere talent; he seeks refuge in his rational "talented" Ego, but he rarely succeeds for a long time. (Tolstoy is a typical instance of a man who by all possible experiments wanted to include his genius within the scope of an average rational talent and has not succeeded). The more "irrational" such a character and the farther

his consciousness penetrates into those domains which are unconscious for average people, the greater burden is his own genius to him. This burden sometimes even crushes him, i.e., he perishes under his own spiritual riches.

Hence, the creative activity of a genius is not a "pleasure," but usually a means of getting rid of his inner burden which otherwise would crush him. His art is a struggle with his own chaos, as well as with his own Fate. On the other hand, for this very reason he lives the fullest and the most intense—because the most tragic—life. The more "intuitive" he is the more forces of Life and Spirit may find in him their focus; he may become an accumulator of spiritual energy for his whole nation, as well as for his whole epoch—thus anticipating and exhausting the creative energy of many generations. In any case, the highest genius is the highest expression of Microcosmos. Therefore, every trifle has for him a great symbolical, a universal, significance; he is filled—in spite of all suffering—with that universal sympathy which is as typical of a real genius as egotism and "egocentrism" are typical of an average talent.

That is perhaps the reason why the genius usually cannot be satisfied with the mere creation of art for art's sake. He considers the latter only as a stadium on the way towards the creation of life, towards the creative, i.e., the fullest, life. The more he is penetrated by this tendency the more universal and religious (in the profoundest meaning of this word) his art becomes. After geniuses of art there will and must come—geniuses of life (like Christ and St. Francis). . . . However, both types of genius are, in essence, religious. They are religious even when struggling against religion. An instance is Nietzsche who fiercely struggled against his own religious consciousness without being able to overcome it. A real genius may be without so-called "religion," or belief, but he is never without religiosity. He may be anti-religious, but never a-religious. An a-religious genius is an absurdity: to become a-religious he must kill his very consciousness, i.e., the chief source of his genius.

Therefore, it is quite logical that our "positivistic" epoch is poor in genius. Our one-sided and exaggerated positivism is our greatest danger, for it reduces the inner life to a minimum beyond which is nothing but—horror vacui. . . . We are facing at present this horror vacui without any real prospects for the future. All European science and erudition cannot conceal our spiritual poverty, and still less give a satisfactory issue out of our so-called rationalism. Hence, it is no wonder that many of those who are longing for such an issue prefer to seek for new inner values rather in Asia (especially India) than in Europe. And this is logical, too. For we must not forget that the direction of higher religiosity and wisdom found a very strong expression in Asia, where so many religious founders and wise men came from, while the direction of "science" and cleverness reached an absolute dominion in Europe—in that Europe which gave so many scientists but no religious founders, so much philosophy but so little wisdom.

Besides, a profound interfusion of Eastern (especially Indian) spirit into our contemporary culture would be of far greater importance for the inner regeneration of Europe than one realises. In any case, a great culture of the Future can only be reached by the fusion and synthesis of these two directions. For such a synthesis (if it is still possible) are necessary, however, geniuses and not merely superficial theosophists. Unfortunately, clever Europe has become too "talented" to have such geniuses. Moreover, the chief aim of our social life and education seems to be to kill the very germ of genius there where the latter may be still possible. And really, that is the only thing in which we succeed completely.

Drama.

By John Francis Hope.

MR. ALGERNON BLACKWOOD and his collaborator have forgotten the first principle of art, the principle that demands translation of the subject-matter into the terms of the art. "Karma"* may or may not be a sound philosophical principle; but it has no validity in drama except as poetic justice. It may be exhibited comically or tragically, but it must not be presented intellectually; it is not the principle, but the drama of it, that concerns us in this connection, and the drama can arise only from the clash of characters with each other or their circumstances. The question "Why?" is one that is never asked or answered by an artist; he shows us "How?" and leaves us to form our own conclusions—indeed, he cares nothing about our conclusions; he asks us only to enjoy. It is not to the reason that he appeals, but to the intuitions; and a work of art will be profound or superficial accordingly as we share or fail to share the artist's mood. For he lives in his art, and not in his or our æsthetic judgments or explanations of it; the artistic thing-in-itself is self-existent, self-explanatory, self-justified. It is not like life, it is life; and the artist, like Nietzsche's Greeks, is "superficial—out of profundity." He is concerned with the form, the tone, the colour, of things, or in drama, with the vesture of manners that disguises or expresses the texture of characters. The soul, to him, is not something separate from the character; it is the character; it is the primary canon of drama that character is destiny.

There is, therefore, no reason why the doctrine of "Karma" should not be expressed dramatically, for it is in agreement with the first principle of drama. But it must be expressed dramatically, and not philosophically; it must not be explained, but exhibited in action, and it must conform to the conditions of the art. The characters must be characters in their own right, and not partakers in a philosophical dialogue. They must be concerned with the living of their own lives, and not with the authors' explanation of their motives, and the action must move up to a climax. The necessity of climax should be obvious; if there is to be unity of effect, there must be a focal point to which everything tends or from which everything radiates, and we progress from the centre to the circumference, or from the circumference to the centre by gradation. The surest way to shatter the unity of effect is to repeat it with the same intensity; and the authors of this play do it three times. They also make it impossible to feel any concentrated effect by destroying even the unity of place; each of these scenes is in a different country and a different century, as though the authors, like Nietzsche's "Wagner," were determined to say a thing again and again until one despaired—until one believes it. That is the method of the propagandist, not of the dramatist.

But even the method of the propagandist fails to produce its proper effect in this case, because it ignores the *lex parcimonie* of art as well as of science. Minor effects are not referred to major causes in either case; "neither should a god intervene unless a knot befalls worthy of his interference," was the Horatian rule. When Hamlet discovered that "there's never a villain in all Denmark—but he's an arrant knave," the fitness of things demanded the retort, "It needs no ghost come from the grave to tell us that, my lord." It needs no universal law of retribution to explain a colonial administrator's resignation of office because his wife's health did not permit her to reside in the country wherein his work lay; and really the matter is not explained by showing us that he had done it

* "Karma." By Algernon Blackwood and Violet Pearce. (Macmillan. 6s. net.)

before in 2000 B.C., 325 B.C., and in the fifteenth century. The authors of this play only refer the dramatic conflict back to antiquity; they do not explain it; that a man should have to choose between his work and his love for a woman is no new dramatic phenomenon, but the crux of the whole matter (so far as explanation is concerned) is why he chose as he did. When he made the choice is a question indifferent to drama; how he made it is a problem that might tax all the resources of a dramatic genius and still leave something to be done by the hacks. But the authors only ask us to believe in the greatness of their characters, and of the powers that move them; they do not exhibit them in great drama. Nefertiti wins Menophis from his determination to become a priest of Aton by a flirtation that, in its simple obviousness, would be beneath the dignity of any dramatic heroine except, perhaps, in melodrama or musical comedy. A man so easily diverted could not have been mentally or spiritually qualified to become an Egyptian priest; he would not even be fit to become a catechumen of the Anglican Church; and his solemn assurance that "the choice is made, not for this life only, but for ever," betrays the fact that he is our old friend, the romantic lover, who has forgotten his parts of speech.

But to explain a trumpery case of uxoriousness, the authors have to repeat it three times, to drag in Phocion, Alexander the Great, Damiani, di Medici, without any sense of obligation to these personages or to the artistic principle of economy of means. Why Phocion's memory should be defiled is not obvious; the authors have chosen to represent the man who would not accept the favours of Alexander as the man who did, and, as this is neither true to drama nor to history, I suppose that it must be philosophy. We are asked, then, to believe that the doctrine of "Karma" is true because we have to falsify history to prove it, because it can be shown by the authors only in a form that defies all the canons of drama, and because it is a quite unnecessary explanation of a very common situation. But we cannot make all these concessions to truth, even when it is not true; "this bad taste, this will to truth," as Nietzsche put it, "this madness of youths in the love of truth, has become disagreeable to us; for it we are too experienced, too serious, too jovial, too shrewd, too profound. . . . We no longer believe that truth remains truth when the veil is pulled off it"—and it certainly does not become art in the process. It becomes precept, rule of conduct; and in this case we are warned that, whenever we choose to do a thing, it means that we have done it before and ought not to do it again—and we are reminded of the admonitions of nursemaids.

KULTUR.

Beneath the crimson heel of State,
They groan in misery;
Mind-manacled, blind tools of Fate,
They dream of liberty.

Yea, they applaud the fool and knave,
And stone the prophets still;
Sport of the gods—from birth to grave,
They serve their masters' will.

As puppets, in a shadow-show,
Vainly, for light, they grope;
The gods, in wisdom, made them so;
They are bereft of hope.

And ye who strive to make them free,
Shall win alone, their hate;
At Kultur's shrine they bow the knee,
Slaves of the Prussian State.

P. A.

Readers and Writers.

FROM the recent issues of the "Little Review," a monthly magazine published in America under the foreign editorship of Mr. Ezra Pound and the American editorship of Miss Anderson (it always, by the way, takes a number of people to edit a little review), I see what I must have missed before—the characteristic sub-title of the magazine: "Making no compromise with the public taste." Already it is to compromise with public taste to deny it; indeed, nothing is more compromising than to be found in explicit negation with public taste. The thing itself and the negation of it are as closely related as the Poles. But apart from this, how of the coterie the phrase smells, how very little indeed is the area taken under review. For myself, as I have often observed, what is good enough for the classics is good enough for me; and since their habit has invariably been to write about what interests everybody in language that everybody understands, the nearer we approach to public taste the better is our style.

* * *

The "Little Review" will have to pay, however, for its contempt of the classic aim; and not alone in finding itself neglected. Neglect, on the whole, means nothing very much; success is a matter of time for everything that is really classic. On the other hand, deliberately to incur neglect by writing for the few involves the further risk of more and more deserving it. I mean to say that whoever makes a boast of writing for a coterie sooner or later finds himself writing for a coterie of a coterie, and at last for himself alone. It cannot be otherwise. As the progress of the classic is from the one to the many, the progress of the romantic is from the many to the one; and the more sincerely the latter is a romantic, the sooner he arrives at his journey's end. The involution of aim thus brought about is obvious already in the succession of works of the chief writers of the "Little Review." They grow cleverer and cleverer, and, at the same time, more and more unintelligible to the public—including myself. I am staggered by the cleverness of such a writer as Mr. Wyndham Lewis; and a little more so by the cleverness of Mr. James Joyce. But in the case of both of them, I find myself growing more and more annoyingly mystified, bewildered and repelled. Is it, I ask, that they do not write for readers like me? Then their circle must be contracting, for I am one of many who used to read them with pleasure. And who are they gaining while losing us? Are their new readers more intensive if fewer, and better worth while for their quality than we were for our numbers? But I am not going to allow the favourable answers. The fact is that the writers of the "Little Review" are getting too clever even for coterie, and will soon be read only by each other . . . or themselves.

* * *

A characteristic example of what I mean is to be found in the opening chapter of Mr. James Joyce's new novel, "Ulysses," of which a long instalment appears in the issue of the "Little Review" for March. This is how it begins:—

Stately, plump Buck Milligan came from the stairway, bearing a bowl of lather on which a mirror and a razor lay crossed. A yellow dressing-gown, ungirdled, was sustained gently behind him on the mild morning air. He held the bowl aloft and intoned. . . .

Now it is clear that such a passage has not been written without a great deal of thought; and if thought were art, it might be called an artistic passage. But, on the contrary, thought is not only not art, but the aim of art is to conceal thought. In perfection, indeed, art is indistinguishable from nature. The obvious thoughtfulness of the passage I have quoted is, therefore, an objection to it; and the more so since it provokes an inspection it is unable to sustain. Chal-

lenged to "think" about what the writer is saying, the reader at once discovers that the passage will not bear thinking about. He asks, for instance, *whence* Buck Milligan came from the staircase; *how* he managed to balance a crossed mirror and razor on a bowl's edge—and, particularly, while bearing them aloft; and what mild air it was that sustained the tails of a man's dressing-gown. To these questions deliberately provoked by the obvious care of the writer there is either no answer or none forthcoming without more thought than the detail is worth. The passage, in short, suffers from being aimed at a diminishing coterie; and it succeeds in satisfying, I imagine, only the writer of it who is alone in all its secrets. Mr. James Joyce had, I think, the makings of a great writer—not a popular writer, but a classic writer. To become what he was he needed to be opened out, to be simplified, to conceal his cleverness, to write more and more for the world. In THE NEW AGE, I believe, he would have been set to writing reviews for a year or two—in other words, to trying to see things as the world will one day see them. But first in the "Egoist" and now in the "Little Review" he has been directed to cultivate his faults, his limitations, his swaddling clothes of genius, with the result I have described that he is in imminent danger of brilliant provincialism.

* * *

Mr. Ezra Pound, for all his unabated enthusiasm, is not a severe enough coryphæus to be safely entrusted with the education of genius. He is indiscriminating in his praise as well as in his censure. Milton, we know, he dismisses without a qualification—a sufficient example of his massive recklessness. But, on the other hand, Mr. Wyndham Lewis and Mr. James Joyce are simply "it," and equally without qualification. Were this attitude consistent even, it might be less unamusing; but, alas, Mr. Pound has himself qualms and misgivings that lead us to suspect that his Jove is often nodding. Let us take Mr. Pound's own essays in the "Little Review," the chief of which is a commented anthology, very well done (for the second time), of modern French poets. He begins in his absolute fashion by declaring that it is a disgrace to know no language beside your own; and America, in particular, is warned that its intellectual affairs cannot be conducted on a monolingual [unilingual?] basis. Very well, but in a minute or two we have Mr. Pound's confession that he "cannot take much interest in the problem of the mute 'e' in French verse." Such like technicalities in a foreign tongue, he goes on, "cannot have for us the importance they have to a man writing in that tongue." Which is to say, I suggest, that, after all, America's affairs of culture will need to be conducted on a unilingual basis, since even so good a French scholar as Mr. Ezra Pound can take no interest in what is the A B C of French culture. Truth to tell, the cult of French verse by an English critic is in nine cases out of ten an affectation admired in England, perhaps, but secretly smiled at in Paris. I have sat with French writers in Paris, in fact, and heard them politely patronising the efforts of well-known English Gallophils to criticise French verse. If Mr. Pound could hear them *en famille*, I doubt whether he would invite America to share his experience.

* * *

As a footnote on the "Little Review," I would draw attention to the congruous impudence of Miss May Sinclair's opening of her essay on the Novels of Dorothy Richardson. "I do not know," she begins, "whether this article is or is not going to be a criticism, for as soon as I begin to think what I shall say, I find myself, etc., etc." But not to know is, in this case, equivalent to not caring very much about your readers. The chance of what may turn up is to be good enough for them, provided the writer is satisfied with herself.

R. H. C.

Recent Verse.

The first cycle of "Wheels"* did not roll in my direction, and I caught only a distant echo of its rumbling. Some of this has been preserved at the end of the present volume in a series of Press notices, which make me regret that I too was not invited to mingle my wit with such a literary arbiter elegantiarum as Mr. Gossip of the "Daily Sketch," or the anonymous critics who have made "The World" and "Country Life" what they are in the world of letters. But I really begin to sympathise more warmly than ever with Tantalus when I read that the "Pall Mall Gazette" (that authority on cdours) observed of "Wheels" that "the foetidness of the whole clings to the nostrils. . . ." And I never received a copy! However, I will do what I can with the second cycle.

My general impression of this volume of "Wheels" is that the verses in it were written by people with nerves. I do not know whether I need to draw your notice to the close connection between nerves and poetry (oh, I am speaking quite seriously!). On the whole, modern English poetry, in striking contrast to modern Slavonic poetry, for example, suffers from a lack of nerves, which gives it what I am inclined to call a "woolliness" of outline. Many of the poems in "Wheels" are almost Slavonic† in this respect: they show the result of a sensitive response to outward impressions. Here is an example of what I mean:—

When the hood of night comes on the land
My ship is rocked by the sunset wind—
Shrill voices from the town
Cleave the air like darts;
When they sing in chorus
It were as if steel arrows of the day,
The showers of rain, rebounded to the dome of air.
When one shouts aloud, his jagged voice
Blares like a trumpet. . . .

This is from a poem entitled "Tahiti," by Mr. Sacheverell Sitwell, and illustrates my use of the word "nerves." I know that there are writers who frequently refer to something which they call "nervous English," but as the epithet in this connection rarely appears to have any meaning whatever, I think (and hope) that my use of the word is based on a different idea.

For the moment I can only indicate a connection between this quality and a striking verbal skill of which I will offer a few examples. Thus, in the poem, "Tahiti," from which I have already quoted, the following lines occur:—

. . . Lanterns are lit—great stairs of light
Shake in the water;
All dank and wet I seem to climb,
Swaying on soundless gold. . . .

I commend this particularly, because it does not rely on typically decorative words for its effect. Art will continue to conceal artifice as long as the laws of gravity hold good. Here is another admirable passage from "Low Tide," by Mr. Sherard Vines:—

They (the waves) spit at one another, they howl like
strange pied leopards
Whom she (the moon) serenely shepherds, their mistress
and their mother.
Cruelly out of the east to cut his pitted runes
On the dry sands of the dunes, and scatter the yellow
yeast
From the slaving firth's grey lips, the mad wind
griffin runs
To try conclusions with the black-hulled covey of
ships. . . .

And I have noted more than a handful of similar felicities which point to language culture, if to nothing else.

* "Wheels: A Second Cycle." (B. H. Blackwell. 2s. 6d. net.)

† How much so, I could demonstrate by some interesting parallels if space allowed.

In one or two cases it has led to extravagances, which will, perhaps, remind you of Dr. Johnson's "metaphysical" poets and their conceits. Here is an instance from a poem by Miss Edith Sitwell:—

The negress night devours that gourd the sun—
Grown over-ripe, and lets the gold juice run,
Staining her body; pelts with the hot rind
The gold processions as they dance and sway.

or, again, from the same poem:—

Strange sparks struck out by Time, the diamond dust
Of fountain-lighted groves, the golden must
Of vats of joy. . . .

These are examples of art which does not conceal artifice. But rather too much than too little of this revelling in language!

There are few metrical surprises in this volume. An abundance of free-rhythm underlines its modernity, and there is some more than respectable blank-verse. It is a pity that Mr. Osbert Sitwell has not made more of his poem, "London." He writes like this, for instance:—

I love the business thoroughfares and roads
Where all the wealth of London circulates;
So full of people that at noon the streets
Are black—an ant-heap overturned—at night
Deserted and forlorn as Babylon.

Five pages of this sagging modulation leave the reader exhausted. The theme deserved better treatment, and such a poem as "The Return of the Prodigal," shows that Mr. Sitwell is not without the necessary resources. Read as a contrast, Miss Edith Sitwell in her fragmentary drama, "Saul":—

Cry, tear the fabric of the world with screams.
This whirlpool of my madness has sucked down
The palaces of light into its depths.
The pulsing earth is ashen black as night:
They say it is with drought—old thirsty ape!

The heavens die—they melt away like Time.
I would the day grew blind before her birth—
The light a curse, to break the world's old womb
And mix her shape with dust. . . .

Here, again, there is excess—this time in the manner of the late Elizabethan dramatists.

Those who demand from poetry a "message," will get little satisfaction from "Wheels." When these poets do aim at something more tangible than æsthetic word-mixing, they produce satire. This is as it should be, for it's a poor youth that is never satirical. Unfortunately, their verbal and metrical abilities seem to desert them when they reach this point, and, as a result, their satirical verses do not altogether "come off." Mr. Aldous Huxley, for instance, would have derived better results from his sardonic musings if he had invested them better. In their present state they read like bad imitations of Mr. Pound. "Carry On," by Mr. Sherard Vines lacks the finesse that effective satire ought to have. There is a great difference between fencing with rapiers and scuffling with broken bottles.

No, these poets are almost more successful at the other extreme. Then you get "Black Velvet," by Miss Iris Tree:—

The darkness of the trees at deep midnight,
And sombreness of shadows in the lake;
A mountain in the starlight wide awake,
Dreaming to Heaven with imperial might
Of lifted shoulders, huge against the bright
Bespattered jewelry of stars—the ache
Of silence, and the sobbing tides that break
From music. Slumbering cities—Candle light
Snuffed in the flooding darkness, and the train
Of Queens that go to scaffold for a sin—
Or splash of blackness manifest of pain,
Hamlet among his court, a Harlequin
Of tragedies. . . . Mysterious. . . . And again
Venetian masks against a milky skin.

(I wonder, by the way, what Mr. Gossip makes of all this). Critics who are fond of high-flown phrases will probably call this symbolism, but I prefer to describe it as five-vowel exercises. Such a tuning-up is excellent practice for young poets, and I am far from despising it. I hope, in fact, that I have shown myself far from despising "Wheels," which contains more than the usual qualities of youth and rather less than its usual defects.

P. SELVER.

The Royal Academy.

By B. H. Dias.

THE Royal Academy, Oh God, the Royal Academy! The Royal Academy is, before God, nothing to joke about. It is with groanings that the critic pulls up his cravat, hitches his braces, smoothes down his overcoat, plunges past the funny foreshortened plaster horse and its archaically costumed caballero, and lugubriously addresses himself to the entrance stairs. The Royal Academy (150th exposition) contains 1,622 items.

With colour out of all register, with ashes of Alma Tadema, with refuse of Tate, Luxembourg, Art Shop Windows, etc., brumagem. I decline to take the 1,600 items seriatim. If any of the exhibitors expect their work to be looked at seriously and carefully, they will doubtless exhibit it elsewhere. We pull up a few stray examples.

Strang (Spanish Lady) improving. Strang (The Singer) punk Zuloaga. Ewell (5), we note that the lettering on the façade is distinct. Sims (A Sussex Landscape) has mood, not despicable; Sims (Piping Boy), the really idiotic. Clausen (The Sleeper), style of Le Doux in Salon des Independents for 1912, its hard-cream tonality and composure bearable, and even a relief among the rest of the pictures. Chas. Shannon, portrait of himself, not so successful as his portrait of Chas. Ricketts shown last year; at any rate, free from the almost omnipresent vulgarity of his co-exhibitors. Sir J. Lavery (portrait of Mr. Asquith), worse than any picture need be. Salisbury (panel for Royal Exchange), as might be expected. Hawksley (182), cheap Jap, plus symbolism. Shannon (James Jebusha, R.A.), "Girls Bathing," bad to the point of being comic, all the prurit of Watts, smartened up to oleograph register, false colour, steam-heated "nature." Anna Airy (210), comedy, as intended, good magazine illustration. "Jagger" (241), spirited Raemakers, coloured (Bolshevic, or "blood," red). M. L. Williams, "The Triumph," real French (old) Salon "shocker," Pierrrot with the stigmata, school of—let us say, Zwitscher, skirt and lady's underfrillies show technique, flesh tints, especially in the face, less successful.

R. G. Eves (250), as in many other portraits in the show, the skirt is better painted than the face. Riviere (309) bad Boldini, like a few gross of other portraits here present. H. Hurst (393), punk salon cum Luxembourg. J. R. Reid (401), like so many others, etc., sea the colour it "ain't." Adrian Stokes (400) colours on this canvas are at least in relation to each other; *no common feat* in this company; not to be underestimated among so many exhibits in the tone of the "firelight" pictures so common in the "Strand." "Lighting the cigarette," etc.

H. Morley (370) pseudo-hellenic, cum teuto-hellenic, cum symbolic meaning. Le Quesne (372), incredible. B. Partridge (410), painted with a mop. H. Draper (406), little fairy soap ad. I. Codrington (407), B. Jones, the late, ashes of. 421 cf. Manet. 440 Tate. 444 cf. tinted photo.

G. Spenser Watson (portrait of H. Pinker), has at any rate made a portrait, painted the face, even if he got a little tired before quite finishing the rest of the

canvas. Example for confrères who have apparently left the faces to be filled in at the end.

627, as "Before Æsculapius," but worse painted. 613, comedy (unintended). 610 F. Dicksee, not shining in his disciples. 285, school of the lady on the volant champagne cork. Sydney Lee (293), larky idea for stage scenery, might collaborate with Mr. Allinson.

We sink, we perambulate, among flowers à la 1829; among pre-Raphaelitisms with the definite detail and definite outlines removed; more Boldinis, more blasted Tademas; Partridge past belief again looms upon the exhausted vision; Cayley Robinson has pre-raphed with a Bengali innovation; Russel Flint, even Flint with his post-Boutet de Monville magazine covers comes as cooling and relief. One regrets having intended to write (or being about to write) that the London Group show was uninviting. (It was. It was painted in suet, but continue. The Academy is a dark forest, a psychological era, a morass, and so on. God help us.) More Boldini. Spenser Watson turns up again, spirited if bad painting. I have not noted the number. More history, allegory, paregory, paregoric, etc.

Most of the sculpture is comic. We note 1416; some rumour of something called form has reached this artist (F. Wiles). 1598, careful copy. 1583, suave. 1556, pseudo-Epstein, oh very-very-very-pseudo. 1558, trace of shape. 1507, usual Tate-Luxembourg bric-a-brac. 1489, pseudo cinque cento. 1481, pseudo-Rodin, very pseudo. 1498, beer-mug pottery, but good as such.

1497, Epstein's "Rom," very pseudo, very diluted, and one returns to the pigment section. 316, evidently as "modern" as is allowed "in," wide garish bad pointillism or late state of impressionist jab-jab. 317, ditto. 596, funny animals. Forgot to mention that there are a lot of pages out of the bestiary, fierce tigers, not burning very illuminedly, etc. 581, false colour beyond belief. 635, Tadema with the glaze off. H. Harvey (465), artist had an idea, and carried it out. My first moment of pleasure.

More smeary impressionism, tinted photos, official portraits of "robes." Hall Neal, interior. Impossible leopards by Wardle; pretty-pretty, by J. Duncan; then the 243, by Walter Bayes, "Pygmalion poster" school with the modishness of the Parisian firm removed; matt colour, flatness, very mild recognition of the present. "Oh, I dew think that's queer" (sic: queheh; whiff-whiffs the young lady behind me.

I suppose spectators of that sort have to have pictures to look at. There are, presumably, plenty of entrance shillings to represent that state of inanity. Bayes' picture is the first spot of interest in the show. It ought to be hung somewhere else.

Lastly, M. Green, in "The Step Dancer" (54), shows great charm, a picture well painted, pleasant, the colour in scale, and well put on, true lights, proper degree of dulness and lightness in register, a picture, in short, fit to hang with two dozen others in the drawing-room of some person of taste, who doesn't begin to think he or she "has a collection." Just a quiet piece of good work, lost in this mass of rubbish. There may be two or three others, but there is an end to one's patience.

The Rothenstein show of war pictures, is, or was, chiefly remarkable for the psychology displayed by the "Times" writer on painting, in dealing with it. The London Group give a poor show; a few clean drawings by Ginner, being the star feature. Karlowska's stuffed cat is less suety than most of the exhibits. Hamnett gaining admirers. Bevan had roughed up his trees a little. Only by contrast with the Academy does one unenjoyed hour at Heal's take on some glow in remembrance.

Quel métier! Quel métier!

Views and Reviews.

A CRITIC OF THE CONSTITUTION.

ROBERT LOWE'S famous jibe—that we must "educate our masters" is beginning to develop a double meaning. In the sense in which the phrase was originally used, that it was necessary to educate the newly enfranchised electors, it is still indubitably true; popular government must fail if the exercise of the political sovereignty of the people is not guided by a clear knowledge of general political principles. If the Chichele Professor of Military History had done no more in this book* than make those principles clear to the ordinary mind, he would still have done valuable service; it is not necessary that every man should be his own strategist and tactician, as was, until a few years ago, the custom in the Greek army, but it is necessary to the success of popular government that every man and woman who has a vote to cast should have a conception of the State not only as a sort of Tom Tiddler's ground from which they are unfairly excluded but also as an organisation by means of which the national will and the national purposes are expressed. No sincere study of history can fail to reveal the fact that war is one of the primary means by which the national will is expressed; it is not the only means, and should not be emphasised to the exclusion of the other means, but it is a means that is neglected at the peril not only of the State but of the nation. Improvisation of means is a proof of genius, but to rely only upon improvisation, to neglect to develop the technique that successful improvisation requires, is to demand miracles when human exertion would suffice. "Put *your* shoulder to the wheel," said Hercules to the carter in the fable.

But if it is necessary to "educate our masters," the electors, it is none the less necessary to educate our masters, the politicians. The political constitution of the United Kingdom may be, as the late Marquis of Salisbury declared at the time of the South African War, "unequalled for producing happiness, prosperity, and liberty in time of peace," although some of us believe that what was "unequalled" could still be improved; but the consensus of competent opinion is to the effect that the "British constitution as at present worked is not a good fighting machine." That was the opinion of the late Marquis of Salisbury; it was the opinion of the late Prince Consort that the Crimean War (and it is true of every war) put Parliamentary Government on its trial; and if we accept councils of war among allies as analogous in principle to Parliamentary Government, the great Marlborough may be quoted as a critic. Apart from these representative opinions, the most obvious proof of the contention is the extraordinary constitutional changes that this war has made necessary, changes that have had to be improvised and are, therefore, ad hoc, and with no apparent principle to co-ordinate them.

It was said of Athens that its government was one in which the wise men deliberated and the fools decided; and to the best of our ability, we have produced a similar system in England. "The chief weakness of our national life," says Professor Wilkinson, "is the want of faith in knowledge"; and the expression of that want of faith is illuminated by our constitutional practice of "giving authority to men without knowledge or experience of the kind of business over which they are set. There are only two methods of forming a committee for governing a nation—for directing the nation's work. One is that hitherto practised, by which a personage distinguished by party services, or by anything except mastery of the business which he is to superintend, is placed as Cabinet Minister at the head of a department, while its permanent chief, pre-

sumably the competent man, is made his subordinate, his adviser whose advice he may reject. This is government by incompetence. It has been accompanied by inefficiency and confusion, and can lead only to defeat. The other method is to appoint as Cabinet Minister at the head of each department, the most competent master of the work which that department has to do. . . . Victory cannot be won by a Government of amateurs. A Government that seeks victory must begin by entrusting the conduct of the war to men who understand war." Truisms, of course, but truisms which the British Constitution does not embody, and which constitutional practice, even as recently as the Dardanelles expedition (to come no nearer to our own time), tended to obscure.

The system, of course, will not infallibly produce its worst effects; the criticism of the late Marquis of Salisbury, for instance, was qualified by the phrase, "as at present worked." Under the American Constitution, to take an historical case, the office of Commander-in-Chief is vested in the President, who is not often as qualified technically as was Colonel Roosevelt. But the temptation to use the authority was not always successfully resisted even by so modest a man as Lincoln. "His guidance," says Lord Charnwood in his recent "Life," "came from common sense and the military books, of which, ever since Bull Run, he had been trying, amidst all his work, to tear out the heart." His purpose was, of course, to enable him to form an intelligent opinion of the main purposes of the war, and of the military schemes for their prosecution. But Lord Charnwood remarks: "It is really no small proof of strength that, with the definite judgments which he constantly formed, he very rarely indeed gave imperative orders as Commander-in-Chief, which he was, to any General." But a system that requires the extraordinary self-restraint of a Lincoln to prevent it from rushing into disaster, as we rushed in the Walcheren Expedition, the Peninsular War, the Crimean Expedition, the South African War, and has not, even in this war, entirely reversed our traditional practice, is not a system to be maintained on its merits. It is true that nobody likes the expert, but we do not, as a rule, go to war because the enemy likes us, and do not, therefore, need to choose a "lovable" man. The present system of government was devised to save us from a domestic tyranny, but we are threatened now with a foreign tyranny; and the necessary adjustments, and the principles that dictate them, are stated by Professor Wilkinson in language intelligible to the general public, fortified by historical examples, and made effective by some scathing criticism of our political leaders.

A. E. R.

Reviews.

Last Lectures. By Wilfrid Ward. (Longmans. 12s. 6d. net.)

The principal contents of this book are the Lowell Lectures, 1914, a series on Biography given at the Royal Institution, 1914-1915, and an introductory study by Mrs. Wilfrid Ward. The Lowell Lectures deal with "The Genius of Cardinal Newman," and are a "criticism of popular misconceptions" offered by Newman's biographer. Actually they reveal more of the "sympathetic insight" of the biographer than they do of the genius of the subject. Their purpose is to prove that Newman was greater than his work, and that even his work proves this contention. Controversial as most of it was, Mr. Ward insists that it was not mere controversy; but, on the contrary, was the application of profound thought, inspired feeling, and careful research to problems that were then becoming current. It seems that Newman, even in his student days, apprehended the growth of infidelity; this apprehension was mystical, distinct from the practical

* "Government and the War." By Spenser Wilkinson. (Constable. 6s. net.)

apprehension of those who predicted the same danger from the works of Tom Paine or David Hume. Newman knew it by the excitement of that "illative sense" that he discovered before Carpenter developed the theory of unconscious cerebration; by the same sense that he knew of the existence of God, he knew that mankind would tend to cease to believe in God, and he devoted his life to the attempt to frustrate this tendency. But for Newman, we might all have been little Darwinians struggling for existence; but he prayed for us, argued for our souls against the Protestants and the scientists—and now we are making guns to shoot further than the German guns shoot. In a word, we are saved.

But Newman, although he insisted before Emerson that "we are wiser than we know" (the Minister of Munitions has just made the same discovery), although he insisted, before Ribot, that all thinking is unconscious, that consciousness is the simple relation of an unconscious work, did not make the mistake of ignoring or denouncing the method of science. On the contrary, he insisted on its importance; there was nothing to be gained, he saw, by attaching faith in God to any theory of the universe, and thus closing our eyes to the true knowledge of God's works. If God really did construct a helio-centric solar system, for example, it was a mistake to hold a spatial conception of Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory based on a geo-centric system. The function of the Church, he implied, was not the teaching of science, but the establishment of religion, the maintenance of a spirit, the interpretation of a revelation. If science could prove that certain things happened in certain ways, there was no need to harass faith by asking it to believe that they happened in other ways. Even if facts are not "the truth" ("as if evidence were the test of truth," he wrote once in a passage that annoyed Huxley), yet potent errors are further from the truth than are facts. A certitude that will not bear examination or expression in the terms of new knowledge was not, in his opinion, really worth having, was not, in the real sense of the word, a certitude. God would not tumble off His throne because man discovered that that throne was not based on a cloud, that the whole conception of God on a throne was simply the attempt to express the ideas of sovereignty and elevation in the terms of visual fact. Newman was convinced that for the exploration of the sensible universe, the scientific method was necessary; you cannot intuit the chemical composition of substances, or the variable motion of the Moon, or the actual process by which any transformation is accomplished. Unconscious cerebration may provide us with certitudes, but it cannot guarantee that those certitudes are true—but Newman did not say that. He insisted, though, that the certitudes should be able to express themselves in the most precisely accurate knowledge of phenomena that was possible, that the burden of belief in demonstrably wrong processes should not be imposed upon the expression of faith.

He might seem, therefore, to have forestalled the Modernists, but there was a proviso attached. Just as truth was not, so to speak, a thing in itself, but a certitude that he could convey to an auditor (thereby he forestalled Mr. Lloyd George's "political strategy," for Newman's method was also that of suiting his statements to his audience), so the scientific knowledge of process could not be permitted to substitute itself for an epistemology that has not been created. There were things that were indubitably true because they had been believed always, everywhere, and by all; and reason had no authority in the realm of unreason. The Virgin Birth, for example, was true, although we had no gynaecological knowledge to explain it; it was true that Christ was very man and very God, although we did not know how this unified duality was explicable

except by falling into heresy; the Resurrection of the Body was also true, although it was impossible to explain it without pretending to know more than we could know of the subject. Man had a soul, although he did not know it or know what it was, and could do nothing but "save it" even if he discovered it. On all these and similar matters, reason was incompetent to pronounce; they were the province of faith. Like Professor Moore, who argues that if we say a thing is true, it is true, not because but apparently in spite of our saying it, and that it would be true whether or not we said it, whether or not anybody ever did, could, or would say it or know it (and thus finely proved the utter irrelevance of truth to humanity), Newman was concerned to show that we could know things without knowing anything about them, and that what we could know by not knowing was the immediate reality of God. This was some time called Agnosticism, but it also passes for Catholicism, presumably because nobody knows how to describe what they do not know. Mr. Ward's exposition is admirable in its clear obscurity.

Mr. Webster and Others. By Mrs. W. K. Clifford. (Collins. 1s. 6d. net.)

This is a volume of short stories, four of which have previously appeared, and the rest ought to have done so. For their assumptions are curiously old-fashioned, "pre-war," to give them a date. Most of them deal with one or other of the difficulties that might arise in the domestic life of an old-fashioned husband and a modern wife; none of them explain the idiocy of the modern wife in choosing the old-fashioned husband. Why the woman who ran away with the actor (and was, of course, divorced by the husband) should have drunk herself to death, we do not know; perhaps it is the modern touch. Why Miss Welworth should have been offended because Fulkston (who did not want to marry her any more than she wanted to marry him) refused to encourage gossip about their friendship, only Mrs. Clifford can tell, and she does not; Miss Welworth only makes a scene wherein she declares a woman's right to have as many male friends as she likes, to have them at her place when she likes, in as large or as small numbers as she likes, with or without female company, at any hour of the day or night—and, of course, denies the right of anybody else to have any opinion of her behaviour. It is the old feminist clap-trap, but it is supposed to overwhelm Fulkston into admiration of the new woman. Perhaps it did.

Penny Scot's Treasure. By Frederick Niven. (Collins. 6s. net.)

Mr. Niven has written a straight-forward story of a treasure-hunt, almost too straight-forward, for we miss the real interest of treasure-hunts, their reactions upon the individuals who undertake them. Told in this bare Cæsarian fashion, "I came, saw, annexed the title-deeds," it is no more than a "get-rich-quick" episode, with a wife in waiting. This does less than justice to the district, the remote north-west of Canada, and less than justice to some of the characters. Sadie only sympathises and waits for the hero to propose on his return; the "nitchy-gal" is treated more humanely by the author, but he leaves her desolate without a pang. Frontiersmen surely have a little time to spare for the humanities, even if they do not feel, or cannot express, the infinities; and so single-hearted a quest for treasure as this is has the Colonial touch of vulgarity. For when the treasure is found, the hero only becomes a rich man and hires a man to split the wood; and apparently finds all that he needs of occupation in loving his wife, and feels that he will never be good enough for a woman who had once managed a hotel—which may be true without being interesting.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

A LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

Sir,—The space which you have been devoting to the subject of a League of Nations shows that you rightly recognise the practical importance which the idea has assumed. The Governments of all the allied countries are committed to the policy implied in that phrase. If nothing were achieved in that direction, the alliance would have failed in what it publicly professes to be its principal war aim. That being so, it is the more important that the subject should be investigated and discussed in all its aspects. And you will, I hope, be willing to insert a few lines of comment on the article by Mr. Warnock in your issue of May 16. The criticism therein contained, and based upon a pamphlet by M. Jean Grave, turns upon the limitation of national sovereignty involved in any form of a League. That some such limitation is implied is true. How great the limitation would be would depend upon the constitution and obligations of the League. But, then, every treaty obligation implies some such limitations, so long as the treaty is in force. And, most likely, your correspondent does not contemplate, at the close of the war, the disruption of all existing alliances and a condition of "splendid isolation" for all States.

But, it is urged, every scheme for a League of Nations involves an international court. That is true. And, for certain classes of disputes, it is intended that recourse to the court shall be obligatory. If, further, the awards of the court are to be enforced when necessary, then in effect (it is said) a "supernational government" will have been created. Everything here depends on the implications of the word "government." In such a League, there would not be "government" in the sense in which there is government in England, where (so far as the law is concerned) there is no command which may not be laid upon the citizens by Parliament, or which, when so imposed, could not be legally enforced. The matters in which the nations of a League would be restrained would be defined in the treaty constituting the league. In other respects, they would be free. To say that nations so placed would have forfeited their "self-determination" is to imply that (for instance) there is no self-determination in Australia or Canada, because they are included in the political system of the British Empire; and to assert that there can be no self-determination for Ireland short of complete political independence. The whole question is one of degree.

Your contributor urges further that in its working an international court will be swayed by "class, party, or purely personal interests." The "swaying," in the case of the international tribunal, is more likely to be national. But the national bias of one of the judges (which, of course, may exist, but which, also, may be countered by a sense of international responsibility) will be neutralised by the other judges, of different nationality. It may be a question, indeed (not an easy one to answer), whether the judges appointed by the nations in dispute should sit upon the case.

But the objection of your correspondent seems to go deeper. It seems to be an objection to all government, national or international, as necessarily corrupt and oppressive. That government is a very imperfect business is true enough. The practical question is, however: Is anarchy better? The common sense and experience of mankind appears to have answered that question in the negative. The present war is the result of international anarchy. And if no serious attempt is made to cure that anarchy, this war will be merely a prelude to others, yet more terrific in their energy of destruction, and preparation for that "next war" which will swallow up every other function of society. Incidentally (a point which would appeal to Mr. Warnock), nations conscripted under governments who can turn machine-guns and aeroplanes on the people at any moment are not nations any longer capable of revolution. Nothing would fix more surely upon all nations the yoke of a plutocratic military class than the perpetuation of international war.

There are other points in Mr. Warnock's communication which it would be interesting to take up, but I must not trespass upon your space. Those of us who are advocating a League of Nations and endeavouring to give practicable shape to the idea are not unaware of

the difficulties of the task. But such difficulties, we are convinced, are as dust in the balance, when it is realised that the alternative is the destruction of civilisation. To objectors we put always the question: What is your alternative? And we never get an answer.

W. H. DICKINSON,
Chairman of the League of Nations Society.

* * *
MARX.

Sir,—If Mr. J. T. Walton Newbold were not so clever, it might be possible to do something for him. Like the Greek sophists, he overwhelms us with a flood of words till we must beg him to stay to enlighten us plain men by replying to a few questions. He does not, so far as I can see, bring forward any arguments against the criticisms which I advanced against the Marxists, not primarily, as I may point out, against Marx himself, most of whose main ideas, as I understand them, I should accept. But I object to being required to accept the outlying parts of the theory on the ground that they also are *de fide*. The philosophical basis which Marx gave it, the theory of increasing misery, the disappearance of the farmer class, and so on—these things I should reject, not because I do not like them, but because they seem to me demonstrably false. This, I suppose, has always been the plea of those in danger of excommunication for heresy; and the orthodox, in their righteousness, have never understood it.

The basis of Mr. J. T. Walton Newbold's antipathy to THE NEW AGE is, however, obvious enough. We are, it seems, intellectuals who lecture to the workers. We desire to induce them to seek after National Guilds, and fall away from the pure gospel, according to which salvation is by works alone. The chief difference between the two is apparently that the first is meant to provide a haven of refuge for the middle class, while the other completes the historic process which leads to Socialism. In fact, the "materialist interpretation" of the National Guilds movement is simply that it is an effort to save itself on the part of the disappearing middle class. Abandoning as hopeless the effort to save its capitalist masters, it tries to frame a scheme in which it will in turn rule the unfortunate working class, in subjection as usual. The bureaucracy of the Fabian Society is patently capable of no other explanation. The plans of THE NEW AGE are more subtle. They throw over the official class, and still purpose to preserve these other parasites, the intellectuals. Some provision must be made for the professional classes. Lawyers and clergy and professors and journalists must live, even though they are too proud to work. Let them care for the things of the spirit. This will (happy thought) serve the double purpose of providing for the future and refuting that dangerous revolutionary Marxist materialism.

Assuming that something of this sort is Mr. J. T. Walton Newbold's position, we might get further if he will either correct it or define it a little by replying to these questions:—(1) Why, if, as Marx held, the triumph of the working class is certain, should an incident by the way like the struggle for life of the middle class so perturb and anger him? The middle class is merely acting under a historical necessity of which it is not even conscious. And in any case it can't possibly succeed. Is Mr. J. T. Walton Newbold's temper equally beyond his control, for the same reasons? (2) Does he really think that in the views of Marx, as they can be found—e.g., in the Communist Manifesto—no change of any sort is required? A creed which can persist through centuries has been regarded as something to wonder at. But a scientific doctrine which preserves its formulation unchanged since 1874 should arouse even more awe. This is not a question, we may point out, of considering who are the real inheritors of the tradition. Two (or more) could play at that game. And the case that can be made out for the claim of THE NEW AGE to that honourable position is at least striking. (3) That Mr. J. T. Walton Newbold should object to intellectuals may be natural enough, but that he should do it on the ground of faithfulness to his master Marx is passing strange. Between anything we can justly attribute to Marx himself as to the burden laid on the working class and the position of THE NEW AGE on the same matter there is little difference in principle, though much in detail.

Only when at a later date Marxism began to be an esoteric possession, a mystery jealously to be guarded from the uninitiate did the proscription of the intellectuals take rank as a dogma. A preference for Marx to the writers of *THE NEW AGE* might be based on many grounds. But does Mr. J. T. Walton Newbold seriously propose to accept as his, that they are intellectuals while Marx was not? Or in the alternative, why does he prefer one of that fraternity to others? He ought to be no respecter of such persons.

M. W. ROBESON.

* * *

CONDITIONS OF WAGE-LABOUR.

"The night-shift workers suffered fewer accidents than the day-shift. This was not due to the smaller output, but to the calmer mental state of the night-workers. 'These workers have for the most part forgotten the pleasures and excitements indulged in shortly before coming on to night-shift, and they have nothing but an unexhilarating breakfast and bed to look forward to. Such a mental state is impossible of achievement by the day-shift workers, but something in the way of mental calm and equilibrium can be attained by stopping all conversation except that relating to the work in hand. If the workers would consent, it would be a good plan to induce temporary deafness by plugging the ears, and so shut out the noise of the machinery, which is in itself an important cause of distraction and fatigue. Again, if it were practicable, it would be of value to shut out the sight of surrounding objects by separating the lathes or other machines from one another by partitions.'

"... Even moderately defective lighting produced considerable increase of eye accidents. . . . The use of goggles is suggested as a preventive measure.

"... Temperature is another important factor. It was found that accidents increased rapidly at the higher temperatures. As regards external conditions, it was established that accidents increased considerably as the weather grew colder and diminished as it grew warmer. . . . The women's accidents were two and a half times more numerous when the temperature was at or below freezing than when it was above 47 degrees, whilst the men's accidents were twice as numerous."

Sir,—The unsuspecting, if asked to give the source of the above quotation, would probably surmise that it came from a treatise describing the conditions under which the slaves of some ancient barbaric empire worked. Alas for their guilelessness! It is a cutting from an article in the "Daily Telegraph" of May 13, 1918, consisting of a digest of a memorandum published by the Ministry of Munitions as the result of investigations conducted on its behalf by Dr. H. M. Vernon.

One has long since become accustomed to the callous stupidity of the modern scientific mind. Dr. Vernon, like the rests of his caste, reckons as usual without the spirit. Far be it from me to suggest that a munition factory is a paradise, but at least while sight, ears, and tongue are free there is a modicum of human feeling about the atmosphere.

Has Dr. Vernon no suspicion of what is likely to happen to one who, with ears plugged, eyes, goggled, and tongue tied, stands alone with a machine behind an impenetrable barrier? Has he no inkling of what self-hypnotism means, or of how probable it is that in such a state the lonely worker may become irresponsible for his actions and get into a condition when he cannot distinguish between his own finger and the head of a nail? Has he no conception that the alertness induced by free intercourse with one's fellows has as its necessary correlative a general alertness of mind and body of which the work in hand has its share, and that solitary confinement by destroying the stimulus to the former would fail to produce the latter? Further, has he ever for a moment wondered whether much of the deftness shown by men and women in connection with modern machinery is not due to the bodily virtue handed down to them from a healthier past, and drawn the conclusion that the descendants of the modern industrial workers, with nothing behind them but the inhuman drudgery of the nineteenth and twentieth century factory, are not likely to have the bodily health by

which alone good and efficient work of any kind is carried out?

One can find no hint of any such thoughts having passed through Dr. Vernon's mind. His remedies are, in addition to those stated above, seats for the standing workers to rest on occasionally when they are not actually working, and the most suitable seats possible for the sedentary workers; less alcohol in order to diminish "the careless habit of mind"; the choosing of suitable hours of labour; the installation of thermometers and heating apparatus on the floor, or a few feet above it, so as to warm the feet rather than the head. Apparently these improvements, combined with the prospect of an unexhilarating breakfast and bed and solitary confinement during working hours, are to result in the modern slave being as little as possible incapacitated from continuing his all-important toil.

One wonders whether the galley slave would have cared to change places with the modern "free worker," with his health and his welfare in the hands of the modern doctor. These stupid and materialistic medicine men cannot regard the human being as being anything but a complicated bit of machinery, fit only to be lubricated and tended with a view of avoiding the nuisance of a stoppage—and consequent loss to the employer. With a few honourable exceptions, the members of the Medical Trade Union are, in their dealings with the workers, nothing better than brutal overseers armed with the scourge of modern science wherewith to whip out the last drop of energy from the besotted and dehumanised slaves.

It is to be hoped that the workers will study Dr. Vernon's report and insist upon somebody who is more cognisant with their point of view being appointed to make suggestions with regard to the best conditions for their work. In despair of seeing any concerted action on the part of the possessing classes on behalf of the workers, one is driven perforce to urge the latter to make at least a desperate struggle to save themselves.

ELSIE F. BUCKLEY.

* * *

THE DUTY OF THE CITIZEN.

Sir,—The mistake "A. E. R." makes in his article on "The Duty of the Citizen" ought not to pass without correction. He overrates the power of Parliament while under-estimating the principle of popular sovereignty, which of the two is by far the more important. The sovereignty of the people need not be, and is not, only exercised by the addition of a cross to a ballot-paper; it may be exercised through any organ that gives expression to popular opinion. One of these is the Press.

"A. E. R." admits that the ordinary citizen "may keep up a running fire of criticism against Parliament," which, by the way, includes the executive. This occupation is all the more necessary in view of the increasing subordination of the ordinary M.P. to the power of the Cabinet. When General Maurice issued his letter, he asserted, not "the principle which is maintained by the conscientious objector," but the sovereignty of the people. Under ordinary circumstances the power of the people is exercised by the House of Commons. When this body, however, by subservience to the executive, ignorance, or any other reason, proves unable to exert this power, the ordinary citizen can put before his countrymen the facts of any case in which he considers the principle of popular sovereignty violated. General Maurice thought that, if the House of Commons was hoodwinked, the people, at any rate, should not be kept in the dark. By appealing to the people, and not to the Commons, he assured himself a wider hearing. The fact that he was a soldier does not make illegal his attempt to resist the subversion of constitutional principles.

The question, to my mind, amounts to this: If the House of Commons degenerates into a tool of the executive, the ordinary citizen, whether soldier or civilian, has the right, by virtue of whatever superior knowledge he may possess, to make his voice heard through other channels.

M. LIPTON.

* * *

Sir,—With reference to "A. E. R.'s" letter in your issue of May 16, if Parliament decrees that every man shall murder his mother, is it his legal duty to do so, and, if not, why not?

F. DIMOND.

Pastiche.

THE WATERS OF PARADISE.

In Paradise there is a sea
Blue as a turkis stone,
And many royal wonders be
Hid in his depths alone:
But seen of all the folk of neighbour land,
Whose quiet feet do pass the yellow strand.

And since that shore is void of man
No sail about it flies,
But hundred-hued leviathan
Like a prone rainbow lies
And looketh on the weaving waters wan
With stilly emerald eyes.

And though no sail move on the deep
Waveless as any mere,
A radiant folk who may not weep
Without a sail do steer,
And very pleasant ways and winding keep
Above the solemn clear.

Par miracle I once did go
And stood upon the shore:
A gemmy archipelago
The gemmy waters bore,
And all those sprites that are unchained of woe
Do dwell there evermore.

Like gentle summer leaves, that make
A little whispering,
These folk that dwellen in the lake
Full fairly say and sing;
Even as streams at night, that wake
With a sweet murmuring.

RUTH PITTER.

THE GREY WOLF.

(The mythology of the North looks forward to a day when the Grey Wolf shall come and destroy the gods of Valhalla.)

The gold-girt Lord of the ocean,
The flame-lit legions in ordered might
Thronged over the deep-rayed lucid motion
Of western seas: and the eyes of night
With heavy low-hung lights looked over the rim
Of the star-wrought veil of her: darkening, dim,
The sky saw passing the far-called hosts of the day.
And resting, a wraith, on the great winds' glimmer
Serene rode down on the eld white way,
With raiment of age and the long years' shimmer,
Pale, the moon, on the far white way.

The golden halls of the mountain,
The thunderous halls of the gods of the north,
Valhalla flamed in a living fountain
Of liquid light; and straight came forth
The peerless powers, came forth in a vast array.
The midnight music of centuries rang from their way.
And thoughts of old, and the old dim thoughts of the
place,
Gathered greyly to greet their reigning.
Pale was reflected in Odin's face
(And now the war in the west was waning),
Pale the moon in the great god's face.

The day was dead, and the dreary
West was wrapped in a shroud of fear.
Slowly came there a whisper weary
Through the gods that the end was near.
Odin watched with a wintry smile, and a word
That uttered eternal night in the desert places was
heard.
And Odin watched, and across the shivering sea
Came the sound of the Grey Wolf's going.
The night came down that was to be:
And Odin watched and waited, knowing
The Grey Wolf's coming that was to be.

M. E. BROWN.

PRESS CUTTINGS.

But is the scheme of Industrial Councils contained in the Whitley Report the only possible solution of the Industrial Problem after the war? Ought Co-operators to accept and give it their full approval and blessing? Quite another solution has been suggested by the body of thinkers who are called Guild Socialists. It is evident that they better understand the true cause of labour unrest. The Guild Socialists perceive that the causes of industrial discontent before the war were not merely economic, but spiritual; that the new Trade Unionist does not only demand higher wages and better conditions, but freedom to rule his own life and direct his own labour. A century of effort has taught the organised worker that he will never be a free man until he has secured full self-government in the workshop. Industrial emancipation will not be possible until democracy has been established in industry. In industry, as in the State, there must henceforth be equality of status for all.

Why is it that many working men and women are so slow to realise that wavery is but another name for slavery? The wage-system by which human labour is bought and sold as a commodity is an outrage on human dignity. What is it but that brutal "cash-nexus" against which Carlyle thundered in the greatest of all his pamphlets? If the Industrial Problem is to be solved now and for all time, there must be a complete reversal of existing industrial relationships. Instead of organised Capital employing organised Labour for wages, organised Labour must discover how to employ organised Capital by paying it its current market price. Industry must in future be organised on the basis of Co-operative Production and undertaken by associations of producers working co-operatively together as free men.

The Guild Socialists suggest that this desirable end can be achieved by the transformation of the existing Trade Unions into great National Guilds. They urge the amalgamation of competing Trade Union organisations in order that the Trade Unions may secure a monopoly of labour power, and the technical education of Trade Unionists as an essential preliminary to the control of industry by the organised producers. They argue that the interests of the general body of consumers will be protected because the National Guilds will be responsible to the State; but the human factor in industry will no longer be subordinate to the money factor; the dead coin will no longer rule the living hand.

All co-operators will agree that these are attractive proposals. They are, in the main, sound and satisfactory, albeit they appear to afford no real protection for consumers' interests. But who will assert that the workers, as a whole, are yet prepared to assume the direction and control of industry? The Trade Unions have not yet seriously considered the difficult problems of control and the vested interests of Trade Union officials form a barrier in the way of the amalgamation of existing Trade Unions.—T. W. MERCER in "The Plymouth Co-operator."

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