NOTES OF THE WEEK.

It has been found comparatively easy to pass a resolution to set up a League of Nations, but making a League of Nations work is another matter. Already a high degree of suspicion has been engendered between the great and the small nations represented at Versailles, and the "Nation" makes no scruple of condemning the five Great Powers as little better than a secret committee of dictators. The most open antagonism to the League, however, comes from France, whose apprehensions for the future are by no means set at rest by the prospect of the creation of an all-powerful League. England and America, some obviously intelligent Frenchmen told General Maurice of the "Daily News," are in no need of securities other than those they possess. Between Germany and England is the British Navy; and between Germany and America is the Atlantic Ocean. But between France and a Germany of double France's population is nothing of equivalent defence; and it is therefore with considerable scepticism that France regards the creation of a metaphysical League. How would England or America feel with no better defence than such a League? Would they be satisfied so? France, neither military guarantees nor a League will prove to us to be but one real security for France. It certainly is not the occupation of German territory, or the League controls and exercises a greater power than at present appears likely, the French view of its value is correct. We have, however, not yet seen the end of it; for Italy, it will be observed, has given notice that the League must control and exercise economic power. Italy demands that the League shall put itself in the position of being able at any time to apply economic pressure so effectively that no modern nation will be able to go to war in defiance of the League's orders. Even this, however, under certain circumstances cannot be held by France to be a complete defence against Germany; for what if Germany became self-supporting relatively to the Western world? Depending, let us say, upon Russia, would not Germany be able to flay her wings at a League that could merely forbid her the use of the seas? Against these fears there appears to us to be but one real security for France. It certainly is not the occupation of German territory, for that would form a perpetual invitation to German irredentism. It is, on the contrary, justice and co-operation with Germany and Germany sounds, of course, a mockery for the moment; but in the future it will be France's best defence. Neither military guarantees nor a League of Nations will prove to be so effective for peace as the removal of the causes of war.

Too little subtlety has been employed in commenting upon the resolution of the chief Allies to invite all parties in Russia to a common conference. The decision came, no doubt, as a surprise, and it has naturally annoyed the various Russian parties who were entertaining quite other ideas. The unanimity of the Allies, however, and their recent conferences with the Swedish ambassador fresh from Russia, may surely be supposed to imply that they are not acting without design; and credit may as well be given to them for the exercise of common-sense. What may be conceived to be the plan in their minds? It is nothing more or less, we should say, than that of dividing the Bolsheviks by casting a bone of contention into their midst. The Helsingfors Correspondent of the "Times" is probably reporting only a rumour when he informs us that the Bolsheviks are confessedly at the end of their resources and would willingly make a compromise with the other Russian parties and with the Allies; but there is, we believe, enough truth in the report to substantiate the information of the "Times."
opinions. Lenin, we are told, is of opinion that the Revolution is now sufficiently established to be able to co-operate safely even with the "bourgeois" parties; its individuality, in other words, is now no longer likely to be swamped by association with the other Russian parties. But to the other hand, the work of the Revolution should be undone by compromise; and he is all in favour, therefore, of continuing its work in independence not only of the rest of Russia, but of the rest of the world. We are not called upon to pronounce upon the merits of these two policies, but we simply draw attention to the fact of their co-existence and their mutual antagonism. Lenin and Trotsky appear to be divisible. If the Allies have as their object the revelation of this division; if, in short, they intend to split the hitherto united Bolshevist dictatorship into two opposing halves, their adoption of the Marmora plan of a Conference appears to us to be reasonable. In any event something is accomplished; for either, it is clear, Lenin will subordinate Trotsky or Trotsky will subordinate Lenin. The dual dictatorship will disappear. This interpretation may be commended to the simple souls who imagine that all the leaders of the Versailles Council are as simple as themselves. Whether Lenin or Trotsky, we may be sure, will read the invitation as a recognition of Bolshevism.

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The "harmonious co-operation of economic interests" desiderated by the Italian Government as a prime condition of a League of Nations means, in effect, the establishment of a vast international Capitalist Trust. Were the nations themselves the actual owners of the capital and resources nominally within their control, a League of Nations might indeed be a League of Nations; but since, as need scarcely be pointed out, the economic power of every nation is exercised not by the nation itself, but by the small Capitalist class of every nation, an economic League of Nations is of necessity merely an economic League of the Capitalist classes. The point need not be laboured. Fearful, we must suppose, of the possible consequences to Labour of the creation of such a League, the Labour leaders, including Mr. Henderson, Mr. George Lansbury, and Mr. Barnes, are now hastening to attempt to prepare a defence against the Leviathan they have drawn out of the deep; and the form of their defence is to be, if it appears, an international Charter of Labour, incorporated in the text of the League of Nations itself. A more inadequate defence it would be difficult to construct. We are not sure, indeed, that it is not an addition to the power of the Leviathan to be hitherto urged, for instance, against the raising of wages and the lowering of the hours of labour will in future be added the excuse that it is not right for one nation to be in advance of another. We must remember our western brethren, with whom it would be unjust to compete by the adoption of reforms in which they cannot share. The International Charter of Labour may prescribe only minimum conditions, it is true; and thus each nation will be left under the illusion that the maximum condition is no infringement of the agreement. But we know enough of the operation of minimum conditions to forecast that in this case also they will tend to become maximum. The most advanced nations will be required to keep step with the least advanced. An international objection will be raised to every scheme for the national betterment of Labour.

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The threat of a coal-strike still hangs over our heads; and the usual steps are being taken to meet it. In confirmation of what we have written in the preceding paragraph, the "Daily News" has already begun to employ the international situation as an excuse for declining to consider the men's demands at this moment. "First things first" is the title of its article; and in the course of the "Daily News" reasoning, the miners are urged to defer their claims until at least the League of Nations is thoroughly established. By a not uncommon coincidence of two great Liberal Capitalist minds, the "Nation" is of the same opinion as the "Daily News." Both, moreover, are in attitude from the "Timings" and the "Morning Post." The "Nation" is eloquent after the Asquithian fashion concerning the "risk" the miners are running that their demands may charge the industry with more than it can bear. Have the miners considered the probable consequences of their demands—the enhanced prices, the possibility of the closing-down of a number of mines, the peril to our foreign as well as to our domestic trade, and so on? Surely the remedy for the ills from which the workers suffer is not the raising of nominal wages, but [it was bound to come] "to produce more wealth," Increased production—there is the remedy. If the workers wish to be better off, they must produce more. The "Spectator," as might be guessed, casts a wider net to catch the same fish. We have had enough of the "rubbishy talk" about Capitalism. "The more capital there is in industry, the more money there is to pay wages." "The increase of capital is, therefore, the only road to better conditions of Labour all round." "Increase production; let us pull down our barns and build greater. That this might be required of us is a thought that naturally does not occur to a professing Christian.

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Before attempting to reply to the case presented by this journalistic League of "Nations," we may remark upon a passage from a "Times" leader on the same subject. "There has been an enormous destruction of wealth," we are told, "which has been masked for the moment by an artificial finance. This, however, can only continue indefinitely." If we are not mistaken, the "Times" all unconsciously has put its finger in this passage upon the radical factor in the present situation—the discrepancy between real wealth and nominal wealth or finance. It is, of course, undeniable that the destruction of real wealth during the last four or five years has been enormous. The nation is immeasurably poorer to-day than it was in the spring of 1914. Nevertheless, in a financial sense we are better off than ever before in our history. Our banks are laden with deposits, and thousands of our citizens are opulent with war-bonds. Consider now the paradox thus presented. Simultaneously with the destruction of wealth there has been a process of creating nominal wealth—with this final consequence that side by side with a real shortage of commodities there is a positive plethora of money, or what the "Spectator" calls capital. How has this state of things been brought about? To what or to whom is due this artificial finance which masks the active impoverishment of our real wealth? The reply is obviously this: that we have converted our real losses into financial credits. For every commodity destroyed we have allowed somebody or other to write down in his books a positive money value. In short, we have capitalised, not goods, but the destruction of goods; not gains, but losses. That this is a highly artificial finance is obvious; but the consequences, unfortunately, are real. For since, under our modern system, money is purchasing power, every penny of this artificial finance constitutes a claim on production, a claim, moreover, that the Courts would enforce. Here is then the position: with a reduced production of commodities, financial claims have been so multiplied that not only are prices raised, but all our future production is already mortgaged. It would take years of production to pay off the claims of the working classes, and manage to live without consuming a single commodity.

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The same problem is presented, it is clear, to each of the nations that has been engaged in the war. It is,
Thenation is divided at this moment more deeply than astonishingly naive, even for a Labour leader. The contrary, indeed, he tells us, that by the increased employment can be employed in both its process and its distribution. The immediate problem before us, however, is not only in the mining industry but in the other industries where there is "unrest." Caught in the toils of an artificial financial system which has long ceased to have any close relation with real industry, the miners and others are perhaps being driven to make demands which, in current accountancy, their industry cannot satisfy. But what are they to do? It is true that the prospect of the increased cost of coal is alarming to society; but the prospect of a lowered standard of living is just as alarming to the wage-earners; and it would seem, for the moment, as if these were the only alternatives before us. Either, in short, society must pay more or Labour must receive less. That both are equally innocent, in the sense of being ignorant, must be admitted; they are, indeed, at war with one another across a mysterious gulf of cunning and chicanery, of whose existence both parties are unaware. Neither party has anything to hope from the system that keeps them asunder; for if it is the case that Labour is robbed of its proper share in production, it is no less the case that society is robbed of the real satisfaction of its demands. Make a list of the commodities to be found in the shops supplied by modern capitalism for the consumption of the public. We are scarcely exaggerating when we say that the majority of the commodities on sale are unfit for dignified human use. Even, therefore, the very products of capitalist production are a mockery of real production, being as they are, fake, adulterated, pretentious and useless. The coming era of labour unrest will afford an opportunity for a reconstruction of industry on a basis of use instead of profit. The impossible demands of Labour are only a cry for help; and if they are not to be and cannot be satisfied in their present form, the obligation is on society to divest the underlying grievance and to remedy that. The alternative is Bolshevism, which, as we have said before, is the despair of Labour. Nothing, as the "New Statesman" remarks, can be more dangerous than for the workpeople to discover that the present governing classes are unable or unwilling to reconstruct industry for humanity. S O N N E T. To X. O love, how soon time's ravages defeat Our sweetest dreams of immortality; How swift from love's admired reality But to an image in the mind repetit. With borrowed charms, is beauty changed. To meet and to repel love, the tuneful light Must love devise a scheme To kill depreciation in a dream Of loneliness demanding time's retreat. But if th' impress of time shall make the mind More lovely as the body languished, The soul may even triumph over death, And are a fragment of the mind Of life unbounded by finess: And youth's fond dream the real reality. C. S. D.
Foreign Affairs.

By S. Verdad.

It was on January 18, 1918, that the Russian Constituent Assembly was suppressed by the Bolsheviks; and it was, it now appears, on January 19, 1919, that the German Bolsheviks, the Spartacus bund, were suppressed by—the German Constituent Assembly. The results of the General Election in Germany confirm all that has been said in these columns concerning the probable outcome of the Revolution. Contrary to the opinion of Heine who prophesied that the French Revolution would be a picnic in comparison with the German Revolution, the Revolution in Germany has been carried out—and will continue, I think, to be carried out—with comparative sanity and humanity. It is clear from the voting that, as a herd, the German people have moved to the Left Centre; but not only have they moved thither from the Right Centre which they formerly occupied; but it will be observed that they have also concentrated in the Centre from the two extremes. The votes cast for the Independent Socialists suspected of desiring a proletarian dictatorship are almost exactly equal to the number of votes cast for the old Conservatives who are more than suspected of desiring to restore the old Prussian régime. The Extremes have met, indeed, in a common total; the would-be class dictators of the proletariat are now buried in a common minority with the have-been dictators of the Junker class.

I am not on the abstract merits of the Bolshevist political theory as compared with the Parliamentary theory. If we were in a class-room examining constitutions, a very good case, I dare say, could be put up for Sovietism. Lenin is a pedant and argues well chalk in hand; and his contention that the Soviet system is more directly representative than Parliament cannot easily be disputed. Moreover, as we know to our cost, Parliamentarism is not at its best at this moment; and, perhaps, like “Punch,” never was; and when Lenin claims that the “people” is at liberty to substitute Sovietism for Parliamentarism every democrat must not only assent to the proposition, but wish that it could be made practicable. The real argument against Sovietism, however, is just the practical argument. Society being a political institution (as well as other things), its political forms must coincide more or less with the common desire; and if the common desire of the masses is for parliamentarism, however mistaken, it is useless to attempt to impose on them another system however theoretically superior. Sooner or later the dictatorial government that stands apart from the masses and cut off by violence either from without or by violence from within. A dictatorship is of necessity eccentri- that is out of the centre; and an unstable equilibrium is a necessary consequence for the society that is so ruled.

Among the men in Germany who have managed to keep their heads cool during the revolution has been Kautsky. I commend the example of Kautsky to the attention of that section of the English Socialist movement that loves to think itself the extreme Left, because nobody is silly enough to go beyond them. Kautsky, needless to say, is as good a Marxist as any of the variegated disciples of that confused master; and he certainly cannot be suspected of having changed his opinions since his opinions to-day are the opinions he held even before the war. His part in the Revolution, I gather, has been the somewhat necessary part of thinking for it. While others were doing their bit, rolling their tub, and generally making themselves hot, Kautsky has been behind the scenes directing the minds of the chief actors. And I am bold enough to say, after reading his articles, that a better man could scarcely be found for the rôle. I admire Kautsky unreservedly. To the extent that his influence has prevailed, he is entitled to be regarded as the saviour of his country. It is certainly not his fault if any blood has flowed; for, like us, he believed from the outset that only a bloodless revolution is a permanent and a real revolution. True revolutions, according to him, are born and not made. And had his advice been taken by the Spartacists, not only would the Spartacists have escaped useless slaughter, but they would have lived to fight another day—in another way.

Kautsky has addressed to the Spartacists a series of argumentative appeals, the character of which ought to be familiar to readers of The New Age. Nevertheless, coming from an authority, a German authority, a Ger- man Marxist authority; they may carry more weight than our home-made reasons. In the first place, he has clearly seized, and quite as clearly expressed, the essential difference between political and economic or industrial power. An economic revolution, he says, is much more important than a political revolution, but, at the same time, it is infinitely more difficult. And the reason he offers for this is, in my judgment, singularly happy. “The political system is a mechanism, whereas the social, or economic system, is an organ- ism.” This distinction is well worth making a note of. It is true, and excellent practical conclusions for revolutionists can be drawn from it. From the “mechanistic” nature of a political system, it follows that “power” is its chief motive-force; and “power” is thus rightly the objective revolutionary “capture.” On the other, it equally follows from the “organic” nature of industrial society that the capture of political power is not likely directly to affect it. The “power” of an organism cannot be captured like the power of a machine. It must “grow” into revolution.

Addressing himself more immediately to the Spar- tactists, Kautsky points out their mistakes. They have no notion of building anything, he says, but only of destroying something. It is a revolution against and not for something that they are attempting to engineer. Their plan appears to be to stoke the fires of destruction to such a heat that the pot will boil, and then to watch for the new society to issue from the fumes. What, however, that new society is, the Spartacists have kept secret—even from themselves. They literally have no notion of it than has the man in the street. Only get the pot hot, and something, they think, will certainly be cooked. Whether it may not be their own goose is not even a matter of speculation to them. This is pretty plain speaking; and I have translated it into plain English.

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Towards National Guilds in Italy.

By Odon Por.

II.

The application of co-operation to shipping has been tried successfully in Greece where already several co-operative societies manage their own merchant service. But these Greek societies are neither industrial union in origin nor are they national in aim; their purpose is profit and not the social transformation of industry; and, in effect, little or no social importance. They are vastly different from the experiment made by the Italian Seamen, and described in a previous article; for the latter is not isolated from the rest of the industry, but remains an integral part of it. Its success would, therefore, be not an isolated success attributable to special conditions, but a real success of the utmost social importance.

In the "Garibaldi," we have an enterprise directly initiated by a great industrial union; an enterprise, so to say, parented by the general Federation and never dissociated from it. True, it acts for the time being as a separate corporation of the Federation; but, in the end, the two will merge again into one when the whole of the shipping industry is under their joint control, for the Federation and the "Co-operative" will then be co-extensive and synonymous. Moreover, in the case of the Italian Seamen, the success implies the spread of its methods; for unless the rest of the industries follow its example and become "national guilds," the Seamen must tend to become merely a kind of close corporation. Its higher ideals, implying collective action, will of necessity be frustrated. This, however, is not little or no social importance.

The "national guild," even in germ, tends to propagate its own kind. Operating, as it does, in a "key" industry, it is bound to establish relations with practically every other industry and to affect them in its own direction. It is not likely to remain any more isolated from industry in general than from its own industrial Federation in particular; and by these associations, Labour, in general, is directed towards a national aim.

Already, indeed, the movement amongst the employees of the Italian State is all in the direction of self-management away from bureaucracy. Practically all the Italian railwaymen, for instance, are members of a single industrial union which is recognised by the State, and has representative workers on the consultative State Board of Management. And they are now demanding an active share in the legislative and administrative functions of the supreme Executive. War-conditions, moreover, have been favourable to this development; for they have naturally tended to a more unified and practical control than was possible during peace. The Railwaymen's Union is now insisting that the same control shall be continued and extended. At a recent meeting of the Union, one of the speakers to a resolution demanding the "reform of the railway administration and the participation of the workers in the economics effected by better management," called upon the members to abandon the habit of "always asking for everything from the State." Such demands, he said, merely increased State-expenditure, which, in its turn, merely resulted in increased taxation and the consequent perpetuation of general poverty. The proper reforms, he said, were in the direction of more efficient and economic management, and this was only possible by means of the responsible co-operation of the railwaymen themselves. The raising of their status from that of employees to that of partners was a condition of real reform.

As a result of such opinions, the Conference passed a Resolution which affirmed, among other things, that the railway industry required a decentralisation of control, that its staff should be appointed industrially (that is, for technical competence), and that all reforms should include the direct co-operation of the railwaymen in their administration. Such claims are the privilege of an enterprise conscious of its own ability. No union feeling itself to be weak or incompetent is likely to demand responsibility, since it is afraid of killing the goose that lays golden (or, at any rate, silver) eggs. It is, therefore, a tribute to the ability of the Italian Railwaymen that they have not hesitated to demand a share in responsible management—and not alone for their own sake, but equally for the sake of the national efficiency of their industry itself.

In this connection it is interesting to observe that one important railway line—the Reggio-Emilia—has been entirely built and is now being successfully run and managed by a co-operative society of workmen. The construction of this line was decided upon by the provincial administration of Reggio-Emilia; and it was reckoned to cost, on account of the engineering difficulties, several million lire. Political influence was naturally in favour of giving out the work to private contractors; but it so happened that Labour was extremely well organised in this province, with the consequence that Labour intervened. Some fifty or so local co-operative societies, all of them already experienced in collective contracts, formed a syndicate for single Co-operative Societies, as prescribed by the law, and thereupon proposed to the provincial authorities to take over not only the construction but the subsequent management of the railway. As the offer was in all respects a better offer than that made by the private contractors, the authorities had no choice but to accept it. The work was efficiently carried out, the line was constructed, and for nearly ten years the railway has been under the management of the workers to the satisfaction of the public. With this example before them, the Italian railwaymen have a powerful stimulus in the direction of assuming responsibility for the whole of the national railway system.

A Bill shortly to come before Parliament establishes the right of the postal-workers to be directly represented on the Postal Executive. Needless to add, the workers are demanding also that a share in control throughout the whole service shall be included as a condition.

The employees in the national factories set up during the war have not been content to be consulted in the transformation of these industries from war to peace, but they have demanded, first, that such factories shall not be transferred to private ownership, and, second, that they shall be transferred to co-operative unions formed of their former employees.

These tendencies signify plainly that nationalisation, in the old sense of the word, is no longer satisfying to Labour. Nationalisation is seen to be compatible if not identical with State-capitalism, for it involves no more than the centralisation of control in the State-officials who are themselves usually only the nominees and servants of private capital. Labour in Italy aspires to something better than a mere change of name of the old regime. They desire to eliminate not only the private capitalist trust, but also the State capitalist trust. Their aim is to transform the function of industry from that of making profit to that of performing public service; and thus to substitute for the capitalist trust what may be called "a public trust. In short, the aim is the aim of National Guilds.

The same desire for real emancipation by means of responsible self-management—the same guild spirit, in fact—is seen at work in other Labour organisations in Italy. It is true that few of them are yet operating in the field of public or national service; and they are thus for the present merely embryonic forms of the guild proper. Not only, however, are they valuable
schools of training for future guildsmen, but they will in due course be ready to take their place in a complete Guild system.

Foremost among these is the Federated Co-operative Glass-works, with its four great modern factories, its thousands of members, and with an output of half the total output of bottles and demi-johns in the whole of Italy. This society, as everybody knows, grew directly out of the Union of Bottle-blowers during one of the stormiest periods of its history. Its progress during the war has been remarkable; it has accepted and discharged many Government contracts, and is now in a fair way to assuming control over the whole bottle-making industry of Italy. The Co-operative Guild system is best exhibited, and guild principles are best exhibited, and schools of training for future guildsmen, in whole districts where the agricultural population consisted almost entirely of labourers, the latter set themselves, after the usual fashion, to form unions for their own defence. In course of time they succeeded in making their unions blk-ckleg-proof, with the consequence, however, that as they still continued to be employees merely, their monopoly of labour was insufficient to guarantee them against periods of unemployment. Discovering this fact, they then formed co-operative unions among themselves chiefly for the purpose of collective purchase and collective assistance during times of stress. Later, however, they began to organise co-operative societies of producers, with the intention of controlling not only their own labour, but their industry as well.

These co-operative societies have specialised in various classes of skilled manual labour, such as road and canal-making, bridge and railway-construction, building and harbour-works, and the reclamation of waste lands. They are prepared to carry out such work collectively for anybody who demands it, whether private contractors, provincial or State authorities.

They have not stopped at this. After experience of enterprises of this kind, the various local co-operative societies united in provincial and national Co-operative Federations which are to-day exceedingly powerful organisations with a very high degree of technical competence and equipment. Unlike the private contractors, they do not speculate in contracts for the chance profit. They work on fixed rates at fixed prices; and are so efficient and trustworthy that in many cases public administration turns over to them the most important undertakings, stretching over years of labour, and running into millions of lire in cost.

No complete record of their activity exists, unfortunately; but many official reports could be quoted in testimony to their capacity and honesty. The fact that the National Credit Institution for Co-operative Societies has lent them during the last three years no less than 150 million lire, is, however, a tribute both to their status and to the scale upon which they work.

The Italian Co-operative Societies have demonstrated their super-capitalism over private capitalism during the war in particular. Profiteering is unknown amongst them, as, alas, it has not been unknown in the latter bodies! In the war-zone itself the Co-operative Societies of Bakers and Grocers have greatly assisted the military authorities, both directly in supply and indirectly in keeping down prices. And the same can be said of the Co-operative Societies of Workmen in connection with military engineering and the like.

It is only just, having established their right, that they should now claim a share in the work of reconstruction; and there is no doubt that the authorities will be glad to accede to it. Many municipalities and provinces are already arranging for their work to be done by the Co-operative Societies. The City of Milan (under a Socialist administration) has set aside 200 million lire for public works, the chief of which is the construction of a canal linking up Milan with the Adriatic. And it has been announced by the Mayor that “as a rule, and whenever possible, the work shall be carried out by the Co-operative Unions.”

Italian labourers, being specialists in the construction of roads, bridges, railways and similar works, have found employment in all parts of the world. They have hitherto, however, been subject to exploitation either by foreign or by Italian contractors. It is now control; and a Society has been formed—the “Società proposed that in future they shall be under their own Umanitaria,” of Milan—with financial backing, whose purpose it is to assist Co-operative Unions of workmen to undertake contracts in France, Belgium and elsewhere.

“**A. E. R.**” and Catholicism.

By Leo Ward.

So far from letting the Catholic Church “die of its delusional insanity” **‘A. E. R.**” has devoted three of his most brilliant articles to its demolition. In the guise of a sexton he has come forth as an assassin.

Like a true assassin he makes sure that his enemy is disarmed before he strikes his blows. He explains, for instance, that I have no more right to speak on Catholicism than Tyrrell; this apparently on the ground that Tyrrell was condemned for teaching anti-Catholic doctrine in the name of the Church. But I have not been so condemned, nor is there the remotest likelihood of my being so. That is the difference. I am strictly orthodox though insignificant.

But he further accuses all Catholics of intellectual dishonesty. Catholicism he explains is one thing in propaganda, another in history and present fact. Catholic propaganda “divorces Catholicism from the Catholic Church, exposes its argument to suit its audience, and having satisfied its audience of the agreement between Catholicism and whatever may be the ideals of its audience, it substitutes the Catholic Church for Catholicism.”

This method of poisoning the wells might be painful to me were I not demolished in such excellent company, as we shall see. **‘A. E. R.**” divides mankind into those who love and those who pursue knowledge. Religion is assigned to the former category; **‘A. E. R.**” belongs to the latter. I should like to hear **‘A. E. R.**” definition of “knowledge.” As a mere child of love I dare not compete with him in scholarship. Yet even **‘A. E. R.**” is not infallible, as he would be the first to admit; and I am tempted to suggest that even he has made mistakes.

He assures me, for instance, that excellent Roman Catholics such as Linaeae, Mendel, Pasteur, Galvani, Vesalius, Lapparent, and many other famous scientists never discovered anything worth knowing.

Again, he would exclude from the category of honest thinkers Athanasius, Augustine, Aquinas, Descartes, Pascal, Bonnald, Brunetiere, Cardinal Newman, Cardinal Mercier and many more; for the Church of Rome is the communion of all those who do not know or will not accept the truth.

Nay more; “the Church is no place for an honest man,” and in this phrase he charges all those known to history as the Saints with actual dishonesty. I wish some of them were alive to answer him!

But **‘A. E. R.**” the child of knowledge, has arrived at certain interesting conclusions such as that historically Catholicism is not Christianity and that the Papacy is a tyranny.
Yet even here I cannot accept "A. E. R." as an authority, though he is obviously a champion of Modern Thought. In a matter of history, for instance, he assures me that the Papacy has claimed temporal power "since ad 800." If "A. E. R." would pursue his Elementary Manual of European History (what a pity this subject is not taught in our schools!) he will learn that Charlemagne confirmed the temporal power in the year 800. The whole of mediæval history centres round this event. He will also learn that the Pope finally lost the temporal power in 1870. No. "A. E. R." has no more right than I have to talk about history—rather less.

But "A. E. R." is modest. He appeals to Authorities. He explains his own manner of argument. I do not intend at this moment to resume the history of the Catholic Church; I need only remind the readers of this journal that it is an article of religion in this country that the "Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in the Realm of England." The Thirty-nine Articles are an interesting compilation, but I may ask incidentally what connection they have with Catholicism or Modern Thought? On the same authority he doubtless holds that "good works done without the grace of Christ have the nature of sin." This quotation would be equally convincing.

But "A. E. R." has authority even higher, perhaps, than the Thirty-nine Articles. He appeals to the opinion of the Civilised World voiced by Dean Inge. Dean Inge may certainly claim to be civilised; for his violent anti-Catholicism has often been commented upon. This is a sure entrée to the pale of civilisation. But I cannot, or at least, regard him as a mouth-piece of the civilised world, upon the tyrannous played-outness of the Papacy.

"A. E. R."'s only other authority is M. Loisy. His knowledge of M. Loisy, as of Catholicism, is largely derived from a little Modernist manual, by Miss Maud Petre. He describes him as "a Catholic, or rather a Modernist." May I remind him that the later development of Loisy's mind led him to a frank repudiation of Christianity, and to the adoption of what Miss Petre calls a "big" or "large-hearted" religion—I forget which. Anyhow, is M. Loisy quite an impartial witness?

But apart from his authorities and his own knowledge of history, "A. E. R." employs his Reason. What are his own arguments against the Catholic Church?

First of all, he complains that no Catholic paper would have printed such an article as his. In this, perhaps, he is right. But he further implies that Catholic journals do not print non-Catholic points of view. May I refer him to back numbers of the "Tablet," where he will find not only non-Catholic but anti-Catholic letters in abundance; or to the controversy on Catholic Christianity between Mr. Bernard Shaw and the late Roman Catholic editor of the "New Witness" in the pages of that journal; or to the numerous articles by non-Catholics in the Dublin Review on "A. E. R."'s editorialism?

"But," says he, "the Pope told the Bishops to suppress Modernist articles." Precisely—because Modernism was an anti-Catholic philosophy masquerading as Catholicism. Would the editor of The New Age print Fabian propaganda in its pages under the title of Guild Socialism? Incidentally, "A. E. R." accuses The New Age of being a journal of Modern Thought. What does Mr. Penty think of this, or Señor de Maeztu? But, obviously, it is the organ of the Guild idea, and if "A. E. R." will refer to his Elementary Manual, etc., he will learn that there were guilds even before the Reformation.

As a matter of fact, the ablest writers in The New Age are "post-modern" (if I may be allowed the paradox), for, like all the ablest minds of to-day, they are thoroughly disgusted with Modern Thought.

In a former article I urged that so far from being "the enemy of the human race," the Catholic Church had maintained a true philosophy in face of a world which was adopting false and suicidal philosophies. I described—though I thought it too notorious to need description—how the philosophy of Determinism produced the French pessimism and decadence of the end of the last century, and I urged that through an equally false interpretation of modern science, a philosophy of the future and of the Superman has risen in Germany with almost equal fatal results. "A. E. R." in his final article, has not troubled to understand my argument, far less to answer it. He merely caricatures it. He assumes that science and Modern Thought are the same thing, and then declares that Catholicism is opposed to science, because it is opposed to Modern Thought.

But let us return to the subject of Catholicism, and note his method of treating it. "A. E. R." knows his gallery from within, and does not scruple to appeal to it. "Papacy," he says, "like the Kaiserism it somewhat resembles, is the curse of the world." I might equally retort, "Presbyterianism, like the Bolshevism it so much resembles, is the curse of the world"—or, rather, of Scotland. Has it never occurred to "A. E. R." that the difference between the Kaiserdom and the Papacy is that, in point of fact, the former used force, whilst the latter resorted to free consent? How does the Pope coerce, e.g., the sixteen millions of American Catholics? Such methods depend entirely upon your gallery. They are not "cricket."

Again, he drags in the old story about the Pope having exempted German priests "teaching in the faculty of theology" from taking the anti-Modernist oath. Personally, I can see no reason why any loyal Catholic should find any difficulty in taking this oath. But if he will refer to the original Latin text in the "Acta Apostolicae Sedis" (Vol. III, p. 19), he will find that the exemption in question refers only to those teaching in State schools to whom the enforcement of the oath might involve molestation from the State authorities.

Moreover, the Pope calls upon all these to take it voluntarily, and declares that if they do not do so they will show themselves "miserably subservient to the judgments of men." Do "A. E. R."'s implications give a true impression of the facts?

But I can find little pleasure in criticising "A. E. R." as a controversialist. In his own forcible words, "There is no need to flog a dead horse." I shall endeavour, therefore, to speak less of him and more about the subjects which he raises.

He alludes, for instance, to some of the legal documents of the Catholic Church. He makes jokes about the doctrine of Infallibility and derives much sport from his study of the encyclical "Pascendi" (via Miss Petre's little book).

But legal documents are ever the sport of the gallery; and just as I should require some elementary knowledge of the British Constitution and its recent history before understanding the meaning of some of its laws, so it is necessary for the reader to have some knowledge of the constitution of the Catholic Church and its relation to modern history before writing about its legal documents. I shall venture, therefore, to make some general observations on this subject.

The Catholic Church exists as the providential witness of a unique Divine Revelation. The Revelation of the Incarnate Word of God Himself, of the Divine wisdom wherein alone will be found the ultimate reconciliation of all truth, justice and holiness. Hence, Catholicism has three necessary elements, the Doctrinal, the Devotional, and the Legal. The Doctrinal relates to the eternal truths of the Church's tradition; the Devotional to the spiritual life of man in relation to those truths; and the legal to the codification of laws necessary to the corporate life of the body of believers. These three elements do not always appear equally
prominent. In an age of faith, for instance, when the Church is comparatively at peace with the World, the doctrinal and devotional element will appear to dominate. In an age of popular scepticism or of false ideals of life, the legal elements will be emphasised. It is the difference between a state of peace and a state of war. There are times when it is necessary for the legal element to dominate all other elements. A state of war demands the very opposite of a conciliatory spirit; it demands absolute discipline and a fearless opposition to the enemy; it demands many extra laws and disciplinary measures which would not be necessary in time of peace.

In a state of war, for instance, a book might have been published in England, advocating a German alliance and Prussian ideals of civilisation. If such a book appeared in war-time it would either be suppressed or placed on a catalogue of pro-German books entitled "Through Enemy Eyes" or some such title. Now, to some extent, the Church is always at war with the world. The world hates and suspects her, and many "think they do Christ service" by persecuting her. But the state of war has never been more acute than in the last three centuries. From the Renaissance onwards the Church has been opposed by a time-spirit diametrically opposed to her own ideals. The Renaissance attacked the foundation of Catholicism by substituting Humanism, or the worship of man for Theism or the worship of God. The new learning certainly created a sceptical atmosphere, since, as Newman said, "Knowledge is often error for those who are unprepared for it, from the refraction with which it enters into their conception." In this sceptical atmosphere the whole moral issue of life was relegated to a back seat, and man's knowledge and power alone were worshipped.

As Señor de Maestu has pointed out, this doctrine of the supremacy of man (instead of the supremacy of God and His law) gradually led to two antagonistic social creeds, the worship of the State, and the worship of Liberty and human personality. They are perhaps seen in their logical completeness in the late German Empire and in Russia at the present time, though each of them has passed through many phases on their way. When the Renaissance undermined the authority of the Church it subverted the authority of the State over all departments of life in Protestantism, Gallicanism and Erastianism. The official Church condemned all these and in later times has condemned the systems of Liberalism which have been a reaction from them.

During these centuries, then, the Church has been in a state of war, and indeed sometimes (and indeed sometimes invaded) by a time-spirit opposed to Christianity and indeed to any definite Theism. Consequently her legal documents have been many and her measures of discipline have often been strict. Take the Index Expurgatorius for instance. It is a list of famous books which do not express the Church's doctrines (though I can assure "A. E. R." that if he becomes a Catholic no one will object to his reading them). This list includes, I believe, a considerable number of Sir Walter Scott's novels and some of Tennyson's poems. Like many of the Church's legal documents it is mediaeval in origin and probably, therefore, violent in language. Legal documents are never sympathetic in language. Seldom do "Popes speak of "errors".; they are usually "damnable errors" and "pernicious errors." But in any case Papal documents should be treated as legal documents which are intended for legal experts. They include, for instance, Condemnations of proposition which are to be understood only in the particular sense and context in which the particular proposition was held. Of these the "congregations" (or government offices) occasionally publish indexes or syllabuses in which the indexed proposition would convey an entirely different impression to the ordinary reader from that which the Papal document to which it refers actually condemns.

But let us take an instance of the loose use of legal documents. "A. E. R." implies in his article on "Catholicism" that Catholics are forbidden to hold that the laity are any factor in the progress of the Church. I am not in any way blaming him in this matter. I am merely suggesting that he has unwittingly conveyed a somewhat false impression. He neglected Miss Petre's translation and does not refer to the context. Miss Petre's translation of these passages is, I find, that which appeared in the " Tablet " at the time of the encyclical's publication. But, read with its context, it conveys a distinctly different meaning. After mentioning the matter of fact the official translation issued from the Vatican condemns the proposition that the laity are "the factor of progress" in the Church. But even so it seems to me that the Latin "elementum" should be translated "source" rather than "factor."

But, however that may be, the meaning is clear from the rest of the paragraph, describing the particular Modernist theory, which, treating the Church's doctrines subjectively, divided the Church into two elements; maintaining that "tradition is represented by religious authority" whilst the "progressive force...lies in the individual consciences—especially in such as are in more intimate contact with life."

As the Church regards her doctrines as objectively true, though inadequately expressed, the Pope regarded this whole theory as an error.

In England, of course, it is easy to laugh at Papal definitions and encyclicals without understanding either the meaning or the degree of authority which belongs to each. In a similar spirit, as Newman pointed out, a Russian demagogue might denounce "John Bullism" for its immoral doctrines such as that "the King can do no wrong," that he is incapable even of "thinking wrong"; that he "can never do an improper thing"; that "in him is no temptation to do evil." Such weakness to a Russian crowd might be very effective and might even produce a pogrom against the unfortunate British citizens of Moscow. But they would not be fair play. Similarly, Papal pronouncements might be quoted which would appear utterly immoral or absurd if viewed apart from their intended meaning and bearing. Nothing is easier than to attack the Catholic Church in this country. Indeed, I think I could make a far better case against her than "A. E. R." has made, though I know that she is divine and will outlast us both.

Unfortunately, my space is limited, and I am shortly leaving this country. Otherwise I should like to treat of the nature and significance of the Catholic religion in a series of articles. Perhaps the Editor of The New Age will allow me to do so at a later date.

There is much also to be said about the Modernist controversy which I cannot think is fairly described in the little manual from which "A. E. R." has derived most of his knowledge. Many outside the Catholic Church, as a recent critic observed, are opponents of Modernism, not through any animus against the Catholic religion "as if the said cities thought Roman Catholicism unworthy to hold the loyalty of honest thinkers. Their real quarrel with Modernism is that its philosophy is, in their view, unsound, and that, in any case, it involves a complete repudiation of the intellectual foundations and the historical evolution of Catholicism. It cuts a great historical religion entirely loose from its past." (The "Times" Lit. Sup., Jan. 2, 1919.)

But the subject of Modernism is only one aspect of the subject of the relation between the Catholic Church and contemporary movements of thought. As Cardinal Newman observed long ago, the Church has always condemned any system of religious ideas which arose as a system in rivalry to itself, but she has never failed to absorb the true elements in that system when they have been separated from its fundamental heresies. In the case of the mediaeval scholastics, as of the
There are moments when the Church has to assume an attitude of sheer defiance to the mixed movement of contemporary thought with its unverified truths, hasty conclusions and unverifiable errors. Her first duty is to maintain the Faith inviolate.

Newman describes an extreme case of this situation in a well-known page of his "Apologia": "There is a time for everything, and many a man desires the reformation of an abuse, or the fuller development of a doctrine, or the adoption of a particular policy, but forgets to ask himself whether the right time for it has come; and, knowing that there is no one who will be doing anything towards its accomplishment in his own lifetime unless he does it himself, he will not listen to the voice of authority, and he spoils a good work in his own century, in order that another man, as yet unborn, may not have the opportunity of bringing it happily to perfection in the next. He may seem to the world to be nothing else than a bold champion for the truth and a martyr to free opinion, when it is just one of those persons whom the competent authority ought to silence, and though the case may not fall within that subject-theologians which that authority is infallible in, or the formal conditions of the exercise of that gift may be wanting, it is clearly the duty of authority to act vigorously in the case. Yet its acts will go down to posterity as an instance of a tyrannical interference with private judgment, and of the silencing of a reformer, and of a base love of corruption and error, and it will show still less to advantage if the ruling power happens in its proceedings to evince any defect of prudence or consideration. And all those who take the part of that authority will be incessantly supported by a violent ultra party which exalts opinions into dogma, and has it principally with private judgment, and of the silencing of a reformer, and of a base love of corruption and error, and it will show still less to advantage if the ruling power happens in its proceedings to evince any defect of prudence or consideration.

The second difficulty is, of course, an insufficient number of rehearsals to enable the actors to develop a performance that is homogeneous in spirit and style. With all their revivals, one is tantalised by the appearance of one or two of the actors who are in the picture because they have, at least, a definite conception of the part they are playing; and for the rest, is annoyed by a medley of styles that agree only in this particular, that they betray the inability of the modern actor to render literary prose as dramatic dialogue. A sentence does not lose its dramatic quality and appropriateness by being perfectly constructed; it only requires a more urbane, polished delivery to secure its proper effect, and much less playing for 'point' than is customary. There were several actors (I use the word to include both sexes) in the revival by the Stage Society of Vanbrugh's "The Provok'd Wife" who betrayed the modern hatred of style by gabbling the preliminary demonstrative which alone made the "point" intelligible; they were always trying to "cut the cackle" instead of making it the vehicle of character, or, at least, of style. It ought to be drummed into them that these people were primarily people of leisure, whose chief contribution to the art of killing time was elaboration of externals. "Time was made into them" instead of making it the vehicle of character, or, at least, of style. It ought to be drummed into them that these people were primarily people of leisure, whose chief contribution to the art of killing time was elaboration of externals. "Time was made easy by compounding the company's intercourse; he urged his argument, instead of him-
Readers and Writers.

I do not know how many of my readers examine this column through a library; but my otherwise anonymous correspondent, "W. S.," has usually many more interesting things to say in connection than I have in test. That, of course, is as it should be. At least, I will flatter myself that it is as it should be. A writer who can, with a minimum of means, stimulate his readers to a maximum of reflection is an economist of the first water. Behold him in me, and the evidence in the following letter:

In one of my books I have copied the following from "E. B. B." to "R. E." (July 4, 1845). Mrs. Browning evidently had an unsexed judgment, a quality Thomas Hardy admires in women.

"If you promised never to tell Mrs. Jameson nor Mrs. Martineau I would confide to you perhaps my secret profession of faith—which is—which is . . . that let us say and do what we please and can there is a natural inferiority of mind in women—of the intellect . . . not by any means of the moral nature—and that the history of art and of genius testifies to this fact openly."

To turn to the question of style, it is all summed up in the old observation, "The style is the man." I once wrote in the margin of George Brinley's essay on Coventry Patmore, opposite a certain paragraph, "This is asking Coventry Patmore not to be Coventry Patmore." We have attractions and repulsions when we come into contact with classic writers—to say nothing of the second-rate—just as we have when meeting people in the world of men. Where a personality fascinates and delights us as we approach it in literature, I think it goes without saying that the style has our approval, but where we are angered, troubled violently in our prejudiced or bored (owing possibly to our own petty mood), we incline to dislike the style in which the annoying ideas are presented.

I have room for De Quincey and Swift both, and would part with neither. Do not think I give the latter lower than first rank. Were there nothing but the Letter of heroic nations) that demand "fine writing" and it were sufficient to show his genius unmistakably. Listen.

". . . all disagriers of the Press in prose and verse, condemned to eat nothing but their own cotton, and quench their thirst with their own ink."

"Do these miserable animals presume to think that I am so far degenerated as to defend my veracity?"

I suppose Swift glanced obliquely at De Quincey in the following observations on the culture of the Brobdingnagians.

"The learning of this people is very defective, consisting only in morality, history, poetry, and mathematics, wherein they must be allowed to excel. But the last of these is wholly applied to what may be useful in life, to the improvement of agriculture, and all mechanical arts; so that among us it would be little esteemed. And as to ideas, entities, abstractions, and transcendentials, I could never drive the least conception into their heads."

Coleridge is hit with the same stone.

I don't care how you derive De Quincey's style; it justifies itself, expresses his personality fully, and so, for me, delightfully.

You dislike fine writing. So do I, for this age. Fine writing was inevitable in the days of Elizabeth and of the first James. Wherever you place Shakespeare among stylists, it is evident he enjoyed writing magnificent-sounding words. What being ever addressed his men sonorously as Henry V before Harfleur? But that is not the case. For writing you need an age in which the imagination is well exercised, adventure and romance rightly understood, and life is more than meat or machine-minding. Where are the statesmen, the writers, the ideals (even of heroic nations) that demand "fine writing" and "fine" oratory as their due? So much prostitution of religion, of words like patriotism, motherhood, liberty, as we have it in our Press, compels all who would think sincerely and rightly to avoid any but the plainest style—the style The New Age so successfully aims at. Let us go back
to fine writing when it is the instructive outburst of a nation freed from the bonds of sensuality and of commercial exploitation. (2)

May I quote from Henry James's criticism of Baudelaire a few paragraphs that make it hard not to infer what would have been his attitude to a "Yellow Book"?

"To deny the relevancy of subject-matter and the importance of the moral quality of a work of art strikes us, in two words, very childish."

The crudity of sentiment of the advocate of "art for art" is often a striking example of the fact that a great deal of what is called culture may fail to dissipate a well-seated provincialism of spirit. They talk of morality as Miss Edgeworth's infantine heroes and heroines talk of "physic"—they allude to its being put into and kept out of a work of art, put here and kept out of one's appreciation of the same, as if it were a coloured fluid kept in a big labelled bottle in some mysterious intellectual closet. It is in reality simply a part of the essential richness of inspiration—it has nothing to do with the artistic process, and it has everything to do with the artistic effect. The more a work of art feels it at its source, the richer it is; the less it feels it, the poorer it is. People of a large taste prefer rich works to poor ones, and they are not inclined to assent to the assumption that the process is the whole work.

What the poet wished, doubtless, was to seem to be always in the poetic attitude; what the reader sees is a gentleman in a painful-looking posture, staring very hard at a mass of things from which, more intelligently, we avert our heads.

I see that in July 9, 1894, in reference to Aubrey Beardsley, you ask who else was of importance on the "Yellow Book," and allow him to be something of a genius. This is rather grudging praise. To me there is no smallest doubt of his absolute genius. No one else has ever expressed in line the subtle but essentially repulsive and diabolic decadence implied by certain moral and aesthetic ideas of the late nineteenth century. His word rather than anything else gives his presentation of fastidious sensuality of body and pride of intellect nothing of the corruption it portrays. He may have been of it, but he sees it (though, perhaps, not in all his works) in true perspective; he passed beyond it, and his drawings condemn while they immortalise. Would not any hopeless sensualist with power of introspection shudder at his own image mirrored in "Tannhauser's Return to the Venusberg"? I have an unbounded admiration for Beardsley's work within his own sphere; it is never sentimental, and, willingly or not, never calls evil good; and it is not hard to understand why Catholic critics should have been repelled by this. Arthur Symons in his most interesting but not altogether satisfying criticism of Beardsley's work has insight in the following observations.

"In monologues or the scene sacrifice to the rebellious angels," says St. Augustine, and Beardsley's sacrifice, together with that of all great decadent art, the art of Rops or the art of Beaudelaire, is really a sacrifice to the eternal beauty, and only seemingly to the powers of evil.

Compare the decadence of Rossetti with that (so called) of Beardsley. The first is obviously the最多 of the sensuousness he pictures, the second, a satirist too subtle for any but the inward eye to behold. But here I part company with Arthur Symons. The doctrine that "art is a dangerous game" and that danger is the essence of art is criticized by myself. "For evil itself, carried to the point of a perverse ecstasy, becomes a kind of good, by means of that energy which, otherwise directed, is virtue; and which can never, no matter how it may be changed, fail to retain something of its original efficacy. The devil is nearer to God, by the whole height upon which he fell, than the average man who has not recognised his own need to rejoice and to repent. And to a profound spiritual corruption, instead of being a more 'immoral' thing than the gross and pestiferous humanity of Hogarth or Rowlandson, is more nearly, in the fine and abstract sense, more closely allied to the triumph of the spirit over the flesh, to no matter what end." (3)

Personally I should get more pleasure out of Hogarth's most brutal picture than from Max Beerbohm's merciless cartoon of Oscar Wilde in his later years; and W. S. S. At two or three points in "W. S. S." letter I have inserted a number; and on the sentiment preceding each a note of my own may now be added. (1) The passage from Mrs. Browning's letter is a little out of date in one respect—in its assumption that mind and intellect are co-extensive. It will be observed that Mrs. Browning identifies "a natural inferiority of mind" with the exigent, "of intellectually, or in other words, the permanent, the latter, in fact, as an index of "mind," if not as practically the mind itself. We have travelled very far in psychology, as well as in commonsense, since 1835; and it would be an impudent person (I do not say "bold," since boldness contains something admirable) who would to-day accept Mrs. Browning's definition as criterion of mind, or, still more, as co-extensive with it. Intellect, it need not be denied, is an estimable mental talent; but it is one of the talents only. Wrapped up in a napkin and buried, as it usually is, it is very unprofitable. The whole mind is much more than intellect alone; and Mrs. Browning, if she were alive to-day, would not, I think, give men the palm so readily as she did in 1835. A new mental synthesis is needed; and the over-valuation of the intellect is not the best way towards it. Intuition, insight, sympathetic imagination, taste, common-sense—any one of these is more to be desired for the present than a further development of what our American friends call the rubber-neck intellect. (2) I am sorry "W. S. S." doesn't care how I derive De Quincey's style, but not because of the unintentional indifference to my genealogical studies, but for the reason immediately given that De Quincey's style justifies itself, because it expresses his personality fully. That, to my mind, is not a sufficient justification; or, rather, let me say, would "justify" De Quincey's style only if it were perfectly true. But, in fact, De Quincey's style does not express his personality fully; it expresses his personality only in part, the rest of his style being the expression of his idiosyncracies. That, if I remember, was just my point—it frequently is. Pure style, in fact, is not only the pure expression of personality; but the mixed style of De Quincey, derived as I traced it, is anything but its own justification. If De Quincey were correcting his work to-day I imagine he would put his pen through many a fine passage—and not at all because the present age is unsuited to fine writing, but because no ripe age ever is. The riper the age, in fact, whether of the individual or of the nation, the simpler the style is. De Quincey, in spite of the complexity? And will the whole world one day be resumed in the simplicity of Eden? De Quincey, I repeat, did not fully express his personality. He had a box of tricks, a few of which he was not too old occasionnally to substitute for art. I am afraid, indeed, he sometimes thought they really were art.

(1) "Unbounded" admiration is precisely what I cannot feel for Aubrey Beardsley's work, even "within its own sphere." I ought to say, perhaps, "because of its sphere." The pure aesthetic is, of course, a matter for contemplation merely; an! I am prepared on occasion to suspend every other kind of judgment. Or, would not it be true to say that the pure aesthetic does itself suspend in the beholder every other form of judgment or reaction—such as the moral, the intellectual and the practical? A great tragedy, for instance, is a kind of focus of that very falsity of which the spectator is engaged in it, and all are lifted up and transfigured into the pure aesthetic of contemplation. But one is not aware, in that case, of moral or other reservations; one has not to apologise for the experience by pretending that the "essentially repulsive and diabolic decadence" contained in the tragedy is the justification of the present age. Beardsley is only "something of a genius" precisely because he failed to transfigure the moral and other reactions of the spectator of his work. He did not engage to occupy the whole of one's mind. On the contrary, all the while that one's aesthetic sense was
being led captive by his art, several other of one's senses were in rebellion. His command (his genius, in short) was not "absolute," but only a quite limited monarchy. This, of course, is not to deny that he was an artist; it is to deny only that he was one of the greatest of artists. For my part, I think that other artists owe him a greater debt than the world at large. He was a great arf-master, but not a master of art. (4) I agree with "W. S.," that the doctrine of Mr. Arthur Symons is dangerous. Juggling with the terms good and evil is always pernicious, since in a predestigial exhibition of them, one can so easily be made to look like the other. Demon est Deus inversus. The paradoxical truth about the matter, however, I have expressed before in a paradox of my own which I repeat with pride. Evil is good only so long as it is regarded as evil. The moment it is thought of as good it is nothing but evil. Mr. Arthur Symons, it may be observed, has confused in his mind the problem of good and evil with the quite alien problem of quantity of energy.

R. H. C.

**Art Notes.**

**By B. H. Dias.**

**Canada, and the Remnants.**

The problem is economic, and the Canadian War Memorial has proved that "official" art or official support of painting does, or at least can, pay. "The whole of the great expenses incurred in the formation of the collection have been defrayed by other enterprises of the Canadian War Records Office." By running films, "publications," etc., in connection with
great works of art, has been acquired by the Canadian Government.
The "Mercure de France" for January opens with an "Appel aux poètes, aux artistes" to form a Grand Atelier in Paris to develop a communal style, and shoot the "rays and clarity of the flower of civilization across a renascant world." Paris is firmly convinced that such a Grand Atelier would pay somebody, either the world, French artists, or both.

Having at bottom no interest in official art or official support of the arts save in so far as they might be used to produce a little (or even quite a lot) of good art, one begins to speculate. If the public will flock, at a shilling a head, to see three hundred
day and fifty pictures, containing only a few of what even the "Evening News" calls "oases," would it not flock in equal numbers to see four hundred and fifty paintings containing at least fifty "oases"?

I do not believe that "under the circumstances" the Canadian Government could have been persuaded to accept a more contemporary collection; but having broken the back of the Academy "old gang"; having really, by a triumph of tact, insulated a few works of interest into an official collection, should not the promoters of the enterprise be cheered on, encouraged, prodded, threatened, cajoled, anything you like, into continuing the good work? Should not New Zealand, or Queensland, or the Maharaja of Molahawk be reminded that art has paid Canada; that Canada has got her money back, and has a collection of paintings beside?

A lot of money has gone to a lot of artists, some of whom ought to have it. There must be waste in the arts; you must have a huge flood of art in order to get a little good art. There must be "competition," both among artists, and among buyers. Some other Dominion ought to want a better collection than Canada's. (And it ought to be easy to persuade them.) The Canadian Government ought to begin where the Canadians have left off. They should start with John Oliphant, Lewis, Turnbull, Kenmington, Roberts, whose second war pictures would all, almost of necessity, be an advance on their first. The "of necessity" is not vague conjecture. None of these men are or were illustrators; every one of them went at a new job; each of them adapted his own means to new conditions on demand. I imagine that most of them made concessions.

One would like to see an exhibit, the nucleus of a permanent collection, in which the artist should be asked to say exactly what he thinks of the war, regardless of what the general spectator of pictures is for the moment ready to "hear." The more I think over the Canadian exhibit the more I find it inferior in warlike ness to the Futurist canvases "Revolt" and the "Anarchist's Funeral," though either of these canvases was satisfactory, or, perhaps, very well executed.

In Jack's largest atrocity there is a suggestion of the rhythm of bombardment, inferior to that produced by some of the Italian cinema films, but still a suggestion. The stasis of painting is perfectly capable of showing the feeling of violent cinema is only more facile, not more capable or capacious.

**Pastels.**

One goes from the "advance" of Canadian officialdom, across Piccadilly to the "Institute," and one wonders if there is any use for tolerance; if there is any use trying to see the good in all schools. Hugh Williams alone of all the pastelists is good enough to hang in Heal's gallery along with the London Group. Anna Atiyd's drawing for her Canadian War Record's picture is rather better than the picture. It would be an exaggeration to say that any member of the society has come so far as to attain even a passable mimicry of Whistler's pastels.

There are two kinds of painter's ability: the ability to copy a set mode with remarkable skill; and the ability to "do something new"; to "express," or open the beholder's eyes to some visual or, perhaps, even emotional or metaphysical) quality not before apprehended. (I do not want to enter endless quibbling over other than optical values in painting. At least the artist must use eye-language. He must speak with form and colour, whatever he may wish to convey.)

Detailed analysis of the pastels "yields": Bernard Partridge (still a malevolent force apparently, mortal continuing) is as stumpish, 19, Murillo thoroughly damaged; T. Williams, touch of impressionism; M. A. Cohen, probably quite a lot of good art, has begun to speculate. If the public will flock, at a shilling a head, to see three hundred and fifty pictures, containing only a few of what even the "Evening News" calls "oases," would it not flock in equal numbers to see four hundred and fifty paintings containing at least fifty "oases"?

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RE-INCARNATION.

SOME months ago, I advanced various arguments against the theory of re-incarnation, to which I received no answer. With reference to this pamphlet,* I may say that I have no reasonable hope of receiving a reply; the author, Lieut. G. H. Whyte, M.C., was among the fatal casualties that occurred after the taking of Jerusalem, at the end of 1917. But if to every question there is an answer, as he believed, I may as well state my objections now, even if I have to wait for the answer until I recur as a decimal point in the census. The occasion prompted the delivery of these addresses mutatis mutandis against their demonstrative value; the author, while convalescent at Malta, talked to the soldiers on the subject. We have here the record of what he said; it is usually stated, Lieut. Whyte himself states, that precocious genius, such as that of Mozart, “is expressing through a sensitive body the knowledge and the experience gained in former lives of effort”: in other words, that knowledge is re-incarnated as faculty. The difficulty of this theory is, as I said before, that it allows for no variation, provides no incentive to any variation, from the original type. Once a musician, always a musician; once a soldier, always a soldier, and so forth. The problem of genius is only referred back to the original incarnation; its appearance in the last re-incarnation is not explained by the theory. But the evidential value of genius, already nil, is destroyed by Lieut. Whyte's own definition of what is immortal. “Character,” he says, “is the very essence of the immortal life of man”; character, mark you, not faculty. “The details of the clerical work with the railway company, the numerous parts of the rifle and the machine-guns with which he was familiar, the knowledge which he possessed—these would be among the unessentials.” So would be Mozart’s knowledge of tones, rhythms, intervals, and instruments; on the theory, not his genius but his character was re-incarnated—the proffered proof of the theory contradicts it.

I insist upon this point because my experience of Theosophical literature has taught me that the writers do not understand the meaning of evidence. For example, a friend recently lent me a most interesting book on the symbols and mythology of the signs of the zodiac, entitled "From Pioneer to Poet," by Miss Pajan. In an appendix, the lady tells us that clairvoyants had told her that, in a previous life as a Chaldean astrologer, she had qualified herself for writing this work. On the theory of re-incarnation, the lady ought to be a first-class astrologer to-day; but, on the previous page, she declares that she had never been able to read an astrological text-book to the end, that she never cast a horoscope if she could get anyone else to do it, that she could not give the "directions" to anyone, not even to herself, and that her interest in the subject was that of a writer of plays, an interest in character and its expression. Yet Miss Pajan is a declared believer in re-incarnation, and presumably (to judge by the reference to the clairvoyants) in the re-incarnation of faculty. I suggest that the clairvoyants should now fit the ancestry of the talent to its present expression, and tell her that she was an Arabian storyteller.

The reference to astrology (a very interesting study, by the way) reminds me that, even here, the Theosophists are, as ever, unconvincing. They allege that astrology, more particularly with relation to what is called "The Pre-Natal Epoch," proves re-incarnation to be true. I have made some study of this subject; and I can say positively that, if one accepts the hypothesis of re-incarnation, astrology is explicable in terms of that hypothesis; but if one does not accept the hypothesis, a study of astrology will never lead to it. Nay, more, Dr. Richard Garnett, himself an astrologer, demonstrated in his essay, "The Soul and the Stars," that astrology made the theory of re-incarnation unnecessary. The doctrine of heredity, he argued, explained why children resembled their parents, the theory of re-incarnation why children differed from their parents; but neither theory could offer a satisfactory explanation of both resemblance and difference. Astrology, on the other hand, could demonstrate that there was resemblance in the planetary positions of the child and its parents.

The theory of re-incarnation is not an interpretation of vital phenomena, it is a mechanical theory of justice. "As a man sows, so shall he also reap," is its favourite text; but like all mechanical theories, it fails to explain abnormalities. A case was recorded in the British Journal of Astrology, April, 1918, of a man born with three fingers on each hand. The theory of re-incarnation would require us to believe that, in a previous life, he did not use the little fingers, and was, therefore, born without them; the fact is that the mother received a shock on meeting a brother whom she had not seen for years, and observing, as she shook hands, that he had lost his little finger. The supposition that anything that had happened in a previous life would necessitate, first of all, the loss of the uncle's little finger, secondly, his return home at precisely this time to shock the mother, so that the child should be born minus the little finger on each hand, is simply as incredible as it is unnecessary.

Re-incarnation is not a key to the riddle of life. It asserts the moral causation of physical phenomena, but it makes no attempt to demonstrate the causal connection. It denies the continuously creative process of life, relies for its scientific analogy on the theory of evolution by gradual accumulation of favourable variations, although the "mutation" theory of species is equally necessary to the explanation of the facts. It is contradictory in itself; it asserts, on the one hand, the necessity of obtaining complete experience in a series of lives of all powers and capacities, in both sexes, and tells us, on the other hand, that by the use of certain faculties we shall intensify that particular power and by the disuse of others, will lose them. It denies the intervention of Providence in natural processes, and re-introduces it in the form of direction of re-birth by Lords of Karma. It ignores the efficacy of proximate causation in favour of a theory of undeniable moral causation; a man does not fall down a cliff because his disordered liver has caused a momentary vertigo, but because, in a previous life, he pushed someone over a cliff, or something like that. It tells us nothing about this life, but pretend to know everything about the last and the next lives. What the soldier said is not evidence, I know; but I should like to know whether one of Lieut. Whyte’s audience put forward these views.

A. F. R.

* "Re-Incarnation: A Key to the Riddle of Life." By G. Herbert Whyte. (Watkins. 2s.)
Reviews.

The White Island. By Michael Wood. (Dent. 4s. 6d. net.)

It may legitimately be doubted whether the novel is the appropriate form for the expression of mystical experience. The danger of all mystical experience is that it intercepts the crosscurrent activities of his meaning and value, to deny that "God is all in all," and to limit His expression to states of Being subjectively experienced. But the perception of unity should be an explanation, not a contradiction, of the diversity of life, if we really are living in a Divine order of reality. The assumption that God is purity, simplicity, and the rest, is a mental assumption, the work of the analytical intelligence that draws distinctions rather than of that synthetic sense of the spirit that seeks expression through all things and understands them. God is not specially something reserved, to be sought for in solitude or with searching of heart; although these may be the disciplines necessary to enable certain people to become aware of His presence, there is no need to seek the ever-present, there is no need to assume that there is more of His spirit in one place than another, in one person than another, under one set of conditions than another. Nor is there any need to assume that the universal experience of mankind can be reversed; it is the fool who says in his heart, "There is no God," and we cannot accept the paradox that it is the fool who says, "There is nothing but God." Christ, if we accept Him as the type, did not lose His wits when He was inspired, did not become incapable of dealing with ordinary affairs, is obviously not a "case of arrested mental development." He saw and showed the divinity of common things, and the divinity of personal beings; He declared the universality as well as the unity of the spirit. But Mr. Michael Wood shows us a definite fool, a feeble-minded person incapable of anything but the simplest manual labour; and asks us to believe that he was specially the vehicle of the glory and the power of God. But the influx of the spirit is not a deprivation of the reasonable faculties, it is an inspiration of the whole man; it is more power, not less sense, that is the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the fool is no more, and no less, divine than the man of affairs. Artistically, the conception fails because it is incapable of development; René, from beginning to end, remains a simpleton, a mere conductor of the spirit as unintelligent as a lightning-conductor, a living denial that man in all his complexity is the creation of God. The whole form of the story is false; God is not specially a haunter of chapels, an illuminator of altars, and the assumption that René had a vocation that could be realised in a lay brotherhood is simply the ecclesiastical idea imported into spiritual experience. When "the heavens are telling the glory of God," it is absurd to pretend that that glory is only occasionally revealed in a pseu-
demistic establishment in the presence of a half-witted person who is capable only of the work of an agricultural labourer. The glory of God is not only whispered in sanctuaries, it is shouted aloud through all creation; it is not monopolised by piety, nor does it permit inquisitiveness. If there is any meaning at all in it, the Divine is not merely the substance of things hoped for, it is the substance of things that are; it is the evidence of things seen as well as unseen, and the visionary only prophesies of possible practice. We want something more than this other than this struck vision of whiteness, as though the spectrum lied; and Mr. Wood must give us ground more relative than "The White Island" if he would have us to believe in a special divinity of the sanctuary.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC POWER.

Sir,—I am not really surprised at The New Age's confusing Parliamentary power with political power, for this is frequently done everywhere—this is surely, however, no reason for The New Age to do likewise. Nevertheless Parliamentary action is only one aspect of political action, and not necessarily even the most important. Various assassinations such as that of King Humbert by Br Esci: the deeds of Vaillant who threw the bomb in the French Chamber are the so-called "anarchist" outrages committed by Ravachol were all political acts, but certainly not parliamentary ones; Roosevelt's notorious revolution in Panama was a political act, but quite unlike action in a largely political action, even when not taken for a "larger" political end, but again is, of course, unparliamentary. The "Partiya Sotsialistov Revolutionerov" in Tsarist times absolutely ignored parliamentary action in Russia and boycotted the elections to the Duma; yet the party believed in political action in other fields—a certain section of them as "Terrorists." I give below a translation from the official program of this party (generally known as the Social Revolutionaries) issued some years ago:

"Our chief aim is to reorganise Society according to the principles of Socialism, which alone can realise in practice the ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity. . . . A fight against Government despotism is therefore imperative, as the acquisition of political freedom must precede economic freedom."

I have italised the last few words because The New Age in its issue of January 16 has accused Lenin and Trotsky of this very fallacy. On the other hand, in the issue of August 15 last, "J. B. M." replying to some comments by The New Age on a previous letter of mine (about the Bolsheviks) states: The Bolsheviks thoroughly grasped the proposition that economic power precedes and determines political power. . . .

We have therefore these two absolutely contradictory statements definitely put forward. But the statements are incorrect, for the Bolsheviks, realising in the best Marxian manner that unity is strength, acquired both economic and political power—ignoring parliamentary power so called—to all intents and purposes at the same time. The situation created by the war and the intense Socialist propaganda enabled the Russian workers to realise their own strength and that the whole position was theirs practically for the asking. Later the "de facto" control of factories, etc., by the workers themselves was "regularised" by Soviet decree, etc., by the workers themselves was "regularised" by Soviet decree, as, for instance, a few months ago in the case of the Fr. (not German, mark you) soap and tallow works in the Moscow district, which are among the largest in Russia.

The futility of supposing that political power, when only represented by parliamentary power, means economic emancipation for the workers is repeatedly shown in Australia, when Labour has constituted the Government—this has been rightly pointed out in The New Age recently. Even the Queensland Government—the pet of the I.L.P.—has not yet brought Socialist freedom to the workers, and has only instituted a radical amelioration of conditions. This makes it all the more remarkable that The New Age should in recent issues be encouraging the idea that the millennium for Labour will arrive when we presently can boast of a Labour Ministry formed from a Labour majority in Parliament. It is all the more extraordinary, seeing that Labour in England is in its political aspects almost the most backward in Europe. Proof of this can be seen in the Labour Party's "great" manifesto entitled The New Strike Order, which is claimed as a "bulwark against reaction"; for my part I consider it a quite blatant "bulwark against Socialism," and our workers here will one day wake up to the fact—perhaps on this is certainly very "remarkable"—that The New Age has in recent or any issues been encouraging the idea that the millennium of Labour will arrive when a Labour Ministry has been in power more months than the five months marked by the fine confusion of the rest of our correspondent's letter. Some attention to truth and fact is necessary even among revolutionaries.—Ed. N.A.J.
A GERMAN INDEMNITY.

Sir,—In reference to your thesis that Germany cannot pay us an indemnity without injuring us, could it not be done by insisting on her goods going to tropical countries, and the tropical products coming here, thus exacting the indemnity in the form of goods which would not compete with our own productions?

Your argument seems, on the face of it, to be a glaring paradox. It seems to involve, as corollary, that such advantages as favourable climatic conditions, or valuable natural resources, are all to our disadvantage, since the more unfavourable the conditions the more work there will be.

W. W. H.

The difficulty is not escaped by first exchanging German goods for tropical products, since the latter, would still be paid for by German instead of our own labour. We do not deny that their labour is a paradox, but the system is itself paradoxical, and every "problem" in it shares in the common nature of the whole. The corollary drawn by our correspondent is quite logical. Given the private ownership of one or two people, the demand for labour—the solution in other words, of maximum production with the minimum of personal ownership of "favourable climatic conditions" and "valuable natural resources"—in other words, of maximum production with the minimum demand for labour—the solution would be "our" disadvantage, meaning by "our" of course, Labour itself. Suppose that on an island whose population lived by the manufacture and sale of wooden nutmegs, real nutmegs began to be grown in commercial quantities, but under the private ownership of one or two of the "leading inhabitants," the situation of the wooden nutmeg makers would at once become difficult. In capitalist countries the situation as regards labour is identical. The wage-earners live by the sale of their labour. Any "favourable" circumstance making for a diminution in the demand for labour would undoubtedly be to their disadvantage.—Ed. N.A.]

THE NEW CAMBRIDGE.

Sir,—Although to those intimately connected with Cambridge, its patriotism and the splendid part which its sons have played in the War at all well known, there are many who have been led by the views expressed in the "Cambridge Magazine" to believe that the characteristics of the University were Pacifism and Defeatism. It is with the aim of dispelling the false and harmful impression that the "Cambridge Magazine" is a representative journal of the University that I beg the hospitality of your columns to give the widest possible publicity to the following protest, signed by 120 ex-Service members of the University who were in Cambridge during the Michaelmas Term, 1918, and who felt the "A. E. R." has not done what he promised his personal data, and that the whole question is not clear to him; but I must remark in passing that there are many dreams of which by far the most simple explanation is that they have no real existence whatever. Further, I see no explanation of the extraordinary profundity and wisdom of children, often of very mediocre parentage, which is hitherto so straightforward as is immortality, and the same applies to all cases of extraordinary faculty throughout life.

No doubt the long arm of coincidence and suchlike aids may be invoked, as they always were, to explain away, say, telepathy, until it became clear that telepathy could not be explained away, but had come to stay. I venture to think that immortality is going to do much the same in the near future, in spite of the materialists. What immortality means exactly is a more difficult question. Fundamentally it means that a body is his home, and that Man is not the by-product of his metabolism. It also postulates that conservation of energy is true of mind-energy as much as it is of other forms of energy, and for anyone who thinks broadly this should have considerable importance.

As the idea is perhaps not self-evident, I will give a physical parallel. Suppose that our only criterion were weight—all forms of energy, such as chemical energy or heat energy, would be unknown, for all the heat or chemical energy in the world will not alter the weight of a body (at any rate, as far as we yet know). We might see a pound of water turning into a pound of ice, and expanding, and bursting water-pipes, and knocking down mountains; but it would always weigh a pound. And so clearly there could be no energy expended on cracking the pipes and mountains; it was merely an amiable whim of the water, or perhaps due to the water having moved one-thousandth of an inch down the pipe. Some might wonder how all this energy could come from so little, but there is the criterion of the scales, against which there is no appeal. Just as we see two men, both living a life of equal metabolic value, one of whom does nothing and the other moves all the world. Whence, then, comes the energy? And is it reasonable to suppose that death wipes out the source?

M. B. Oxon.

A CORRECTION.

Sir,—May I call attention to a printer's error in my translation of the Serbian Ballad printed in your last number of "A. E. R." to be willing to examine any evidence which may be produced. My objections are, however, to his methods of argument. Like all materialists who try to deal with psychology, he has few data on which to talk, and easily forgets such data as do not suit him. For example, he postulates: "There are whole periods when all the psychical faculties are suspended and when the soul does not think. What becomes of the soul in sleep, for example? . . ."

What right has he to say that there are periods when the soul does not think? All he knows is that there are periods when it does not usually remember its thinking—a very different thing. For there are periods in our waking thoughts which are not to be forgotten, still recalled by some chance happenings. Surely among his quotations must be one which refers to the widely accepted fact that "Sleep brings counsel," even if he has no examples of his own by which to know this. Some difficult question regarding its application to every dreamer, sometimes in the morning; sometimes it is worked out in dream. And what about all dreams? Are these not due to psychical faculties, or is it postulated that when we dream we are in other forms of energy, and for anyone who thinks broadly this should have considerable importance.

Helen ROOTHAM.
Pastiche.

TO A BABY.

You have no function. Indolent and selfish
You exercise no thought or social care
To clench your portion of the light and air
With boiling poets, kings and priests and shell-fish.
I must admit your mind is never selfish,
But you're a gluton, sweet-toothed like a bear.
At present, you're a parasite whose share
In human life is vain, fantastic, elfish.
Will you become a Superman for whom
Mankind must toil and bleed? Has love created
A judge that will our human nature doom?
Thank God, insane, what I have loved and hated
Must yet revive in you and in your span
Of time you'll be no more or less than man.

TRIBOULET.

SEEK THE WIDE SOLACE.

Seek the wide solace, never leave her shore.
Stretch not abroad thine hands in misery
With toiling poets, kings and priests and shell-fish.
With boiling poets, kings and priests and shell-fish.
I must admit your mind is never selfish,
But you're a gluton, sweet-toothed like a bear.
At present, you're a parasite whose share
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TRIBOULET.

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Seek the wide solace, never leave her shore.
Stretch not abroad thine hands in misery
To claim your portion of the light and air
Must yet revive in you and in your span
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