

THE NEW AGE

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THE English Church, claimed to be of Christ, has naturally left it to the Marquess of Salisbury to express the opinion of Englishmen and Christians that the Allies are showing little mercy to their defeated enemies. There is no doubt about the suffering now being experienced in Central Europe, and chiefly, of course, by the classes and persons least able to endure it. A month ago the "Times" special correspondent described the food condition of Berlin as "appalling"; and within the last few weeks there has been published the report of fourteen British officers, who were allowed to travel anywhere in Germany, and whose conclusion is that the need to revictual Germany was "vital" even so long ago as early in January. It cannot be much less so after eight or nine weeks more of winter. Yet, in spite of all such evidence, even its own, the "Times" does not scruple to continue to sneer at Germany, and to insinuate that the hunger of the population is possibly a political invention. In any case, it is to be used as a lever for imposing ever-fresh and ever-increasing terms upon our conquered foe. "If Germany," says the "Times," "is as hungry as her statesmen and her Press aver she is, the delay ('in condescending to accept the relief on the terms offered') will not be long." Unfortunately for the "Times," however, the disastrous consequences of this barbarous policy are not confined to the bodies of the men, women and children among our late enemies; they are to be seen, and they will long continue, in the policy forced both upon Germany and the rest of the world. Famine and Bolshevism go hand in hand; and the hungrier Germany becomes, the more certainly will she look to the East rather than to the West for deliverance. We cannot say that even President Wilson has proved himself as yet capable of retrieving the honour of Christendom. He has announced that "America is the hope of the world," and he has laid down the excellent proposition that foreign policy must henceforth "satisfy not Governments only, but peoples." But is there any "people" in the world that is satisfied with the policy of starving Germany? We do not think there is one. The only "statesman," moreover, who can afford to be satisfied with the procedure is Lenin, who must see in the pressure put upon Germany from the West the ap-

proaching inclusion of Germany in the Bolshevik system of his own desperate Russia. And not a score of Polands, we may be sure, will be able to keep asunder two Powers, like Germany and Russia, when once they are joined in a common Bolshevism.

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With the "Nation" we are pleased to believe that, in the case of our own people, it is not revenge but ignorance that permits this policy to be pursued. They were led to believe during the General Election that Germany might pay the indemnity as well as make reparation for the war; and it is with considerable reluctance that they are forgoing the preposterous claim. They find it hard to credit our politicians with the lies that must have been told if, in fact, Germany is not and cannot be expected to be in a situation to pay the entire cost of the war. Both Mr. Bonar Law and others have nevertheless begun with all cautiousness to make this admission—fatal, as it would seem, to their right to hold office a moment longer. That Germany is "morally" obliged to pay for the war, Mr. Bonar Law asserts as anybody else may do; but the "value" of a moral obligation "when you cannot recover the money," he is beginning to realise is nothing. But this, as many of us knew, was inevitable sooner or later; for the fact is that even if the cannibal policy of eating our dead enemies could be justified upon other grounds, the impossibility of getting blood out of a stone was bound to be ultimately recognised. An indemnity could conceivably be paid in one of two forms: in goods and services or in territorial annexations; and since the latter was barred by President Wilson's Fourteen Points, and the former by economic circumstances, the prospect of any indemnity whatever was certain to grow more and more shadowy. The case, as we conceive it, stands at present in this position. Goods and services being abandoned as impracticable, for the sufficient reason that either of them would involve the instant rehabilitation of German industry—a thing not to be thought of!—certain of the Allies are now endeavouring to stretch the terms of President Wilson's Fourteen Points to include what he specifically excluded, namely, annexations. The Saar coalfield, for instance, might prove to be an indemnity in itself, not to mention its "strategic" importance. And though it is true that it cannot be "annexed" under the terms without tearing up every scrap of paper Pre-

sident Wilson has written, a way, it is hoped, may be found under another name to substitute it for the indemnity proper which is no longer feasible.

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This, too, however, will in the end prove to be illusory, in view of the cost of maintaining possession, and we shall then be left to face the black night of our real financial position. How gloomy this is, only the "experts" yet know; but a little hint of it was dropped by the chairman of Barclay's Bank in a recent speech. We began the war, it appears, with a national debt amounting to £20 per head of our total population. We shall finish it in debt to the amount of £160 per head. The meaning of this should surely be obvious, for it is nothing less than the plain statement that of the fifty millions that constitute the population of these islands, every man, woman and child is at this moment in debt to the amount of £160. How is this enormous and, indeed, for the vast majority, this fabulous sum to be paid off? Messrs. Barclay's chairman is of the natural opinion that it is to be paid off by economy, by increased production, and by the discovery and development of old and new world-markets. But is it conceivable that by these means we shall be able within any historic period to liquidate the astronomical figure of a debt of 8,000 millions—a sum, moreover, that is still growing? We doubt it. We do more, we deny the possibility of it. Nor need it be imagined that we shall be able to put off the rainy day until such time as only our unfortunate descendants are alive. Within a measurable period a financial "crisis" is certain to arise, the experience of which must be endured by most of those who are still living. It may not be for months, it may not be for a few years, but before very long the circumstances will arise when we are no longer able by voluntary means to raise the loans corresponding to the Government's policy or even, perhaps, by taxation, to pay the annual charges on the debt. What will have to be done in either of those events? Overweighted with such an albatross about our necks, the nation will in that event have either to sink under it, leaving as survivors only the small class of its bondholders—or to deal summarily with the bondholders themselves. There will be no third choice open to us. Even less than the Germans we cannot be expected to evolve an indemnity from our inner consciousness; and since the sum of goods and services represented by the debt of 8,000 million pounds is beyond material means to discharge, one or other of the two choices named will have to be made. Either a levy must be made on capital, or the nation must become a helpless bankrupt.

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We observe that the "Herald" (shortly, by the way, to re-appear as a daily newspaper) is demanding that an end should be put to Government control, and particularly in the matter of food-stuffs. We have, of course, every sympathy with the object of reducing the cost of living of the wage-earning classes; and there is little doubt, we imagine, that the removal of Government control (if for other reasons this were desirable) would have the effect at this stage of bringing down prices. But is it, we ask, altogether desirable from a large point of view? The effect of reducing prices would, of course, be to raise the purchasing power of money; in other words, to enhance the value of the pound sterling. And while, no doubt, this would be to the immediate advantage of the wage-earning classes, it should not be forgotten that it would also be to the advantage of the financial classes, whose monopoly is money and who are creditors of the nation to the amount of 8,000 million pounds. It is impossible to raise the purchasing power of the poor man's pound without at the same time raising the purchasing power of the bankers' millions, and the major effect, as we see it, of the movement to reduce prices will therefore be to increase the nation's real debt to its principal money-lenders. We do not put this forward as an argument

for maintaining high prices when they can conveniently be reduced; but the necessity, as it appears to us, of not making a further colossal present to our bondholders in the process is obvious. It can be circumvented by the strictly just and logical means of writing down the debt in proportion as the purchasing power of money is raised. Only by the adoption of some such sliding-scale of value shall we be able to ensure ourselves against re-paying for every £1 borrowed thirty shillings or so in actual purchasing power.

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In one sense too much outcry has been aroused by Mr. Churchill's announcement of the prolongation of conscription; in another sense, too little. It is too little if we have in mind the extraordinary confessions made by Mr. Churchill that the Government had never contemplated what would happen in the interregnum between war and peace, and, in consequence, made their election promises completely in the dark. But it is too much if we have in mind the inevitable relation between policy and military power. It stands to reason that an end willed and implied in any given policy must include the means for pursuing it; and since the end and policy defined in the recent General Election, and endorsed by a considerable part of the electorate, is that of forcing markets which otherwise might not be open to us, the surprise now expressed that the force must be prepared—in other words, that we must increase our standing Army—is altogether unjustified. That the Army would need to be conscripted was likewise, we may say, a foregone conclusion; for it is not in the nature of Englishmen (as yet, at any rate) to be disposed to volunteer their lives in the service of capitalist international exploitation. Three and a half million men did, indeed, volunteer for the purpose of putting an end to militarism; but, as the "Times" naively asks, "Does anyone think that the voluntary system would give us the Army of our present policy here and now?" We cannot refrain, however, from repeating our contention that both the Army and the method adopted for raising it are the practical consequences of the policy of competition and super-production so enthusiastically supported by some of the very people who denounce militarism and conscription. But they cannot, they must see, have it both ways. They cannot endorse a policy necessitating force and expect that force to be neglected or to be left to the chance of voluntarism.

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Some real revolution of policy such as is here implied is undoubtedly occupying men's minds, though not, it is to be feared, to the exclusion of contradictory ideals. The "Times," for instance, with a view to easing the burden of the spectacle of the world at this moment, declares that "the meaning of it all is that the world is labouring to bring forth a new social order." It is for England, the "Times" continues, to set an example of how the crisis should be met. No other country is so well situated for this duty in place, in time or in the character and history of its people. And it is ours, therefore, to give the lead. Unfortunately for our duty in this matter, not only is the "Times" hypocritical, but the actual control of policy is in the hands of men like Mr. Kellaway, the President of the Local Government Board, who, in a debate last week on industrial reconstruction, announced that the present was *not* the time "to embark on so hazardous an experiment as reconstructing industry from top to bottom." As for this, however, the period of the war, it seems, was the golden age for reconstruction from top to bottom, in the opinion of no other a person than Mr. Kellaway himself. For was he not an under Minister of Munitions, and did he not pride himself upon having effected revolutionary changes in industry in the very thickest phase of the war? It appears that the time for swapping horses is when you are crossing a stream; but you must never do it when you are on dry land again.

The Industrial Committee appointed from the recent Industrial Conference on the suggestion of Mr. Henderson to inquire into the means of "revolutionising" industry has divided its labours into three parts each of which it has entrusted to a sub-Committee with instructions to report. The first part refers to wages; the second part to hours; and the third part to unemployment. It will be observed that the material of revolution, in any sense of the word, is carefully excluded from this classification, and presumably with the consent of the Labour politicians who assisted at the making of it. For nothing is more certain than that the crux of the industrial problem lies in the question of control, while nothing is more obvious than that the question of control is excluded from the labours of the present Industrial Committee. We cannot believe that Mr. Henderson and the rest are in a conspiracy to overlook Hamlet in the play of the same name. At the same time, we find it quite as difficult to believe that they are unaware of the fundamental importance of the problem of control. What is, then, the truth about the matter? Is it policy or is it ignorance? Assuming, charitably, that it is only the latter, we may point out to those concerned that control is control, and that not all the clever manipulations of wages, hours and unemployment will affect the root-problems of industry while control remains where it is. The proposition, we should have thought, was by this time self-evident. It is, at any rate, self-evident to the Capitalist classes who openly allow that wages, hours and unemployment are matters for negotiation, while control is not. This alone ought to indicate to the Labour leaders where the question at issue really lies.

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Thanks to the co-operation of the despised "intellectuals"—for whose selection we have to thank Mr. Smillie—the Coal Commission now holding its inquiry promises to be of some educational as well as practical value. It is not astonishing what the public has to learn, after years of newspaper-reading, of the interests most closely affecting it. The conspiracy of the Press to diffuse positive ignorance concerning vital matters has been remarkably successful. We cannot say, however, that the facts so far established come as the smallest surprise to anybody but the victims of the Press. They are, in fact, all in order. That the profits in the coal-owning industry are normally between nine and ten per cent. (and this after the black art of accountancy has done its best to conceal the results); that the coal industry, like every other, takes every advantage of public need to raise even these profits when possible; and that, finally, the Government is always willing to oblige the Capitalist class at the expense both of the wage-earners and of the community—all this was the alphabet of the economists, and should be familiar to every citizen. What is of a little more interest to us is the perfectly valid plea which the coal-monopolists will be able to make that they are no worse than other monopolists of capital, and do not therefore deserve, under the prevailing system of equity, to be treated as an exception. Nine or ten per cent. return on capital (and much, much more), with the chance of an occasional windfall, is, we are told by Dr. Stamp, the normal expectation of Capitalists in every industry. If this margin is to be reduced, in the case of the coal-owners, in order to pay higher wages on the demand of the miners, either a similar tuck must be run in the margin of profit of other industries, or capital will inevitably be transferred from the former to the latter. We see no other answer, given the premises, to the plea of the coal-owners that they should not be unfairly discriminated against. What applies to coal applies to all the other materials monopolised by capital; and the profit on coal must either be suffered to remain equal with the profit obtainable elsewhere, or all must equally be reduced. The logical sequel of the Coal

Commission, in short, is a Commission of inquiry into every other industry.

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We doubt, however, whether it will come to this. Our habit of doing everything by halves, and usually wrong, will in all probability lead to a compromise on the coal issue and the postponement of the rest of the matter to the next war. The Report to be made by the Commission before the 20th instant will, we have little doubt, recommend without prejudice to industry in general the raising of the miners' wages and the reduction of their hours of labour, while leaving to an indifferent future the vital question of a reconstructed industrial system. For of none of the "intellectuals" co-operating at present with the miners can it be said that they have a larger view of the future than, at best, nationalisation. The discussion, if it should take place, will, therefore, follow the lines of the familiar debate concerning the relative advantages of Competition and Nationalisation; and in this, we believe, the advocates of Nationalisation will be forcing an open door. Even the "Times" has begun to doubt the advantages of Competition in every case. "Competition," it says, "means, in effect, employing two blocks of capital to do the work of one." In other words, it is a waste of capital. From the standpoint of Capital itself, therefore, it may well be the case that Competition in the accepted and historical sense has ceased to be profitable. The "Spectator," again, is disposed, under certain circumstances, even for the nationalisation of "natural monopolies," including coal, for no better reason that we can discover than that their private ownership is no longer profitable. The situation as between Competition and Nationalisation is thus for the present and in its limited application to coal comparatively favourable to Nationalisation; and we should not be surprised to find a majority of the Commission reporting in this sense.

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But this brings into discussion, if not into prominence, the issue as between Nationalisation and the Guilds; and here, if we are not unduly optimistic, the Guilds should find friends where formerly they have met only enemies. The nationalisation of industry—or, let us give it its right name, State Capitalism—involves us in as many evils as the policy is designed to avoid; and though its economic evils are likely to be great, its political and human reactions are likely to be quite as disastrous. Lord Selborne, for example, quite correctly observes that a "nationalised" industrial system is incompatible with parliamentary government; and it is so for the simple reason that as industries are nationalised parliament necessarily approximates less and less to an assembly of representative citizens, and more and more to an assembly of industrial interests, still divided into the two antagonistic groups of employers and employed. Parliament, in short, would inevitably become a sort of central Whitley Council in which the questions of industry would be entirely paramount over the questions of national policy and the like. The still more absolute dictatorship of the political Cabinet would be a necessary consequence. We have said that the economic consequences of nationalisation are likely to be as bad as its political consequences; and this is only because they cannot be worse. We share all the fears of the "Spectator" that nationalisation will have the effect of reducing production to a minimum, both as to quantity and quality; and while, even at this cost, we prefer it to the continuance of Competition, we see no reason for throwing the house out of the window to effect only this exchange. "The problem to be solved"—we are quoting the "Spectator"—"is to establish the responsibility of the State without consenting to the creation of a huge bureaucracy with all its deadening influences." We agree; but the answer is not Nationalisation, but National Guilds.

Foreign Affairs.

By S. Verdad.

HOWEVER impolitic it may appear in President Wilson to leave behind him in America a cave of Senators opposed to the League of Nations Covenant, we shall probably be correct in assuming that President Wilson has got them weighed up all right. A third of the Senate may, indeed, put a spoke in the wheels of the President's policy; but the question to ask is whether, at the last moment, they will dare to do it; for, in appealing to the American "people," as formerly he has to all "peoples," over the heads, but not behind the backs, of their elected representatives, President Wilson has ensured himself, I think, the support of the power that finally makes the Senate. The ideal of the League of Nations is particularly seductive, in the form given it by President Wilson, to the moral strength (or weakness, as some think, though I do not) of the American people. The American nation is therein represented as a sort of Sir Galahad, with no fears for itself and with no personal objects, but whose vow is to defend the right wherever it may be challenged. Such a rôle is pleasing in any circumstances, provided, of course, that it can be maintained; and to the American people it is particularly pleasing, since it falls in with America's enormously strong economic situation, but, more than that, with America's developed conscience. With this in view, I do not myself anticipate any reversal of the President's policy at the hands of the Senatorial cave. Having the "overwhelming majority" of the American people behind him, President Wilson can afford to treat lightly the opposition of the Little Americans and the Hearst Anglophobes.

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It is as well that there should be no doubt of this, particularly in France and Italy; for it is obvious that both countries are a little disposed to mistrust the effectual power of the League. They calculate, with a degree of reasonableness, that the League may not be there upon the spot when wanted. Observing the American opposition to President Wilson's plan, they ask whether this opposition may not sooner or later be sufficiently powerful to cancel his promises. After all, President Wilson is not immortal, and an obligation entered into by him to-day will not necessarily stand for all time. Hence the need, in the opinion of certain French and Italian statesmen, to keep their own powder dry, and to be prepared to defend themselves in the event of the breakdown of the League. I admit the plausibility of the argument, but it appears to me to proceed on a false estimate both of the psychology of the American people and of the actual tie that binds the two effective members of the League—Great Britain and America—together. For all practical purposes, the League of Nations is an Anglo-American League; and since Great Britain and America are the only two world-Powers that count (Japan, without steel, is for the present only a junior partner), the moral obligation of each is reinforced by their mutual world-obligations. In short, though it may be true that the League will not always be able to act quickly in any dispute, its interference in any considerable dispute, sooner or later, may be taken for granted. In no case that is of more than local concern will the League be likely to be neutral.

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This affords a reply to the views just published in "Modern Italy," a weekly sixpenny review now appearing in London. "Modern Italy" bears on its cover the following maxim of Talleyrand: "The Power that rules the Adriatic is the Power that holds its eastern shore," from which, it appears, we are to draw the conclusion that Italy is entitled in her own defence to the command of the eastern Adriatic. I will say at once that even if Talleyrand's maxim were as

true to-day as it may have been when uttered, the conclusion that it should be Italy rather than Jugo-Slavia that should "rule the Adriatic" seems to me to be in need of discussion; but the truth is that the maxim no longer holds. The Power to-day that rules the Adriatic is not by any means necessarily the Power that holds its eastern shore; it is, on the other hand, the Power that commands the support of the League of Nations! Given that Italy should actually establish herself on the eastern Adriatic—the very possibility of which I gravely doubt—her effective control of the Adriatic itself would infallibly be limited by the Leagued Fleet, to say nothing of the Leagued economic forces. The inability of certain Italian statesmen to realise the gulf that separates Talleyrand from President Wilson is really surprising. They continue to imagine that everything in Europe depends on the maintenance of merely European balances of power. They rule out America and the League as definitely as Senator Lodge and Mr. Hearst would have it ruled out; and conclude that if the League is not behind them, at any rate it will not be on the other side. Events, however, will shortly prove to them the truth of what I am saying: that if Italy, for instance, is not supported by the League, she will be *opposed* by the League. Italy need not imagine that, with the eastern Adriatic in her hands, she will then be able to deal with Jugo-Slavia alone and upon Talleyrand's maxim. On the contrary, since the League is bound, in a major dispute of this kind, to be on one side or the other, if the League does not support Italy, then the League will support Jugo-Slavia. I leave my Italian friends to ponder the question whether, in that event, Italy will "rule the Adriatic."

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Though I do not agree with all the strictures of the "Daily News" upon the attitude of France—for the situation of France makes an apparently desperate policy excusable if not defensible—it appears to me that France stands in considerable danger of alienating just that sentiment of the world whose most effective organ is, for the present, the Anglo-American nucleus of the League of Nations. Let not Mr. G. K. Chesterton misunderstand me. Like him, I believe that the maintenance and future of France are essential to civilisation; and if I were empowered to choose between the obliteration of France or Germany, I cannot conceive myself hesitating for a moment to obliterate Germany. But this very attitude, which is certainly not peculiar to Mr. Chesterton and myself, is in reality the surest guarantee that France can have for her future security. It is just because the world has need of France that France is safe. Not to be too quixotic, I believe that if France were now to throw herself upon the League of Nations, the League of Nations would undertake her defence, even if France were to cease to maintain a standing army! France, however, like Italy, has too long a memory and too little foresight. France believes that she, too, must be fully prepared for her own complete defence in the case that neither America nor England will be ready to defend her upon the next occasion. It is unthinkable—to use the word of President Wilson. Even a little calculation will show that, for better or worse, the maintenance of France—of France, right or wrong!—is incumbent upon England, and, therefore, upon America. The condition, therefore, of the defence of France is already given; she has only to remain France. Let us hope that in the coming weeks this will be made plain, and that France will cease to demand of Germany the "guarantees" already implied in the existence of the League of Nations. It is significant that President Wilson said, before leaving America, that if Germany had known that England would fight, there would have been no war. A fortiori, if Germany is warned that America as well as England will fight, I do not see that France need fear another aggressive German war.

How Irish Protestants Regard Sinn Fein.

By John Eglinton.

THE fundamental assumption of Sinn Fein appears to be that Gaelic culture outweighs in value for Irishmen the culture which, in the natural course of things, has come for the most part from England and is now the common inheritance of these islands. Not at all that Sinn Feiners are less interested in the thought and literature of the world than other Irishmen, but that they choose to regard Gaelic rather than English as the stock-culture of Ireland. At all events, the ideals of Sinn Fein had their origin in this claim for a purely Irish culture. The opening-up of ancient and mediæval Irish literature, which was almost as much a revelation to Irishmen as to foreigners interested in such matters, aroused some rather fantastic expectations; and it was not unusual at the beginning of the present century, when the Language Movement was at its height, to hear it said that Irish would be the language of Grafton Street in another generation. The ancient language, to the end of driving the language of the foreigner from its citadel, gained a footing in the daily Press, to the extent of a column, which in many of our daily and weekly newspapers it still retains. Here at last appeared a prospect of realising something like Bishop Berkeley's dream of a wall of brass around Ireland, in a language bristling with difficulties to a foreigner but within full of the joyous converse of hearts unsealed at last. The whole conception of Irish nationality was, in fact, indefinitely extended and intensified about this period, particularly under the influence of the heroic imagination of Mr. Standish O'Grady and Mr. W. B. Yeats, who succeeded, where Sir Samuel Ferguson and others had honourably failed, in bringing the modern Irish imagination into relation with the ancient life of the country. What wonder that the legitimate heirs of this ancient Irish culture, forming, moreover, three-fourths of the population, began to translate this spiritual capitulation into political terms? If Ireland, in the ideal, is a spiritual unity, why, indeed, should it not be one politically? Sinn Fein began its propaganda, and found a great deal to suit it in the disposition created by the Irish literary movement to regard symbolically the eternal war of Irish nationalism with the external world. In English literature itself many poets, from Spenser to Tennyson, had found a symbol of spiritual warfare in the struggle of Arthur and his knights with Saxon heathenism. A similar subject in Ireland lent itself, on the contrary, to a re-interpretation into politics and actuality. Symbolism and actuality are, in fact, inextricably intermingled in modern Irish nationalism, and the literary origins of Sinn Fein appear continually in its ability to sport with fact. If things are not as we would have them to be, proposed Sinn Fein, let us imagine that they are! Let us think away eight hundred years of hateful history! If the majority of Irish people acquiesce in the use of the English language, let us conceive of it as an island of pure Gaelic speakers! If England with its detestable Reformation has introduced eternal division into Irish life, let us rather think of it as it was in the days of Columkille and Malachi! If most people accept as inevitable some kind of partnership with Great Britain, why, then, let us assume that we are a Republic!

The assumption of the end proposed as something already attained has always had to be made at certain points in revolutions, which, however, when successful, have been directed by political seers who have known the moment at which a popular psychological change has made possible a new set of political conditions. Never before, probably, has a perpetual coup d'état, which appears only a contradiction in terms, been established as the policy of a generation. The facts which have brought about this curious state of affairs

are plain enough. In Ireland two competing and mutually irreconcilable claims are made, which appear equally chimerical to their extreme upholders on either side. One is the claim of the British Islands that Ireland is part of a larger unity, a claim which is backed up not only by a powerful minority in this country, but by the more or less unwilling acquiescence even of the majority—*how* unwilling or willing no man can exactly say. The other is the claim made on behalf of three-fourths of the Irish population, that it is a nation which has come down intact from the Christian era, and is now, after wars of extermination, plantations, persecutions, and efforts at conciliation on obviously deceitful assumptions, stronger and more self-conscious than ever before.

This latter is the claim of Sinn Fein, but it is a claim which has validity only for Catholic Ireland. We are aware that attempts are made to frighten the Catholic Church with the word "Republic"; but however things would work out in an independent Ireland, the Catholic Church, no doubt, knows very well that the whole-hearted and admiring acceptance of the part which Ireland has played in history, to which Sinn Fein makes its confident appeal, is only possible to the Irish Catholic. The Irish Catholic loves Ireland for all that it has ever been or ever done. The patriotism of the Protestant Irishman, on the other hand, though he often cherishes a wistful affection for his native land, is yet necessarily tempered with some disapproval of the main cultural achievement of Catholic Ireland, which is to have preserved its ancient faith intact through all kinds of trials down into the modern era. Thus, while the whole life-interest of the Irish Catholic is contained within the confines of Ireland, the interest of the Protestant extends beyond his country, and has a great deal in common with that of Great Britain. Sinn Fein is thus a movement entirely within Catholic Ireland. No Protestant can really be a Sinn Feiner, for no man can really be a Protestant who believes in the supreme value for Irishmen of a purely Irish culture.

Looked at in this way, the question at issue between the majority and the minority of Irishmen at present involves democratic principles more subtle than can be acted upon by a mere counting of heads. A nation may adopt any religion it likes, but nationality should not be determined by that religion. A nation is a section of humanity in which all that is human should be represented, and should develop itself freely. Now, Protestantism and Catholicism represent two attitudes of the modern mind (to admit less is to avow intolerance), and should, therefore, both have free scope in any community which claims to hold within it all that is necessary to build up a new humanity. In the highly questionable claims of Sinn Feiners as to the supreme value for Irishmen of a purely Irish culture, and in their arrogant scorn of the perfectly genuine though quite different patriotism of the Protestant minority, there is something in the nature of religious intolerance. Certainly, a foreign observer, noticing that Protestant and Catholic Ireland are, generally speaking, opposed to one another politically, would draw the conclusion that religion had something to do with the matter; even though the cheerful society of our Dublin intellectuals would, no doubt, get hold of him and try to persuade him that nothing could be further from the truth. While intolerance, however, on the Protestant side, especially in the gloomy North, is, unfortunately, indisputable, the religious intolerance of the Sinn Feiner, who is usually a delightful person and radiantly unconscious of it, is more difficult to detect and define. It consists in his inability to put himself in the point of view of those who belong to a different tradition, and it is this inability which makes of a community of men and women as sociable as the French the most unsociable of nationalities.

There is a disposition in present-day Ireland to ignore the achievements of the Anglo-Irish in the eighteenth century: in fact, it is vital to Sinn Féin to discredit an "Irish Parliament" which demonstrated the *possibility*, at all events, of the appearance in Ireland of a new nation, based on the acceptance of the culture common to Great Britain and Ireland. In Western Europe generally, the century in which a definite culture-tradition was formed, the century in which opposing forces in religion and politics came to terms and were satisfied if they came into power periodically through the sway of parties or of fashion, was the eighteenth century, and it was not least so in Ireland, where, though the Penal Laws were supposed to be in operation and the mass of the Irish people were somewhat like slaves, an Anglo-Irish culture came into being, as much differentiated from English culture through the presence of Roman Catholicism as, let us say, Scotch culture through Puritanism. Unsatisfactory as this culture was from the point of view of the Catholic Irish, and though they were destined to show that the element which they were able to contribute was infinitely more important than was then dreamed of, yet even in Ireland the eighteenth century performed its function of forming a main-current for literature and politics.

A Guildsman's Interpretation of History.

By Arthur J. Penty.

X.—THE DEFEAT OF THE GUILDS.

"THE Reformation in England," says Cobbett, "was not the work of virtue, of fanaticism, of error, or of ambition, but of a love of plunder. This was its great animating principle; in this it began, and in this it proceeded till there was nothing left for it to work on. The monasteries were gone; the cream had been taken off; but there remained the skimmed milk of church altars, chantries and guilds." Their turn was now to come. In 1545 a Bill was passed confiscating the property of all Colleges, Fraternities, Brotherhoods and Guilds, which were to be placed in the hands of the king, that they might be employed for "more godly and virtuous purposes." But it was never acted upon, as the death of Henry VIII had rendered the statute void; and the action of the Government of Edward VI rested on a new statute which was enacted in 1547.

It is important to recognise that this statute did not attack the Guilds as economic organisations, nor did it seek to confiscate the whole of the property of the Guilds, but only such part of their revenues as had already been devoted to certain specified religious purposes. A great part of their wealth had been spent in providing masses for the souls of the deceased brethren, and it was the lands whose revenues were spent on such purposes that were confiscated. The revenues of the craft companies devoted to social and charitable purposes remained with the Guilds. Strange to say, opposition came only from the burgesses of Coventry and Lynn, and they were rewarded for their opposition by being allowed to remain in possession of the Guild lands.*

Though it is customary to speak of the suppression of the Guilds, and though in a certain sense it is true, for it was during the period of the Reformation that the Guilds finally lost their privileges, yet we must look to economic influences operating on the Guilds from without rather than to legislative action for the ultimate cause of their defeat. The Guilds were local organisations. They regulated currency and trade conditions in the towns. But outside of the towns in the rural areas, scattered about in out-of-the-way places, there gradually came into existence industries which were subject

to no regulation or control. These industries were at first of the domestic order, and it was through exploiting them that capitalism first got its foothold. As early as the beginning of the fourteenth century we learn of the existence of this "domestic system" of industry, especially in the manufacture of cloth and articles made from it. The Guilds early began to feel the competition of this new capitalist industry. There are complaints of goods so produced being of inferior material; that one master would employ many journeymen, have too many apprentices, and pay them a lower wage than was allowed by the Guilds, while some trades, as, for instance, the cappers and fullers, began to suffer from the competition of wares produced by machinery driven by water-mills. This led to so much impoverishment among the craftsmen of the towns that fulling mills were forbidden by statute in 1483.*

Not only were the Guilds at a disadvantage in meeting such competition owing to the high standard of quality which they existed to uphold, but they were further handicapped by the fact that the towns came in for taxation which manufacturers outside of the towns were able to escape. "The pressure of the apprenticeship act of Henry IV, the heavy assessment which they paid for the wars with France, and for Henry VII's unnecessary exactions, and lastly the regulations made by the Guilds with regard to apprentices and journeymen, were all telling against the old corporate towns; they were at a disadvantage as compared with neighbouring villages, and there was as a consequence a considerable displacement of industry from old centres to new ones, or to suburbs.† During the fifteenth century a general decay of English towns set in. Migration was no longer from the country to the towns, but from the towns back to the country, and with this change there came the decay of the Guilds which had grown up within the corporate towns.

There can be little doubt that the newer regulations of the Guilds which were regarded as tyrannical, and which we hear of in the fifteenth century, were brought about by the desire of those already in the Guilds to protect themselves against the competition of the rising capitalist industry. At an earlier date it had been possible for every journeyman in the Guild to look forward to a day when he would be able to set up in business on his own account as a master. But now when the monopoly of the Guilds was clearly breaking down before the rise of national industry, and the masters were beginning to feel the pressure of competition, they began to frame regulations not with an eye to the interests of the craft as a whole, which was beyond their power, but solely to protect their own individual interests. Such undoubtedly was the origin of the grievance of the journeymen, for which they obtained redress in 1536, whereby, on becoming apprentices, they were made to swear upon oath not to set up in business in the towns without the consent and licence of the masters, wardens and fellowship of their Guild upon pain of forfeiting their freedom or like penalty.‡ One of the results of this restriction was to aggravate the tendency of journeymen to withdraw from the towns and set up shop in the villages where they were outside of Guild jurisdiction. To do this was often their only chance of getting employment, for the competition of the rural industries inclined the masters more and more to overstock their shops with an undue proportion of apprentices.

The growth of such abuses demonstrated clearly that the craft Guilds were breaking down before the rise of capitalist industry; and it became evident that if industry was to continue to be subject to regulation the Guild system would need to be reorganised upon national lines, or, in other words, that Guild regulation should be made co-extensive with industry and the various local Guilds linked up or federated into

* See "An Introduction to English Economic History and Theory." By W. J. Ashley. Vol. I, Part II, pp. 139-155.

* "Growth of English Industry and Commerce." By W. Cunningham. P. 397.

† Ibid., 460-1. ‡ Ibid., p. 455-6.

national ones. Some such general notion appears to have inspired the attempts at Guild re-organisation by Henry VII and Henry VIII. They tried in the first place to get the Guilds entirely under the control of public authorities by enacting that in the future all Guild ordinances should be approved by the justices. "This was the one remedy which complainants had demanded in 1376 and 1473, as well as from the Tudors."* Subject to such control the Guilds were encouraged. But the measures they took were altogether inadequate to cope with the economic situation which was developing. Instead of seeking to establish a national system of Guilds they merely extended certain local privileges, giving certain Guilds the right to search in rural areas within a certain radius of the towns. Justices of the Peace were to appoint searchers for the shires.†

We can easily imagine why such measures were ineffective. Capitalism had already got a firm foothold, and it could not be brought under control except by the most determined action on the part of the authorities, and Justices of the Peace would not be the kind of people to act in such a way. If regulations are going to be enforced, it must be that those empowered to enforce them suffer if they neglect in their duty, as is the case with a democratically constituted Guild. Such Guilds might have been established in the rural areas at the time of the Great Revolt. But the opportunity which then presented itself was lost. The peasants threw away their opportunity when they demanded the liberty to buy and sell instead of the protection of Guilds. And now the problem was not such a simple one. The development of foreign trade made the problem of fixing and regulating prices an extremely difficult one, and nothing short of a great popular movement demanding such reforms would have sufficed to render such measures practicable. But no such movement existed. The peasants, who had been driven off the land to make room for sheep, resented the monopolies of the Guilds. They had no idea of the value of their services in regulating currency, and welcomed action which removed their monopoly. "The disendowment of religion in the mysteries evidently accelerated the transformation of the system; for it removed one strong bond of union among the members, and limited their common efforts to the range of their material interests."‡

The Guilds received their death-blow when they found themselves no longer able to fix the prices of commodities, for everything turns upon this. If prices can be fixed, then it is a comparatively easy matter to enforce a standard of quality and maintain the internal discipline of the Guilds, but if prices cannot be fixed, then a standard of quality cannot be enforced, and the Guilds' jurisdiction over their members tends to become restricted within increasingly narrow limits. The Guilds found themselves unable to determine prices during the sixteenth century. In 1503 they lost their autonomy in this respect, when it was enacted that any change in the price of wares had to be "approved by the Chancellor, Treasurer of England and Chief Justices of either Bench or three of them; or before both the Justices of Assizes in their circuit."§ But what finally broke the monopoly of the Guilds was the growing desire of the public to have prices fixed by "the haggling of the market." No doubt, they had acquired this taste through buying the products of the capitalist industry which was subject to no regulation; and they came to demand the same terms from the Guild masters, who, presumably, suffering from competition, were unable to offer effective resistance. And so the Guilds fell. From this time onwards the Guilds lose their public functions. In the seventeenth century, journeymen were excluded from their membership, and they continue as societies of employers. Two or three,

even a dozen occupations, become united in one company (for they cease to be called Guilds), which bears the name of the occupation followed by the more influential citizens. Such companies continue to exist to this day in old towns in the provinces, as well as in London, and have given rise to the various Chambers of Commerce of our day.

The Elizabethan Statute of Apprentices passed in 1563 may perhaps be regarded as an honest attempt to save something from the wreck. The Mediæval policy of regulating prices having broken down, it sought to protect the position of the skilled worker from deteriorating under competition.

According to it no one could lawfully exercise, either as master or as journeyman, any art, mystery, or manual occupation, except he had been brought up therein seven years, at least, as an apprentice. Every householder dwelling in a city, town-corporate, or market town, might take apprentices for seven years at least. But only those youths might be taken as apprentices whose parents possessed a certain fortune; and none could be bound but those who were under twenty-one years of age. Whoever had three apprentices must keep one journeyman; and for every other apprentice above three, one other journeyman. As to journeymen, it was enacted that, in most trades, no person should retain a servant under one whole year, and no servant was to depart or be put away but upon a quarter's warning. The hours of work were fixed by the Act to about twelve in summer, and from day-dawn till night in winter. Wages were to be assessed yearly by the justices of the peace or the town magistrates, at every general session first to be holden after Easter. The same authorities were to settle all disputes between masters and apprentices, and protect the latter.*

Though this was, I believe, an honest attempt to protect the skilled workers, its mischief lay in the power given to the justices of the peace to determine wages, for in effect it handed the workers over to the mercy of their employers. Thorold Rogers condemns it severely on this account, affirming that it brought down wages to a bare subsistence. All the same, the Act does not appear to have been unpopular among the workers, for in the eighteenth century, when the assessment of wages had fallen into disuse, and wages had begun to be settled by competition, the workers in the skilled trades repeatedly petitioned Parliament to compel the justices to carry out the regulations as to apprentices, which they recognised would tend, by limiting the number practising a particular craft, to keep up the standard of wages. "When year after year, notwithstanding all the petitions of the workmen, the Acts regulating woollen manufacture were suspended a factory was burnt down; and in September, 1805, the London Fire Insurance Companies received letters of caution from workmen, wherein they declared that as Parliament refused to protect their rights they would do it themselves.† It was determined action of this kind that brought the whole question to a head and led to the repeal of the Statute in the woollen trade in 1806, and for all trades in 1814. And this, in spite of the fact that in petitions presented to Parliament 300,000 were for the maintenance of the Statute, and only 2,000 for its repeal.‡

The repeal of this statute declared the state of industrial disorganisation and disorder as the only lawful state. This state became only too soon the prevailing one in all trades. Parliamentary reports on the condition of the ribbon trade and the silk manufacture at Coventry, Nuneaton, and Macclesfield describe, as the immediate consequence of the repeal, such a growth of the system of sweaters and half-pay apprentices, that the journeymen were driven to famine, and the female workers to prostitution. "Whilst the statute of the 5th Eliz. was in force," says the report, "the distressing circumstances now complained of never occurred." The whole of the masters and weavers therefore petitioned in 1818 for the extension of the Spitalfields Acts to the silk trade in the

* Ibid., p. 456. † Ibid., 457. ‡ Ashley. Vol. I, Part II, p. 158. § Ashley, p. 159.

* "Brentano's "History and Development of Gilds," p. 103. † Ibid., pp. 112-3. ‡ Ibid., p. 128.

said places. Reports of the years 1817 and 1818 give an absolutely identical account of the condition of the watch-makers at Coventry. Further, as the justices of the peace no longer assessed wages after having heard masters and men, the workmen now endeavoured to introduce regulation of wages by statement-lists of prices, agreed upon by masters and men. But they were violated upon every occasion by the employers. The words which Pitt spoke on the subject of the Arbitration Act were now completely fulfilled. "The time will come," he said, "when manufactures will have been so long established, and the operatives not having any other business to flee to, that it will be in the power of any one man in a town to reduce the wages, and all the other manufacturers must follow. If ever it does not arrive at this pitch, Parliament, if it be not then sitting, ought to be called together, and if it cannot redress your grievances its power is at an end. Tell me not that Parliament cannot—it is omnipotent to protect." The workmen were quite of the opinion of Pitt, and numberless were the petitions which, after 1814, they addressed to Parliament for the legal regulation of their trades. But as Parliament thought it could not redress their grievances they tried self-help. After the repeal of the Act of Elizabeth, combinations and unions therefore arose in all trades. But whilst, on the one hand, the workmen were refused legal protection, self-help in consequence of the 39th and 40th Geo. III, c. 106, was considered a crime. In 1818, bail to the amount of £200 and two sureties for £100 each were required for the appearance of a common workman at the next session to answer a charge of combining. The greatest mischief was, however, that the Combination Laws, by confounding right and wrong, led men to regard with less aversion things really vicious. The people, in their despair, did not shrink from the greatest deeds of violence and the most infamous crimes in self-defence.*

That the Guild should in the past have suffered so much from misunderstanding and misrepresentation is in no small measure due to economic historians, who, in spite of all their learning, have usually failed to exhibit any grip on reality. Until Mr. Lipson wrote his "Economic History of England," it was the custom after describing the Guilds to dismiss them with an air of patronising superiority. Thus, Prof. Ashley, from whose economic history I have quoted, after writing about the Craft Guilds with sympathy and understanding, dismisses them finally in these words:—

Although it is unsafe to philosophise about historical development, it is hardly rash to say this much—that in every stage of social evolution there are particular needs that have to be met, and particular tendencies in human character which call either for repression or stimulus. And, speaking generally, we may say that in the later Middle Ages the time had not yet come for the free play of individual enterprise. It was rather a time when elementary conceptions of good and honest work needed to be driven into the general conscience by minute rules vigorously enforced; when what was required was discipline rather than spontaneity.†

Professor Ashley brings no evidence in support of this perfectly extraordinary conclusion. What evidence is there to prove that the removal of Guild restrictions has been followed by any beneficial results? Can it be claimed that "elementary conceptions of good and honest work" do not need to be driven into the general conscience to-day, that we stand in no need of discipline, or that the arts of to-day exceed in spontaneity those of the Middle Ages? To say that an institution like the Guilds is necessary at one stage of industrial development and not at another is sheer nonsense, for it means in effect that the suppression of abuses is in the public interest at one period of history but not at another, and that honesty in trade relationships was good when industry was in its infancy, but that a highly organised system of industry can well afford to dispense with morals. If Professor Ashley philosophised more about historical developments, I doubt whether he would hazard opinions so rash.

* Brentano, pp. 129-131. † Ashley. Vol. I, Part II, pp. 167-8.

Readers and Writers.

I FOUND Dr. Oscar Levy's opinions, as expressed in the series of aphorisms recently published in these hospitable pages, sufficiently contradictory to spare me the attempt to make head or tail of his thesis. What was it that Dr. Levy would have us think—or Germany—or Democrats—or Christians? Doubtless, there is a meaning in Dr. Levy's mind, or he could not so invariably produce the same effect even of bewilderment in his readers; but for the most part he becomes ironical the more nearly he approaches his personal and ultimate creed, with the consequence that his readers miss him just when they think they are about to discover him. In the following letter, actually addressed by Dr. Levy to a German professor, and translated for THE NEW AGE, I may say, by Mr. P. V. Cohn, Dr. Levy appears to me to be as explicit as he is ever likely to be. Precise words are still wanting; and, perhaps, there are good reasons for the ambiguity; but the meaning can be read between the lines with less than the usual difficulty. Here is the letter:—

TRUTH AS A MATTER OF POLICY.

(Open Letter to Professor H—.)

Dear Professor,—My recent conversation with you was so profoundly interesting that I should like once more to go over the ground that we traversed. Your presentiment of the German *post bellum* spirit, with its refusal to discuss the question, "Who was guilty?" did not come to me altogether as a surprise; but the fact that I had not seen my own theories on the subject confirmed by so high an authority as yourself lent a peculiar value to your remarks. I regard this spirit as a very dangerous one—and that, too, from reasons of policy.

I can, of course, quite well understand a man's preferring the claims of patriotism to those of truth, but on one condition only: that he at least knows where the truth lies. "My country, right or wrong!" said the Englishman in the Boer War, but surely there was no thinking Briton who did not realise that his country, on that occasion, was in the wrong. I lived in England, as you know, for twenty years, and was able to obtain convincing evidence at the time, through my own eyes and ears, of the strong moral opposition to that campaign. To care not a jot whether one is in the right or in the wrong betokens a very dangerous frame of mind. So complete a lack of self-criticism and self-analysis can scarcely be found in any other nation. The Englishman is saved from this pitfall by his puritanical conscience, the Frenchman by his training in psychology, the Russian by his Christian, often morbid, consciousness of sin. The German national soul, on the other hand, seems to me like a morass into which we sink without coming upon any firm ground in the shape of right or wrong, true or false, beautiful or ugly, good or evil. Can you blame the foreigner for declining to build a house of friendship on such treacherous soil?

If in the course of our conversation I expressed the view that the German-Swiss and others who raised protests—such men as Lichnowsky, Grelling, Rosemeier, Muehlton, Förster, Fernau, Eisner, Stilgebauer—ranked as the leading lights of present-day Germany, I did not assign so high a place to these gentlemen because I consider them particularly gifted in the political sphere. On the contrary, I hold that their talents lie in the region of ethics, and for me, as a disciple of Nietzsche, ethics are not always identical with politics. The pressing need of the moment, however, is to regain the confidence of the world, and this we can only do through the agency of the men who love the truth, who are free from national prejudices and political entanglements. When I urged this, you objected that these people "are not clever enough for such responsible positions." I know only one of them personally, and even with him my acquaintance is slight, so that on this point I can form no valid judgment. But even assuming that you

are right, assuming that moral enthusiasm has led our paladins of truth to ignore the realities of this imperfect world, I can still bring forward a powerful counter-argument in the shape of officialdom, which allows no one, not even a statesman of genius like Bismarck, to rule undisturbed, without imposing its checks and offering its advice. Can anyone, I ask you, make a worse mess of things than the so-called "brains" of our civil and military administration, than the petty Jesuits and amateur criminals who have hitherto posed as statesmen in Germany, and, accepted by the Germans as such, have brought the whole world about their ears?

I repeat: I am not passing a moral verdict. I understand and, under certain circumstances, respect the politician whose methods are not entirely free from objection. But it is an essential feature of immoralism (which, as history teaches, is sometimes practised with success) that one should at least understand morality. To-day, more than ever, should we understand morality and take it into account, for never before has it played a more prominent part in the life of nations and the opinion of individuals. Politicians who pass it by with a careless shrug of the shoulders remind one of those painters who cheerfully set to work without having mastered the technique of their craft—and I know that you think no more than I do of such "wielders of the brush." During the war these dilettantes might still proclaim with some show of justice, "We won't stab our troops in the back!" but *after* an unsuccessful war, whom do they stab in the back with their continual lying? Why, the very men who, in Europe and America, are working for an understanding! And since it is more important for a defeated nation than for its opponents that an understanding should be reached, this would-be clever attitude is worse than a crime; it is a blunder!

I hope you will excuse my plain speaking, in which I have been encouraged by your own sincerity and evident anxiety for your country's welfare, and remain,

OSCAR LEVY.

The political question involved in the foregoing letter does not concern me here; but the ethical question is one for general discussion. It appears to me, I must confess, that if, as Dr. Oscar Levy asserts, the present German spirit of non-recognition of German wrong is "dangerous," much more dangerous, and even, I would say, much more German, is the spirit of Dr. Levy's own letter. For what is it of which Dr. Levy complains in the case of present-day Germans, and what is the remedy he would suggest? It will be observed that nowhere does he complain that the Germans have actually done wrong; his only complaint is that they have failed to recognise that it *was* wrong. It is not, in fact, the wrong he deplores, but the intellectual or "moral" inability of the Germans to realise that the world would call it wrong. His remedy naturally follows the same line. Nowhere, it will be again observed, does Dr. Levy attempt to dissuade the German, or any other people, from doing wrong: all he asks is that they should realise before acting that what they are about to do will be reckoned as right or wrong. In other words, they are to have an appreciation of moral distinctions; but they are not called upon to be guided by them, except by way of taking them into account as conditions under which any act must be performed. Now this I call a more dangerous view than the view now prevalent among German professors, for the simple reason that it professes to be *above* morality. The German professors, Dr. Oscar Levy complains, realise no difference between right and wrong. They are incapable of appreciating the fact that the world's judgment declares certain things to be right and others wrong, and of submitting to this fact as a condition of existence. Dr. Levy, on the other hand, quietly prides himself on his appreciation of the world's moral values; but, at the same time, while taking them into account, he would propose to ignore or to circumvent them as his will-to-power demanded.

That this attitude of super-morality is arrogant in the extreme is obvious on comparing it with the corresponding attitude adopted by the "superior" to the "backward" races or by man in general to the animal kingdom. In each of these cases we have the same assumption on the part of the superior, and in each case for the same end, as a rule. In our relations with savage peoples, as also in our relations with animals, we make a point of understanding the superstitions and psychology of the inferior creatures, and even of humouring their idiosyncrasies—but only to the extent that such indulgence is advantageous to ourselves. A British Governor of the Cameroons or of the Bhil tribes of India; a mighty hunter or ivory-collector of British East Africa—would not, of course, be expected to share the superstitions of the people he governed, or to act on the instincts of the animals he hunted. All the same, a competent man would be annoyed if you were to tell him that he did not understand the superstitions of the one or the habits of the other; and his effective reply would be to point to his own success. Success in dealing with his material would, in short, be the vindication of his policy. But success, we may ask, from whose point of view? It is, of course, conceivable that a British Governor, placed as imagined, may reckon his success in terms of the welfare of his charges; that is to say, his freedom from the prejudices of the inferior people may be used as a means to that people's advantage. Similarly, it is conceivable that a man may use his understanding of animals for their and not for his own advantage. Usually, however, in the case of "inferior" creatures, whether human or animal, the object to be achieved by the "superior" is not the good of the charge, but the good of the superior himself. His "success" is measured in his own terms, and has no necessary relation with the "success" of his victims. Now Dr. Oscar Levy, it appears to me, has precisely this attitude—but with this difference that whereas, hitherto, by common consent, this superior attitude has been reserved for our dealings with "inferior" creatures, *he* would have it adopted, if not explicitly, quite deliberately, by the ruling classes or ruling nations even among the supposedly "superior" races themselves. He repeats, it is obvious, the advice of Machiavelli to the would-be "prince" everywhere: despise the morality of your people, but *use* it.

* * *

Given that I am right in my interpretation of his point of view, Dr. Oscar Levy's letter to his professional German friend may be paraphrased somewhat thus: "You foolish Germans! Can't you *realise* the nature of the human beast over whom you propose to exercise your will-to-power? Can't you *feel* and *see* that they are morally and fanatically superstitious—and draw the practical conclusion that your wise course, if you are to succeed, is to respect those superstitions—not, of course, by sharing them but by appearing to bow to them? But how can you even bow to them if you do not understand them? How can you recover the goodwill of a superstitious world if you fail to understand its superstitions, and, in consequence, outrage them? That you are entitled to ignore in your innermost policy all these superstitions, I, as an old Nietzschean, readily agree. I tell you so, in fact. But you cannot even safely ignore them unless you understand them. Hence, the beginning of your reform is to realise their existence and to admit that your war has been 'wrong.'"—Such a paraphrase, I think, is just to Dr. Oscar Levy's text. But it will be seen that the doctrine is dangerous, more dangerous, it appears to me, than the spirit it seeks to displace. Moreover, I am by no means sure that in preaching it in Germany, Dr. Levy is not carrying owls to Athens. Reineke Fuchs or Reynard the Fox is a German totem.

R. H. C.

Art Notes.

By B. H. Dias.

MR. POUND mistakes both my tone and my attitude; but whatever I might think of Wyndham Lewis' work, I cannot, in fairness to other artists, use these columns for the criticism of any painting save that which has been publicly exhibited. I have, as a matter of fact, seen the Baker collection, but I can include neither that nor the works which Mr. Pound sent to New York in an estimate of Mr. Lewis' work unless I am also to include the unexhibited work of Mr. Lewis' contemporaries. I am, however, quite willing to admit that Mr. Lewis is one of the dozen, or perhaps even the half-dozen English painters, whose work merits international attention.

International standards are difficult to appraise, and all our knowledge dates from before the war. Contemporary Japanese art consists in imitation of American magazine covers, and imitation of Brangwyn; Viennese art consists or consisted of Zwintscher, a gentleman who imitated old masters; who never, I think, painted a whole picture well, but who inserted in nearly every canvas some patch of masterly workmanship; and Klimt, who imitated Beardsley in gilded and gaudy colours. In Paris there was a Russian lady who did tricky eyes in one or other of the old salons; and there were Picasso, Matisse, Derain, posthumous exhibits of Rousseau, Laurencin (who is no better than some people in London), Metzinger (ditto), Picabia (emphatically ditto), Gleizes, and there was somewhere a person called Kandinsky, and a fine draughtsman named Pascin. Matisse was chiefly to be valued for his innovations in pure colour. In America there is an elderly gentleman called R. Henri; and the more "advanced" painters: Arthur Davies, W. Kuhn, and, if we may judge from reproductions (which we can't), a master of water-colour called Demuth.

This list is, naturally, not complete. There is Signac, De Segonzac, probably Balla, Severini; it is possible Castelvich is still in the running, though he probably belongs to a past era, and one forgets how bad a painter may be when one hasn't seen his work for five years. There was also a man who painted allegorical Greek subjects in blue and white and hung in the Independents. All of which, let me repeat, is not an attempt to give a complete catalogue of living passable painters, but simply an endeavour to find out what one means by international standards. Does one mean to count in only living painters, or is one's bogey the Cézanne collection outside the Port Maillot, and the massed work of Van Gogh and Gauguin?

Lavery and Lambert used to have their pictures hung in the Venetian International, but one will scarcely suggest that this is a claim to international importance. An ideal British Academy would include, I suppose:

NICHOLSON, who is a careful and conscientious and meritorious painter, and one who hasn't stopped trying to make each picture a work of art with its own proper and individual interest.

AUGUSTUS JOHN, who was the best painter in England ten years ago; who is not very strong in composition, and rather tends to imitate himself, and to let a single figure float waltzily about in the middle of a canvas, and who is getting less exigent of himself each year.

ORPEN, purely on the strength of past work, and not in any way on account of anything he is now doing or is now likely to do.

PRYDE, because he once painted some rather good pictures.

SICKERT, a man of talent who has done a certain amount of experimenting, honest colour schemes, and courage enough to try the ugly. He has at any rate suited himself, gone his own way, not with great individuality or originality.

CHAS. RICKETTS, a very talented archaeologist, and possessed of genius for water colour.

And after these gentlemen it seems to me we must chronologically reach Mr. WYNDHAM LEWIS, peer, at the most moderate estimate, to any of the foregoing. I am willing to hear further nominations from anyone who admires members of the Royal Academy, the Society of Twelve, or other painting organisations.

Coming to the London Group we must first express our sincere regrets for the recent death of

HAROLD GILMAN, a sober and earnest painter, whose work will be greatly missed from their shows. There remain Bevan, Nina Hamnett, Chas. Ginner. And Albert Rothenstein is a talented draughtsman, though not of this group.

I have been going patiently to art shows for some years, but I cannot at the moment recall the names of any other English painters whose work I should care to possess, save that of the very "advanced" group, Wadsworth, Etchells and Roberts, and in the cases of these three I should want to make a very rigorous selection. None of these men and none of the members of the London Group are in Mr. Lewis' class. In sculpture England is beneath all forms of contempt. Both Epstein, the devastator, and Derwent Wood, the hidebound and purblind Academician, are Americans. They are both in their separate ways excellent sculptors.

As for the rest of the painting in England, it consists in the modest private diversion of several untalented painters; the expression of several forms of conceit; the deliberate attempt to make money without any concern for art, and the purely unscrupulous bluff of Messrs. X, Y, Q, M., etc.

There are also some honest tradesmen earning their weekly and monthly living by fulfilling contracts, making illustrations, etc. There is also the type of person whose work is published in "Colour"; this constitutes a lower level of the various classes I have mentioned.

I have omitted names quite well known to the so-called "public," but I trust I have committed no sins of forgetfulness. (N.B.—If I have forgotten anyone I will admit the fact on receipt of notification.)

NATIONAL PORTRAIT SOCIETY.

A lady of established social position asks me not to slate Sargent's portrait of Mrs. A. "because every fool in London has done so"; unfortunately there is no other reason for ignoring the fact that No. 22 is an exceedingly bad picture of almost the worst possible sort; and as a little card informs us that it has never been exhibited before, one wonders at the reputedly modest perpetrator's having permitted its present exposure. I have no doubt that the great man did so out of charity to his younger competitors, and in the hope that they would shine by comparison. Several do, and the show is almost worth visiting.

Guevara's "Walter Taylor" is clever, a good likeness, in an excellent colour-scheme of somewhat Matisse-like tonality. It is the most interesting canvas in the building, though it has a poor cat in the background. Guevara's No. 1 is fancy work. Strang's (2) is carefully delineated, and the paint well put on. V. Forbes, No. 4, prize example of bold desperadism. McEvoy's (5) has no merit. His (12) is the "sweet pretty," his (31) has some nice colour in the background.

Wolmark (7), is Munichism gone to seed. E. B. Johnson shows in (8) a presumable likeness; Philpot, in (11), pseudo-old-masterism with some *métier*; Lavery in (13), some pretty obscurity. Rankin (14) slops along in McEvoy's vestiges. D. Jagger's (15) is posed. F. Howard, in (20), has made an excellent picture, but left out the likeness to his sitter; Sickert shows a probably commendable dirtiness in (21). John has the likeness of Davies in (23); Rankin's (24) is bad colour. W. J. Leech has probably drawn the face well in (33),

and used simple and pleasing colour. G. F. Kelly does not shine as a sculptor.

O. Gardner (71), more incompetence; B. Munns has been very careful about Sir T. Beecham's shirt-front and waistcoat; Stuart-Hill uses suave tone in the coat and velvet, but has skimmed the pearls, and the fur of (80). One might dismiss most of the rest of the show as "the usual bluffs and incompetences"; F. Hodgkins needs firm negation; Tytgat ditto; Strang's (192) is bad imitation of himself. Miss Hamnett is Paris of six years ago, and rather too wooden in (223), but considerably more successful in (210); E. Sawyer (239) shows the usual colour photo with rather unusual care.

The Subconscious Influence of Nature.

By Millar Dunning.

WHERE are we masters of the situation and where are we the unconscious victims? We live in a planet, every phase of which is the manifestation of some order or degree of life. To those manifestations other than ourselves, we necessarily stand in some certain relation—a relationship which has for us an all-important though untold significance.

The object of this paper is therefore to set forth certain thoughts on the matter, and, if possible, to show that the elemental products of nature possess a high degree of intimacy with ourselves, and, though by no means consciously, exercise an influence which is in itself highly inimical though perhaps necessary to the essential spirit of human progress. Indeed, it might not be too much to say that the whole attitude of this lower life towards mankind is one of consuming antagonism, of subtle insinuation and encroachment, exercising that power of tireless persistence which is the vital characteristic of all basic forms and conditions of life.

For the purpose of illustrating this idea let us select but two aspects of nature each of which, in the scale of evolution, hangs very low—first, mere vegetable existence in the form of trees, and, secondly, the still less tangible combination of forces which goes to make up the visible world, including earth, rock and water, and whatever higher things it may be in their nature to contain.

In respect to trees, and especially those of the virgin forest, at least some people will have experienced their curious influence and their power under certain circumstances to force on the human spirit a mood startlingly like that of the vegetable itself. As a conscious and well-defined experience it is probably rare, and in view of the great disparity which exists between the human being and the vegetable, one cannot help but suppose that the disposition on the part of the human being to become greatly affected exhibits itself only under some set of conditions, peculiarly unfavourable to his self-assertion such as where the influence of the trees in their spring-time ascendancy works in on the man in his period of spiritual depression. And, indeed, the degree of fluctuation to which the spirituality of a man is subject is enormous, so that at times he is naturally little more than a vegetable.

Added to this we must remember that the greater part of our spiritual vitality lives in and depends on the mental associations we carry with us. Thus if we become surrounded by circumstances which are totally new and strange, our connection with the world to

which we are accustomed becomes severed, and we are, as it were, cut off from our stronghold. We become weak. It must be noted, on the other hand, that the impossibility of dissociation is perhaps the point of greatest strength in the tree, as of all life that is immobile. As for the civilised man he can suffer no dissociation so complete as that experienced in the depths of a really dense forest. He is perhaps shut off from the sky; he can see no distance in front of him; his every movement is hampered; his sense of direction becomes lost; there is but little light; the ground and a variety of fungoid growths exude strange odours, while the trees themselves would seem to press in on him from every side. Under these circumstances he becomes as one possessed by a low and almost groveling state of inspiration, compelling him through the whole range of his conceptions to live on a lower plane. He becomes as one who, having tasted the wine of the menial gods, sees opened to him the grim glories of their heaven, together with the sordid byways of their every-day world. So that while his outlook on life remains perfectly comprehensive, it is, nevertheless, toned down and reduced to the inspired state of his pre-historic ancestors.

Let us now consider the wider and more subtle influence, similar in many respects, yet far more difficult to detect, as it is more far-reaching in its general operation—the force exercised by the great and varied panorama, by the combined and blended influence of mountains, ocean, rugged sea-coast, vast uplands of virgin forest, or, more probably, a combination in which one or other of these features predominates.

That such environment is not necessarily ennobling is more than suggested by the characteristics peculiar to all bucolic peoples and people of every description living in small and isolated communities. Still more eloquent is the phenomenon of the absolute hermit. In him we frequently see an actual retrogressive movement which sometimes approaches very nearly its ultimate state. But while this may be more or less true of the effect of every natural environment, it will be found more especially true of scenes possessing qualities of the grotesque and the macabre—such as give rise to a multitude of self-estranging, almost non-human, thoughts.

In such as these we have a power which may readily eke its way to our souls, and, by regaining our submission, reduce us almost swiftly to something too nearly akin to its own essential character, and from which state there is no such speedy escape. Take, for example, the following scene and its possible effect.

* * * * *

It is a hill-side slope which leads down to the sea. The country around is almost barren producing only reeds and dry heather-like shrubs. But beneath, there is a long stretch of water, leading out and narrowing in the distance. The land on either side sends out winding arms, reaching, some of them, almost to midstream. Of these there is a long succession, so that the last peninsula is but a blue point piercing a watery horizon. On the side of the sea there is a city. On the other, a number of villas, but these are all in middle distance. Here, at the head of the gulf, all is deserted. In the farthest distance it is the same. Here, near at hand, the sea is oval-shaped and wide, and dips in under the overhanging cliffs. But it is a still, solemn sea, and although sometimes it flashes with all the glory of magnificent sunrise, its prevailing mood is one of shadows and sombre hues. Its waters, from early morning to late evening, remain dull and motionless, while the sky above is invariably a watery realm of spiritualised grey, beaming with low translucent colours, and formed into almost living, fantastic shapes. On the southern shore there are forests of great pines, whose reflections reach black and ominous many miles across

the water. Between the hills, the long tidal rivers make winding sheets of liquid mirrors. Not a breath of air disturbs the lightest thistledown, and the sunshine, which is ignorant of warmth and almost of light, is all that gains an entrance. So intense are the limitations of sombre grey that of realms beyond nothing is suggested but things still more deathly. It is a scene for banished souls, where a merciful fate decrees they shall die by the slow poison of what they look upon. The very sea speaks infinite depths and untold fathoms of perishing water. The clouds hang low, heavy with things of evil essence and formless things of death. They close in from every side, to make their daily fare on those who walk beneath, drawing through the eyes all the warmth and life the centuries have stored in their hearts—as though these were the sacrifices fallen to their altar, and over whom they would ceaselessly pause, sucking slowly through the soundless nights and sunless days, and leaving in the end nothing but the dead—spiritless relics of a bitter and fruitless past.

* * * * *

Nor would it be difficult to imagine a graduated series of scenes, each one growing less fearful, until at last we arrived at one altogether idyllic. But even then a close inspection of the feelings occasioned by it would reveal something not at all permanently acceptable whether considered in the person of one who submitted to it consciously, or in its combined effect on a small, unthinking community.

The truth of this will become more apparent when we realise that every phase or state of existence outside our own is significant of some powerful human idea, over which we hold but a small degree of mastery, and that scenes significant of death—of great joy or great sorrow—of great danger or great isolation—of great altitudes of existence, or more especially of great states of vegetation or of animalism, are in reality what they are in effect—powerful entities which by their very nature automatically tend towards our overthrow. We ourselves are built more or less in accordance with some law of highly complex harmony, and, on analysis, prove to be a complicated combination of certain phases or aspects of all the vast number of our external conditions and surroundings. But these external forces possess but one comparatively simple attribute, and one which, while proper to our own constitution, far out-measures any of the elements contained in ourselves, and thus, by an element peculiar to the human character, making the intimate and prolonged submission to a force immeasurably superior to its human counterpart a highly consequential procedure.

Nor is it conceivable that any exterior influence could possess for us such unique proportions that we might receive it without qualifying opposition. Outside ourselves there is, broadly speaking, no single entity more highly organised, or of such description, that it could possibly meet the case of what is essentially human, or in any way claim with us a high degree of affinity. To hold ourselves indiscriminate in what we would absorb, or inviolate to its influence, is to assume that state of entirety towards which we strive—the state towards which, whether consciously or unconsciously, or even perversely, all evolving existences tend—a consummation far beyond our present subservience to fatalistic powers.

We may say, therefore, that the ultimate survival of the greater if not the whole part of mankind depends, first of all, on his power of resistance as an individual, and, secondly, on his power of resistance as a member of a group. For the mass of mankind number is essential. Except for the select highly conscious few, to be outnumbered by nature is to be numbered with the things which must die.

Views and Reviews.

THE THEORY OF RE-INCARNATION.

I HAVE been so bombarded, during my recent illness, with correspondence on this subject, that I take this opportunity of trying to clear up the confusion. Most of my correspondents, I notice, agree that only the "soul" re-incarnates, and leave me to infer that any application of the theory of re-incarnation to explain material or physical phenomena is illegitimate. My reply is a plea of non-responsibility; it is the propounders of the theory, not I, who have explained material and physical phenomena by the application of the theory of re-incarnation, with its concomitant theory of Karma. We are told, for example: "Nothing but such certainty can quiet our revolted sense of justice. For, when one unacquainted with the noble doctrine looks around him, and observes the inequalities of birth and fortune, of intellect and capacities; when one sees honour paid to fools and profligates, on whom fortune has heaped her favours by mere privilege of birth, and their nearest neighbour, with all his intellect and noble virtues—far more deserving in every way—perishing of want and for lack of sympathy; when one sees all this and has to turn away, helpless to relieve the undeserved suffering, one's ears ringing and heart aching with the cries of pain around him—that blessed knowledge of Karma alone prevents him from cursing life and men, as well as their supposed Creator."

That passage is quoted from the "Secret Doctrine," ii, 317; it alleges specifically that the doctrine of Karma, which requires re-incarnation as its mode of operation, is alone capable of explaining "inequalities of birth and fortune, of intellect and capacities." If it explains genius, as it does, by asserting that the genius is reaping the harvest of studies made in a previous life, it must explain idiocy, for example, as a result of disuse. The Law of Karma is proclaimed as being as universal and invariable as the law of gravitation, of which, indeed, it seems to be a psychological extension; and a universal law must be universally applicable. It must explain the congenital idiot, the congenital cripple, the congenital sufferer from disease, just as clearly as it explains the existence of the congenital genius, of the saint, or of the "favourite of Fortune." It does so by alleging that "as a man sows, so shall he reap" here or hereafter; it alleges that the origin of present fortune or misfortune is in a previous life, and that its cause is the inevitable, the invariable, the universal justice that is called Karma.

I have not the space to elaborate the theory, or its mode of operation; concerning the latter, this quotation from Annie Besant's "Study in Consciousness," pp. 98-100, must suffice: "When the time for re-incarnation comes, and the presence of the Permanent Atom renders possible the fertilisation of the ovum from which the new body is to grow, its keynote sounds out, and is one of the forces which guide the ethereal builder to choose the material suitable for his work, for he can use none that cannot be to some extent attuned to the permanent atom. But it is only one of the forces; the Karma of past lives, mental, emotional, and in relation to others, demands materials capable of the most varied expressions; out of that Karma the Lords of Karma have chosen such as is congruous, and this congruous mass of Karma determines the material group, overriding the permanent atom, and out of that group are chosen by the ethereal builder such materials as can vibrate in harmony with the permanent atom, or in discords not disruptive in their violence." I emphasise the point that it is "this congruous mass of Karma" that "determines the material group"; and I repeat that the citation of structural abnormalities, of teratological cases, of morbid or simply rare specimens, is strictly relevant to the discussion of the theory.

The opposing argument defeats itself. If only the "soul" re-incarnates, and the soul has nothing to do with the bodily structure, if the Law of Karma does not explain congenital diseases and deformities, then "that blessed knowledge of Karma" does not make apparent the justice of undeserved suffering. There is between my correspondents and myself a profound agreement on this point; Karma, working by means of re-incarnation, is not an explanation of the observed "inequalities of birth and fortune, of intellect and capacities."

If we press for proof of the theory, there is none; you cannot prove the justice of undeserved suffering. Indeed, the defect of the theory, as of all ethical theory, is that it tries to establish personal responsibility for things which are not universally personal in origin. Dr. Johnson did not "deserve" his scrofula any more than Ludwig of Bavaria "deserved" his insanity. It is the idea of justice itself that is illegitimately imported into the consideration of such questions, for justice has no relevance to anything but the deliberate actions of human beings. But although it is impossible to prove the moral origin of physical defects or excellencies, the attempt has been made, as I said before, to claim the science of astrology as a technical demonstration of the theory of re-incarnation. Yet if we read the very statement of the claim, we see how flimsy it is; the late Alan Leo did much for astrology, as he also did much to popularise theosophical teachings, but he never demonstrated the connection between them, so far as I can discover; indeed, astrologers are divided into "esoteric" and "exoteric," and seem to detest each other with real heartiness. But when we discover where Alan Leo jumped off, or jumped in, we need not be surprised at his failure: here is his own explanation in the series of four lectures appended to "Astrology for All," p. 333. "The Moon at the moment of epoch," he says, "will indicate the sign of the zodiac that is to make the ascendant or descendant of the nativity; and you could predict from that lunar position the whole of the horoscope and say what kind of child would be manifesting about nine months hence, its fate, disposition, and character; for in that moment, its whole future history seems to be concerned. And it is impossible for any birth to take place before the Moon reaches this particular position, before the appointed time, as it were. This fact it was that led me to the idea of re-incarnation. I could come to no other conclusion but that since Ego was to be born into a special set of conditions there must be some inherent necessity in that soul which linked it to those conditions; this necessity could be nothing but a state of development, and this development must have been attained in some previous existence."

But it is precisely this "necessity" which has never been demonstrated; Alan Leo "could come to no other conclusion" because he held no other theory of man than that which needs Karmic re-incarnation for its explanation—a theory of creative evolution, for example, would make his "necessity" as superfluous as we already know it to be scientifically valueless. "Fact I know, and Law I know; but what is this Necessity save an empty shadow of my own mind's throwing?" Alan Leo had forgotten his Huxley when he assumed the point at issue, and saw in the pre-natal epoch the proof of re-incarnation; for other astrologers see in the epoch only another definite act of creation of which they are able to forecast the consequences. Karmic re-incarnation is a necessary or a valuable theory only to those who have no acquaintance with any other; it is simply a post hoc, ergo, propter hoc theory of morals; belief in it simplifies nothing, on the contrary, to such a writer as the author of "Pro Christo et Ecclesia," "it offends the instinct of justice in any healthy mind that believes in God"—in other words, it raises the very question of justice that it professes to settle. It is a purely speculative theory that is incap-

able of development; it offers sin as the explanation of suffering, and bolsters up its own inefficiency as an explanation by an equally imaginary theory of previous lives.

A. E. R.

Reviews.

My Reminiscences. By Fanny, Lady Blunt. With an Introduction by Admiral Sir Rosslyn Wemyss, G.C.B. (Murray. 15s. net.)

It is not the fortune of the Consular Service to be famous in the country that it represents, and to few indeed of the reading public will the name of Sir John Blunt recall one of our most successful Consuls-General in the Levant. Lady Blunt's reminiscences will appeal primarily to her friends, for personal reasons; but with the general public, the book can only appeal on its merits as a book. Her reminiscences consist, in the main, of small talk, very small talk indeed, of what happened at Salonica, Adrianople, Uskub, and Monastir. The life itself was not dull; if there were not an epidemic raging, there was a massacre, and if there were neither happening at the moment, there was always some political intrigue to be dealt with. But the difficulties of domesticity, and the pleasures of entertainment, are the matters that really arouse Lady Blunt's enthusiasm. The Fleet ranks first in her regard, as might be expected from the "Aunt Fanny" of so many "extraordinary nephews" who are now of flag rank; but in spite of the motto, *Honi soit qui mal y pense*, which she appends to her account of this informal adoption, she reveals nothing more indiscreet than charades and flirtations. Compared with her landing on Mount Athos, or her experiences of fire at the Consulate, these reminiscences of the Navy are trivial. The common sailor who bought a donkey, and paid a sovereign to have it shaved, and the other one who picked up a praying Turk in the street, made him turn three somersaults, and pacified him with a shilling, were much better worth remembering. Most of the book is chatter, but it is the chatter of an accomplished woman who has lived a very full life under conditions that, perhaps, put a premium on the delights of the drawing-room; but the reminiscences of the hard-working wife of a hard-working Consul ought to reveal something more substantial.

Italy's Great War, and Her National Aspirations. By Various Authors. (Fisher Unwin. 5s. net.)

The chief purpose of these essays is to demonstrate to the Allied peoples that Italy's claim to the Trentino and Upper Adige, to Julian Venetia, Fiume, and Dalmatia, is not Imperialistic but nationalistic. All these provinces and colonies belonged to Italy before Turkey and Austria filched them from her; it is argued that they belong to her geographically, racially, strategically, as well as historically. It is true that in some cases there is a considerable Slav population; but the essayists demonstrate that the "Slavization" of these provinces was an anti-Italian policy deliberately furthered by the Austrian Government, and, therefore, the present constitution of the population is not a valid objection to the Italian claim. The authors propose to blot out the history of Austrian oppression, and to revert to the circumstances prevailing before that period began. "France," says one of them, "appeals to the wishes of the inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine as expressed in the famous Proclamation of Bordeaux in 1871. What the Germans have done in the interim to denationalise the two provinces simply does not count, any more than what has been done with the same end in view by Austria in Dalmatia since 1797." The authors accept and define the principle of nationality as "the right of each people to decide its own destinies," and they refuse the appeal to the present inhabitants whenever the vote is likely to be adverse to their

claim, and accept it whenever it will support their claim. Thus, "there is but one solution of the Fiume question which can be termed worthy of serious consideration—the solution which fulfils the expressed wishes of the inhabitants of the city on the Quarnero by uniting them to Italy, their Mother Country." On the other hand, "no weight can be attached to the objection that Fiume is not the whole of the Liburnian region, and that the surrounding country is for the most part inhabited by Slav peasantry. This population is only a small one, since the Liburnian Carso, like the Friulian, is very sparsely populated; moreover, the vote of an illiterate peasant, devoid of national consciousness, who has never spontaneously expressed any ambition beyond that of remaining in undisturbed possession of his little plot of ground, can hardly be regarded as equivalent to that of a citizen whose whole life is dedicated to the preservation of his nationality." That the citizen's vote should count two on a division, and the countryman's none, is a new principle in politics, we think; and we hope that its adoption by the Italians will convince the Slavs that the Austrians were tyrants. With regard to Dalmatia, the world is assured that "it is no spirit of conquest which impels Italy to return to the eastern shore of the Adriatic, but the love of justice and the desire for peace. Italy is a country profoundly liberal, which will know well how to live in peace with all its neighbours, especially with the Slavs, to whom it has promised the reconstitution of their countries and an outlet on the sea. But renunciations here must not be asked of Italy, for one can renounce the superfluous, but not that which is absolutely necessary for existence." It is a very interesting book, particularly in view of the fact that the Italian occupation of Fiume was not accomplished without some resistance by the Slavs.

The Light in the Clearing. By Irving Bacheller. (Collins. 6s. net.)

This is a "good boy" story which introduces Silas Wright, the American democrat, as the kindly benefactor of the "hero," Bart Baynes. The story pleases by the quaintness of its characters rather than by any abounding interest in the character of its hero. He certainly passes through the four perils granted him by the soothsayer, makes the many friends, and marries at twenty-one. But it is Uncle Peabody and Aunt Deel, Mr. Hacket and Silas Wright, the Grimshaw tragedy and the part played in it by "roving Kate," Purvis, the hired man, and "the man with the scythe" (who contradicted with genius), who form the real substance of the story; and we suspect that Bart Baynes, in spite of his acceptance of the democratic ideals put before him by Silas Wright, found his vocation as a novelist. The book is described by the publisher as "a right-thinking American novel of patriotism, ruggedness, self-sacrifice, and romance"; and popcorns agree with the average stomach better than paté de foie gras. It is a book for the young or the very old, those for whom the stream of life runs clear and shallow; and in the person of Amos Grimshaw it warns us against the pernicious effects of "penny bloods."

The New Tariffism. By the Right Hon. J. M. Robertson, M.P. (Allen and Unwin. 2s. 6d. net.)

Mr. Robertson's criticism of the conflicting recommendations made by Lord Balfour's Committee is a timely reminder of the fact that, even in politics, we cannot have things both ways. If the damage done by Germany is to be repaired or compensated for by her, then it is to everybody's interest that all impediments to her activity should be removed. Even if the indemnity could be paid in gold (which it cannot), the gold could only be obtained by a favourable balance of trade; she must export more than she imports. A

starved industry pays no dividends; and if Germany is to repair the ravage she has made, her industry must be fed and encouraged. There is no escape from the dilemma except by the impossible road of impoverishing the German people to extinction. Deny her access to raw materials, and she can take no part in the reconstruction of Europe; the Allies will have to undertake that task, and present the bill to a bankrupt Germany. Exclude her goods from the Allied markets, as the Balfour Committee suggest should be done, for at least a year, and you deny her even the right to repay. Of course, if we are prepared to govern Germany, and to make her industry an annexe of our own, the situation will be very simple; she will no longer be treated as an enemy, and the proposed tariffs and exclusions will no longer apply to her. But on the assumption that she still remains an entity responsible for reparation, Mr. Robertson shows that as fast as we discard the Free Trade system, Germany will be forced to adopt it, because even in her years of slavery, she cannot make bricks without straw or clay. The argument is very familiar to those who have followed the Free Trade v. Tariff Reform controversy, but it is pointed by the problems of practical politics at this moment, and is lifted above a party wrangle by its well-nigh universal implications. If we are not to throw away the fruits of victory, the Germans must become the Helots of Europe; but the Helots cannot work without tools and materials, and without the minimum necessary to subsistence, renewal and reproduction. If we want to jump on Germany, we can do it; but a Helot in a hospital furnishes no supplies, and it is supply, above all, that is demanded from Germany.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

"NOTES OF THE WEEK."

Sir,—I have been studying "C. H. D.'s" "Notes of the Week" with particular care, and entirely fail to understand some of them. Thus in the first note, "The single point we wish to stress . . . accompany the process" is quite unintelligible to me. I am not sure of having grasped the meaning of "entirely apart from any surplus profits." If you mean that x lbs. of cotton turned into manufactured articles are paid for by $x+y$ lbs. of raw cotton, and that these in turn, when manufactured, are again exchanged for $x+y+z$ lbs. of raw cotton, it is obvious that the community gains nothing, and, in fact, one does not see how the manufacturer and workmen are to live. But if you mean that the x lbs. of cotton, when manufactured, are exchanged for x lbs. of raw cotton + y lbs. of coffee or corn or meat, surely the community is the richer by those y lbs.

Your third note is also puzzling. You say, "Let us imagine that the whole of the stupendous output for war purposes had been for peace purposes. How much of this output would that 4s. per week have bought?" But surely that output was bought by our population by means of war loan, war bonds, and taxation. (We may set off the Government creation of notes against the loans to other nations.) Instead of securing to our roads, railways, railway stock, ship building and repairing, building, and the like, we were producing these same for war purposes and at war prices. A considerable amount, too, of munitions were imported, and our exports were comparatively negligible. Again, everyone was doing without the ordinary amount of food, clothing, and other necessities or conveniences of life, and what was bought was at prices which in pre-war days would have purchased twice the amount of commodities. And, finally, the production of commodities was going on at a high pressure, which we do not expect continued in peace-time.

I do not know how you get at your figures of 7,000,000; but, granting it, I do not see why they should not be absorbed. If casualties are allowed for, there must be something like 1,000,000 fewer effective labourers than before the war; there are four years of arrears of home work to be made up, new large schemes of house-

building, transport, power production, and so forth, and, if wages keep up and prices go down, a much larger demand for commodities at home than before the war.

Finally, assuming your dilemma as set out in the latter part of your third note, what would happen if, by the wave of a fairy wand, a capitalistic England could be changed into a Guild England?

This is not written argumentatively, but as a means of getting at your views, and my sole excuse for this letter is that there may possibly be other readers of THE NEW AGE as dull as myself who would be glad of an explanation. S. C.

["C. H. D." replies: The short answer to "S. C.'s" difficulty is that, like many others, he is regarding the matter from the point of statics—i.e., of a fixed relation between money, trade, prices, etc.—whereas the premises are dynamic.

The origin is in the cumulative failure of the total effective internal demand of the consumer to meet production or its exchange value; consequently, export of the surplus is compulsory.

Imports in payment of this surplus cannot be consumed, again because of the failure in private effective demand which is practically represented by what the banker calls personal cash credits. They must consequently be in the form of the raw material of industry for re-export, because the only demand effective against them is loan credit which is in the hands of the financier and manufacturer.

The query in regard to the third note is simply another form of the same difficulty. Production, in theory, is meant to be distributed for the purpose of advantaging the consumer, and the machinery of distribution is money. The point intended to be made in the note was that the 4s. representing the profits per head on war production would not alter the effective demand to the extent necessary to absorb an equal production of peace-time commodities, which is simply a statement that the wages, salaries, and profits distributed in respect of modern production will not buy it, because price is governed as to its minimum by cost, involving overhead charges not represented by commodities, and only as to its maximum by demand.

Finally, a Guild England would provide as a component of its fabric all economic machinery of distribution, which would regard export as an incident of purely voluntary exchange, and not as an essential of internal distribution.]

* * *

Sir,—While agreeing with your criticism of Mr. W. L. Hichens' remarks on "Guild Socialism," I have yet a good deal of sympathy with him, as with all those who harbour similar fears of National Guilds to the detriment of all including ourselves. The fact of the matter is Guildsmen have never yet succeeded in making clear the exact relationship between the State and the Guilds. And I am inclined to think we never shall, so long as we are content merely to generalise. Why do we not take a concrete case, as, for example, the Post Office? It is quite evident what is wrong with it—namely, that absolute power over it is vested in a representative of the people whose only real authority is to exercise a jurisdiction over its administration. Thus, its present defect is due not merely to an antiquated system of centralised control (bureaucracy or red-tape-ism, that is), but that that control is generally exercised by one who is totally unfitted to direct its internal management. What Guildsmen want everyone to realise is that there is just as much harm in allowing a representative of "plain people" absolute power over any branch of administration as there is in allowing any branch of administration absolute power over the people. In other words, what the people gain in freedom at the expense of the worker, the community as a whole loses in efficiency. The fact of the matter is that, at present, we are endeavouring to combine a dual function in one representative, and quite evidently it does not work. The only alternative is to divide the functions between two representatives—that is to say, between a representative of the people and a representative drawn from and appointed by a particular branch of administration. Once that is done, their functions are obvious. Like a cus-

tommer in any shop, it is for the "plain man" to voice his demand, to leave it to the "shop steward" to meet it in a way which he best understands, and to approve and accept it if he considers it meets with his requirements. And so it should be with direct representatives of both in our Ministerial procedure. Instead of which, at present, we appoint a customers' representative to "run the shop." A GUILDSMAN.

[We do not agree that so elementary and fundamental a relationship has not been made clear by Guildsmen, if not to Guildsmen. We agree, however, that it cannot be made too clear.—Ed. N.A.]

* * *

NAME AND SUBSTANCE.

Sir,—Millstone forward, please. For, alas! I have horribly offended one of these little ones. But before I go under may I say that I the less regret the use of that unfortunate word "barren" inasmuch as it seems to have made clear to one reader at least that I was writing entirely from the standpoint of the ordinary Englishman, richer often in not always unwholesome prejudices than in high intelligence? Nevertheless, offended or not, "S. H." should really not go about even to seem to hint that I want to assassinate the good "S. G. H."—quite the wrong man. Now, Sir!

PHILIP T. KENWAY.

* * *

RE-INCARNATION.

Sir,—When your correspondent "M. F. M." first charged me with deliberate misrepresentation of the idea of re-incarnation, I assumed that he had said more than he meant, and was guilty only of clumsy expression of his dissent from my opinion. But his repetition of the charge in your last issue compels me to recognise it as an imputation of bad faith. Your correspondent has not detailed the charge, has given no instance of my misrepresentation, has made no attempt to prove his charge; he could only prove it, I may say, by stating the true theory of re-incarnation, by showing that I was conversant with that theory, and by quoting the actual phrases which, he alleges, are my deliberate misrepresentation of it. He has chosen, instead, to make a general charge of bad faith to which I can only oppose a general denial; and as a charge of bad faith, unsupported by any evidence, is a personal insult, your correspondent has no claim to the courtesy of a reply to his letter.

A. E. R.

* * *

ART NOTES.

Sir,—We can readily understand that any inquiry into the details of art, any writing that should tend to concentrate the examining faculties of the spectator upon the actual workmanship, would tend also to upset Mr. C. R. W. Nevinson. In a world so abundantly furnished with clever counterfeiters of everything, from Treasury notes to old masters, we do not pretend to omniscience, nor can we tell how every duck emerged from a hen's egg. Yet, as one sitting apart humbly and in truly monarchical splendour, dependent upon "advisers" and acting only upon the recommendations of our Ministry, we express our willingness to learn whether Mr. Nevinson's lithographs are bit by a wholly new process of pyrric acid through suet.

B. H. DIAS.

P.S.—To prevent needless discussion, your correspondent might be informed that the implications of the verb "cut" are not limited to incisions by chisel, "an instrument by which wood or stone is pared away."

* * *

Sir,—Mr. Pound's abuse of Mr. Diaz in last week's issue is just as impertinent as the latter's horrible method of criticising pictures! They both are wrong, for any sane individual would deal with Mr. Wyndham Lewis's pictures as he would with the revolting book "Tarr"—he would destroy the pictures and the book, as all are equally malignant. ERNEST WILTON SCHIFF.

* * *

WOLF! WOLF!

Sir,—I am honoured by your notice. Of course you are right. You always are. The dog's day is over.

S. S.

PRESS CUTTINGS.

When in olden times . . . artists had to prepare and grind their own colours, therefore using them carefully and sparingly, their secret is obvious. The result was also to a great extent brought about by the severe regulations framed by associations, guilds, and bodies of master painters, and it would be a good thing if guilds were in existence to-day, because, with large firms and big banks amalgamating, it is not difficult to prophesy that they will have to be re-established in order that craftsmen and trade workers may live.—A. V. GODBOLD in "British Journal of Photography."

The chief value of the (Whitley) scheme is that it provides machinery for the promotion of a better and more cordial understanding between employers and work-people, between organised Capital and organised Labour. By a frank interchange of views on the problems of workshop management, wage rates, conditions of employment, trade fluctuations, all who are concerned in the conduct of industry will benefit, a new spirit will be introduced into their relationships, and the community will be saved from the recurrent industrial struggles which were so deplorably frequent in pre-war years.

The establishment of what have been described as industrial parliaments will promote unity and peace in the industrial field just as the League of Nations will do in the field of international affairs. They are a method of organising goodwill.—MR. ARTHUR HENDERSON in "Unity."

[The League of Nations will certainly fail if it attempts to perpetuate an unjust relationship between any two given countries. Since the wage system is fundamentally unjust, the so-called industrial parliaments not only have no right to maintain it, but they cannot.—P.-C.]

During the election he declared in favour of railway nationalisation, not because he thought that the railways would be more efficiently managed, but because of the burden of the increased wages and the cost of renewing rails and rolling stock that would be thrown upon the shareholders. The nationalisation campaign had been started, not by the Trade Unions, but by the Guild movement. To bring many of the industries under national control would be disastrous to the industries themselves. He was satisfied that the leaders of the movement did not know that no State machinery could look after a concern like private management.—Local reports of a lecture, "Increased Productivity and the Labour Problem," before the Huddersfield Textile Society, Monday, February 24, 1919, by Dr. J. F. Crowley (London).

Note.—The Huddersfield Textile Society consists of textile manufacturers.

Controversialists of nearly all parties are accustomed to select from the ranks of their opponents certain leaders famous for their promulgations of special doctrines whom they use as whipping-boys, holding such doctrines up to execration or ridicule, as though, like the geocentric astronomy, they were by this time exploded fallacies, and nobody but a fool could any longer believe in them. One of the most prominent of the doctrines which are thus treated by Socialists, and other extreme reformers, whether calling themselves Socialists or no, is the celebrated doctrine associated with the name of Malthus. Mr. W. A. Orage, for example, the editor of THE NEW AGE—a journal which preaches Socialism of the ultra-sentimental type—declares that a wage-worker "who is not intent on abolishing capitalism might just as well be a Malthusianist," and it would be easy to multiply indefinitely quotations of like import. Such language obviously means that the teaching of Malthus is the *ne plus ultra* of absurdity, and that no serious thinker, whatever his opinions otherwise, regards it any longer as worth even the trouble of formal refutation.

[Evidently the "Outlook," from which this extract is made, has as little acquaintance with THE NEW AGE as with common sense. The writer assumes or concludes, or whatever he would call his process of ratiocination, that the phrase "might just as well be a Malthusianist"

was equivalent to "might just as well be a lunatic." But, in fact, as the context showed, the meaning was that against a willing wage-slave the Malthusian argument is conclusive. If the wage-system cannot be abolished, then not only the doctrine but the practice of Malthusianism becomes reasonable. The choice offered the wage-slave is, in short, the choice between Malthusianism and the wage-system, and National Guilds and nature.—PRESS-CUTTER.]

Lord Balfour of Burleigh, the chairman of the recent conference between North London manufacturers and trade union representatives, has accepted the presidency of the North London Manufacturers' Association, the body which convened that conference. The committee of nine manufacturers and nine Labour representatives, appointed to draw up recommendations as to some practical means for overawing the antagonism between Capital and Labour, has adopted the following resolutions:—

Industry rightly belongs neither to the Capitalists nor to Labour. It is the organisation by which are produced the commodities necessary for the welfare of the community of which they form the industrial constituents, and in whose services it should be carried on by them in trust.

Capital and Labour are morally and economically partners in industry, and by reason of their different functions no distinction can exist in the relative importance of the services rendered by each.

Neither the control of industry nor its benefits can be rightfully claimed or advantageously possessed either by owners of capital invested or labour engaged to the exclusion of the other.

The function of capital is that it be applied productively and sufficiently for the general good.

The function of Labour is to produce to its full capacity.

If any genuine attempt is made to extract a useful lesson from the history of human development, the conclusion is irresistible that the process is one long and, on the whole, continuously successful struggle to subdue environment, to the end that individuality may have the utmost freedom. Now, by the operation, misunderstanding, and misuse of our financial and industrial system in its application to economics, we have created an economic position which is such a formidable threat to the material existence of the individual that he is obliged to subordinate every consideration to an effort to cope with it. Partly by education and partly by what may be called instinct, it is increasingly understood that misdirected effort and unsound distributing arrangements, while operating to minister to the will-to-power, are entirely responsible for the position in which we find ourselves.

The practical issue at this time, therefore, is not at all whether this condition is to continue—it is simply one regarding the number of experiments, all very probably involving great general discomfort, which we are to endure until the inevitable rearrangement in alignment with the purpose of evolution is satisfactorily accomplished. And the suppression and perversion of the facts, on which alone sound constructive effort can be based, can have but one result—to increase the number of these experiments and the discomfort of the process.—MAJOR C. H. DOUGLAS, in the "English Review."

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