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CONTENTS.

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

Simultaneously with the announcement that the miners' ballot is in favour of accepting the interim Report of Mr. Justice Sankey's Coal Commission, we learn from the Labour Correspondent of the "Times" that the coalowners have decided to allow the question of nationalisation to go by default. It appears that they have been engaged during the last few weeks in attempting to discover and, if possible, to agree upon a scheme of Joint Control or co-partnership such as would at once satisfy the material demands of the men and stave off the nationalisation of the ownership of the mines. But they have failed to find it. Either it is, as the "Times" correspondent suggests with intent, that the coalowners believe that they are assured of more generous terms of compensation from the present than from any prospective House of Commons; or, it may be, the difficulties in the way of forming a National Trust with a monopoly of both Labour and Capital have proved to be insuperable. In either event, however, the conclusion is the same, namely, that the question of the nationalisation of the mines is now settled. But this, it will be seen, is to open up as the immediate discussion before the new session of the Commission the problem of control; and as regards the problem of control there are, as our readers know, only two possible solutions. The nationalisation of the ownership of the mines being assumed, the methods of control open to be adopted are direct administration or bureaucracy and delegated administration or guild control.

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We shall not spend time in re-arguing the case against bureaucracy. We can at once transfer the discussion to the plane upon which the subject is likely to be debated. Everything turns, it will be discovered, upon the attitude of the "middle classes," in other words, the bourgeoisie or managerial classes. And to these it is necessary to make appeal. How are *they* to fare under bureaucracy or guild control respectively? What are *their* prospects in a comparative sense; and how can they best secure both their own welfare and that of the industry of which, in the last resort, they are the responsible management? To answer these questions, we must turn at first to the grievances of the class and consider what they are. They are to be found, expressed with more than usual directness, in the April issue of the new magazine, "M. C."—a journal devoted to the interests of the "Great Middle Class." Glancing over the pages of this journal, we find that the grievances of the managerial classes may be summarised in the statement that they are between the upper and nether millstones of Capital and Labour respectively. Between "the rapacity of the manual-workers" and "the rapacity of the profiteers," says Mr. Kennedy Jones, the middle classes are being rapidly ground to powder. Forced, by reason of their position, to accept a more or less fixed nominal salary, they see their purchasing-power dwindling weekly under the double demand of the capitalist for more profit and the wage-earner for more wages. Each of the latter classes has its own means of enforcing its demands: the former by virtue of its possession of the monopoly of Capital, the latter by virtue of its monopoly of Labour. But the managerial class, standing between them, and having no organisation of its own, is in consequence the victim of both parties.

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If the political organisation favoured by "M. C." were in the least likely to effect the object the middle classes must have in view—that of delivering themselves from their present intolerable situation—we should feel disposed to support it on the grounds of simple justice. For, after all, the middle or managerial classes are as necessary to modern industry as the manual workers and are, indeed, an increasingly important factor in modern production. But the merely political organisation of the class cannot possibly be effective for any other purpose than that of adding another to the already innumerable little groups of interests in Parliament; and for all the effect of such a group on the operation of the upper and nether millstones, it might as well spend its energy in playing golf. A much more sensible policy was suggested at the recent Industrial Conference by the Society of Technical Engineers. Realising that the upper and nether millstones between which the managerial classes are being ground out of their purchasing-power are *economic* and not political phenomena, the Society of Technical Engineers (as might be expected of practical men) propose to meet the situation in its own world

of discourse. They propose to meet economic facts with economic facts; and to confront both the economic fact of the monopoly of capital and the economic fact of the monopoly of manual Labour with the economic fact of the monopoly of managerial ability. Nothing, indeed, could be more sensible; but is not, we ask, a prior determination of direction necessary? In other words, is it not, at least, advisable, that the managerial classes should make up their minds with which party, whether Capital or Labour, their future interests lie? The truth is that, with their usual apathy in matters outside their daily routine, the "Great Middle Classes" have come rather late upon the field of battle. They enter it to find the two main antagonists already not only fully organised but almost fully engaged. And it is practically certain that at this time of day the utmost they can do is to decide their allegiance, upon which side they will fight. Is it to be upon the side of Capital, in the certainty of alienating Labour as Labour was alienated in Russia before the Revolution by the Russian bourgeoisie? Or is it to be upon the side of Labour, at the risk of alienating Capital and, perhaps, of discovering afterwards that "Labour" too is unfriendly? It is a critical decision for men of little public intelligence to make; but it is necessary to make it.

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We have no doubt that in the case of the managerial staffs employed in the mining industry the choice must be made within the next few months. Since the coal-owners have agreed to let nationalisation go by default, the choice before the salariat is narrowed down, indeed, to the choice between working in co-operation with "Labour" or in subordination to the State Department of Mining. It is no longer a question even of Capital or Labour, but of Bureaucracy or a Guild. And what the mining salariat has within the next few weeks to make up its mind about is whether, on the whole, its interests as a class and an industry are to be found in becoming a part of the bureaucracy or in forming a factor in a National Guild. The decision, we must admit, is not altogether an easy one to make in view of the prejudices likely to be created around it; but it has the quality, nevertheless, of urgency. What are the materials for forming a judgment? We need not dwell upon the merits or demerits of bureaucratic control, for they are familiar to everybody. But the merits or demerits of Guild control, on the other hand, are still generally unknown and are, in any event, until the system is tried in practice, somewhat speculative. That it must be tried, however, we have no doubt; and that, in consequence, the option to be exercised by the mining salariat is really between willing and intelligent co-operation and unwilling and blind co-operation. The problem is to know, in the first place, what is the nature of the problem itself. We can define it as the discovery of the respective functions and the degree and form of "control" attaching to each of the various classes of labour employed in and about a mine. What kind of and how much "control" must the managerial element exercise in a Mining Guild? What is the kind and amount of control to be left to the colliers? These questions, it is obvious, go down to the roots of the matter; and, at the same time, they appear to us to be questions for practical rather than theoretical discussion. We could, it is true, state the solution in general terms as requiring a demarcation of technical and administrative control; we could also point to the plain necessity of the common and equal admission of the aristocratic principle of technical authority and the democratic principle of administrative liberty. But, on the whole, it is time to cease to talk and to get to business. The practical problem before us is to set about the creation of a national Mining Guild; and the practical means appear to be a round-table conference between the Miners' Federation, the associations of the mining salariat, and representatives of the State, all alike charged with the formulation of a definite working scheme.

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At the Conference of the Government with the Civil Service Associations on Wednesday a national Joint Committee of 30 members was appointed to consider a Whitley Scheme for the future regulation of the clerical and administrative staffs of the Civil Service. It is a little ironical that the Government, having designed the Whitley proposals for industry, and after having explicitly excluded them from the Civil Services on the ground that the latter are "not industries," should now be compelled to adopt them for the Civil Service and to see them (as we certainly shall) excluded from industry. But in fact no conclusion was more certain; for it is obvious on consideration that since the Whitley Scheme presupposes a common "thing," and, consequently, a common interest in the parties to a Whitley Council, a Whitley Council was pre-eminently well adapted to a Civil Service, in which all the interests and objects are common, and pre-eminently ill adapted to private industry in which the respective claims of Capital and Labour are directly antagonistic. As Mr. Stuart Bunning, however, pointed out at the Conference in question, the Whitley Councils set up in the Civil Service must not be allowed to fall into the category of industries. Our colleague, "S. G. H.," has observed that the Treasury control now exercised over the Civil Services, and likely, if Mr. Asquith's advice were taken, to be more dictatorial than ever, is, in effect, the industrialisation of public service, or, rather, let us say, the subordination of public service to the control of the banks. Under these circumstances, the distinction between the Civil Services and private employment would exist more in theory than in practice. Mr. Stuart Bunning, we are glad to notice, was aware of the danger, and explicitly demanded on behalf of the Civil Service the modification, at any rate, of Treasury control. It is the business of Parliament to define the end, the business of the Treasury to find the means, and the business of the Civil Services to devise and carry out the plans. The present Treasury control is, in effect, an encroachment on the privileges of Parliament on the one hand, and a limitation of the function of the Civil Service on the other.

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The hopes, always shadowy, of an indemnity from Germany have now completely vanished, leaving us with no more comfort than this sentence from the "Times": "There is to be no indemnity in the strict sense of the word." We are thus left to face the fact of our war-debt of eight thousand million pounds with only our own resources for paying it off. How is it to be done? "In the strict sense of the word," the repayment of our war-loan is no more possible than the exaction of an indemnity from Germany; for, in essence, the two operations are one and the same. What difference does it make to the debtors whether their creditors are next door or in a foreign country; and how much better placed is the war-worn country of England for repaying a loan of 8,000 millions than the war-worn country of Germany? If, therefore, for the good reason that recovery is impossible, we are to forgo our claim upon Germany for an indemnity, it appears only equitable that for the same reason the claim of our creditors upon ourselves shall be either withdrawn or considerably reduced. But this amounts, we shall be told, to the repudiation of the debt and will involve us in all the consequences of national bankruptcy. But what is to be done? Either we must submit (as we do not expect the German people to submit) to a prolonged period of pauperised servitude during which we are to be skinned alive for the benefit of our bondholders; or, like Germany, we must plead inability to pay. There appears to be no third course open. Mr. Bernard Shaw (in the "Daily Herald") is,

however, very certain that we ought not to repudiate the debt ourselves; and the reason he offers us is, as usual, amusing only to himself. It is that "You cannot expropriate the big parasites without ruining their little parasites." Think of all the people who are dependent upon the income they receive from our charitable bondholders, and consider twice before you ruin the lesser with the greater! It is a touching plea from one who is reputed to be a considerable and also a charitable bondholder himself; but it is scarcely compatible with the alternative Mr. Shaw offers to the proposed repudiation. If only the country were to adopt universal compulsory industrial service as a means of paying off the debt, and make it obligatory upon even the largest bondholders, the latter, he thinks, would soon be disposed to say: "D——n the debt, if it means that we must work; write it off." But in that case, we ask, what will lesser parasites do then, poor things? And why is the nation to consider them when their present hosts are prepared to consider them only in so far as they are a convenient excuse for defending their bonds?

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Call it by any other name, repudiation in some form is necessary if we are to turn over the leaf of the new age. And it is necessary not as regards the war-debt only, but in respect of other capital values of a more material kind. Consider, for example, the question of the future of the land and of all that depends upon it. A pre-war calculation of the fair market price of the land of Great Britain estimated its amount at over 5,000 millions, a sum which we must nearly double if we want to arrive at the "fair market value" of the land to-day. Can the community ever hope by ordinary purchase to resume the communal possession and use of the land upon any such terms? But if not, one of two things must occur; either the community must go without its land, or it must "expropriate" the existing landowners at a figure considerably less than the "fair market value" of their private property. In short, it is a choice between starvation and repudiation. We are not at the crossways yet, of course; but we are fast moving in the right direction. The debate in the House of Commons last week on the "Acquisition of Land Bill" clearly revealed the impossibility of fulfilling the pledges of Mr. Lloyd George and of satisfying the landlords at one and the same time. Sir Richard Winfrey gave examples of land recently changing hands at over double its pre-war value; and there have been cases in the recent estate market of sales at as much as three times pre-war rates. And this rise in the market price of land has taken place just when the ex-soldier, with the good-will of the nation, enters into the market as a bidding small-holder. Here again, we must make up our minds. The option presented to us is between "expropriating" (it sounds worse than it need be) the landlords, and making victims of the soldiers. We must repudiate either our dubious debt to the landowners or our certain debt to the soldiers.

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The housing problem is in a similar situation; for this, too, depends for its complete solution on a measure of "expropriation." The King cannot be said to have been well advised in reminding us in his speech last week of the fact that his father, thirty-five years ago, made a similar speech upon a similar occasion; for what is the inference but that thirty-five years hence the nation may find itself in its situation of to-day. The facts of housing are, indeed, no better for the Royal Commission of 1884, of which the Prince of Wales was a member; and they are not bound to be any the better for the interest the present Royal Family takes in the question. Everything depends, it is clear, upon the kind of interest taken, and upon the degree to which that interest can overcome the difficulties which overcame the Commission of 1884. What are these difficulties? We can sum them up in the phrase, private enterprise based upon the complete sanctity of private property. In other words, the real difficulty of housing, as of land settlement, and as of the national debt, is the existence of private property in communal necessities, over which, in consequence, the community has only a market control. But what are the chances that the present Government, even though urged by the Royal interest, will boldly face this fact and deal with it as alone it can be dealt with? After telling us that private enterprise was responsible for crowding 733 people into 29 houses in Shoreditch, and for compelling 352 of 438 consumptives to share their room with non-consumptive people; after remarking that "it was futile to try to deal with the disease of tubercle while conditions like these obtained"—Dr. Addison went on to defend "an economic rent" because "otherwise we should kill private enterprise." The prospect is, therefore, the old prospect of 1884; and the problem of housing will still be to solve 35 years hence. Between killing private enterprise and being killed by private enterprise, the Government of to-day are repeating the failure of the Government of 1884.

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In the Court of Appeal last week a decision of considerable importance was made by a majority of the Judges, Mr. Justice Duke alone dissenting. The case turned upon the question whether the King by virtue of his Royal prerogative was entitled to commandeer private property in the interests of the defence of the Realm without the legal obligation of compensation; and as a result of the decision it is now established that he has no such title. The arguments in the case, especially on the side of the private property involved, were extremely elaborate; but the common sense of the matter is, nevertheless, all against the conclusion to which the majority of Judges came. Without inquiring into the question of the legal origin of property (though, in the last resort, we might clearly argue that what the law gives it can take away), the comparison of the rights of property thus affirmed with the rights of life and liberty appear to be in favour of property exclusively. It is not denied, for instance, that the absolute right is retained by the Crown "to summon all subjects to defend the Realm by personal service"; and we have had sufficient experience of the law courts during the period of the war to agree that personal liberty is no less than life at the discretion of the Crown. But as regards property, it now seems accepted that only to the extent to which the Crown is prepared to pay for it at its full market value is the Crown, in even the greatest emergency, entitled to "summon" it. Exactly how this decision demonstrates, in the fatuous words of the "Times," that "the Court has proved to be what Clarendon called an asylum of the people's *liberties*," we are at a loss to understand. The same Court has allowed not merely encroachment on but actual dispossession of both the life and liberty of the "people" under the plea of the defence of the realm; and it has interposed its veto on the Royal prerogative not in the matter of the people's liberties, but only in the matter of the property of the propertied class. The decision may be reduced to the absurdity it is by contemplating a state of things that may one day arise, namely, when the private property, necessary to the defence of the realm, may be beyond the means of the community to "compensate." In that event, what is the Crown to do? To abandon the defence of the realm; or to reverse the decision of the present Court of Appeal? To regard the community or private property as the more sacrosanct? We have no doubt, of course, of the reply; and it is probable, indeed, that the present decision will be re-heard and reversed in the House of Lords. But the fact that it was made by the Appeal Court last week is an evidence of the hold that private property has upon the lower and legal mind.

Towards National Guilds in Italy.—VI.

By Odon Por.

CO-OPERATIVE farms under distributed management are numerous and successful in Lombardy and the Venetian provinces. Some of them specialise in horticulture and supply the markets of the neighbouring cities. The most important farms of this type, however, are to be found in Sicily.

Most of the land of Sicily consists of latifondi, great estates owned, as a rule, by absentee landlords. These latifondi are leased to contractors at an annual rental, and these, in turn, sub-lease the land in small allotments to labourers or in larger holdings to farmers or peasant families. The rents charged are invariably exorbitant. Under these wretched conditions the farms naturally produce little, few improvements are introduced, practically no modern machinery is employed, while the peasants, being sub-lessees of lessees—are exploited to the very utmost. These conditions have prevailed from time immemorial, and though oceans of ink had been spent in attempting to change them, and parliament had devised innumerable laws to regulate them, all was in vain.

Under the stimulus of the Socialist movement, the farm-labourers of Sicily began to organise in unions, and to bring about strikes for the amelioration of their conditions. But neither the labourers nor even the tenants were able by this means to bring about any considerable change; and they soon discovered that if they intended to effect a radical transformation, they must be prepared to eliminate, first, the middleman contractor, then the absentee landlord, and finally to take in hand production on their own account. In other words, if anything was to be done, it was essential to attack the problem of industrial control at its source, and to reverse the existing order by substituting for the lessees societies of collective co-operative entrepreneurs.

To effect this object, the Socialist unions set about forming various kinds of co-operative societies, including, of course, farming societies. And, later on, other movements followed suit. The consequence is that there are to-day in Sicily some 700 co-operative societies of which about 200 are co-operative farms.

In 1917, the Banco di Sicilia, a State bank, loaned credit to 40 co-operative farms cultivating an acreage of 70,000. The oldest, best-equipped and most progressive group of farms was founded and is still in the hands of Socialist workers. It is situated in the province of Trapani, and is under the control of a co-operative federation to which eight co-operative farms are affiliated. In 1918, this federation cultivated over 25,000 acres, with a membership of 5,000.

As in the rest of Sicily, all these farms are under a distributed management—this being a system more congenial, for the present, to the local traditions of cultivation. If the farms are not as progressive technically and economically as the Emilian farms under single management, they have nevertheless, in relation to their special difficulties, performed wonders. They have introduced modern methods into many of the latifondi; they have given liberty of thought and action to their members; and they have succeeded, in many cases, in eliminating the middleman in the teeth of opposition and competition. Their sacrifices to this end have been enormous; but so great has been their desire to obtain control that they have cheerfully borne considerable hardships. The provincial federation was created mainly for the purpose of leasing lands and of dividing them among its affiliated members. The federation, likewise, undertakes collective buying, selling, insurance, and the like. It thus discharges some of the functions of a united and single management.

The training thus received by the farm-workers in their co-operative farms has undoubtedly matured their capacity for management on a large scale. By extending their enterprises, they spread at the same time the spirit of organisation and thus prepare the masses for higher functions. Already their influence upon the Sicilian economic and social situation is considerable; and there is no doubt that it will grow. Through the practical success of their co-operative venture, they have begun to solve the age-long agrarian problem; and not only that, but the problem of their own redemption as well. What the feudal landowners and their politicians have failed to do, the peasants have done for themselves by the spirit of association, by hard work, and by ceaseless organisation. They are passionately desirous of extending their scope; and it may be that before long the latifondi will be socialised and their management given into the hands of the co-operative movement.

Recently a Regional Federation of Agricultural Co-operatives has been formed for the purpose of concentrating and co-ordinating the technical, commercial, financial and other wider aspects of the industry. It is also the intention of the Federation to prepare a programme for the socialisation of the latifondi, and to organise political power for the purpose of carrying it out.

The aspirations of organised labour have recently led them to link up with the "commonages" that still remain in the Roman and other Italian provinces. These are the oldest economic units of society, and survive to bear witness to the right of men to work as their own masters. Over and over again, the landlords have tried to enclose the commons or to abolish the right of peasants to work on them. And in too many cases they have been successful. In 1894, however, associations of commoners were formed under State sanction with the object of preserving such commons as remained.

In the province of Rome—where immense latifondi under primitive cultivation are to be found—some 122 commonages of about 200,000 acres still exist. They cannot, however, be said to be functioning very actively. The fields comprising the commons are now inalienable, but they are, of course, insufficient to the needs of the commoners sharing them. For this reason, attempts have been made to recover the alienated lands or to add to them by the leasing of lands adjoining. Here again, however, difficulties of all kinds were met with, and progress was slow.

The war, however, favoured the commoners in so far as it put a premium on intensive cultivation. At once, therefore, the following situation arose. On the one side, the landowners and tenant farmers were refusing to intensify cultivation; and on the other were the commoners eager to start the work. The Government had little choice in the matter, and immediately issued an order threatening requisition of such fields or lands as were not instantly placed under full cultivation. Not much requisitioning in the strict sense was needed; for the threat was sufficient to induce the landowners to enter into arrangements with the commoners whereby the latter had transferred to their management, in one province only, over 13,000 acres.

Hitherto the commons were cultivated in single allotments; and only in two cases had there been any united management. But when the new lands were transferred to the Agrarian Universities (commons' associations), the shortage of labour necessitated economy in its use. In consequence, collective management and work were adopted, with considerable advantage to production. Machinery was employed for ploughing and sowing; sometimes collectively, sometimes individually. Altogether, the commoners have done very well under the new scheme; and they have certainly demonstrated their will and capacity to produce a surplus over the former production. Their action has brought to the front again the whole problem of the

latifondi and the commons; and it is now likely to be once again a burning question.

From the technical point of view these experiments represent a new type of collective farming, something intermediate between single and distributed management. They have shown that there are certain functions that can best be performed collectively, and others individually. Wheat-growing, land-betterment, ploughing, fertilising, sowing and threshing, for instance, are functions for the association collectively (in this instance, the Agrarian University), while hoeing, moulding up, trenching, weeding, etc., may be best done by individual members working in appointed fields. The division of the production presents no difficulties.

Such a system is undoubtedly adapted, by means of its efficiency and simplicity, for a rapid application to the primitively cultivated latifondi. It is really made for them and would speedily transform them into modern farms to the advantage of everybody concerned. Further, the application of this system would prevent the dangerous and anti-economic policy of dividing the latifondi into small holdings and selling them to impoverished peasants whose resources would be unequal to their effective cultivation, and who would, in the end, be obliged to sell out. It cannot be admitted that the labourers who have a share in the commons must be allowed to cultivate them or to leave them uncultivated at their discretion. The formula: the "land for the workers," applied inconsiderately is full of danger, and runs the risk of leaving agriculture in many cases in a primitive state of comparative unproduction.

The Agrarian Universities are plainly the proper bodies to superintend the commons; and they have demonstrated their capacity by the work they have already accomplished.

Under their pressure and in consequence of their management, the age-long poverty of the latifondi workers is being abolished. What they are doing virtually amounts to the socialisation of the greater part of the land of the provinces. Clearly, then, the organised movement of the Italian farm-workers is on the way to establish in practice a National Agricultural Guild, responsible to the State, but managed by its members.

A Page of History.

By Marmaduke Pickthall.

The origin of the British occupation of Egypt is to be found in the extravagance of the Khedive Ismaïl. That magnificent satrap got into debt. France and (after Disraeli's purchase of his shares in the Suez Canal by telegraph) England were his principal creditors. When His Highness became bankrupt in due course, a Dual Control of France and England over the finance of Egypt was instituted. Against this arrangement there were riots which the Khedive was suspected of instigating; therefore, pressure was brought to bear on the Sultan of Turkey, sovereign of Egypt, who accordingly deposed Ismaïl and raised his son, Muhammad Tewfik, a more docile man, to the vice-regal dignity. For a matter of two years affairs went smoothly, and then the public discontent broke out afresh without fresh cause apparent, coming quickly to a head in the rebellion of practically the whole native population under a farmer's son, Arâbi Pasha. The rebellion was against the Europeanised Khedive and his entourage, and for a free Egypt under the Sultan. It was successful. The Khedive was a prisoner in the palace of Râs et-tîn at Alexandria when Admiral Seymour's fleet bombarded that seaport, after the French fleet, with which the British were to have acted in concert, averse to such a drastic step, had steamed away. The conduct of the French on that occasion seems inexplicable, seeing that they had even greater cause than had the British to desire the restoration of the Khedive Tewfik (who, as a debtor, represented great financial interests) until it is remembered that a democratic sentiment existed in France at that period, and there was some objection to supporting a ruler against a people in arms.

The British had been careful to secure the sanction of the Sultan of Turkey, owner of the sovereign right in Egypt, for their undertaking; and Arâbi, who at first could boast of the Sultan's approval, had thenceforth to console his followers with lying tales. As the result of British victory the Khedive was reinstated as hereditary Viceroy; and an offer to withdraw the British troops from Egypt by a certain date if Turkish troops were ready to replace them having been refused, or rather overlooked, by Sultan Abdul Hamid, our Government proclaimed a temporary occupation of the country. This was considered and declared to be necessary for the institution of reforms and education of the people in the correct way of government. That the occupation was in nature purely temporary was stated in the clearest terms by British statesmen not once nor twice but many times both then and in the thirty years which followed. As recently as in 1907 the temporary character of the occupation was proclaimed in Parliament by the Minister responsible for Egypt, although its term was left, of course, indefinite. It was, in fact, to last "until the coming of the cocklicranes"—in other words until, in the opinion of their British tutors, the Egyptian people should have come to man's estate.

Our position was anomalous, as people said: but only on the strength of that anomalous position could we appear to the Egyptian people in the light of friends. I say advisedly, upon the *strength* of the position; for an anomaly of natural growth is always stronger than a logical position taken in the teeth of facts. We were, theoretically, on an equality with the French in our concern with Egypt, yet we occupied and governed the whole country. The French still shared control of the finance and other matters. This share, in so far as it had hampered us or caused annoyance, was resigned in 1904 in return for our support of French designs upon Morocco. There remained the capitulations, under which the subjects of some fourteen different Powers enjoyed ex-territorial status on the soil of Egypt; the Turkish suzerainty which resolved itself into the payment of an annual tribute on the one side, and the granting of titles and decorations on the other; and the Khedivial court and throne. All these were founded upon legal right defined and recognised by international law. The dominating factor in the situation—British rule—alone lacked any kind of legal definition. And for that very reason it was unassailable.

But British officials and Imperialistic politicians chafed under the anomaly, as, of course, they would. They longed to regularise or simplify our position in Egypt by eliminating one or other of the factors. To abolish the Capitulations would have simplified the work of government enormously, but the question was too thorny to approach, involving, as it did, the question of Capitulations in the whole Turkish Empire. Nor could it, anyhow, provide us with the thing we wanted —a defined position in regard to Egypt. The choice then lay between Khedivial throne and Turkish suzerainty. Which should be sacrificed to make a place for England? Knowing that the Khedivial dynasty was far from popular, and that the Egyptians could dispense with it willingly, if the Sultan gave command; knowing also what the Turkish suzerainty means to every Muslim, I was always of opinion that if one or the other had to go—though I myself should have decided to let both go on—the Khedivial dynasty could best be spared by Egypt and by England both.

Abbas II was for ever giving trouble which afforded many pretexts for his deposition by a Sultan friendly to ourselves. We could then have rented Egypt from the Porte at a slightly higher figure than before, and our Governor, whether an Egyptian or an Englishman, would have had the title and diffused the glamour of the Sultan's Viceroy. If that had been done, everyone, except Abbas II and his hirelings, would have been content.

But from the point of view of the officials and the fussing politicians, that was quite impossible. We had come to Egypt as the friends (or creditors) of the Khedive. The Sultan, when required to do so, had refused to help us in our first undertaking or to take an active hand in the Egyptian game. The Turkish suzerainty was a vile anachronism. Why preserve it? They little guessed how much they owed in fact to that which they despised in theory. Had we, with France, deposed the Khedive Ismail, all Egypt would have risen as one man for him. He was deposed by the Sultan at our request, and Egypt hardly murmured. If the suzerain had not transferred his sanction from Arâbi Pasha to ourselves before the opening of hostilities, the war of 1882 would have been much longer and more bloody and more costly than it actually was. If an acquiescent Ottoman Caliphate had not been behind the régime of Lord Cromer, the Egyptians would have had no mind to recognise its real beneficence.

The first outbreak of discontent under that régime—not with it: that is the mistake our politicians made, the cause of all the wreck that we have made in Egypt since—was the popular commotion over the affair of Akabah, when Egypt very nearly came to war with Turkey over a quarrel about frontiers within what to the Egyptian mind was all one country, being Turkish territory. There was no doubt, then, as to Egyptian feeling on the subject of the suzerainty. A certain Pasha, famed for his pro-British sentiments, was having his selamlik re-upholstered when a British official called upon him. When asked why he was making it so much more splendid, he replied: "The Turkish Army will be coming, and I should like it to be worthy of the generals of our sovereign lord." Among the Muslim population there was not a man who did not side with Turkey upon that occasion, and regard the English quarrel over frontiers, couched in the name of Egypt, as a gross affront. And our people talked of nationalism then as they do now!

At the time, I thought that the British officials in Egypt at last perceived the different factors in the situation in their true proportions relative to one another, and could at last make a true diagnosis of the case of their Egyptian patient. Early in 1907 the late Lord Cromer asked for my opinion on this very subject. I said that if the British would but condescend to associate Turkey with them in the government of Egypt, the Egyptian people would be pleased, and the Khedive impotent. He said: "I fancy it will come to that."

Lord Cromer was removed soon after that from Egypt, and his policy reversed with most calamitous results. He left an admirably organised and, on the whole, contented country. Within three years of his departure Egypt was in a state approaching anarchy. The structure of a quarter of a century of careful statesmanship had been destroyed, simply because our wiseacres at home mistook the discontent which followed the Akabah incident for discontent with Cromer's system of administration, which was nearly perfect in its way, and well adapted to the country. Then Mr. Roosevelt, ex-President of the United States, returning from a big game hunt by way of Egypt, beheld the state of things and was amazed. He spoke to the officials on the spot. They told him: "We are powerless. The men who rule at home are mad"—the same men, with the exception of Sir Edward Grey, are still among the guardians of our Empire's destiny—"They will not listen to us, but they would listen to you. When you get to London, for God's sake, speak the truth to them. Egypt is being ruined and by their command."

Mr. Roosevelt came to London. At a Guildhall banquet he described what he had seen in Egypt in plain terms. He told the British Government to "govern or get out." And the British Government gave ear to so well advertised a personage. It had been deaf to men of knowledge and experience. It decided to govern—oh, but to govern, mind you, with teeth and hands clenched, in a manner to impress the world! It sent Lord Kitchener to Egypt, with instructions. Lord Cromer had belated justice done to him, but not in the way he would have chosen. Instead of restoring his benevolent régime, all kinds of penal measures were enforced against the unlucky Egyptians, who all along had been more sinned against than sinning. Nationalist leaders, till then reconcilable, were made irreconcilable by exile and imprisonment. The freedom of the Press, respected by Lord Cromer, even when some papers published most atrocious libels on himself; because, he said, every people has to practise freedom ere it could acquire the knack of it—the freedom of the Press was quite abolished. But all the while the root of evil was untouched. The official patronage, which in Lord Cromer's time had been handled by the British Agency, was left in the hands of the Khedive on whom the Foreign Office had bestowed it.

In such a smother of internal trouble and misgovernment but little serious thought was given to the Turkish suzerainty; though, undoubtedly, a friendly understanding with the Porte would at any time have helped us in the government of Egypt more effectually than the expedients which were actually tried and at a millionth of the cost. And few people seem to realise the bitter feeling which was caused by our refusal to let the Turks pass troops through Egypt at the time of the Italian raid on Tripoli, a refusal which lost them the war. But, as we now know, our entente with Russia made any genuine understanding with the Turks impossible. Then came the war, the abolition of the Turkish suzerainty, the deposition of Abbas II, and the elevation of another member of his family to the rank of Sultan—all atrocious in the eyes of the Egyptian people, because the authority of the Khedivial house and the authority of the British in Egypt derived legality from the Khalifah only. It was the Turkish suzerainty which for years had kept the mass of the Egyptians quiet in a position far more horrible in its anomaly than that of the old British occupation. Our rulers supposed that they were abolishing a merely formal tie, a mere anachronism, so regarded by all parties. Did anybody tell them that, I wonder; or did they spin it from their own inventive brains—brains now employed on the invention of a new earth? If anyone deliberately gave them false direction, that person should be hanged if he is not entirely of their "set," and if he is of their set pensioned off discreetly. But more probably it was considered necessary to sever Egypt altogether from the Turkish Empire in view of the designs of Czarist Russia on that Empire, designs to which we had become a willing, even greedy, party. Surely, in view of the collapse of the Ally whom we were taught to worship, the men who promoted the alliance of England and the Czar with so much trumpeting of Russia's strength and holiness and zeal for progress, of the devotion of the Russian people to their Church and Czar, should be banished to the congenial atmosphere of Mt. Athos rather than be put into positions where their judgment proved fallacious, may again mislead them, bringing disaster and some shame upon their King and country. The effect of their misguidance has been felt in Egypt as elsewhere. But

even allowing for the ill effects of a deluded policy, the last ten years of Egypt make a record of mishandling of a subject people by no means pleasant reading for an Englishman. What it must seem to an Egyptian one can only guess.

The Civil Guilds.

IV.—A CIVIL SERVICE GUILD.

We can now see, I think, that there must be a solution of the vexed question of Treasury control before the Civil Servants can achieve any measure of democratic control. It is obvious that the one excludes the other. The facts stated in the previous section of this chapter warrant the conviction that efficiency comes from professional competence and zeal and not from a rigid system with finance as the mainspring. From the previous section we may also infer that effective association, the first condition of Guild organisation, is not far to seek amongst Civil Servants. But it is difficult for the ordinary observer to realise the extent to which association has spread throughout the Service. There are no fewer than 50 associations in the Post Office alone, some of considerable size and power. Thus, the Postal and Telegraph Clerks' Association represents an establishment exceeding 40,000; the Fawcett Association, composed of sorters in the London Postal Service, numbering 7,000; the Postmen's Federation speaks for an establishment of nearly 70,000; the Amalgamated Engineering and Stores Association represents over 22,000 employees in that class; the National Federation of Sub-Postmasters speaks for 23,000. Numerically considered, these are the important bodies, but some of the smaller bodies have their weight and significance. There are, for example, the Associations of Post Office Superintendents, the Postal Telegraph and Telephone Controlling Officers' Association, the Association of Head Postmasters, the Society of Post Office Engineering Inspectors, and the Association of Post Office Engineering Chief Inspectors, with a membership of over 300. From the Guild point of view it is almost immaterial whether these servants of the State associate for technical or financial mutual support or for both; the sine qua non is that they shall, with greater or less formality, be associated.

When we reach the stage of Guild organisation, the question will arise whether the Post Office is a civil or industrial body. I have always recognised the difficulty, theoretically considered, of this problem. The Post Office, although a congeries of trades and occupations, is an institution unique in almost every sense. It is certainly a State enterprise, possessing peculiar legal rights and attributes, touches our private lives as does no other organisation, is already recognised as a State organisation, its members submitting to the rules and regulations of the Civil Service. On the other hand, it is a gigantic industrial organisation, employing men of many different trades, who, in the ordinary course, would join their appropriate industrial Guilds. It must be, particularly, always in close co-operation with the Transit and Engineering Guilds. Personally, I think it ought to be regarded as a Civil Guild, but, as a democrat, recognise that it must ultimately decide for itself to remain a Civil institution or affiliate with the Guild Congress. If we regard it as a problem in itself, we may say of the Post Office that it might be Guildised to-morrow. It certainly obeys the early injunction "when you are ready to nationalise, we are ready to Guildise." The Post Office is not only already nationalised; it is organised.

Coming now to the distinctively Civil Service, again we discover that the practice of association runs all through it. There is the Civil Service Federation with a possible membership of 15,000. There are 20 Associations in this Federation. Then there is the Civil Service Clerical Alliance with a membership of 20,000. In this Alliance there are 10 different Associations. Next comes the Customs and Excise Federation with a potential membership of 5,500, comprised in 3 Associations. Then we may note the Civil Service Society, to which I have already referred. Its operations affect an establishment of over 7,000. There are the United Government Workers' Federation and thirty or forty other Associations, small but representative. Whilst these Associations have not a membership commensurate with their Establishment strength, it is probable that they can speak more authoritatively for their colleagues than in similar circumstances in industry. The reason is that their subscriptions, being merely for the printing and clerical work, are nominal. It is always more difficult to collect nominal subscriptions, for which there is no return, than substantial subscriptions involving possible loss if not paid. A man does not neglect his life insurance premium; he is habitually careless in forwarding his half-crowns. I notice, for example, that the Civil Service Society has a membership of 1,800. The action it took over war-bonuses benefited 7,000. The other 5,000 were apparently content. If their half-crowns were wanted, they would doubtless be forthcoming. The real question is: Are these Associations representative? Do they express the views of their particular Establishment? Since they meet with no dissent, and do, in fact, contain the active spirits, we may safely assume that they say what the general, if inarticulate, body of the Civil Service thinks.

Whilst I know of no conscious tendency or movement in the Civil Service towards a Guild, many of the classes are looking eagerly for self-government. Mr. Monahan, the Chairman of the Alliance at its Conference, said:—"Many questions of importance agitate the Civil Service at the present moment, but I need make no apology for devoting some time to discussing the single question of control; for all the other Service matters that excite our interest are so many roads leading us to this central problem. We had already gone some way in the consideration of the subject when the Whitley Report was issued and public attention drawn to the similar problems in the industrial life of the country. The remedies we had preached for Service ills were now, as they applied to industry generally, expounded with authority and adopted by the Cabinet. Clearly, the welcome given to the Report, and especially its adoption by the Cabinet, immensely strengthen our position; and it seems inevitable that, in some form or another, the suggestions of the Report must—if only for the encouragement of the industrial world outside—be made the basis of a drastic reform of the Civil Service. Indeed, the principles of the Report are demonstrably more applicable in the public service than in industry. The main objections that have been raised to the Whitley Scheme are irrelevant to the case of the Civil Service, just because it *is* the Public Service, and there can be no question, therefore, of a necessary conflict of interest between employer and employed. The problem of the Civil Service is how so to constitute it that the public interest for which it exists may be most effectively served without the creation or maintenance

of antagonistic sectional or private interests within it." Whether or no the Whitley Report becomes the model, the Alliance is determined to obtain a share of control. Its policy was defined at its Conference, so far back as November, 1917, in these resolutions :—

1. "That, in the opinion of this Conference, the controlling authority of the Civil Service should be a Board, under the chairmanship of a member of the Ministry, and composed of equal numbers of (a) persons appointed by the Government and (b) representatives of employees nominated by Associations of Civil Servants."

2. "That, in the opinion of this Conference—

"(i) It should be the duty of the Board of Control, demanded in the above resolution 1, to exercise a general supervision over the general condition and activities of the Civil Service, and specifically over (a) recruitment, pay, appointment, classification, allocation, transfer, training, promotion, and superannuation of Civil Servants; (b) the conditions of their employment, and the division and definition of their duties; and (c) the fixing of standards of office method, premises, and furniture;

"(ii) The Board should, in dealing with all these matters, consult with and seek the co-operation of the permanent heads of Departments on the one hand and the organisations of Civil Servants on the other; and

"(iii) The heads of Departments and organisations of Civil Servants should be in regular communication with the office committees to be constituted as provided in resolution 3 below.

3. "That, in the opinion of this Conference, there should be formed in each Government office a committee, to be described as the office committee, of equal numbers of the higher officials and elected representatives of the subordinate classes, which should be charged (a) with the consideration as they affect the office of the matters generally controlled by the Board of Control, as set forth in resolution 2 (i) above, and their determination within the limits allowed by the Board; (b) with the duty of periodical report to the heads of Departments and organisations as implied in resolution 2 (iii) above."

The Society of Civil Servants, representing the higher grades, is naturally more discreet in its pronouncements. It has taken steps, however, by resolution "to ensure proper representation on any Councils that may be set up if the proposals of the Whitley Committee's Report on Industrial Reconstruction are applied to State Departments." But its methods, outlined in the previous section, aiming at professional status, involve self-government to an even larger extent than in the proposals of the Alliance.

It will be observed that the organised Civil Servants look to some machinery on the Whitley model as the next step towards control—such control as is compatible with the authority vested in the State. The question arises whether the Civil Service Committees here suggested help or hinder Guild organisation. We have seen that, in industry, there are grave objections to the Whitley proposals, notably two: (a) that they predicate the continuance of the wage-system, and (b) that they circumvent workshop control. The Whitley Report expressly declines to discuss the wage-system, whilst its official interpreters regard the works committee as a necessary part of the Whitley machinery. Since the new shop-steward entertains quite other opinions as to the function of the works' committee, it is evident that ab initio there is a fatal clash between the new industrial movement and the schemes adumbrated in the name of Whitley. But can these objections be maintained against Whitley Committees in the Civil Service? In the first place, the wage-system in the Service appears in its least objectionable and attenuated form; it is almost completely a salariat. Secondly, there is no private employment; commercially considered, there is no profiteering; the industry —if industry it be—is already nationalised; it is, in fact, the administrative arm of the Executive, which directly derives its power from the State. To state these facts is to answer the question. Undoubtedly, a Whitley Committee in the Civil Service cannot be condemned on the same grounds that it would be condemned in capitalist industry. The Whitley method would tend to strengthen the position of the rank and file, to ensure enhanced status, to induce increased efficiency, through the satisfaction that comes of group control and personal amenity. Apart, too, from any question of group or personal rights, the Civil Service is centralised beyond reason. It is so centralised that locality is ignored and the lower ranks disregarded. The result is unexampled congestion and smouldering discontent. Decentralisation of power, the distribution of power through appropriate ranks and groups, would cure, almost at a stroke, the worst aspects of bureaucratic management. The Guildsman may, therefore, welcome the Whitley organisation in the public servance, even though he reject it in industry.

There is another form of the public service to which I have not referred. The Municipal Service is in magnitude greater than the Civil Service; its functions, if different, are equally important. It, of course, has intimate relations with its Civil confrères, to whom it is as necessary as is the Civil Service to the Government. The Ministry of Health and Education would be impotent without the corresponding Municipal Services. Even the Police, although subsidised by the Government, are under Municipal control. Since the Police are responsible for the application of the criminal law, it is clear that, in the performance of this duty, their function is at least as Civil as it is Municipal. A Civil Service Guild, once constituted, would therefore have far-reaching Municipal reactions. The Medical Guild would presumably include the Medical Officers attached to the Municipalities; the Educational Guild would be a mere skeleton without the Municipal teachers, who are, in fact, Civil Servants, since, like the Police, they are subsidised by the State; such industrial Guilds as the Engineering would presumably control their own members now in Municipal employment, whilst the various technical corps would, in like manner, cut across both the Civil and the Municipal Services. From the strictly industrial point of view, it would seem that the Municipalities, like the Government, must make terms with the industrial Guilds. There is a huge army of Municipal tramwaymen. They would almost certainly affiliate with the Transport Guild; other industries concerned with Municipal life would in like manner find their economic fellowship with the cognate Guilds. Nevertheless, pending a thorough Guild organisation, it would seem as though there is an incipient Guild organisation in the Municipal Service. An unknown correspondent kindly sends me an account of the Municipal Officers' Guild, who applied to the County Borough Council at Rotherham for recognition as the intermediary between the Staff and the Corporation on all matters affecting the interests of the Staff. The Town Clerk was instructed to obtain information as to the attitude of other municipalities, and the Guild was also requested to furnish any particulars of similar practice elsewhere. The movement is probably both local and incipient; but it is significant.

I am not reviewing, in this chapter, the aims, objects and organisation of our public service, even in regard to its personnel and functional rights. That is a large subject, beyond my purview. But the facts here cited prove that, consciously or unconsciously, this great body of men and women is moving in the direction of Guild organisation: shows a keen sense of functional value: realises the need for the devolution of centralised control, particularly of drawing a clear distinction between Treasury control and supervision. A Civil Service Guild could be created with no great difficulty.

S. G. H.

Ibsen and His Creation.

By Janko Lavrin.

VIII.—THE "SICKLY CONSCIENCE."

I.

As we have seen, Ibsen belongs to those artists who always must have an inner—one might even say, an ethical—pretext and justification for creation. But as soon as the "ideologist" in Ibsen puts forward such an excuse, the sceptic vivisector in him tries to undermine it. As ideologist Ibsen usually endeavours to be "positive," well-intentioned and optimistic, as we can gather from all those dramas (and letters, as well), where the ideologist took the upper hand; but the stronger the vivisector the more pessimistic and gloomy the work. It is to a great extent this inner duality and its permanent tension to which Ibsen owes his strong artistic discipline, his wonderful reserve and tact. And he so admirably balanced his antagonistic pair that whenever he felt a danger to his creative impulse from the lurking and destructive vivisector, he always passed in time to new inner motives, themes and problems. After his philosophic "Emperor and Galilean," he went over to social plays, and after the "Wild Duck" to psychological dramas.

These begin with "Rosmersholm," in which the social or political background is nothing but a canvas for the profound inner drama of Johannes Rosmer, and —still more—of Rebecca West. Moreover, we see that in the very first of his psychological plays Ibsen cautiously returns to the great problem of Brand and Julian—this time not on a romantic or metaphysical plane, but on the plane of our everyday life and moral experience. The dilemmas thus become less "titanic" and simultaneously nearer to us, for the heroes are not moral supermen, but characters of the same flesh and blood as ourselves; they are everyday men in heroic and tragic perspective.

We saw how Brand sacrificed all his happiness in life to the "call" of life with its "Categorical Imperatives"; how Julian strove just for the opposite values, and how at last the "call" itself became an uncertain metaphysical problem, wholly depending on the solution of the insoluble riddle of the Will. At the same time, Ibsen was not able to overcome this split and reconcile in a higher religious synthesis the two poles represented by Brand and Julian, for his mentality was moral without being religious. . . .

A moral, solely moral, consciousness is even bound to widen such a cleavage and to lead not towards a higher unity but towards disintegration of personality and life—in so far as its imperatives lay a ban on joy and passion and earthly happiness. Our will becomes split between the "call" of life and the joy of life, permanently wavering between them and without being able to affirm either the one or the other. But as soon as the value of the "call" becomes undermined and risks becoming a self-delusion, a deliberate reaction against it may take place: the impulse towards happiness and joy grows stronger—until it dashes itself anew against the moral consciousness, against the "sickly conscience."

"If one had a really vigorous, radiantly healthy conscience—so that one *dared* to do what one *would*!" . . . But one does not dare, for together with our inner development grows our "sickly conscience"—in spite of all logic and reason. Of course, the most important problem that arises from such a position is the question whether our conscience is a super-individual (metaphysical) factor, or whether it is but an atavistic survival, an inherited "Christian sickness" barring the way towards the so-called moral (or unmoral!) freedom.

After his failure in "Emperor and Galilean," Ibsen is not quite sure as to the answer to this vital question. . . . He is hesitating between the natural and the "super-natural" view. That may be one of the reasons why he is seeking for explanations of this riddle even in the Darwinian theories of inheritance, and later in so-called sub-conscious phenomena (telepathy, suggestion, etc.), with their mysterious and evasive character. But be it as it may, the fact remains that in a certain stage of development we cannot reach either happiness or freedom without our moral sanction; for our "sickly conscience" weighs us down like a "corpse on our back," paralysing the impetus of our will. Even when our intellect passes over this barrier, our will stumbles over it, and all our effort is vain.

II.

A splendid illustration of this effect is "Rosmersholm." After his struggle for the inner emancipation of the individual, Ibsen tried to give in the ex-Pastor Johannes Rosmer a character who was on the way towards such an emancipation.

"I know no Christian morality. I know no other morality than that I have within me," Rosmer states in the preliminary notes to the drama. He pretends to be free from all the "ghosts," and simultaneously with his emancipation grows also his impulse towards happiness and joy. In the first draft of the drama he does not even intend to "ennoble men." He is craving only for happiness and fullness of life. Like one who has awakened from the dead he exclaims: "All around, in every department of life, a luxuriant germinating is going on. And it is time that I too began to live. I must and will be happy in this world."

"It is in the air. It is one of the greatest things about the new age that we dare openly proclaim happiness as our end in life," adds Miss Dankett (later Rebecca West). However, the old-fashioned Gylling (later Rector Kroll) gives the ominous answer: "Poor man, you, with your conscience burdened with guilt—you think you can find happiness by those paths. . . You are founding your happiness on water."

A still more impressive answer in this sense is given by Hetman (later Ulvik Brendel) when he returns to Rosmer from his unsuccessful "mission"; "It's all rubbish, my boy. Empty dreams. Nothing but mocking shadows that drag us down to destruction. Humanity is past help. . . . Because a mistake was made at the very Creation. . . The Master deceived himself, my boy. . . The Master feels that there is a flaw in the work. And so he takes a firm stand. Insecurity of conscience, my boy. And that is what we have all inherited. That is why humanity is incurable. Past help."*

"Then is life worth living?" asks Rebecca.

"Oh, yes. Only avoid doing silly things. No quackery. Let life swing right or left—just as it chances."

"But one's self. Each individual?"

"Eat, drink and be merry, my fair young lady. And you must take existence in the same way, Rosmer. The Master forgot to give us wings. Both inner and outer ones. So let us crawl on the earth as long as we can. There is nothing else to be done. . . ."

Of course, in the final version Ibsen becomes more prudent and reserved on this delicate subject. And also more subtle—by transferring the psychological centre of gravity to Rebecca and complicating at the same time the inner dilemma of Rosmer himself.

III.

When Rebecca came to Rosmersholm she was "beyond good and evil." Her conscience was completely "emancipated," and therefore her indomitable will did not know any barriers. In order to attain her ends, as well as Rosmer's love, she begins to "emancipate" him, and by cunning combinations she brings his half-witted wife Beata to suicide. At last all the conditions for the fulfilment of her wishes are present, but —but here the real drama begins. . . .

* Quotations are taken from Ibsen's works, edited by W. Archer.

On the other hand, Johannes Rosmer, whose stern and puritan ancestors never laughed, is one of the most noble and absolutely moral characters created by Ibsen. But his very nobility is the cause of his weakness; he is naïve like a child, credulous, impractical and irresolute. After having emancipated himself from the church, he suddenly decides to make all people round him noble and happy—"to go as a messenger of emancipation from home to home; to win over minds and wills; to create noblemen in wider and wider circles. . . . Joyful noblemen. For it is joy that ennobles the mind. . . ." He wants to blend happiness and vocation for the sake of happiness. But he becomes paralysed in this task by his "insecurity of conscience" as soon as he begins to feel himself guilty of the death of his wife.

"I shall never get over this—wholly. There will always be a doubt—a question left. I can never again revel in that which makes life so marvellously sweet to live!" he complains to Rebecca.

"What is it you mean, Rosmer?"

"Peaceful, happy innocence. . . ."

At last he sees but one means to get over it—in marrying Rebecca. "Then she (Beata) will be completely out of the saga—for ever and ever. . . It must be so! It must! I cannot—I will not go through life with a corpse on my back. Help me to cast it off, Rebecca. And let us stifle all memories in freedom, in joy, in passion. You shall be to me the only wife I have ever had."

And here, quite unexpectedly, Rebecca refuses his offer; she refuses it resolutely and almost with an awe. . . . For in the meantime she too has changed; her reckless will came under the power of her awakened moral consciousness. . . After having voluntarily confessed her guilt in Beata's death, she discloses in a most powerful scene the tragic history of her inner regeneration for which she has paid so dearly:

"Rosmersholm has broken me. Broken me utterly and hopelessly. I had a fresh untamed will when I came here. Now I have bent my neck under a strange law. . . . I believe I could have accomplished anything—at that time. For I had still my undaunted, free-born will. I knew no scruples—I stood in awe of no human relation. But then began what has broken down my will, and cowed me so pitiably for my whole life. Rosmersholm has sapped my strength. My old undaunted will has had its wings clipped here. It is crippled! The time is passed when I had courage for anything in the world. I have lost the power of action, Rosmer. . . It is the Rosmer view of life that has infected my will. And made me sick. Enslaved me to laws that had no power over me before. You—life with you—has ennobled my mind—you may safely believe it! The Rosmer view of life ennobles. But it kills happiness. . . . Yes, Rosmer, *this* is the terrible part of it: that now, when all life's happiness is within my grasp—my heart is changed and my own past cuts me off from it. . . ."

Although the happiness is within their reach, the "strange law" bars them way to it, demanding retribution. As they do not believe in an eternal Judge over them, they pass judgment upon themselves. Their wedding feast is the voluntary death in the same mill-race which once had engulfed the wife of Rosmer, deluded by Rebecca. "The dead wife had taken them."

IV.

To a further and still more complicated development of this dilemma Ibsen returns in his famous "Master-Builder"; but in the interval between "Rosmersholm" and this drama he wrote two other plays—"The Lady from the Sea" and "Hedda Gabler"—which deal rather with some special aspects of the problem of the individual will.

As a matter of fact, in these two plays we encounter again a striking difference of mood for the very reason that in the bright and sunny "Lady from the Sea" the well-intentioned ideologist reappears in his full power, while in "Hedda Gabler" he entirely yields to the objective vivisector.

In the "Lady from the Sea" (Ellida Wangel), Ibsen endeavoured to embody (not quite successfully) two themes. One of them is the "dependence of our will on that which is will-less." This dependence, as well as Ellida's longing for the Unknown, he tries to explain in a quasi-Darwinian spirit by the fact that mankind has adapted itself by mistake to the dry land, instead of the sea. However, the second and the main theme brings this play partly into connection with Nora's and Mrs. Alvings, dilemma—in so far as it is concerned with the relations between man and wife. Ellida, who has "sold" herself to her husband, Doctor Wangel, cannot acclimatise herself to her new family and surroundings, for her will is permanently fascinated by the "Unknown" (symbolised by the enigmatic Stranger). "I know you can keep me here," she says, to her good-natured husband. "You have the power, and, no doubt, you will use it! But my mind—all my thoughts—all my irresistible longings and desires—these you cannot fetter! They will yearn and strain—out into the Unknown—that I was created for—and that you have barred against me."

At last when the Stranger returns, the hour of decision comes; she has to choose for ever between him and her husband. Ellida wavers. But as soon as she is free to decide on her own responsibility, she is "saved from herself," and the Unknown ceases to fascinate her. "I was free to choose it; therefore, I was able to reject it. . . ." Thus her true liberation comes not from outside, but from within.

That would be the crux of the play, which, on the whole, produces the impression of a too elaborated, and, therefore, not quite convincing work. It is, in fact, one of those plays in which the artist was obliged to use his greatest effort in order to achieve at least an artificial unity.

Completely organic and convincing, however, is Ibsen's next psychological play, "Hedda Gabler," in which the ideologist, as such, is reduced to a minimum. In its chief character, Hedda, we see the drama of the will without any direction, "call" or meaning. In her we feel great possibilities strangled by a small, vulgar and petty existence. Her strength becomes destructive and "dæmonic," simply because she sees no outlet whatever. She has "no gift for anything but being bored," as Ibsen puts it in his preliminary notes. And, again: "Hedda's despair is that there are, doubtless, so many chances in the world, but she cannot discover them. It is the want of an object in life that torments her." . . . . Her life is, therefore, like a dull and senseless journey, without any aim or end. None the less, in her cowardly yearning for beauty and strength we still can divine a dim and disillusioned vision of heroic greatness; if she had met a real hero, instead of Philistines, like Brack and Tesman, her potential strength would probably not have degenerated into destructive tendencies which finish with her own self-destruction.

By the way, it is interesting that Hedda's character fascinates us even in its depravity, for we feel beneath it a great inner tragedy. She is cynical and cruel, but never vulgar. Although immoral, Hedda is somehow above our moral judgment.

After this drama of stagnation, Ibsen returned again to the drama of the creative will. This he did in his "Master Builder," which, on the one side is connected with "Rosmersholm," and, on the other, with his last three dramas, especially with "When we dead awaken."

V.

The old master-builder Solness is at a deadlock with himself. He succeeded in his "call" and vocation,

but he paid for his success with his happiness. "All that I have succeeded in doing, building, creating—oh, isn't it terrible even to think of—!. . . . That all this I have to make up for, to pay for—not in money, but in human happiness. And not with my own happiness only, but with other people's too. That is the price which my position as an artist has cost me—and others. And every single day I have to look on while the price is paid for me anew. Over again, and over again—and over again for ever."

Among his victims was not only the old Knut Brovik, but first of all his wife Aline, who has lost her two children—owing to the burning of the very house on the ashes of which Solness started his brilliant career as architect. Solness pities all his victims, and yet he cannot help crushing them. He seems to be the instrument as it were of some hidden power which acts through him; but he pays for the actions of this power—pays with the tortures of his conscience and a permanent fear of the inexorable retribution on the part of the young generation which would crush him one day in the same manner as he had once crushed his own master, Knut Brovik. His success in building he compares to a sore on his breast. His mysterious helpers and servers flay pieces of skin off other people in order to heal his sore. "But still the sore is not healed—never, never! Oh, if you knew how it can sometimes gnaw and burn."

"I wonder whether you weren't sent into the world with a sickly conscience. . . I mean that your conscience is feeble—too delicately built, as it were—hasn't strength to take a grip of things—to lift and bear what's heavy," answers the young Hilda Wangel, who came like a fresh wind to his house in order to stir his doubting soul and reawaken it to its highest creative possibility.

When she was quite a young girl, Solness enchanted her mind by his daring and by doing the "impossible." While seeing him high over the cheering crowd, she heard "harps in the air," and now she came to Solness in order to see him again on his highest heights. She came to the old master just at the moment when his inner split had reached its climax: when the "sickly conscience" weighed him down like a terrible burden, and at the same time he saw that, in spite of all his sacrifices, in spite of all his victims, nothing had been really built nor worth building.

While relating the drama of his inner life, he himself explains to Hilda that he started his vocation as a real creator, as one who was chosen by God Himself. "He (God) wanted to give me the chance of becoming an accomplished master in my own sphere—so that I might build all the more glorious churches for Him. . . Then I saw plainly why He had taken my little children from me. It was that I should have nothing else to attach myself to. No such thing as love and happiness, you understand. I was to be only a master-builder—nothing else. And all my life long I was to go on building for Him. . . . First of all, I searched and tried my own heart—then I did the *impossible*—I no less than He. . . . I had never before been able to climb to a great, free height. But that day I did it. . . And when I stood there, high over everything, and was hanging the wreath over the vane, I said to Him: Hear me now, thou Mighty One! From this day forward I will be a free builder—I, too, in my sphere—just as thou in thine. I will never more build any more churches for thee—only homes for human beings. . ."

But he soon came to the conclusion that this utilitarian "building homes for human beings is not worth sixpence. . . Yes, for *now* I see it. Men have no use for these homes of theirs—to be happy in. And I shouldn't have any use for such a home, if I'd had one. . . ." Something greater and something more is necessary. That is why he conceives his new idea to create the only possible dwelling-places for human happiness, namely—human homes with high church-towers, i.e., with something that "points up into the free air. With the vane at a dizzy height." He wants to create "castles in the air," but on a firm foundation, thus attempting to reconcile on a higher plane his "call" with the greatest fullness and joy of life. In other terms, he directs his will towards the "Third Empire."

He has, in fact, built for himself a new home with a high tower. And now, inspired and stirred by Hilda, he wants to build new Life instead of new houses. Oblivious of his wife, Alina, to whom he was "chained as to a dead woman," oblivious of all his former victims, he is anxious to do the impossible again, and to "climb as high as he builds." And before his ascent he promises Hilda to speak again from his height to the Almighty. "I will stand up there and talk to Him as I did that time before. . . . I will say to Him: Hear me, Mighty Lord—thou mayst judge me as seems best to thee. But thereafter I will build nothing but the loveliest thing in the world—build it together with a princess whom I love. . . . And, then I will say to Him: Now I shall go down and throw my arms round her and kiss her—many, many times, I will say. . . . Then I will wave my hat—and come down to the earth—and do as I said to Him."

He really puts the wreath on the top of the tower; he boldly speaks to the Mighty Lord, waves his hat, but here his "dizzy conscience" betrays him: he crashes down from his height into the quarry.

The young Hilda exults, for she has just heard again "harps in the air," but her master is dead. . . .

Thus in the assertion of life through organic union of the earthly and heavenly principles—in Life as the highest, religious, creation (which is infinitely more difficult and more important than the creation of Art) Solness has failed. On the one side, he was foiled by his "sickly conscience," on the other, he erected his "castle in the air" in his own name, founding it on his self-will as creator for himself and for his own sake—not as one who fulfils his "Master's Will. . . ."

Therefore, he was not strong enough to overcome that "terrible freedom" which separates our present consciousness from the new religious consciousness of the "Third Empire." His self-erected heights made him dizzy. And instead of a victor he became a victim.

"ANY GUILDSMAN TO ANY ARTIST."

(Vide The New Age, April 10.)

Why "any" Guildsman, Mr. Lunn?
Why do you lump us all in one?
Are we so very homogeneous,
Or, being so, so scant ingenious
That, when we are not reading Marx,
We're spouting Engels in the parks?
Think you we dream of "State control"?
Why, take Aristotelian Cole
(He calls for his initials three)—
His heart's with "hoti," "ouu," and "de."
The usual task of Maurice Reckitt
Is studying the martyr Becket.
Shall I not speak of Mr. Penty?
If *he's* built one church, he's built twenty.
And when we come to Mr. Ewer,
Your proofs, I think, are even fewer:
Tending sheep is his delight,
And making verses all the night.
It's years since I saw Ivor Brown,
And since his novels took the town.
(There's dozens more of lesser fry,
Among whom may be reckoned I;
And I—if I may speak of me—
I simply dote on poesy!)
And need I speak of Mr. Hobson?—
The point is, Lunn, that while this job's on,
Each one of us must turn and build
His little bit towards the Guild.
I've done my bit; have you done yours?
. . . . (I pause) . . . .

C. E. B.

Music.

By William Atheling.

MAINLY STROESCO.

ALFREDO NARDI, the blind composer and violinist was warmly received (Æolian, March 12). Various singers and instrumentalists, also a "chorus of ladies and gentlemen," participated. Nardi's compositions are roughly école de Verdi; Misses L'Anson and McLelland displayed clear soft voices. Nardi's music was carefully rendered by the instrumentalists. Mr. Clapperton was by no means unusual.

The indivisibility of the human body prevented my attending all of both the Cernikoff and KENNEDY-FRASER concerts on March 15. Cernikoff I have dealt with in earlier notes. The sign "HOUSE FULL" greeted me as I arrived for the end of the Hebridean concert, and I had the pleasure of feeling that fine work was at any rate in one instance receiving its due reward. Both the K-Frasers were in excellent form; and ROSING, although he had not wholly assimilated the Sea-Rapture (Kishmul) Song, at least demonstrated that the song will hold its place beside his best renderings of Moussorgsky. He is the first singer who has been adequate to the music, and we may expect the thing done with full mastery at his later recital. The swing, the spirit and savagery were already in his version of it, and the combination of his forces with those of the Kennedy-Frasers is a fortunate one for the public. Miss Patuffa K-Fraser showed her rhythmic skill delightfully in the "Ceol Brutha" and "Raasay."

MIGNON NEVADA (Tuesday, March 18, Æolian) devoted herself in the main to second-rate music; I mean definitely second-rate, *not* third-rate or fourth-rate. Miss Nevada represents the taste of her mother's generation; much of the music was well enough in its way, but "the world" has read Henry James; and Laforgue has replaced De Musset and the easy tolerance of the operatic era is waning. Opera is a diffuse form; it was made to cover light, after-dinner conversation; the exigeant audience which concentrated its attention on careful Mediæval canzoni had given way to eighteenth century fluster. Miss Nevada's programme was in part pleasant enough; even Mr. Kiddle accompanied several passages passably well; but it was a programme without any masterpieces; it was a programme which showed that master-work had not been sought. Let us admit that Purcell's descant on "Hark, Hark, the ech'ing air," was pleasantly done, and that Gretry's "Rose Chérie" is the best bit of Gretry that Mr. Evans had resurrected for his lecture on early light opera; let us admit that it is a good thing for singers to get off the beaten track and hunt up music that is lying in desuetude. All of which things being so, this ferreting in odd corners should lead us to a stricter and not a looser critical standard. Opera was best in court conditions. It is for an audience that drifts together for social reasons and which wishes the social pressure to be loosened, the necessity for conversation to be diminished. Concert conditions are much more the conditions of song-competition "Preisleid." One, indeed, wanted to compare the icy tinkle of Miss Nevada's voice with the rich barocco of D'Alvarez, without the fortnight's interval (D'Alvarez, Æolian, April 1, at 8.15). In detail: Kiddle performed the first four lines of the Gluck quite nicely; then something broke loose. Nevada showed charming acuteness in the Prière, but the line of the melody has nothing in particular to do with the supposed meaning of the words; it is eighteenth century artifice. There was technical grace in "Il mio ben quando verra." We have praised the Purcell, yet the voice was a little clouded, or misted; "stellis nebulam spargere candidis." "Casta Diva" was excellent in the first three lines, and later in spots, but cold, and here one began to speculate as to the possible value of D'Alvarez equipment, despite its fuss and tropic excitement, and desired a comparison of vocalisations. The Delayrac has its moments, but is not really good enough, save as an illustration to a lecture on musical history. The voice was a shade too thin. In the third group the concert went to pieces. V. Thomas was twaddle after the Hebridean music of a few days before. The words were ill set, and with poor melodic line. Szulc is not the preferred setter of Verlaine. Delius' setting is the sort of thing one would expect from such words as "With perfume heavily laden, the roses droop their heads." "In the Seraglio Garden" (Turkish Bath seraglio)—the composer has not observed the sonorities of the words, and this shows in the way the music tends to make the singer sing "Minarits" and "*Torr*kish." Delius had, it is true, bad verse to set, but this is only another sign of the blunt-wittedness of contemporary musicians, and their general incapacity for literary choice and selection. Cyril Scott in "Sleep Song" had observed the verbal qualities. Let us mark this to his credit, even though the song is wholly without interest or importance ("Hush-a-bye, Hush, the wind is fled," etc.). Also the final "sleep" is set as "sleeeeeeeeep." Pierne's "Boutique Japonaise" is just music "en toc." That term has been evading me for some months, but "Music in stucco" is certainly the proper designation for a great and damnable category. "Magdalen at Michael's Gate" is post-Tennysonian re-hash balladry, music on a par with the words, after which even in "Canzone della Piovra" by Il Eggregio Signore Io-sono-Mascagni,-mi-pare-che-basta came as an improvement. It is "all sheer nonsense," or "all my eye," or whatever substitute for "Tell it to the Marines" is permitted the serious critic of æsthetics.

STROESCO (Æolian, March 18, evening) gave the best concert he has yet given—a series of clear and finely cut intaglios. Obviously he had intended a full programme of the finest possible work, and only in the case of the Pierne did he commit any error; even this song had the excuse of being fitted into a group of Oriental subjects for unity. A little of the horrible drizzle of Tuesday evening had clouded the singer's throat at the start, but he "sang through" that and gave us a memorable evening. Those are the only flaws. And if he can give three or four concerts of equal merit there will be no justice in his not having a firm and constant support. When he puts his mind to it, he is one of the finest vocal craftsmen we have; he had definitely put his mind to it for Tuesday's performance. I have used the term "intaglios" with intention; there is no other expression for the firm delicacy of his workmanship. Tinayre is an exquisite singer; if I had to discriminate between their two totally different styles I should say that Tinayre is, in sort, an embodiment of lyric joy, a sort of green grass and open air nature. Stroesco is a man in love with his art, innamorato. The term is much abused, but here we have the real thing, a Latin passion with its apparent excess and exaggeration, but real; and, my God! in what glorious contrast with the domestic content wherewith most English singers contemplate their music, or with the domestic satiety of the "type" Elwes.

I record the programme in full, because when a man makes as rigorous a search for perfection as Stroesco obviously had made, and when a singer takes such a strict line in presenting his best to an audience, one should notice the fact. Sic.: 1. "Pur Dicesti," Lotti; "My Lovely Celia," Monro; "Languir mi fais," Enesco; "Air de Joseph," Mehul. 2. "Quatre Poèmes Hindous," Maurice Delage; "Boutique Japonaise," Pierne; "Sadko," Korsakow. 3. "Pescatori di Perle," Bizet; "Les noirs nuages," Korsakow; "Le Steppe," Gretchaninow; "D'une Prison," Hahn. 4. Roumanian songs, set by Jassy and by Dina. The

encores were chosen with as much skill as the songs, and all exquisite.

There was suave and lovely voice in "Pur Dicesti"; this time Stroesco did not over-force his fortissimos (a danger in his earlier concerts). He showed exquisite sense of verbal values in "Lovely Celia." The Enesco setting of Marot's poem a mélange of modern French, and music of Marot's period, ends in an exquisite little cadenza that might be either thirteenth century French or Roumanian; despite these varied elements it attains charm. The Mehul is the mode of pomps and circumstance; it was forcefully and faultlessly presented, and took its place admirably in the programme structure. Di Veroli's sympathy and comprehension were admirably employed in the dénouement of the evening, Delage's Poème Hindous, which are like painting on silk. The second is more markedly Oriental than the first. The third opens with vowel intoning, and here Stroesco was glorious and unique. This intoning is old as Egypt, it is full of meaning, it still lasts in the synagogues, and takes part in Roumanian folk song. We do not recommend Delage's songs to amateurs. Those who have not heard Stroesco's opening to "Naissance de Bouddha" have missed something, and we counsel them to make good their loss at the earliest opportunity. There are just some things which Stroesco does all by himself without any dangerous competition. Even the Pierne was elevated by Stroesco's sense of verbal values. The Sadko is vital Orient; Stroesco had the rhythm, and in this and in the succeeding Korsakow and Gretchaninow he carried the war into the "enemy's country" with no inconsiderable interest and great applause from his audience. We shall soon have a duel of tenors, and Rosing must look to his monopoly. The French translations will doubtless upset the strict Russophile, but the results have a charm of their own. Stroesco was exquisite and passionate in the Bizet, and there was no room for improvement in the Hahn-Verlaine or in any of the encores. The Jassy was perhaps the most interesting of the Roumanian folk songs, absolutely authentic; and this mixture of Latinity and Orient has its definite place and lure.

Dolmetsch concerts, April 16th and 30th, at 5.15, at 6, Queen's Square, W.C.1. (Inquiries to A. Dolmetsch, "Jesses," Haslemere, Surrey.)

Reviews.

The Women Novelists. By R. Brimley Johnson. (Collins. 6s. net.)

Mr. Brimley Johnson has made a careful and discriminating study of the women novelists from Fanny Burney to George Eliot for the purpose of discovering the real nature of their contribution to English literature. Women certainly wrote novels before Defoe and Richardson, but there were no peculiarly feminine elements in those works; they copied men, accepted their standards and practice as the only criteria of art and life, and added more to the volume than to the content of literature. But with Fanny Burney began a self-assertion that has never ceased since then; women began to be conscious of themselves, and their powers, and set to work to exercise those powers and to exhibit themselves. A woman's place was the home; they developed, and perfected, the domestic novel. The tinkle of tea-cups invited the straying sex to come home and be criticised, and a man was judged not by his abilities but by his manner of eating cake. They were stern realists, every one—with the possible exception of Charlotte Brontë, who was sufficiently undignified to express passion; they knew that life was not something to be discovered in a glorious adventure, but something that had to be lived every day, usually with a man. And the men! Oh, my dears, the men! We must be prudent, you know; you never know what they do when they are away from home, so awfully doggy are they. A man may eat cake like a curate, and yet have actually kissed as many women as a Parliamentary candidate. No constancy, my dears, no constancy; we must be careful whom we allow to soil our antimacassars. As Mr. Brimley Johnson says: "The earlier women novelists contented themselves with raising the standard of domestic morality, upholding the family, and hinting at *one* ideal for the *two* sexes." They simply could not "abide" difference; the world was their home, and its history a criticism of table-manners. If they gave us the woman's woman, they also gave us the woman's man, a sort of spaniel taught to do drawing-room tricks. It took men a long time to learn the lesson; as Mr. Johnson says: "It was reserved for George Meredith to understand women": and, as no one can understand him, the women have now reverted to the earlier tradition, and write like men in lingerie gowns.

However, Mr. Brimley Johnson has written his study with more sobriety than this. He has that peculiar affinity with the temperament of a maiden aunt that makes some men prefer the works of Jane Austen to that astonishing feat of imaginative genius, the "Wuthering Heights" of Emily Brontë. Jane Austen may be, nay, certainly is more representative of the women novelists; but to those whose vision of life is not limited to backgammon after dinner, the work of Emily Brontë will always be as true a revelation of a higher life as Beethoven made in music. The "stern realism" of the women novelists, their meticulous observation of real life, has resulted in the practical destruction of the domestic ideals they developed and maintained; the home is being left for the hotel, the family, in spite of their "upholding," is barely tolerated as an institution, and its reformation is fiercely demanded by women; the "one ideal for the two sexes" has turned out to be the ideal of the man about town. But "Wuthering Heights" endures as the unique performance that it is; it contributed nothing to English literature but itself, and itself is a revelation that is still vital.

Facts About France. By E. Saillens. (Fisher Unwin. 8s. 6d. net.)

It was a good idea to put together in dictionary form some of the facts about France; and M. Saillens has contrived to make this form of presentation agreeable, and to add to the value of what is necessarily summarised information by indicating some of the literature that pertains to the various subjects. Its purpose is obviously to explain France and the French to the Allies, particularly the English-speaking Allies; and M. Saillens is peculiarly qualified for the task, for he understands the English and is capable of appreciating their differences and their difficulties. What could be more illuminating, for example, than this explanation of the English diffidence in speaking French: "We sometimes think that our Allies would speak French more commonly if they were not so fond of perfection (let us put it that way); they had rather not speak at all than 'make fools of themselves,' as they express it. But is silence always wisdom?" There is, of course, another reason for the English refusal to speak French; but Englishmen do not, as a rule, know the reason, they only act on it. The range of information is extraordinary; and with almost uncanny insight, M. Saillens descends from general description to precise information. After describing the cafés, for example, and telling us that you may ask for any drink you please except wine or coffee, he comes down to the practical question of tips, tells us that if we tip too highly, we shall be regarded as the careless millionaire who might have given more, while if the tip is too small, unmentionable things will happen. Give 10 per cent., he says, and live comfortably ever afterwards. But architecture, literature, education, military organ-

isation, Napoleon, everything that France is, was, or wants to be, has, did have, or wants to have (like Alsace-Lorraine, concerning which M. Saillens adopts the arguments of those who ignore history since 1871), is here described and explained with really extraordinary skill and style. It is not only an instructive handbook, it is extremely pleasant to read; it is as interesting as a dictionary, as compendious as an encyclopædia, and as pleasantly written as a study in belles lettres. It is all things to all men; it supplies dates and facts for human ostriches, and the sauce of style for the gourmet. M. Saillens has made France habitable, has made it seem a real country instead of a Promised Land.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

THE WAR DEBT.

Sir,—I am in full agreement with the masterly diagnosis of the situation with regard to the British war debt contained in the last paragraph of your "Notes of the Week" in your last issue. This may be summed up as follows:—The great German indemnity is a fairy story; the war-loan interest will divert a large part of the product of industry from the workers; these workers will not be better off because the diverted product goes to British, instead of foreign, capitalists; finally, a fall in prices will make the burden of repayment greater.

What is the remedy? Is it not to sweep away the debt by a levy on all wealth, graduated to fall most heavily on those whose possessions are largest? The citizens of the country are liable jointly for the debt; let it be divided severally between them, according to the amount of their wealth. For this purpose the fact that most of the debt is held internally is an undoubted advantage, for much of the levy will be paid to the State in the form of war bonds which can be immediately cancelled. The levy will also tend to deflate the currency and lower prices, but as this effect will be brought about simultaneously with repayment the disadvantages that you rightly envisage as concomitant with deflation under ordinary circumstances will not arise.

I do not, of course, claim the proposal as a panacea for all the ills of our social order, nor even as a cure for the whole maladministration of wealth which afflicts our civilisation. But for the specific purpose of freeing the people of the country from the incubus of the war debt I believe it will be adequate and satisfactory.

F. W. PETHICK LAWRENCE.

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"A REFORMER'S NOTE-BOOK."

Sir,—In his last instalment of "A Reformer's Note Book," the writer, under the heading of "Marriage," proposes that all children of divorced couples shall be taken away from them and brought up by the State, pour encourager les autres, or rather to encourage the parents to marry more happily next time.

I have been looking for fire from heaven to consume this wicked man; but as nothing has happened, I cannot further refrain from asking for a few more gleams of light. In the first place, does the writer, though he seems to say it, really mean that people "unfitted for marriage" together are necessarily both of them "inadequate parents," and more inadequate than the State which is not married at all? Does he consider the natural love of a mother, for instance, of no value? Does the writer consider it just that, owing to a young human woman having erred in her judgment as to the probable compatibility of her temperament with that of her prospective mate, her possibly dearly loved children should be put away into a State reformatory? And under this reformed regime would an individual be allowed to go on marrying one mate after another till he or she struck the right one, piling the consequential débris on the State? Finally, it would be interesting to know from "A Reformer" what proportion of existing marriages in this country he would estimate as inadequate, and what improvement, if any, in the power of right mutual choice of mates he would seriously anticipate, as the result of their contemplation for, say, twenty years of the failure of State nurseries. PHILIP T. KENWAY.

"MACHIAVELLIANISM."

Sir,—I think Dr. Levy's mistake is that of appealing to the lower side of man. An appeal à la Machiavelli to the evil desires in the minds of all of us may easily pass as "honest" because it will be reinforced by all the little-suspected power of our unconscious minds, and the conscious mind will often seek to justify this appeal as Dr. Levy does. Those who appeal to the higher or moral side of the human mind will be therefore at a disadvantage, being unable to enlist the support of our unconscious desires. Accepting for the sake of argument the dilemma propounded by Dr. Levy that we must choose between life which is immoral and religion (death implied presumably) which is moral, how does Dr. Levy justify his choice of life rather than death? To accept death for the sake of an idea may be to take a mystic's attitude, but it is logical; it is also the attitude of man—or, at any rate, of some men. The alternative attitude has been adopted by monkeys.

G. E. FASNACHT.

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THE SUPPRESSION OF THE MONASTERIES.

Sir,—Great though Mr. Penty's authority is on most Guild questions, his ideas of the Henry VIII reformation will not pass muster.

Henry VIII—a king who compares favourably with most of the feeble men who followed him on the throne during the ensuing centuries—was quite able to gratify his "lusts" without the luxury of divorces or beheadings. But, like Napoleon, he wanted a son and heir, and the nation—remembering the Wars of the Roses—wanted his wish gratified.

The Popes of Rome were very generous with divorces—in the case of powerful persons. Any history of the Middle Ages is full of them; take, for example, the history of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. But Clement VII was between two stools—the Spanish interest and the English. The Spanish won, yet won merely by default. Whenever did Clement boldly say, "Thou shalt not have this woman?" Of all the cowards in history, this Pope is the worst. Give me Henry VIII!

And the Catholic population of Tudor England was either rather sick of the Pope or too pusillanimous to oppose Henry to any important extent (either theory reflects discredit on the Church). A very few martyrs shed their blood; most people were either glad of the change or indifferent to it.

It is the fashion in these days to whitewash an institution which Chaucer, Langland, and Rabelais knew at first hand and did not whitewash! F. H. H.

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MOHAMEDANISM.

Sir,—Once and for all, damn these "kingdoms of God on earth"! It is bad enough, it is insult enough, to the human intelligence that the Papacy should still continue—continue as an organisation with infinite capacity for stirring up mischief and persuading gelatinous members of the Occidental communities to preach obfuscation; cannot Mujid Ali abu ben Rachad Pickthall find a better excuse for the Turk? (Bless the Turk and damn Gladstone!) Cannot, however, said Pickthall find a better excuse for said Turk than saying that the poor suffering Mohamedans (who were so considerate at the time of re-embarkation) or than that the fellahin think the Turk is God's vice-understudy, or than that Mohamedanism is a bigotry not much better than the sainte foi catholique?

The plea that Mohamedanism or Judaism or any other superstition is a necessary balance against Christian fanaticism does not hold. It is merely the old argument that two mad dogs are better than one. "Douze crimes pour l'honneur de l'infini!" etc. Mohamedanism has had considerably more than a thousand years in which to cure this world of Christianity, and has failed ignominiously. The whole horde of Moslem has not managed as many deliverances as one Frenchman (Voltaire) or one Englishman (Fraser).

One's sympathies go out to Mr. Pickthall in his quixotic attempt to prevent Occidental so-called civilisation from spreading any further than it has. But one bigotry is not the cure for another, and the defender of the Ottoman would convince us more if he could present a few examples of Turkish intelligence or of Moslem intelligence since the fall of Granada. On the other

hand, I believe the Emir Feisul has already promised to collect the oral songs of the desert as an evidence of Arab mentality.

A race which has *thought* nothing for five centuries is not particularly worth our attention.

EZRA POUND.

* * *

IBSEN'S "GHOSTS."

Sir,—Mr. Janko Lavrin's supplementary explanation of the standpoint from which he views this, so far, notorious rather than famous play, is again interesting as illustrating the danger of reading into a book thoughts born of preconceptions (I will not say prejudices). It is, of course, quite legitimate to read a moral into "Ghosts," as into any work, even though Ibsen positively disclaimed preaching anything whatever with it. But it is not legitimate to father on an author conclusions drawn from a story he did *not* write. It is surely impossible to tell whether Ibsen was chiefly concerned with the "inner tragedy as such of Mrs. Alving" or with "poisoned social 'atmosphere,'" unless that inner tragedy and its causes or motives are rightly understood.

I confess to a theory of my own about the motives—besides the irresistible impulse of the artist to create, of course—that influenced the writing of this particular play. It is so prosaic, however, that I refrain from obtruding it here, lest I be thought appreciative of Mr. Lavrin's legitimate desire to interpret a great artist's work. Moreover, it may well be that the interpretation —"we are slaves of 'ghosts'" at any rate of the one ghost I see plainly, "sham-idealism"—will rather be confirmed than not by the *true* story. But as that somewhat trite lesson has not satisfied the prejudices (I need not worry about refinements!) of commentators like Mr. Shaw, it may be hinted that, if the fable is misread, the chances are the moral will be misread too. It is only by accident that a true conclusion ensues from false premises. Mr. Shaw has not, I think, met with that "accident." He certainly starts from false premises; and, making out Oswald to be "the victim of ideals," as certainly arrives at a most ludicrously false conclusion.

I have no wish to distract attention from Mr. Lavrin's earnest study of Ibsen's whole work, covering fields, as it does, which are "out of bounds" for me; but at a more convenient time I should be very glad if you would let me have the satisfaction of demolishing those "premises" of Mr. Shaw's—were it only that I might, perchance, convert my courteous but sceptical critic, "D. I."

PATRIC PARK.

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CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

Sir,—In the article entitled "A Reformer's Note Book," in your issue of the 3rd inst., a reference is made to Christian Science, which is liable to create a false impression as to its method of healing. Christian Science practice does not include the exercise of will-power in commanding patients or oneself to sleep. "The physical healing of Christian Science results now, as in Jesus' time, from the operation of divine principle, before which sin and disease lose their reality in human consciousness and disappear as naturally and as necessarily as darkness gives place to light and sin to reformation." ("Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures," by Mary Baker Eddy, Pref., page xi.)

CHARLES W. J. TENNANT,
District Manager,
Christian Science Committees.

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A CORRECTION.

Sir,—May I correct an error in the printing of my article in your issue of April 3? "These laws, so it is claimed, are to be found clearly stated nowhere in the Koran" should read "These laws, so it is claimed, are to be found clearly stated nowhere *except* in the Koran."

MARMADUKE PICKTHALL.

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"MR. PENTY'S IDIOSYNCRASIES."

Sir,—"T. N. G." appears to overlook the fact that some, if not all, the ideas of mine, which he regards as personal idiosyncrasies, are shared by a large part of the human race. I need not reply to these criticisms in a letter, since many of them will find an answer in the historical articles now appearing.

A. J. PENTY.

From "A European Anthology."

(*Translated by* P. SELVER.)

FRENCH.

PAUL VERLAINE: MR. WISEMAN.

He is sedate; both town and family feel his power.
His patent collar swallows up his ears; his eyes
Rove in an endless dream, wherein no cares arise,
And on his slippers glitters every springtide flower.

To him the golden orb is naught, and naught the bower
Where sings the bird in shade; and naught to him the skies,
The verdant leas, the greensward that in silence lies,
For Mr. Wiseman plans to grant his daughter's dower

To Mr. So-and-So, a young man, well-to-do,
A steady chap, a botanist—pot-bellied, too;
But as for versifiers, those rascals, worthless litter,

Those loungers, scrubby-chinned and badly kempt, they are
More loathed by him than his perpetual catarrh,
And all the springtide flowers upon his slippers glitter.

"Les poèmes saturniens."

GERMAN.

DETLEV VON LILIENCRON: FOREBODING.

The starling pecks red berries: harvest-ears
Made the exulting of the fiddle shrill.
And wait, for soon the autumn with its shears
Shall sever leaves from branches at its will:
Then in the woods a grievous gap appears,
And through bare boughs a river peeps until
Thence to my shore the drowsy ferry steers,
To fetch me where the silences are chill.

ITALIAN.

EDMONDO DE AMICIS: THE CIRCULATION OF BOOKS.

A youth once bought a little book by me,
The which he then to his professor lent,
Whence through the hands of eight dames it was sent,
All of whom simply roll in £ s. d.

The eighth one passed it on to a J.P.,
For others' books he has a fervid bent,
And then from him to touch the hearts it went
Of all the clerks that work at his decree.

And from the last of all of them it came
To his beloved at Syracuse, from whom
A marquis at Turin received the same.

And he to-day said: "Why, you'll break the bank!
These books of yours are having quite a boom. . . ."
(Humbugs! The whole lot brought me in a franc!)

DUTCH.

ALBERT VERWEY: FROM "THE LOVE HIGHT FRIENDSHIP."

E'en as an Ethiop lord from torrid strands
Sends forth a fleet whose treasures amply weigh,
Gold, ivory, and raiment's rich display,
Greeting and gift to a lord in foreign lands;—

The ships along blue paths flaunt their array,
And a whole motley pageant from them lands,*
Bondswomen, bondsmen kneel, with suppliant hands
Goblets and gems down by the daïs to lay:

So presses on the vision of my thought,
Thee, Lord and Friend, on bended knee to greet,
With noblest pomps that in my soul appear:

Fleet upon fleet I send thee, fully fraught
With lavish song and love, and at thy feet
Heap up the treasures that stood useless here.

DANISH.

J. G. JACOBSEN: SONG FROM "A SHOT IN THE MIST."

I'll bring home my bride by the month of May
In blossoms of rose and lily-array.
Play, minstrels, play.
That day shall the forest have bonnet of green,
And the meadow have flowers at its breast.

* Identical rhyme also in original (landen-landen).

And that night shall the moon in its fullness be seen,
But the sun shall dance warm to the west.
And the cuckoo shall call and our luck to us bring,
And the finch he shall pipe, and the thrush he shall sing,
But sorrow shall bide in its lair.

NORWEGIAN.

SIGBJORN OBSTFELDER: RAIN (IMPROMPTU).

One is one, and two is two—
In water we hop,
In shingle we drop.
Zick, zack,
The thatches we scour,
Tick, tack,
Shower upon shower.
Rain, rain, rain, rain,
Pattering rain,
Clattering rain,
Rain, rain, rain, rain,
Goodly its touch,
Goodly its clutch!
One is one, and two is two—
In water we hop,
In shingle we drop.
Zick, zack,
The thatches we scour,
Tick, tack,
Shower upon shower.

SWEDISH.

GUSTAF FRÖDING: THE IDEAL.

The ideal, it is here, and it's yonder withal:
The ideal's like St. Peter and also St. Paul:
The ideal, it is white, it's the hue of a smut,
And, like the Pope's beard, of peculiar cut:
The ideal, it is light, the ideal weighs a ton:
The ideal, it is old, and it's new all in one:
The ideal, it is love; the ideal, it is hate:
The ideal is what Tolstoy and Nietzsche prate:
It's best for each to have his, I opine,
As I have got mine.

RUSSIAN.

A. PUSHKIN: EX UNGUE LEONEM.

I, having piped some verse a short time back,
Without my signature sent forth the same;
It was discoursed on by a clownish hack,
And he—the rogue—like me, withheld his name.
What think ye? Nor the hireling hack, nor I,
Contrived to hide the trick that we had played.
It was my claws he quickly knew me by,
And him his ears at once to me betrayed.

(1825.)

UKRAINIAN.

TARAS SHEVTCHENKO: WHEREWITH AM I STRICKEN?

Wherewith am I stricken? Why do I languish?
Why does my heart make ado, weep and mourn,
Like a famished child? O heart full of anguish,
For what dost thou crave? Why art thou forlorn?
Dost thou thirst, dost thou hunger, does weariness rise?
Then slumber, my heart, evermore shalt thou rest,
Unsheltered and smitten. Let mortals molest
With their raging and wailing. O heart, close thine eyes. (St. Petersburg, 13/11/1844.)

POLISH.

ADAM MICKIEWICZ: STORM.

Sails, helm were rent, waves roar in frenzied plight,
Voices of dread, the pumps' ill-omened groan,
The last ropes from the seamen's hands were blown.
Amid the blood-red sunset hope took flight.
The wind exults, and on the sodden height,
Out of the towering ocean-waste has flown
The sprite of death, and made the boat his throne,
As one on ruined walls in savage fight.

Some lie half-dead, one yonder wrings his hands,
One bids farewell amid his friend's caress,
Some pray ere death, that death they may dispel.
One wanderer aloof in muteness stands,
And ponders: Happy who in his distress
Can pray, or has to whom to bid farewell.

From "The Crimean Sonnets."

CZECH.

JAROSLAV VRCHLICKY: METAMORPHOSES.

I see how, as the years roll by,
From change to change I ever go.
In happy rest, in battle's cry,
In tenderness, in passion's glow:
Fate is the plough, the field am I.

In me are buildings raised and wrecked,
Gifts tendered, taken back again:
A hundred worlds my soul protect,
Forthwith a hundred others wane—
I am as Proteus, sea-bedecked.

When will the spell of toil be o'er?
Will death remain the final due?
Or will it take my crystal store,
And shape it into worlds anew,
To soar and bloom and live once more?

Be as it may! Creation's plan
It is a joy to help uphold.
And Nature, mighty mother, can
All discords evenly remould,
Twining upon our life's short span.

"Thorns from Parnassus" (1892).

CROATIAN.

AUGUST HARAMBASIC: SONG.

Blossom, blossom,
Little rose,
Where thy tiny
Garden grows.
Thou ere long wilt
Lose thy bloom;
Thou ere long wilt
Meet thy doom;
Thou wilt in thy
Youth be ta'en:
But my love will
Never wane.

SERBIAN.

JOVAN DUCIC: THE STILLNESS.

By the spacious clearing, a forgotten dingle,
Banks whereon the silence and the grasses press.
Here in grief the evening waters mutely mingle,
And the mournful willows sigh forgetfulness.

Where a clear green gloom the foliage diffuses,
In eternal silence Solitude I spied,
Pale beside the river; there she sits and muses,
Gazing at her image in the azure tide.

Who knows since how long? And where the dale lies dumbly,
Only just a sound those pure domains has stirred:
All the stillness then sighs in its sorrow numbly,
Suffering's refrain from leaf to leaf is heard.

SLOVENE.

F. PRESEREN: TO THE POET.

To whom
'Tis given to lighten the soul-fretting gloom.
Who may
Rout the vulture that seizes the heart for its prey
From dawn unto darkness, from darkness till day.
Who shows
How to quench from the memory yesterday's woes,
And the eyes before threatening anguish to close,
To flee from to-day with the irk of its throes.
Thy care
A poet to be is not vain, if thou dare
Both heaven and hell in thy bosom to bear.
Nor cease
To think of thy calling and grieve without peace.

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