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**NOTES OF THE WEEK.**

The evidence of the Colliery Managers before the Coal Commission last week leaves no doubt where the opposition to “joint control” is strongest. It is strongest, at the present moment, not in political circles, where, indeed, “joint control” is becoming more acceptable every day, nor even in the employing classes, but in the managerial classes who have hitherto lorded it over the rank and file in the interests of private owners and shareholders. Nationalisation, as a last resort, the spokesmen of the Colliery Managers were prepared, it will be observed, to accept, “provided that there were no joint control.”

“Any dual control,” they said, “would in their opinion, be unworkable.” “The position of the managers (under joint control) would become intolerable. . . . they would find it absolutely impossible to carry out their obligations . . . . and, in fact, it would be useless to attempt it.” This is plain-speaking; but plain-speaking is by no means always correct thinking: and it appears obvious to us, as it must to anybody accustomed to weigh the meaning of words, that the very emphasis of the denials of the Colliery Managers indicates a misunderstanding of the meaning of “joint control.” A proposition so absurd as to justify such a torrent of repudiation could not possibly be formulated or intended in the phrase, “joint control.” It must, therefore, be to some caricature of the idea that the opposition is directed. What, in fact, we suspect to be the case is that the Colliery Managers, who, outside their profession, are not widely intelligent men, have heard of “joint control,” have hastily concluded that it meant “divided control,” and have in consequence rushed into the arena to denounce it.

Mr. Smillie’s assurance, given at the Commission, that the Miners have no intention of “interfering with the management,” will probably prove to be insufficient to allay the fears aroused by the Managers’ bogey. Other assurances will doubtless be necessary, and some of these, at any rate, are to be found in a calm examination of the nature of the actual problem. What is the purpose of the authority now exercised by the Colliery Managers; why was such authority given to them; what are its natural limits? The replies to these questions, it will be found, turn upon the character of the function to be exercised by the Colliery Managers; and may be summarised as the adaptation of power to responsibility or of authority to function. Under the Mines Act from which the Colliery Managers derive their defined powers, the Colliery Manager, it is well known, is the person responsible (ultimately to Parliament) for the safety of the mine. All his powers are given him for that purpose. As the representative of the community in any given mine, he is charged with the responsibility of the safety of the mine and empowered to enforce the provisions necessary to this end. His authority, in short, is derived from his function; and is, or ought to be, exactly equivalent to it. But is there any need to fear, we may now ask, that this authority will be diminished under the system of “joint control”? The safety of the mines has clearly been endangered in the past, not primarily by the action of the men, but by the neglect of the owners; and it was, we have no doubt, against the owners rather than against the men that the safeguards of the Managers’ authority was originally created. The men, on the other hand, have not only a greater interest than the owners in the safety of a mine, but they have a more personal and direct interest than even the interest of Parliament. After all, it is their lives that are at stake. If, therefore, Parliament with its lesser interest has found it desirable and necessary to endow the Colliery Managers with specific and unquestionable powers, the miners themselves, with their still greater interests, may certainly be expected at least to acquiesce in the continuation of those powers, if not, indeed, to enlarge them. Powers and authority designed and exercised in the common interests; powers and authority, in other words, indispensable to the performance of defined functions—these, it is obvious, would be denied to the personnel claiming them only at the peril of the rank and file. Unless, therefore, the rank and file were utterly indifferent to its own interests, it might safely be assumed that all the authority necessary to the safeguarding functions would be readily conceded. Experience of analogous situations, in fact, proves that the tendency of a rank and file, when jointly interested with its leaders or elected officers in any enterprise is not to give the latter too little, but too much, authority. We should not be in the least surprised to find the Colliery Managers under a Mining Guild exercising far more power than they do at present.
The Colliery Managers are not only allowing themselves to be scared by a bogey, they appear to us to mistake for a bogey what, on the contrary, is an indubitably real danger. "Joint control," they tell us, is unworkable, intolerable, impossible and so forth. But have they considered the alternative to it? The first Interim Report of the Coal Commission makes it very certain that the existing system of ownership and control must disappear. The resolution of the Miners' Federation (and, we may add, of Labour everywhere) is that the system which replaces the existing system must include a measure of "joint control." If the Colliery Managers' Association should now refuse to co-operate in the new system (whatever that may be when joint control is practically defined), the danger both before themselves and before the community is considerable. The demand for industrial joint control, being as it is, a world-movement and not a mere passing fancy of Labour, will certainly not be denied; we may say, indeed, that some concession to it is a necessity of public and national policy. At the same time it is probable that joint control without the operation of the managerial classes is likely to be ruinous.

What then is to be expected, if the Managers continue in their present attitude, but either their supercession as an existing personnel—their wholesale dismissal—or the creation of a measure of joint control for the community as a whole? The Managers tell us that, unlike the wicked Miners, they are not threatening to "hold up" the community; all they want is to be saved from what they imagine to be the impossibilities of the joint control of their imagination. But their very refusal to consider anything but a grotesque caricature of joint control is itself a virtual threat, and, if persisted in, would involve them in a definite strike.

In the event of Nationalisation with Joint Control being recommended by the Commission, it is to be hoped that the Colliery Managers will not be as foolish as their word and decline to make an attempt to work the new system. We must, however—meaning by "we" the general public and the miners—be prepared even for this; and, happily, the prospect is not altogether black, given a sufficient period of preparation to meet it. In his evidence before the Commission Lord Haldane reminded the world of the magic of education and training. "Public spirit," he said, could be as easily be "educated" as the spirit of private enterprise; and the development of government for the purpose of improving subjects of education as the servility and irresponsibility deliberately encouraged to-day. In a comparatively short period of training at the London School of Economics, a considerable number of military officers, Lord Haldane said, had been made efficient in a particular kind of managerial work; and as many more might have been found as the need demanded. The application of this discovery, or, rather, utilisation of the value of education, to the immediate problem of mine-management is obvious. Like so many of the "skilled" trades which the war proved to be easily and rapidly assimilable by the average amateur, the skilled function of mine-management is not a monopoly of a few hundred naturally gifted men. The skill required in it is not very rare; and, for the rest, it is only a question of a little special training in decision and initiative—qualities, we repeat, that are definitely within the control of education. Assuming, therefore, that it were decided that joint control should be established, and that the present Mine Managers were to persist in their anti-social attitude, the difficulty their "strike" would cause need not be of very long duration. If Lord Haldane could, as he said, put his finger on half a dozen men capable of acting as a Minister of Mines, the Miners' Federation could certainly select a few thousand men capable of being trained to take the place of the present Mine Managers. Needless to say, we hope, for the sake of the good relations between the existing managerial and proletarian classes, that it will not come even to this temporary deadlock. The dictatorship of the proletariat is not to be advocated blindly, even when no other course seems to be open.

This brings us to the substance of the Commission itself. We are now within rather more than a week of the date arranged for the issue of the second Interim Report; and the question becomes urgent whether the Report is to recommend Nationalisation, and, if so, whether with or without Joint Control. With the arguments for and against both Nationalisation and Joint Control, that part of the community that has not allowed its whole mind to be distracted by Mr. Hawker and the Derby is sufficiently familiar. Everything that can be said on one side or the other has been said; and nothing now remains but to act. It is perfectly true, we allow, that the results to be anticipated from either National or National Guild administration are problematical. In this sense, the adoption of either principle is something of a leap in the dark. But not only does the implied uncertainty attach to every forward step in progress—there would be no merit in progress if it were otherwise—but the alternative to the adventure is something that we know too well already, and that in all probability will grow worse with over-familiarity. The choice of means is not very large. It is either that the existing system is good, or that it is not becoming more impossible every day. He would be a rash prophet who should venture to say that the existing system will serve the interests of society for more than a few months longer. Some change, therefore, will be necessary; and of the direction or the intention of the change there can be little doubt. Whether by constitutional means, devised in an atmosphere of goodwill, or by "revolutionary" means adopted in panic and carried out in an atmosphere of hate, a measure of economic democracy will in all certainty be insisted upon. The choice of means is before the Commission at this moment. Mr. Smillie and his colleagues, both on the Commission and in the Federation and the Triple Alliance, have an enviable responsibility resting upon them; they may thrust the community back into the night of the existing system, thence to plunge from one desperate expedient to another in a rising temperature of Labour and public discontent until disaster overtakes us, or they may earmark the community on, at least, a promising if, at the same time, a speculative adventure in the realm of prudence. Mr. Hawker and his friends are not afraid of throwing their little weight on the side of reaction. All the enemies of economic democracy, in fact, are massing their forces and formulating their negativés against the new spirit. A similar resolution is necessary on the other side: events are determined by determined men. We hope that before the Report is made Mr. Smillie and his Federation will have determined its character.

The decision of the police to refrain from striking was wise in the circumstances, though not for the reasons either offered or accepted. If we were to believe the Press and the Government that the motives of the police for withholding their action were fear of the Government's threats and satisfaction with the increases in their pay, we should be bound to regard the police as at once a mercenary, pusillanimous and hypocritical set of men, and their decision not to strike as indicative of anything but wisdom. And if, on the other hand, we were to accept the reasons offered by the police they argue that they have decided only to postpone their strike until they had procured the support of the industrial Trade Unions, we should feel equally bound to accuse them of having arrived at their wise decision too late to make it wise. For the probable action, or, rather, inaction, of the Trade Unions was certainly known to the police before the outbreak of agitation had reached the crisis of last Sunday week.
The wisdom of the decision rests on the fact which, we must suppose, has at last been brought home to the minds of the police, that their demand to form a Trade Union after the pattern of the industrial Unions and to affiliate with the Trade Union Congress is not only opposed by the Government but is opposed to sense and reason. The regular Trade Unions, as everybody knows, have the double object of improving the conditions of their members and of making an attack upon the Capitalist system under which they are employed. They are simultaneously, that is to say, defensive and offensive organisations whose temporary existence must suppose, has at last been brought home to the latter's distinctive purpose of abolishing the present system altogether. But if the Union after the pattern of the industrial Unions and to war upon the Capitalist system under which they are controlled "profit" is extracted from them. They are a public Service than with the Trade Unions the object of improving the condition of its members, it cannot be said to share with the Trade Unions the "profit" of joint control. As such, exactly what the police now are—a public association, like any other organised body of men, may be said to share with the Trade Unions the object of improving the condition of its members, it cannot be said to share with the Trade Unions the latter's distinctive purpose of abolishing the industrial system. Save as citizens, in fact, the police as an association have no direct concern with the distinctive function of Trade Unions. They are not "under Capitalist control"; their employers are not Capitalists; they do not suffer under the wage-system; and "profit" is extracted from them. They are a public service as the Trade Unions proper are not and desire to become; and their affiliation is rather with the Civil Service than with the Trade Union movement. This is not to say, however, that the police have neither a good excuse for a good reason for forming an association and for enforcing its recognition. A Trade Union is not the last word in proletarian, still less, in citizen organisation. On the contrary, given the abolition of the Capitalist system, the present-day Trade Unions will certainly lose their present distinguishing feature of aggressive class-warfare, and become, in the first instance, exactly what the police now are—a public service. At the same time, it is not to be expected that, as the police have discovered, their conditions will then look after themselves. Vigilance is the price of progress, even when it need no longer be paid for liberty. And we may expect, in the second instance, that the public service unions of the future will push on from the abolition of the wage-system, through joint control to complete control. It is this second phase of development which it appears to us that the police association should now be able to carry through.

A great deal, no doubt, remains to be revealed before the general public can form a judgment on the final merits of the dispute between Mr. Asquith and Lord French. But, however disposed we may be to sympathise with Mr. Asquith and to question the public spirit of Lord French, there can be little doubt that in the recent passage at speeches it is Mr. Asquith who has come off in need of most explanation. Attention has been directed for the most part to the contradictions into which Mr. Asquith has proved that Lord French has fallen; and these, it is true, are of such a nature as to convict Lord French of double-dealing in sentiment if not in fact. But the difficulty for Mr. Asquith's defenders, as well as for himself, is not reduced by the manifest discrepancies in Lord French's case against him; but it lies open and, so far, untouched in the case which Mr. Asquith has drawn up in his own defence. Let us briefly consider the relevant facts. Mr. Asquith had "heard" that there was a shortage of shells at the front. The rumour had spread over the public and was on the point of appearing in the Press. The police, that understanding of the situation, were the ready to enforce the anxiety produced by the rumour and, at the same time, to stimulate the production of munitions. In order to fortify himself for the occasion, he not only twice saw Lord Kitchener on the subject and received his assurances that the supply of shells at the front was for the time being ample; but, as he tells us, "to make assurance doubly sure," he instructed Lord Kitchener to send for Lord French and to receive the testimony of the actual Commander-in-Chief. Armed with such a brief, a delirious (cautious barrister that he is), in Lord Kitchener's own writing, Mr. Asquith went to Newcastle, made his speech, and within three weeks was compelled to resign. What was wrong in his procedure, his friends will ask. Examine the steps again. Lord French was sent for and was interviewed by Lord Kitchener, who then reported to Mr. Asquith what he said Lord French had said. There was obviously no "double" assurance in that, for Lord Kitchener's report of Lord French's remarks was plainly only Lord Kitchener's report. And Mr. Asquith did not merely see Lord French; he also saw Lord Kitchener. It was thus upon Lord Kitchener's unsupported word that Mr. Asquith made his speech. Would not anybody but Mr. Asquith have seen Lord French as well as Lord Kitchener? Why did Mr. Asquith fail to see the only man who knew at first hand the state of affairs? Until we know the reasons for his commission on Mr. Asquith's part, we cannot join with the Press in acquitting him of neglect.

The case of Miss Douglas-Pennant presents features of public interest both on the widest grounds of principle and the narrower, but still important question of the code by which the Public Service is governed. The real question is the same from either standpoint and, fortunately, is one which can be separated from the personality of the protagonists. Appointed in due form to administer the Women's Royal Air Force, Miss Douglas-Pennant found herself, in an attempt to produce order out of chaos, "opposed by a well-organised section" of the Air Ministry determined to render her position impossible. Eventually the situation was referred to Lord Weir, then Secretary of State for the Royal Air Force, who, after ruling the justification for it which are of primary importance. He does not question Miss Douglas-Pennant's general capacity, or discuss any specific action taken by her; neither is there any real difference of opinion as to the real origin of the friction existing. This exposes of any necessity to resort to detailed evidence. Lord Weir merely remarks in effect that the shortest way through the admitted difficulty was to remove Miss Douglas-Pennant, and this was done. It was further added, in order that there might be no doubt concerning the principle involved that he did not consider that she had any ground for complaint other than that attaching to a rather shorter notice than the law allows. Now, we repeat, this is a vital issue. It is the plainest possible statement that for the successful bureaucrat there is no canon but expediency; that the first business of an official is to find out which is the strongest party in the Department and to join in forwarding that party's policy. It is a statement that the objective and the code of means for carrying out that objective are not the Public Service in the sense in which that Service is understood by the guileless outsider, but is something on which there may be considerable difference of opinion, and which it is desirable not to discuss in public. While the ethical standard thus clearly established is no novelty to anybody familiar with the ways of Government Departments, this, so far as we are aware, the first time that it has been officially advanced, and the occasion should not be allowed to pass unnoticed. Either Lord Weir deserves the thanks of a grateful public for the announcement that Nietzsche has been formally accepted as the guide-book to governments, or else he should be alarmed with equal publicity that he has misunderstood his instructions. For this and many other reasons connected with the internal condition of the Air Ministry we hope Miss Douglas-Pennant will get a remedy, impartial inquiry, but we do not think she will. It is control which controls,
Asia and the League of Nations.

By Marmaduke Pickthall.

I notice in the daily Press that a number of individuals, evidently without personal acquaintance with the Near Eastern problems, are expressing a desire that Christendom should after all be baulked of its already blood-stained prey, seeming to regard the European War as a crusade against Islam, and seeming to expect the British Government so to regard it. The tone of personal animosity in some of these lurations is extraordinary when one remembers that the writers have no personal acquaintance with the Turks at all, nor any first-hand knowledge of their doings. Are these fierce armchair fanatics victims of our war-time propaganda, or must they be regarded as a medieval mummer, belated products of a propaganda which deluded Europe into the belief that Muslims were idolators? For the sake of securing what they call a "Christian" triumph these people merely urge on the Imperial Government not only to commit a great wrong—that, of course, means nothing to them, since non-Christians have no rights—but also to commit an act of suicidal folly. These people clearly think it impious to treat non-Muslims on a par with Christians. They think it a blunder that a Muslim Power should be made to hear rule over Christians. In their opinion Christians only ought to have dominion. It would never even enter their heads to apply in the region of politics the commandment of Christ that men should do unto others as they would that others should do unto them; so this reflection cannot possibly occur to them. That, if it is hateful from a Christian point of view for Christians to be ruled by Muslims, it is no less hateful, from a Muslim point of view, for Muslims to be ruled by Christians. But that is precisely the reflection which must inevitably occur to the British Government which has so many million Muslim subjects to consider and appease. There must be give as well as take in the relations of Europe with a huge conscious political entity like Asia, at the present moment exasperated to the point of madness. Our Christian fanatics are a danger to the State at such a moment, for who knows that their ignorant outpourings may not be taken somewhere for the voice of Europe, and produce the configuration which those of us who know the state of feeling in the East are trying with all our might to prevent.

There are fanatics on both sides, of course. One does not blame them any more than one would blame demented persons for their ravings. But the British Government has not the excuse of fanaticism; they have sinned through absolute, crass ignorance of Eastern matters; and Englishmen who still preserve some slight affection for the British Empire cannot help blamimg them for endangering that empire as they have done in the last few months. It looks so much as if they did not care a rap what happened in the years to come, as if they felt no real concern for the great charge entrusted to them, but were thinking only of their own comfort and amusement in their term of office; as if their present "re-consideration" of the verdict of the Peace Conference on Turkey were due to fear of personal discredit accruing to them from a general rising in the East rather than to considerations either of abstract justice or imperial policy. They had been warned repeatedly of danger from their anti-Turkish policy, but they paid so heed at all until the danger was so close as to be almost unavoidable. Happily the French Government and our own India Office are now alive to it, and both have power to force a hearing, it is to be hoped that the British Government at the eleventh hour will take their advice, and not merely "reconsider" the iniquitous project of partition in the sense of modifying and revising it—th it will not avert the danger—but discard it altogether, "scrap" it, as we say.

France is prepared to give it up, and the Islamic world is grateful to her. But France is not the conqueror of Turkey. England alone fills that position in the eyes of Asia. In Asia there are many warlike races which, fully realising the right and justice of the demand, are at the present moment exasperated to the point of madness. And it is the fault of those among us who lay claim to that designation exclusively—it is the fault of the ruling class. They lay the blame upon a democratic age. What do they know about democracy? Where is it, under D.O.R.A.? The People are sincere, earnest and idealistic. The same cannot be said of their "superiors." I have yet to learn that the Foreign Office has been demoralised. Democracy is not to blame. The blame lies with the products of our public school and party discipline—men whose conscience has been so deadened that they regard as natural in public business actions which would sicken a bargee. The thing has been painfully evident during the war, and nowhere more so than in our so-called "Muslim" propaganda and intrigue.

It is time for the British Government to recant the greater part of its war-time propaganda against Turkey, and declare it to be what it is, a pack of lies. They should insist on the admission of the two chief Muslim Powers, Turkey and Persia, to membership of the League of Nations on a footing of complete equality with Christian Powers. There must be no partition of the Turkish Empire, if we would avoid another war immediately. There is absolute agreement between Turks and Arabs on this subject, as the following telegram from the Ligue Ottomane shows:

"The Turkish nation forms an absolute majority of workers and owners of the soil in all Asia Minor. And any partition will have recourse to all means to fight against imperialist decisions."

"Thus," says a French commentator on this ultimatum (for that is what it really is) "the Turkish problem is not, as certain powerful financial groups among our friends and allies suppose, a mere question of redistribution of oil concessions. And this enlightenment should give Mr. Lloyd George food for thought."

But we have entered into engagements with regard to an Arab Kingdom, it will be objected. We have said and written such a lot of fer-rid stuff about it that we can't, for very shame, go back upon it now. Well, if our rulers did me the honour to consult me, I should say: "It is better that you gentlemen should suffer a trifling humiliation than that England should be dishonoured and her empire wrecked. But there is still an easy way out of your difficulty. Set up your Arab federation of self-governing States. When that is done you have, I understand, to find a mandantary from the League of Nations who will watch over their welfare and be responsible to the League for their right guidance. Turkey must be a member of the League of Nations; that will still insist on that. Well, give the mandate for the Arab State to Turkey. There will be rejoicings everywhere, and you will have stepped out of a nasty fix quite gracefully." But, someone objects, that would be to put things back in the position where they were before. Surely not. Since we
have been assured that a mandate from the League of Nations is a very different thing from actual sovereignty or free possession! It involves some measure of responsibility. It carries with it the idea of supervision by the League and also, as it thinks, a promise of assistance from the League when needed.

**Economic Democracy.**

*By Major C. H. Douglas.*

**CHAPTER III.**

We are thus led to inquire into environment with a view to the identification, if possible, of conditions to which can be charged the development of servility on the one hand, and the discouragement of possibly more desirable characteristics on the other, and in this inquiry it is necessary to avoid the real danger of mistaking effects for causes; and, further, to beware of seeing only one phenomenon when we are really confronted with several.

For instance, that from the misuse of the power of capital many of the more glaring defects of society proceed is certain, but in claiming that in itself the private ownership of industry is the whole source of these evils, the Socialist is almost certainly confounding the symptom with the disease, and taking no account of certain essential facts. It is most important to differentiate in this matter, between private enterprise utilising capital, and the abuse of it.

The private administration of capital has had a credit as well as a debit side to its account; without private enterprise backed by capital, scientific progress, and the possibilities of material betterment based on it, would never have achieved the rapid development of the past hundred years; and still more important at this time, only the control of capital, which on the one hand has degraded propaganda into one of the Black Arts, has, on the other, made possible such crusades against an ill-informed or misled public opinion as, for instance, the anti-slavery campaign of the early nineteenth century, or the parallel activities of the anti-sweating league at the present day. The very agitation carried on against capitalism itself would be impossible without the freedom of action given by the private control of considerable funds.

The capitalistic system in the form in which we know it has served its purpose, and may be replaced with advantage; but in any social system proposed, the first necessity is to provide some bulwark against a despotism which may or may not proceed that of the Trust, had as the latter has become. In our anxiety to make a world safe for democracy it is a matter of real urgency that we do not tip out the baby with the bath water, and, by discarding too soon what is clearly an agency which can be made to operate both ways, make democracy even more unsafe for the individual than it is at present.

The danger which at the moment threatens individual liberty far more than any extension of individual enterprise is the Servile State; the erection of an irresistible and impersonal organisation through which the ambition of able men, animated consciously or unconsciously by the lust of domination, may operate to the enslavement of their fellows. Under such a system the ordinary citizen might, and probably would, be far worse off than under private enterprise freed from the domination of finance and regulated in the light of modern thought. The consideration of any return to isolated industrial undertakings is quite academic, since there is not the faintest probability of its occurrence, but that stage of development had undoubtedly certain valuable features which it would be well to preserve and revive. The large profit making limited company which distributes its profits over a wide area is already rapidly displacing the family business and, as will be seen, it is not alone in the profit-making aspect of its activities that its worst features lie.

In attacking capitalism, collective Socialism has largely failed to recognise that the real enemy, the will-to-power, the positive complement to servility, of which Prussianism, with its theories of the supreme state and the unimportance of the individual (both of which are the absolute negation of private enterprise) is only the fine flower; that nationalisation of all the means of livelihood, without the provision of much more effective safeguards than have so far been publicly evolved, leaves the individual without any appeal from his only possible employer and so substitutes a worse, because more powerful, tyranny for that which it would destroy.

It is a most astonishing fact that the experience of hundreds of thousands of men and women in such departments as the Post Office, where real discontent is probably more general, and the material and psychological justification for it more obvious, than in any of the more modern industrial establishments, has not been sufficient to impress the public with the futility of mere nationalisation. This is not in any sense a disparagement of the excellent qualities of large numbers of Government officials; it is merely an attempt to indicate the remarkable facility with which well-intentioned people will allow themselves to be hypnotised by a phrase. It is notorious that the State Socialists of Germany, commonly known as the Majority Party, were of the greatest possible assistance to Junkerdom in carrying out its plans for a Prussian world hegemony; while in our own country the bureaucrat and the Fabian have, on the whole, not failed to understand each other; and the explanation is simply that, either consciously or unconsciously, assume that there is no psychological problem involved in the control of industry, just as the Syndicalist is, with more justification, apt to stress the psychological to the exclusion of the technical aspect.

Because the control of capital has given power, the effect of the operation of the will-to-power has been to accumulate capital in a few groups, possibly composed of large numbers of shareholders, but frequently directed by one man; and this process is quite clearly a stage in the transition from decentralised to centralised power. This centralisation of the power of capital, and credit is going on before our eyes, both directly in the form of money trusts and bank amalgamations, and indirectly in the confederation of the producing industries representing the capital power of machinery. It has its counterpart in every sphere of activity; the coalescing of small businesses into larger, of shops into huge stores, of villages into towns, of nations into leagues, and in every case commended to the reason by the plea of economic necessity and efficiency. But behind this lies always the will-to-power, which operates equally through politics, finance or industry, and always towards centralisation. If this point of view be admitted, it seems perfectly clear that to the individual it will make very little difference what name is given to centralisation. Nationalisation without decentralised control of policy will quite effectively instal the trust magnate of the next generation in the chair of the bureaucrat, with the added advantage to him that he will have no shareholders' meeting.

One of the more obvious effects of the concentration of credit-capital in this way, as we have seen, is that it implies the centralisation of directive power, is its contribution to the illusion of the fiercely competitive nature of international trade. Although as we shall see, in considering the economics of the increasing employment of machinery for productive purposes, this phenomenon has been confounded with one to which it is only indirectly connected, it may be convenient at this time to point out one method by which this illusion is produced, and it is probably not possible to do so in better
words than those used by Mr. J. A. Hobson in his "Democracy After the War":-

Where the product of industry and commerce is so divided that while profits, interest, and rent are relatively high, the small purchasing power of the masses sets a limit on the home market for most staple commodities. The small manufacturer, therefore, working with modern mechanical methods, that continually increase the pace of output, are in every country compelled to look more and more to export trade, and to hustle and compete for markets in the backward countries of the world.... Just as the home market was restricted by a distribution of wealth which left the mass of people with inadequate power to purchase and buy, so the majority who had the chasing power either wanted to use it in other ways or to save it and apply it to an increased production which still further congested the home markets, so likewise with the world markets.... Closely linked with this practical limitation of the expansion of markets for goods is the limitation of profitable fields of investment. The limitation of home markets implies a corresponding limitation in the investment of fresh capital in the trades supplying these markets.

Because capitalism per se is largely the instrument through which the will-to-power operates in the economic sphere, some examination of its methods is necessary. The accumulation of financial wealth through the making of profit is merely one of the uses or abuses of money, but it is in this sense that capitalism is associated to a very great extent in the popular mind with the processes of manufacture, production and distribution, and it is in this sense that the word is here employed. The capitalistic system is based fundamentally on the financial perversion of the so-called law of supply and demand, which involves a claim that there exists an intrinsic relation between need or requirement, supply and demand, which involves a claim that there exists an intrinsic relation between need or requirement, and legitimate price or exchange value; a statement commonly been defined as any medium which has reached such a degree of acceptability that no matter what it is made of, and no matter why people want it, no one will refuse it in exchange for his product. (Professor Walker, "Money, Trade and Industry," p. 6.)

So long as the appearance of the money in the hands of those whose rate of increase is most rapid, has been achieved-the scientific management systems in factories (an outstanding instance of this policy) based on the researches of efficiency engineers such as Mr. F. W. Taylor and Mr. Frank Gilbreth, have resulted in a rate of production per unit of labour, hundreds or even thousands per cent. higher than existed before their introduction. As a bait for the worker these methods have commonly been accompanied by systems of payment-by-results, such as the premium-bonus system in its various forms as adopted by Halsey, Rowan, Weir, etc., round which has raged fierce controversy, since in the very nature of things, being based on the consideration of profit, they were unable to take into account the operation of broad economic principles. It is no part of the argument with which we are concerned to discuss such systems in detail, but any unprejudiced and sufficiently technical consideration of them will carry the conviction that while the immediate effect of their introduction was undoubtedly to raise earnings and so apparently to delay the concentration of wealth, it was correctly recognised by the worker that his real wage tended to be worse that of the industrial system, which was to fall, in comparison with the cost of living, since the purchasing power of money in terms of food, clothes, and housing fell faster than his wages rose.

As the mechanical efficiency of production rose, therefore, discontent and industrial strife became accentuated, and an unstable equilibrium was only maintained by the operation of such factors as have become known under the names of "ca'nanny," restriction of output, etc., and before the war the operation of piece-work systems in large industrial engineering works almost invariably resulted in the establishment of a local ratio between time rates and piece-work earnings, generally ranging between 1.25 and 1.5 to 1. It is not necessary to discuss the ethics of such an arrangement; it is merely necessary to note that the settled policy of Labour, acting presumably on the best advice it could get in its own interests, was to exercise a control over production by fixing its own standard of output irrespective of time. The situation created by the demand for munitions of all kinds during the war has, of course, profoundly modified this attitude, with the result that a temporary very large increase in real earnings undoubtedly took place in 1915 and 1916, taking the form of a rapid distribution of stored com-
modities; but it is quite questionable whether this level is even approximately maintained, and with the cessation of the wholesale sabotage of war, it will unquestionably fall as economic distribution through the wages system becomes ineffective; apart from actual scarcity.

Quite apart, therefore, from all questions of payment, there has grown up a spirit of revolt against a life spent in the performance of one mechanical operation devoid of interest, requiring little skill, and having few prospects of advancement other than by the problematical acquisition of sufficient money to escape from it. The very efficiency with which factory operations have been sectionalised has resulted in a complete divorce between the worker and the finished product, which is in itself conducive to the feeling that he is part of a machine in the final output of which he is not interested. His foreman and departmental heads are, from the largeness of the undertakings, almost inevitably out of human touch with him, while all the well-known phenomena of bureaucratic methods contribute to maintain a constant state of irritation and dissatisfaction; and in all these things is the nucleus of a centrifugal movement of formidable force. Nor is this feature confined to industrial life. The connection between militarism and capitalism as vehicles for the expression of the will-to-power has frequently been pointed out. By the device of universal liability to military service a general threat has been made operative which would appear, ultima ratio regis, to set the seal on the ability of authority to dictate the terms on which the existence of the individual can continue. But it is doubtful whether there ever was a time when this threat was held more lightly, and the disregard of consequences so widespread. It is not suggested that conscription either military or industrial is regarded with complacency; the exact opposite is, of course, the truth. But just for the reason that the whole conception of a militant world is instinctively recognised as an anachronism, so, just to that extent, is the determination to defeat at any cost schemes involving compulsion, strengthened in the minds of a population normally acquiescent.

The Human Factor.*

The key to Mr. Cole's new book, "Labour in the Commonwealth," is found in its first chapter. "I shall write," he says, "not of abstract Labour as a term in the economic relation of Capital and Labour, but of individual men and women who, taken together, form the vast majority of the People in any Commonwealth." In all his chapters, he strives to see men and women functioning, not as social and economic cog-wheels in a machine, but as sentient beings of flesh and blood. Is it industry? Then we must not, even in our minds, degrade the worker by attaching a commodity valuation to his labour. Is it the Commonwealth? The State? These exist for mankind; not mankind for them. The method is not easy, since thinkers adopt abstractions and terms as a sort of convenient shorthand. If the Social thinker writes of the State as an abstraction, we must not assume that he is really unmindful of the human problems behind it, just as we do not charge the doctor with callousness because he diagnoses his patient in technical formulae. Mr. Cole, however, is avowedly writing for the younger generation, so he tries to mix his social science with a special brand of the argumentum ad hominem. It is well worth while. The young student is apt to forget that he is finally concerned with the ways and idiosyncrasies of living men and women. Not the young student only: all of us, I fear. I freely confess that many times, in the dialectical chase, I have not kept before my eyes the purely human considerations. No doubt it comes out all right in the washing, but the intellectual laundry sometimes returns it with frayed edges.

There are, of course, palpable dangers. On certain days, in Rome, we may look upon the Pope. Do we see a fragile old gentleman or the titular head of a vast religious organisation? Both; but when we think of him, it is not as a cultured Pietro Benedetto (I fear I do not know his name), possibly versed in the mysteries of Etruscan pottery, but as an institution, known to the world by the office he holds. In like manner, we know from observation that men and women, in the mass, respond to psychological and statistical data, to which individually they may not respond at all. To draw conclusions of general application from personality is therefore almost certainly to invite the largest margin of error. Even if the conclusion be not erroneous it must be inaccurate. Mr. Cole himself supplies an instance or two. He rightly condemns the wage-system for its commodity valuation, and does it incommodly well. He realises that the critics will ask questions. "What becomes of the cost of production?" and the like. The reply is, he says, that such questions could not be answered if we had got really aware of our minds the idea that 'Labour' is a 'thing,' and not a collective noun denoting a number of human beings regarded in a particular aspect." But is that the reply? A manufacturer, who recently read "National Guilds," remarked that the real weakness of the theory was the absence of any costing system. Mr. Cole's logic is this: the commodity valuation is a degradation; it is essential to a commercial balance-sheet; it is an inhuman code applied to human beings; if the commodity valuation be rejected, the question of costs would not arise. In the Guilds, then, where by hypothesis the commodity valuation is eliminated, would any measurement of labour-energy be deemed heretical? In other words, would the Guilds, because labour is no longer a commodity (a thing bought and sold), present no balance-sheet, make no estimate of costs?

Mr. Cole can retort on me with deadly effect. He may say—certainly I would if the boot were on the other foot—"If my method provides no answer, what about yours?" Alas, too true! Then let's look at it together.

In a system of pure communism, I can readily understand that any calculation of cost would be academic. The Economic Department at Birmingham or Manchester University might issue a quinquennial report on the subject for the benefit of future generations. The Harold Cox of the period might read it and write longingly of the ancient days when ledgers were more inspiring than Bibles, just as our own Mr. Penty harks back to the dull days of the Medieval Guilds. Alternatively, if my income enormously exceeded my expenditure, I do not think I should be much concerned about the cost of living. I should feel like the Turkish Pasha, who, asked to report on the number of ships in and out of the harbour in his jurisdiction, replied: "Oh, Allah! Shall these things be? Must I, so soon to repose in Paradise, waste my hours of contemplation in counting the ships of the Infidel?" The Guild problem is different. It is a task of subduing energy and material to production, often of nice calculation, always of avoiding waste. It does not predicate communism; it cannot reckon on a huge surplus of income over expenditure, whatever the method of calculating cost and whatever the formula. Had there been no war, economy would still have been essential to success; the ravages of the war now render economy imperative. Further, each Guild is presumed to be an
economic unit or congeries of units; its relations with other Guilds must be determined by its solvency. But there is a fundamental difference between a commercial and a Guild balance-sheet: the one dominates policy that profits and dividends may be realised; the other is little more than a mathematical assurance that the Guilds are not eating into their capital; that their general store of wealth is not steadily diminishing. Democratic control does not abrogate the economic law that you cannot eat your cake and have it. There are a thousand good reasons why any Guild, at any moment, should know approximately, if not accurately, its economic position. To this end, every Guild must make sure that it is not consuming more than it produces. How can it know, unless some sound costing system be devised? An increase in the standard of life of a few thousand shareholders may not seriously affect the economic position of an industry managed under the joint-stock system; the same increase amongst a million Guildsmen might tip the balance from gain to loss. A reckless demand upon the fat of the land might spell disaster.

Since, however, a commercial balance-sheet is ultimately based upon the control of the labour commodity and the capital value estimated accordingly, it is evident that the Guild system of costs must be subject to different financial canons. The question is: what, in this connection, is implied in the rejection of the commodity valuation? It is an axiom that the alternative to the commodity valuation is the labour valuation. As every Guildsmen therefore becomes, in some sense, a partner, we may perhaps arrive at the principle of cost through the analogy of commercial partnership. The practice that usually obtains amongst partners is to draw regularly definite amounts on account and to distribute the surplus after the balance-sheet has been agreed. The interim dividend is merely this practice transferred to limited liability. In the case of the Guilds, we have several million partners instead of a few thousand. Just as the private partners draw less than their ultimate division of profits (functional salaries, of course, not included), so we may assume that Guildsmen will, in the first instance, decide upon a minimum standard of life, expressed in labour units based upon time, and this minimum becomes the first charge upon production. If the product cannot bear this charge, then, either it is not worth making, or policy may require that it be made at a loss. If the latter, the cost of the product is not affected; only the distribution of the loss has to be agreed between the Guilds concerned. It is no concern of the State. The first distinction, therefore, between the Commercial and the Guild system of costing is that the social minimum of life becomes the first charge upon industry, supplanting rent, now deposed and in process of final extinction. The actuarial calculation is therefore the precise value of an hour of labour-time relative to the minimum standard of life. It is in this quest we shall discover the approximation and final equalisation of pay as between Guild and Guild.

There are two other factors to be considered before we can arrive at net cost: (a) raw material and (b) depreciation. In regard to the first, it is evident that the cost of raw material exchanged between Guilds must be estimated on the principle here suggested, but raw material imported from countries as yet non-Guildised must be bought by a common medium of exchange. So far as I see, this will almost certainly be gold. Our actuaries must therefore relate the time unit to an ounce of gold. This is not really difficult. The price in gold of the imported raw material is calculated by the labour necessary to its production and delivery. In iron ore, won in Spain, it is not difficult to estimate the cost in currency of an hour of Spanish labour, the relative standards of British and Spanish sustenance being taken into account. We can therefore arrive at the exchange value of Guild labour stated in terms of (a) money in Spain and (b) time-units in Great Britain. As for depreciation, the adoption of the time-unit simplifies this enormously. We have only to ascertain the Guild cost of the machine and its length of life. The time taken by the machine on the product must therefore be added to the cost of the product and deducted from the original or capital cost of the machine or tool.

So much for net cost. The gross cost or exchange price is a much more difficult matter, and can only be determined by Guild policy. It clearly enters into the annual Guild budget, and is profoundly affected both by State policy, Guilds, Congress agreements, and inter-Guild commitments.

I return to Mr. Cole, to whom I offer ample apologies for seizing upon a stray phrase in his first chapter to cover an unargent bias in Guild theory. In his chapter on "The Commonwealth" we read: "But so far from making man feel small in face of the Great Commonwealth, these things ought to make him swell to Gargantuan proportions in his own imagination. For it is for men and women that all these wonderous exist, and it is by men and women that they have been created." Here, again, true to his method, Mr. Cole is stressing the human aspect of social and political problems. He has the courage of his logie. We live not in one but in many Commonwealths. Moreover they are grouped in a number of ways, and one individual may be a member of many groups. The man may be at once a 'free and independent' elector of Bethnal Green and a member of the Leather Workers' Union, the Baptist Church, and the True Temperance League. Into no one of these does he put the whole of his personality, nor into all of them taken together; for he may be also a good father and husband, a regular patron of the Surrey Cricket Club and a host of other things. Every man is, indeed, a host in himself, and to regard him as absorbed into any group or collective organisation is to be guilty of a vicious and inhuman abstraction." Now is all this as simple as it looks? It is a pendant to Swinburne's "Hymn of Man"—"Glory to man in the highest, for man is the master of things." Granting, as we must, that we are always confronted with flesh and blood and man's unconquerable soul, recognising also the humanitarian impulse that throbs in this book, is there not a confluence of values that vitiates the argument? There are gradations of value to be considered; every association is not of equal importance or significance. There are associations that are not equally salutary. Every man is, indeed, a host in himself, and to regard him as absorbed into any group or collective organisation is to be guilty of a vicious and inhuman abstraction. Thus the association we call "the State" can hardly be deemed to be a parity with the Surrey Cricket Club. There is the still further question how far the individual must subordinate himself to the association to Mr. de Mauzet's "thing"—how far in fact the function takes precedence over the agent or person. Mr. Cole may retort that, in any event, it all comes back to human life. It certainly does; but again the question obtrudes: what is the relation of the individual to the common life?" It is possible that the solution is found in psychology or sociology. I have often wondered how often, for example, Le Bon is right when he contends that the man in association is not the same man in præriæ persona. Mass psychology is still, I think, a closed book. Why is it that an Irish farmer, very close and even mean in his personal affairs, values, and his views on his co-operative committee? Yet again, is it a fact that the State, the Commonwealth, the Trade Union, the Church, are all separate entities to be dealt with as such? These interminable questions are, of course, no reply to Mr. Cole who can still ask the four square question on his proposition that our social problems are primarily problems of personality. But the fact that his book raises these interrogations in the mind of one of his readers is at least proof positive that he written a provocative book calculated to test more than ope
theory. I think, too, whatever its philosophic implications, it cannot fail to influence his young readers to regard with reverence every consideration that touches the life of the community, which, even if it be an entity in itself or an abstraction, is none the less composed of sentient human beings.

These two other books from Mr. Cole’s pen are in the nature of compilations and will prove useful for reference. After the emphasis I have laid upon time as the main factor in guild pay, it is interesting to read Mr. Cole’s conclusion, after an examination of the various forms of wages. Piece-work and other systems of payment by results, even if they result in an increase of earnings, do seem to the present writer to result in a loss of status, and to those who regard status as of greater ultimate importance to the working class than immediate earnings under the wage-system, the arguments in favour of time-work on purely social grounds appear to be convincing. Thus time is Labour’s friend in more senses than one. Do not, therefore, waste it.

S. G. H.

Drama.

By John Francis Hope.

Whatever we may think of Swinburne as a poet, he cannot be regarded seriously as a dramatist; the recent production of his one-act tragedy, “The Duke of Gandia” by the Stage Society, only confirms the impression made by the play in reading. Cesare Borgia was a very interesting man; and his life and death, particularly his death, afforded fine scope for a dramatist, especially if he has a talent for moralising. The greatness of Cesare’s personality would alone suffice to make him a remarkable figure; he was a man who shuddered at a graceless phrase or gesture, who was particularly adept in winning the confidence of his proposed victims, whose very villainy was comme il faut. Machiavelli wrote an essay, a “description of the methods adopted by the Duke Valentino when murdering” four notables of the Vitelli and Orsini factions; de Quincey only wrote of murder as a fine art, Cesare Borgia practised it. A dramatist who could project such a figure on the stage, and interpret him to the audience, would be a great dramatist indeed; Satan as an angel of light offers no greater difficulty of delineation, no greater possibility of triumph over difficulty.

Swinburne offers an explanation, but in such a manner and in such a setting that it carries no conviction. We are not familiar, even on the stage, with these men who aim at world-dominion, with or without a belief in God. The Lord Kira, in Masefield’s “The Faithful,” was “drunk with power,” and manifested signs, at least, of an insecure faith in the divinity of his God; Ozias, in Mr. Arnold Bennett’s obvious treatment of the story of “Judith,” was another precursor of Machiavelli’s Prince, with a reputation for religion that he would maintain even among those of an alien faith. Voltaire regarded God as a valuable assistant to the police; Browning’s “Bishop Blougram” pointed out, in the Machiavellian fashion, that the steadfast hold on the extreme end of the chain of faith gives all the advantage, makes the difference. With the rough, parthblind mass we seek to rule, we are their lords, or they are free of us just as we lighten or relax that hold.

There is no novelty, then, in Swinburne’s demonstration that the Borgia family were aware of the existence of God only as a means to political power; and the demonstration was tedious. A Borgia family which could be shocked by Cesare’s blasphemies lacks reality; Swinburne represents them, with the exception of Cesare, as a family of “superstitious atheists,” in Bishop Blougram’s phrase, whose quarrels arise over the problem of the existence of God. They talk interminably about God; and Cesare’s “solvitur ambulando” by arranging the assassinations clothes of his brother was the only dramatic activity of the tragedy. But Cesare is what we are now accustomed to call German in his naivety of villainy, and all the smiles of Mr. Franklin Dyall could not add subtlety to the character. The performance endured by the audience through the absence, through indisposition, of Mr. Hubert Carter; for although Mr. Archibald Welland played the Pope in a manner that required no apology, he was not so appropriate a choice for the character. We wanted that sensuous presence, that weighty voice, of Mr. Carter, as the chevalier to the Cesare’s, Franklyn Dyall; Mr. Welland carried so little weight that, little as Cesare had to contend with, he seemed to have nothing to overcome, gave the impression of being more powerful, as well as more subtle, than the Pope. The actors carefully disguised the fact that the play was written in verse.

The other play was a two-act comedy by Mr. W. B. Yeats, entitled “The Player Queen.” It is, in the real sense of the word, a “mystery” play; no one can understand it. Its most notable character is a drunken pool, who hoicks an arm to the Prime Minister, and to the chairman of the unicorn, of the Lord Kira; and, as played by Mr. Nicholas Hannen, performs some astonishing feats illustrative of a body in a state of unstable equilibrium. He was apparently the spirit of a revolting world, but one whose place in the orbit was incalculable by any mathematical method. He reeled in and reeled out, and time stood still while he performed his antics; but what he had to do with anything was incomprehensible. He left behind him a wife for the Prime Minister, whose chief use for her husband was to make him crack the claws of a lobster; and this bequest was perhaps the most considerable service that a poet could render to politics in the land of Mr. Yeats’ dreams.

There is a Queen who lives in a castle, and wants to be a martyr, but without suffering any violence; there is a player whose mother had prophesied she would be a martyr, and who, as it were, was being made a martyr; and the Queen, suffers the martyrdom of marriage to the Prime Minister; the prophetic beggar brays, while the Bishop denounces him as an imposter—and the play is done. But it served to show that Mr. Yeats can write fantastic comedy, if he will discard his poetical conventions. We are tired of his old men, his Queens in castles, his unicorns, and prophetic asses; they mean nothing, they are mere padding, and they produce the bewildering effect of a medley of styles. The poet and his two doxies afforded examples of creation nearer to the dramatic tradition; and the quarrel of the two women concerning the poet would have been quite effective if Miss Maire O’Neill had not allowed the prompter to play so much of her part. She carried her unwillingness to play the part of the wife of Noah to such a point that she practically refused to play at all; and Miss Edith Evans had to struggle along in her altercation with Miss Maire O’Neill the defatamation of her character made by the man behind the scenes. There was an under-vein of satire running throughout the play which was not effectively rendered; the play itself established no moral conviction of its own; and the demonstration was tedious.

The actors carefully disguise the fact that the play was written in verse.
trusting mood has been created. The general impression left by the play was that it was full of jokes that did not make people laugh, of satirical touches (such as the player-queen eating lobsters on the throne) that were indeterminate in direction, of an almost Eliza-

bethan frankness of speech that produced the opposite effect of vigorous masculinity, so anaemic was the spirit animating the play. The Stage Society is to be commiserated.

Readers and Writers.

The second or Spring issue of "Art and Letters" (Pelican Press) has been long enough out to have had its run. I am, therefore, free to say that it is not only not so good as the first issue, but that the descent to the meaningless miscellany has been steep as well as rapid. A few drawings are worth looking at; but the literary contents are, without exception, unremarkable. The best of them would certainly have been published if "Art and Letters" had never been brought into existence; and the rest would, in all probability, have never been written. This decline from the almost sublime tone of readers than the imaginary ridiculous (though the peculiar characteristics of our immediately contem-

porary epoch; for it is the sober truth that our contem-

porary world does not supply youthful stuff enough to make more than a single issue of a literary magazine of high pretension. I have looked about me, for many years now, with the eye of an eagle and the appetite of a raven, to discover youthful talent possibly budding into genius. A few sprigs and sprays have fallen within my vision; and I have counted myself recompensed for hours and years of trouble. But I am bound to say that the evidence to say that at this present moment such apparitions of the future are fewer than ever I have known them to be. Whether it is that more than individual—
collective talent—has fallen in the war; whether the increasing preoccupation of men's minds with economics has proportionately impoverished the will to litera-
ture of our young men; or whether it is that my taste is losing generosity—I am quite convinced that the number of fresh talents just being committed to us is utterly unequal to the unequalled opportunity for employing them a time when it will be easier for a young writer to find publication in one form or another. The number of new magazines projected and issued during the last few months has been legion. I think I have examined every one of them; it is my hobby to collect the earliest specimens; and it is my unpleasant opinion that most of them would be better for never having been born.

They manage, or, at any rate, they are beginning to manage these things better in America. That America is the country of the future is open to less doubt as a prophecy when the critic has made acquaintance with the new and renewed magazines now appearing in that country. A tone of provinciality still dominates a con-
siderable part of the American literary Press; but it is obvious that tremendous efforts are being made to recover or, let us say, to discover centrality. More and more, American literary editors are coming to interest the world of readers rather than a mere province of them. I need scarcely say, of course, that the world of readers is not the same thing as a world of readers. A world of readers connotes large numbers, consisting chiefly of readers in search of amusement; but the world of readers consists of the few in every country who really read for their living, or, rather, for their lives. To appeal to the latter class is to be "of the centre," for the centre of every movement of life is not only the most vital, it is the smallest element of the whole. As I was saying, the most recent American literary journals appear to me to be endeavouring to become organs for this class of reader. It is not indi-
cated more plainly in the fact that they are enlisting European writers than in the fact that their American contributors are writing to be read in Europe as well as in America. America, it appears, has begun to dis-
cover Europe. America, it appears, is on the way to absorb Europe. And in the course of a few gener-
ations, if the present American magazines may be taken as indicating direction, European writers will be as intelligible in America as in Europe; and, perhaps, more so.

Among the most encouraging of them is the "Dial," a fortnightly review and topical miscellany published in New York. Since the war, the "Dial" has expanded considerably and of set purpose; and it is now one of the best of such periodicals in any part of the world, France and England not excepted. I have observed, with pleasure, that several former and several contem-
porary New Age writers have contributed to its pages; but it is with even greater pleasure that I observe that they by no means outshine the American contributors. On the contrary,. . . but let this be a warning! The "Dial" has done well, too, to publish a series of "imaginary dialogues" by Mr. George Moore are the best of the kind that have been written since Oscar Wilde; and they are much better, I need not say, than the imaginary conversations of Landor. It is a confirmation of my judgment of America that Mr. George Moore should have transferred his publication from (was it?) the "Fortnightly Review" to the "Dial"; for Mr. George Moore is nothing if not a straw in the wind. His nationality appears to me to be always, as it were, up to auction; and he is always willing to knock it down to the most intelligent bidder. Years ago, as we all remember, Mr. George Moore was an enthusiastic Frenchman. The streamings of intel-
ligence in Ireland induced him to return to his Irish nationality. In a few years he had become an Englishman; and to-day, as I read the glass, he is blowing towards American citizenship. A George Moore or two in every epoch is a positive spiritual anemometer, from which we can discover the direction of the spirit; and his appearance in the "Dial" may, therefore, be taken as portentous of the immediate future.

The substance of the most recent "dialogue" I have read is a contribution to the subject of these notes, that is to say, to literary criticism. Mr. George Moore puts his finger on one of the characteristic defects of our literary age when he refers to the "vile English tradition that humour is a literary quality." (Tradition it is not; for the apotheosis of humour is a recent phenomenon utterly eccentric from the main stream.) "The supreme test," he says, of writing is to be able "to write well without the help of humour"; and, in-
deed, if some of our modern writers were required to pass it they would certainly fail. Humour, I agree with Mr. Moore, is a poor prop, and poor in every sense of the word. It is a species of playing to the gallery; and serves, as a rule, to hide the emptiness which in a plain style would be visible to everybody. It is the gift that is not gold. But where have I heard all this before? Surely it is not altogether unfamiliar. We have not a critic amongst us who is yet prepared to say that humour is but a crutch by the aid of which any writer can totter a little way." Have we not? Before Mr. George Moore undertook the task of correcting the humour of the age; years ago, I am sure it was, a critic who shall be nameless corrected it or endeavoured, if I remember, of Mr. Moore's then fellow-countrymen. Mr. Moore must have forgotten the occasion, but he has not failed to remember the correction.

R. H. C.
In School.

VII.

STYLE.

In discussing the teaching of English composition we are concerned with two main features—style and substance. I would suggest a short cut with regard to the former: cut it out of the teaching almost entirely. Read good authors to your form, and call attention (maieutically of course) to any striking peculiari¬ties of their different styles, good or bad, as matters of passing interest, but never labour the points. The unconscious mind of the boy will itself absorb as much attention (maieutically of course) to any striking entirely. Read good authors to your form, and call

are concerned with two main features—style and digest. Grammatical faults and irritating idiosyncrasies of style in their English compositions must, of course, be pointed out to the individual offenders; but in practice it will be found that decent style follows so frequently, so inevitably one might almost say, from decent substance of thought that, apart altogether from the difficulty and labour inherent in the endeavour to instil good style consciously, it would seem unprofitable to separate the two in teaching. And in any case the very best style will lose its savour if it does not clothe

nascitur, non fit,” and give the particular boy up as a close to the shore is throwing out the useless fish, and seagulls are diving for them.

Teach the boy to release his best thoughts: the style will follow of itself.

I am not trying to avoid a difficult subject by this apparently easy generalisation. As I pointed out in the second article of this series, “the technique is there in the boy’s mind if only it can be brought out.” This has been proved to me by experience over and over again. I have encountered several instances of apparently quite incurable dullness in writing that have caused me to apply regrettfully the maxim, “Poeta nascitur, non fit,” and give the particular boy up as a bad job. And then suddenly, quite dramatically, I have found myself deceived on receiving a production produced, used to write in an entirely banal fashion until

apparently absolutely nothing. It was written during the snow surrounding her everywhere, the rain pelting

and stopped further disaster by telling the boy to

I happened to walk round the room at this point, noticing that the original

it here, but will content myself with transcribing another effort he wrote a few weeks later—

“WAVES AND Ripples of THE SEA.

‘It is a quiet morning; the sun has not yet risen. The seagulls on the cliffs are waking. The sky is blue except for a few white bunches of clouds which move slowly over the blue, as though they were not quite awake. The sea is calm; only a few baby waves play with the beach. They come in turn and try to run up the beach. Sometimes one, a little bigger than the rest, will venture farther up the beach, and then, finding the stones too rough, quickly draws himself back again. Then, without a splash, a seagull gently lands, causing a few ripples to form a circle round him. There he sits letting the small waves toss him about. Then, following his example, a few more come, and then some more, till what a few minutes past was clear blue is now dotted with white.

Now the sun begins to rise, causing the waves to glitter, and on an island rock some guillemots sit....

‘The sky gets darker now, and all the gulls fly back to their rock homes. The sea gets angry with the beach and ventures farther inland, but the rocks help the beach and like true guardians stand for ever protecting it. The waves, in one successive line come charging on, only to meet the staunch soldiers of the enemy’s advance-posts and to get broken and turned back. After pressing on unheeded of the loss they break right over and capture the advance-post, and after fighting for hours the waves are forced to retire.

‘Then a calm comes on again, and a tramontane close to the shore is throwing out the useless fish, and seagulls are diving for them.’

I am convinced that no amount of conscious teaching could have produced this simple flowing style from apparently nothing, but by the technique being brought out by means of an examination at the end of the term in a limited time which gave no opportunity either for previous thought or subsequent polishing, and I notice that the original does not contain a single alteration.

In some cases the door is only opened for a moment, though long enough to show that the technique is there in the child’s mind. One boy in particular would occasionally, quite unconsciously, achieve real beauty of style in the midst of the most unutterable banality. Here is an instance from a scene by him in blank verse called “The Quarrel of the Months”:

‘Enter AUGUST (a sunburnt, young, sturdy girl, full of cheerfulness and joy. Beautiful brown hair flowing in the summer breeze),

and DECEMBER (a middle-aged girl wrapped in furs, muffs, and shawls. Shivering now and then in the snow surrounding her everywhere, the rain pelting now, and then, and then stops),

and APRIL (an also middle-aged woman with an umbrella. The rain coming down in frequent showers; the sun shining during the interval between two small showers. The grass all pearled with rain-drops shining in the beautiful sunshine. The small flowers just in bud nodding to each other as the rain hits the heads of each, and the wind making them nod when the April sun is shining).

‘AUGUST: The mortal boys and girls do go back home. The bathing season does begin, and I flood the great land with sweet roses, bringing them

Into full bloom. ‘The tourists take their bikes—’

I happened to walk round the room at this point, and stopped further disaster by telling the boy to rewrite the scene in prose. This was his second attempt at describing April:

‘APRIL (aged about the same as December. She sees the flowers shooting like a flash of lightning, making the country the very picture for the artist. She sees the April showers and then the pearl-bladed grass
shines in the beautiful sunshine before another shower falls. The daisies, dandelions and daffodils springing into bloom.

I have given this rather tedious example in order to show clearly that what might be thought a mere purple patch was not a spasmodic conscious effort at all, but that there was some unconscious stylist in the background practically unknown to and obviously unappreciated by the writer. Unfortunately this stylist never emerged for long at a time, and though the boy remained in my form for a year and became more articulate, occasionally writing quite creditable stuff in view of his arid powers I can only regard him as one of my failures.

Kingscote, another hard-working boy, who had apparently no conscious idea of style at all, would occasionally startle me with such well-turned sentences as these, occurring in the midst of the most commonplace stuff:—

"Now a cold-looking sun comes out, making the snow shine all the brighter; and occasionally you see a pheasant winging its way along to the nearest pinecopse."

"On a Summer evening the long, thin clouds stretch themselves across the sky, sleeping in the coolness. They are very peaceful and make a beautiful sight when they lie across the Heavens, connected together with a gauze-like veil."

I have deprecated the attempt to teach style consciously, but the use of certain elementary forms and figures of speech should be explained. Few children will employ metaphor and simile, for instance, unless they are reminded to do so. They will use too far many similes at first, but the novelty will soon wear off.

I once thought fit to call attention to the value of the redundant "and" in the creation of a flowing style—the particular example had occurred in Swinburne's lines—

"And time remembered is grief forgotten, And frosts are slain and flowers begotten, In green underwood and cover Blossom by blossom the Spring begins.""}

As an experiment I told the form to compose one or two sentences on any subject they liked, employing grammatically superfluous "and." The results were, as I half expected, rather deplorable; the effort being, of course, far too conscious. Sifo (aged 13) wrote the best:—

"There is the sound of singing in the distance, and the faint tramping of feet is also heard, which grows louder and louder, and then a party of soldiers come into sight. They look tired and dirty and overladen, but still they are cheerful, and all the villagers come out of their houses to have a look and speak to them. And then in a minute they are all gone, and everyone goes into their houses again, and everything is quiet as before."

In a few weeks, however, I noticed the method occasionally being employed unconsciously with distinctly profitable effect. Throckmorton (aged 11) confessed to its conscious use in the following productions written not long after the experiment:—

"Moonlight."

"If you are walking along past a wood on a moonlight night quite early you notice great shadows slowly creeping along the ground; then, if you wait and look at them getting longer, suddenly the moon comes over the tree-tops and the shadows begin to get shorter again. Then you look at the moon and you see it like a great round whitish silver ball in the sky, and there are funny sort of grey markings in it, and the rays shine out all round it. And the moon seems to change everything before."

If you look at the moon you see it like a great round and find it is only a dog; but every noise seems so weird in the moonlight that it quite frightens you. And the clouds go by like great masses of grey gouze, and the moon seems to be going through the sky very quickly. And all the tree-tops look like black skeletons against the sky, and you find yourself talking in whispers though you don’t know why. . . .

Then it gets lighter and you see one by one like tiny candle flames being blown out, and the moon goes down and disappears, and the sun comes up the other side to tell everyone it is time to get up."

"An English Village on a Sunday."

"If you pass through a village on a Sunday evening in the Summer there are many things which you can see. Everything seems to feel peaceful, except the cows who are all crowded up against the gate and mooing impatiently to be milked, and the cowman is hurrying along in his best Sunday clothes to fetch them in. After a short time he comes out again with a pail of milk in each hand, and as he puts them down the handles fall with a clank and the chickens scuttle away; from each side. And just then a bell begins to ring from the church and everyone begins to come out of their houses and walk to church in twos and threes.

"Everywhere there is a smell of new-mown hay and clover, and the old men stand with pitchforks in their hands holding bottles of water up to their mouths and making gurgling noises. . . .

"Then it gets darker and the people come slowly out of church, . . . and the birds twitter now and then, and flocks of rooks fly over towards their nests, crying loudly, and the gnats fly about in clouds, . . . and the old men go slowly home waving branches about over their heads to keep the flies away. . . . Then slowly it gets cooler and shadows creep across the grass, and a star appears in the sky, then-another and yet another, like warnings that the night is coming. . . . And the big full moon comes out to tell everyone it is night, and it shines on the hot roofs and makes everything which had been hot and glaring before look cool and white."

When a child is first allowed to help himself to sugar he is inclined to put too much over his porridge. It is just possible, however, that despite Throckmorton's lavish use, or abuse, of the method it helped to increase his flow of thought, and that too much was better than none at all. Hence I would be unwilling to regard these productions as proof that it is altogether wise for the teacher to call attention to little niceties of style. The lesson to be learnt from them, I think, is that it is dangerous to lay as much conscious stress on any particular method as I did in this case.

Polabia: A Cynical Narrative.

History in the making is often a useful ally to geography in the learning. Take Polabia, for example, a country whose chief assets are copper-mines, a queer-looking language, excellent lyric poets, and a population of over five millions. One summer evening, at a convenient hour after dinner, a group of about twenty gentlemen met together at Archduke's College to discuss the formation of an Anglo-Polabian Committee. Yet two days previously, not one of them had ever heard of Polabia, except, of course, the Polabian Foreign Minister, who had recently arrived on a mysterious mission from Paris. (He resembled a gnome who had been hastily attired in an obsolete and ill-fitting frock-coat, and was rendered additionally ludicrous by the surname Pelikan.) Interest in Polabia had been stimulated among the rest chiefly by the copper-mines and the population of over five millions, quite a gratifying progress for the open-air callers, would be suitable for military service. After a period of careful debate, the Polabian Government had decided that their sympathies had
always been with the Allied cause, and that they were, in fact, associated with the Allied Nations by historic bonds which dated back from before the Middle Ages. It had been discovered, for instance, by a Polish professor, that a French king on his return from the Crusades had passed through Polabia, and the existence of a French strain in the Polabian national temperament was, therefore, highly probable. All these facts were, in due course, conveyed to the appropriate persons, and thus it came about that the twenty gentlemen had assembled at Archduke's College, instead of playing snooker.

The gathering was presided over by Sir (also Dr.) Roderick Rickshaw, an academic personality on the borderline between dullness and brilliance. He had produced a solid and impressive work on the use of prepositions in Æolic Greek, and was thus peculiarly fitted to deal with the tiresome problems of the Near East. He was ably backed (or, rather, forwarded) by Dr. Widgery-Plapper, the official historian of the problems in question (many of which it was maliciously alleged that he himself had invented), and editor of a bright-orange-coloured review (the first hyphen is essential) called World-Polabia, of which Mr. Bagley Beller, the famous actor-manager, wearing a uniform with green tabs, was also present, not as incongruously as might at first be supposed. None of the remainder had yet reached the stage of being identified by name, but they were well-bred incivility, heavy jocularity, brilliant ignorance, and somehow overwhelmed by the complete novelty of Polabia's enemies, who were becoming more and more nebulous. And as Sir Roderick progressed in his highly impressionistic account of the blessings conferred on mankind by Polabian culture ("The Polabian people, gentlemen, that essentially artistic race, to whom adoration for the—er, arts, has become a, yes, a second nature—") Sir Roderick's voice rose unexpectedly on the last syllable of the last word, in the manner of certain classical scholars when orally translating the oration of an Athenian general from Thucydides), his hearers began to feel that they had a thorough knowledge of the whole realm of art, and assumed expressions of tremendous solemnity.

Sir Roderick's speech was drawing to its prosaic but important climax. "But, gentlemen, I need hardly remind you, that to adequately support our gallant and noble friends, we cannot proceed without, er, money." (Pelikan, swucke, suddenly. Surely he had heard that word before, somewhere?) "Yes, gentlemen, financial aid is essential in this matter, and the purpose of our gathering to-night"—(Sir Roderick was in full flow now)—"is to devise a means by which an adequate supply of this, er, commodity, may be assured. It has been proposed, gentlemen, to form an Anglo-Polabian Committee, and our business is to select those ladies and gentlemen, who, by their social influence, and, er, solid material standing"—(this was a neat paraphrase, thought Sir Roderick)—"together, of course, with their proved interest in the racial problem, to most efficiently contribute to the prosperous career of our Polabian friends in our common struggle for the sacred rights of manhood."

Sir Roderick sat down, trying to look as though he were not thoroughly satisfied with his peroration. There was decorous applause, followed by appropriate silence for a few moments. Then a squeaky voice remarked: "I propose Dr. Widgery-Plapper."

Before everyone had succeeded in locating the speaker, Dr. Widgery-Plapper rose in mild protest. He was one of the old gang; he was remarked, with humorous self-deprecation. What they wanted was new blood. And more to the same effect. For a dreadful instant, it looked as if Dr. Widgery-Plapper was to be taken at his word, but to his intense relief, the combined efforts of Sir Roderick and the sycophantic owner of the squeaky voice, succeeded in urging him to overcome his scruples, and his name went down.

There was a pause. Then, "What about the Duchess of Dengy?" remarked Sir Roderick, as if this had suddenly occurred to him. He glanced questioningly at Mr. Bagley Beller, whose function at the gathering was to do the glibly. "Yes, I think," replied Sir Roderick, coolly.

"She knows lots of useful people," he conceded, glibly. "Yes, I think I might approach her in the matter. Let me see," and he fumbled with a small note-book.

"Well, let's put her name down tentatively," said Sir Roderick, the owner of a thoroughly business-like, and in his element, "and Mr. Bagley Beller will report to us at our next meeting."

"Can't we get a Member of Parliament?" lisped a pink and be-speckled young Jew, sleekly, with the air of a man who has thought of something entirely original.

"Sir Cornelius Noss?" hazarded a voice, indicating a notorious busybody.

"He's fratefully bizzeh," said a chinless gentleman, "Sir Cornelius Noss?" hazarded a voice, indicating a notorious busybody, and somehow overwhelmed by the complete novelty of the idea.

"She knows lots of useful people," he conceded, glibly. "Yes, I think I might approach her in the matter. Let me see," and he fumbled with a small note-book.

"Well, let's add her name down tentatively," said Sir Roderick, the owner of a thoroughly business-like, and in his element, "and Mr. Bagley Beller will report to us at our next meeting."

"Can't we get a Member of Parliament?" lisped a pink and be-speckled young Jew, sleekly, with the air of a man who has thought of something entirely original.

"Sir Cornelius Noss?" hazarded a voice, indicating a notorious busybody.

"He's fratefully bizzeh," said a chinless gentleman, coolly. And although he spoke coolly, his words melted the wax by which the chinless gentleman's wings were secured, and now altogether discredited by his familiarity with
the doings of so obvious an outsider as Sir Cornelius Noss, he eulogistically followed the example of the late Icarus.

The meeting dragged on. The Bishop of Putney, Lord Stadage, Lady Angelica Runk, Mr. Horace Bigboy, the famous journalist, Mr. Peter Phibs, the equally famous historian, and many others became presumptive members of the Anglo-Polabian Committee. Also, on various pretexts, the assembly skilfully managed to elect each other, during which process there was a charming exhibition of coyness and reluctance. Finally, Sir Roderick looked at his watch, and after inquiring, kindly, whether anyone had any further suggestions, in a voice which absolutely prohibited such a proceeding, announced the meeting as concluded. There was a brief interlude to fix the date of the next meeting so as not to clash with the numerous engagements of Dr. Widgery-Plapper, Mr. Bagley Beller, and Sir Roderick, and the assembly then resolved itself into small groups, which enabled those with social ambitions to get into personal touch with the eminent three. Pelikan blinked amiably at Sir Roderick, and Sir Roderick yawned back at Pelikan. The affair had been a complete success.

During the progress of these significant events, a man sat in a shabby bedroom about a mile away from Archduke’s College. He was studying the excellent lyric poets of Polabia, but this activity is so utterly without bearing on the Anglo-Polabian Committee, that it seems hardly worth mentioning. However, it is satisfactory to add that he was gathered into the Army shortly afterwards, and this fortunate circumstance prevented him from devoting his energies to idle pursuits. But the Anglo-Polabian Committee, with the twofold lure of Sir Roderick and the Rights of Small Nations, showed a thoroughly respectable balance-sheet at the end of the year. And so, as a result of the unselfish endeavours of Sir Roderick and his colleagues, quite a useful number of sturdy Polabians, who otherwise would have flitted away their leisure in playing the fiddle or gossiping at the assembly taverns, were supplied with nice grey uniforms, Lee-Enfield rifles and Mills No. 23 hand-grenades. So far-reaching in their effects are the ideals of progress and liberty. Stanley Watson.

Views and Reviews.

A CONSERVATIVE UTOPIA.

The usual objection to Utopias is that they ignore human nature as revealed in history, and the objection is a powerful one. For the human race has a considerable experience of living in communities, and if the study of its history should reveal certain normals which there is an ever-present tendency to maintain, those normals can be neglected only at the peril of dissolution of the body politic. So far as revolution, the subject of this novel,* is concerned, there is an obvious tendency for the wheel to go full circle; the whirligig of time brings in its revenges, as Mr. Bleackley does not forget to quote at the end, and the history of revolution seems to be a transition from despotism through democracy to despotism. After Charles II, Cromwell; after Louis XVI, Napoleon; after the Tsar Nicholas II, Lenin. Mr. Horace Bleackley states at least a prima facie case when he makes the revolution depicted in his story end in a restoration.

But the restoration itself ignores human nature as revealed in history. It may have been hidden from Charles II, but it certainly was not hidden from his successor, James, that the state of things was not as it had been before the revolution. To take but one example, the theory of the divine right of monarchy had been practically repudiated; Parliament claimed, and exercised, the right to determine the succession to the throne, to exercise the prerogative of Royalty, and to determine its privileges. During the period of revolution, an advance, or at least an alteration, in social organisation occurred, and the recognition of the person could not permanently deny. Charles II, in the most literal sense of the words, did not succeed to his father’s kingdom; he was made king of a new country wherein he was a foreigner and an archachronist. The period represented a step backward from the ideal of the person than that which he was supposed to govern; if the people were not politically wiser, they were at least more experienced in politics, and the balance of power had permanently shifted away from the throne. There is no gainsaying the fact that history repeats itself only because we notice the apparent resemblances and ignore the real differences; Napoleon was a greater despot than Louis XVI, but he did not rule over the same France, nor is the Russia of Lenin the Russia of Nicholas II. There is in post-revolution States, at the very least, a more universal and enlightened criticism of the ruler, which he cannot safely ignore; but there is usually also a fundamental economic change to which the restoration does not, and cannot, correspond. The re-distribution of the land in Russia, for example, is the chief obstacle to the success of the counter-revolution.

Mr. Bleackley relies on human nature throughout his story to effect his purpose; but it is a human nature that is quite as theoretical as that of any Utopian. To the Utopian, human nature is perfectible; to Mr. Bleackley, it is already perfect, at least in its political organisation. Hope is as real a constituent of human nature as any other; the Utopian satisfies that hope in the establishment of his Utopia, and hope dies a natural death in realisation. But Mr. Bleackley denies that hope; human nature is already perfect, he thinks, and any change can only be in the direction of degradation. I am, of course, summarising his assumptions; nowhere does he state them so clearly as this; indeed, his treatment of the psychology of the working classes suggests that his perfect human nature is limited to the governing classes. There is, of course, an apparent contradiction between his assertion that our present political and social organisation (which, by the way, he represents as being as impossibly individualistic as the Volunteerist State of Auberon Herbert) is practically perfect, and his assumption that the working classes have a right to demand a stronger government to support it by their labour. Apparently it is only landlords and employers who can manage their own affairs (although, as a matter of fact, they are lamentably at the mercy of financiers); the working classes, left to their own devices, refuse to work even for the maintenance of the new social order. They make demands on their Government, which their Government satisfies by spoliation and confiscation of the accumulated wealth of the governing classes; but work they will not, so long as there is a bliss to be had. Indeed, they seem to spend most of their time in envying and hating the aristocracy and bourgeoisie, an unprofitable pastime which they vary by experiments with violence.

But this assumption hardly accords with human nature as revealed in history. The towns always suffer during revolutionary periods, but there is no ground for the recognition of the fact that the peasantry prosper, although there may be concealment of their prosperity. A considerable amount of work is done during the most violent periods of revolution; exchange is much more interrupted than production, and the working classes, at least, suffer from no delusion concerning the origin of the necessaries of life. But apart from this, Mr. Bleackley has ignored the most significant feature of modern times, the tendency not to anarchy but to or-

* "Anymorn," By Horace Bleackley. (The Bolley Head. 7s. net.)
The Will to Love. By Hugh Lunn. (Chapman and Hall. 7s. net.)

The novels of Mr. H. G. Wells are so varied in style and appeal that, we suppose, he will not be surprised to hear that some of them are regarded as introductions to the unholy state of concubinage. The higher sensuality plus sociological speculation and some literary criticism (chiefly of the works of Mr. Wells, who masqueserades herein as a sort of literary Devil) is the subject-matter of Mr. Lunn's novel; and it is handled, we must confess, in a most literal fashion. The Café Royal serves as the scene of the introductory passages, as it has served in so many other stories; novelists seem to conspire to write over the portals of that dingily splashed place: "Abandon virtue, all ye who enter here." Mr. Lunn spares neither his hero nor his villain; Barbara is a sentimental idiot, whose attempts to see life through the eyes of a prostitute have a certain sardonic humour. Her hesitations in Piccadilly, her "Nonsense, nonsense," when a man says "Good evening" to her, her direct approach to the dubious ladies for the purpose of making close observation of their psychology, her surprise at their outraged virtue or their misapprehension of her purpose (some of them suspected her of being a rescue worker), all these incidents betray the clumsy amateur whose efforts can only arouse a wrinkle. But in Ralph Parker, Mr. Lunn has created a cinema villain; a writer of books, chiefly about Balzac, he hints at a past as shady as it was strenuous which had had the lamentable result of making him misunderstood by conventional people, for which result the compensation. This full-bodied sensualist pursues her to Switzerland, is pursued thence by her wife (alas, too late, as the moralist would say); and Barbara returns monologising on the theme: "The last time I saw the door of this hotel, and the mat in front of it, I was a maiden." This quotation will serve to show the literal level on which Mr. Lunn's imagination works; and Parker's exit from the story shows that Barbara's "experience" was gained at the expense of her father.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

THE RANK-AND-FILE AND THE SALARIAT.

Sir,—In the "Notes of the Week" in your issue of May 22, the writer states: "The Railwaymen's Union has drawn up a new scheme of salaries for the clerical staffs in the Railway Guild, in which, on paper at any rate, the salariat is preserved in all its technical privileges and in more than its present rates of pay. No parasimony has been displayed in this, nor is there any evidence of that jealousy of authority which we are told, characterises the rank and file of the trade unions." "Railwaymen's Union" generally taken to mean the National Union of Railwaymen, but, as I have not heard of that union having prepared anything of the kind, I think probably the writer refers to the programme of the Railway Clerks' Association—a copy of which I enclose, and which is at present under negotiation with the Railway Executive Committee.

In any case, it may interest readers of The New Age to know that the five scales of salaries suggested in the programme for such occupying positions of more than ordinary responsibility (which positions it is proposed should be classified by joint committees of staff and railway authority) were first formulated by representatives of the supervisory staffs in conjunction with the Executive Committee of the Association, and on submission to the general conference were only endorsed after certain improvements in regard to rates of increase, etc., had been made.

It should be remarked that salaried status has been secured for most of the railway clerical staffs (although some few are still classified with the weekly wages grades), but even so it is worthy of note that the R.C.A., which caters for the technical and administrative as well as the clerical staff of the railways, is, so far as I am aware, the only trade union effectively to bring about the unity of the rank and file and the supervisory staffs throughout an industry, and to enforce recognition on their behalf.

P. W. D.
Pastiche.

THE REGIONAL.

1. A dispatch (let us hope well “inspired”) in a local (Ninio’s) paper indicates that the Foreign Office, or what may (slavishly) be called the Foreign Office (from Avignon) turn to be the Peace Conference, has taken note of Mr. Pickthall’s sensible advice, and the “prejudices” of the Egyptians and the rest of the Moslem world are to be respected. The Sultan is to remain, as a sort of rex sacrificium (instar various other regal dignitaries), and he is to be “assisted” by various polyglot assistants whose appointment will do him mental exaltation, obliging aliens being ready to lift the oins thereof from his amiable shoulders and turban. This is in the best tradition of opportunism; and we can heartily congratulate Pickthall had ably pointed out some weeks ago, it would however punctilious and unreasonable, should be forced to go way to another set of bigots equally plunged in the absurdities of creeds.

2. I object to religion “because the Vicar of Kensington rings bells, or has bells rung, in his belfry, to the intense annoyance of people who live near the church spire than he does.” This statement is purely allegorical. The act of bell-ringing is symbolical of all proselytising religions. It implies the pointless interfering with the religions of others. Every religion is a “cult”; an attempt to enforce a type or a cliché; an attempt to impose a thought-mould upon others. Catholicism or Judaism or Moslem is an attempt to define certain propositions which is purely arbitrary. Certain opinions, easily discoverable in “leading” American publications, have always seemed to me to be founded in un-sense, or in inaccurated or even unmade observation, or, thirteenth, in default of standards of comparison. The thought of studying this disease in English, Canadian, Australian, or New Zealand, or in the best South African provincial surroundings is wholly unbearable. Toulouse is the ideal “subject,” and after three weeks of Toulouse I am taking a vacation. I am recuperating. I am, I trust, attaining detachment far from the “Place President Wilson,” for the Toulousains have rechristened the centre of regional vice “Place President Wilson;” far, also, from the Bar President Wilson, for the Toulousains wishing to compensate the American troops for the impending drought in Missouri, have provided a “Bar President Wilson”—from which I have escaped to bull-baitings and to the sanctuary of schism, carrying with me one image, the sculptured smile of Ephraim Mikail—Mikail, poet of an eminently subtle that only De Gourmont could quite discover its poetry. With the modesty of his race, when that frequent bumptious, ancient race happens by fortune to be modest, the eyes of Mikail’s statue elude my eyes for months, the new name-plates upon the sides of the Place President Wilson.

In the midst of this regional centre, the larger, the much larger, ornament displays a more ancient “Poete Toulousain” very much muskeeter, very much “Three Musketeers,” and at his feet sprawls nubile nymph (marble, grandeur larger than nature). From this centre, the gods helping me, either in thought or in actuality, will proceed my meditations on “Decentralisation.”