NOTES OF THE WEEK.

Peace has at last been imposed upon Germany; and the world must now be prepared for the consequences of it. There are those who believe that Europe has seen the last of Germany as a menace, but the facts may very well turn out to be otherwise. Militaristically, we have little doubt, Germany has, indeed, ceased to be of serious concern to Europe; but seventy millions of people, situated in the very crossroads of the Continent, with a considerable capacity for technique and industrial organisation, cannot easily be wiped off the map of European forces. Much depends, it is clear, on the nature of the internal transformation that is to be accomplished by Germany. Freed for the moment from any temptation to pursue an aggressive foreign policy and with a formidable task before her, Germany can, if she likes, accomplish a peaceful revolution into a new order of society such as will place her at the head of modern civilisation. With Russia on the one side of her, a crucified victim of the world's relatively good order and progress, and with the Allies on the other side, all committed, so it would seem, to a policy of international Capitalism, Germany may be said to occupy a position in which the golden mean of economic democracy is, at least, possible. Under such circumstances the menace she would present to the world would be of a different kind from the menace of her late imperialism; it would be a menace not to the world's relatively good order and progress, but to the world's evil order and retrogression. Whether, however, there are statesmen in Germany capable of reading the lesson of the war we have no means of knowing. Kautsky appears to us to be one of them; but even this description is negative and leaves us in doubt, not only of our proper policy in these circumstances, but of the correct assessment of the main factors. It would appear to be the case, for instance, that as between Europe on the one hand and America on the other, our situation is between the devil and the deep sea; and, hence, that we have little before us but a choice of evils. But everything turns, it will be seen, on the immediate or early evidences of what those alternatives are respectively likely to become—whether, in short, bankrupt Europe is likely to remain bankrupt for so very long and, again, whether the trade policy of America is certain to be, relatively to ourselves, ruinously competitive. Since nobody can say for the moment how these two worlds will settle down, nobody either can forecast whether our affiliations for the future should be with Europe or America. We simply cannot know; and all we can do is to watch events until they call for a decision.

This is not, however, to rule out speculation. On the contrary, there is nothing we need so much to-day as a large spirit of speculation without dogmatism. The world is at the turning of the ways; and for England, in particular, the present period is critically important. What, in effect, we have to decide is something the significance and consequences of which will appear in their full light only decades or even generations hence; it is, in its most elementary form, our future relations with the British and the American Commonwealths; and none of us can fail to be aware of the euphemisms that are in constant employment between the official spokesmen of the two Powers. At the same time, since the difficulties are likely to become substantial if they are not faced while they can still be discussed, and the euphem-
isms are certain to come off at the first touch of reality, it is desirable at least to raise the critical question of what shall be the basis of our future relations with America. Are they, we ask, to be based upon trade competition alone? Can the former combination of the Anglo-American commercial world-hegemony be so easily as we suspect it to be. For, from the two and two only, possible answers that can be given to the only possible question that needs to be asked, two wholly different if not actually contrasted policies necessarily follow. Nobody would deny that a resolution to compete commercially with America must entail different consequences from a resolution to co-operate commercially with her; and nobody, again, would deny that the differences must be momentous. The decision, in other words, by which we would or would not face the future of the world depends on it. Without attempting to do more than air the question, we may ask, for instance, whether a decision—such as, in fact, one school of our commercial politicians appears to be inclined to take—to compete with America after the "good old fashion" of our former competition with Germany, would not necessitate, as a matter of policy, a complete re-orientation of our attitude towards Europe in general, Russia in particular, and Asia as represented by Islam. To compete with America, even as a game, requires that the two parties shall be fairly matched; and nothing is more certain than that with a "bankrupt Europe" behind us, and an unfriendly Russia and an incalculably unfriendly Islamic power, our initial disadvantages are too considerable to make a fair game of the proposed contest. If, therefore, it should happen that the school above referred to has its way, and this country is committed to the "game" of an unlimited competition with America, the sequel in our foreign policy is clearly indicated in the considerations just enumerated.

It is doubtful, however, whether the competitive school has more than the spook of a notion of what its policy must or should entail. Apparently these super-producers who are "all out" for capturing the world's markets for their private profit are under the delusion, either that America will be content to gather up the crumbs, or that she will refrain, when it comes to the push, from adapting her policy to the "game" in question and from playing it "for all she is worth." They appear to believe, in other words, that competition with America can be successfully conducted without much exertion on their own part beyond the exertion of keeping Labour cheap and quiet at home. The school of co-operation, on the other hand, cannot be said to share this easy opinion. Unlike their competitive fellows, the British capitalists who favour co-operation with American capitalists have a clear idea of the relative strength, potential as well as actual, of the two countries, and a clear idea, in consequence, of the disastrous consequences, of the discretionary aspect of valour. And this strict sense of the word is not altogether to their liking; they are not disposed to insist on the rigour of the game. On the contrary, their notion of policy is the appearance of competition without the reality, the appearance being "for the sake of the people" who must not be made to think that competition requires sacrifice, particularly the sacrifice of Labour. If, as we were saying last week, from the former school is to be expected an intensification of trade war culminating in the outbreak of war in the military sense, from the later school is to be expected the progressive subjection of the world to international Trusts having an Anglo-American nucleus. These two divergent consequences, in fact, appear to be inherent in the answers contained in the Government's "box" to the question of whether the Government must put itself or allow a clear industrial issue to be made of it. Either, that is to say, our policy is to be dictated by the spirit of ruthless competition with America, in which event certain political re-orientations are necessary if we are to pursue it with the smallest hope of ultimate success; or our policy must become international, as distinct from the merely political action, of Labour, appearing to us to be sound. The Government seems to us unchallengeable in the light of the foregoing considerations. Though we have assumed, for the purpose of explanation, that the issue between the two schools of British capitalism, whether British capitalism shall compete or combine with American capitalism, is still concealed in the obscurity of the Government's "box," there is, in reality, little doubt about the issue itself. We have not infrequently observed events have more than indicated that Labour is to be defeated without at least a protest; and that, with the decision. Scores of small and large events have in question and from playing it "for all she is worth." Whatever this apprehension, however well founded, would justify, the "direct action," as distinct from the merely political action, of Labour, is a different problem. Direct action" upon this particular matter would appear to have been recommended by the Labour Conference held at Southport last week; but with how little genuine intention of doing it up we can only guess. Despite the fact that, as we have suggested, Russia may be at this moment the vital centre of industrial interest, and, hence, theoretically, a proper subject of industrial action, the political associations of the people appear to us to be too many to allow a clear industrial issue to be made of it. More-
over, the whole attempt to save the Russian Revolu-

tion by industrial means labours under two further
serious disadvantages: it is partly negative in char-
acter and while, therefore, it would certainly involve a
split in the Labour movement of this country, even its
success in getting our troops withdrawn from Russia
would ensure to international Labour no positive ad-
vantages. Is it to be supposed that even if the Allied
troops repugnate of Nations League withdrawal,
Russian Bolshevism would then be left to itself or,
still more improbably, assisted to make a per-
manent success of itself? Is the capitalist Interna-
tional to be so easily defeated or persuaded? A pro-
test, therefore, is wise and to the part of Labour; it registers and reinforces the claim of
Labour’s future rights. But protest carried to the length
of a strike which in the circumstances is bound to be
both partial and unsuccessful would, we think, be in-
expedient in the interests of all the Labour parties con-
cerned.

* * *

The Report of the Chairman of the Coal Commis-
sion in favour of the nationalisation of the mines is an eloquent witness of our contention that, whatever system of
mining industry, otherwise proposed, would be a step
in the direction of a reconstructive revolution. It is,
however, a veto only; for, like all Labour policy hitherto, its altitude is directed to the denial rather
than to the affirmation of something; and there is thus
nothing to be wondered at in the fact that the move-
ment shows signs of coming to an end when the mere
object of the veto has been disposed of. There are as
good fish in the sea, however, as ever came out of it;
and in the capitalist sea, with its many resources of
invention, an alternative to the private ownership which
the Miners have denounced—an alternative with most
of the features of the rejected system carefully pre-
served—was an easy matter to discover. And, in fact,
the system of nationalisation as defined and recom-
manded by the Chairman of the Commission, and more
or less endorsed by the Miners’ representatives, is pre-
cisely such a proposal as might have been expected to
make at the moment when the Miners’ first step had been
taken. It substitutes for the forbidden system of
private enterprise the name of nationalisation, but with-
out any of the real virtues of nationalisation in fact.

* * *

To several of the clauses in the Chairman’s Report
the Miners’ Representatives, in whole or in part, offer
objection. The question for us, however, is whether
they are prepared to make their objections good in the event of the refusal of the Government to meet them.
We must confess that the tone in which the reservations
have been made, and, still more, the language applied
to the Chairman’s Report by Mr. Smillie and others,
would appear to indicate that, after a formal resistance,
the Miners are prepared to accept the Report as
it stands, that is to say, with all its objectionable
clauses still upon it. Their satisfaction with the
Report appears to be for all practical purposes complete.
But are the clauses to which they object such as to be
safelyompounded with the rest? Is it not possible—
as, upon other grounds it is certainly probable—that
the Miners are being made to pay much too dearly for the
doubtful blessing of diluted nationalisation? We
believe it is so; we believe, indeed, that one if not
three or four of the clauses in the Chairman’s Report
is of such a character that the nationalisation of
the mining industry, otherwise proposed, would be a step
not towards the emancipation of wage-labour, but to-
wards its more complete and hopeless enslavement.
We refer, of course, to clause 72, which reads as
follows:—

The contracts of employment of workmen shall embody
an undertaking to be framed by the District Mining
Council to the effect that no workman shall, in conse-
quence of any national dispute, join in giving any notice
to cease work, unless and until the question in dispute
has been before the National Mining Council and that
Council has failed to settle the dispute; provided that on
the written request of 15 members of the National Mining
Council the Miners shall convene a meeting of the
Council within one month.

However this clause is read, it cannot but appear that
its object is to make difficult, to say the least of it, any strike in the mining industry; and, still further, to
make impossible any joint or sympathetic strike by
the Miners with the rest of the Labour movement. In
other words, in return for a measure of State-Capital-
ism, the Miners’ Federation is not only to lay down its
right to strike on its own behalf, but it is to be legally
debarred from common action with the Trade Unions hitherto allied with it.

* * *

If it were the case that the proposed plan of national-
isation included the abolition of the wage-system, the
transfer of responsible control to the producers directly,
in short, the creation of a true National Mining Guild,
even then we should be dubious of the wisdom of al-
lowing the Miners to be isolated from their late wage-
fellows and forbidden under the terms of their Charter
to strike in sympathy with them. For we have no mind
to see one class of wage-labour liberated to the cer-
tain weakening of the remaining classes. But so far even this from arising including the present re-
commendations, that the Report not only assumes the
continuance of the wage-system with its diversion of rent, interest, and profit to other parties than the pro-
ducers, but the control of the industry is vested in
councils upon which the miners themselves are in every
instance in a minority of one to two. Where that the
“responsibility” in a proportion of control amounting
to only one-third of the whole? To what extent is the
wage-system abolished when, under the terms of the
Report, the selling-price of coal is to include not only
wages, salaries and the cost of material, but interest
on the purchase-price of the mines, sinking-fund for
the repayment of the same, and a profit for national
purposes”? The alternative to the rejected system
of private ownership and control would appear, under
the circumstances, to be something worse than private ownership itself. The nationalisa-
tion contained in the Report would be dearly bought”
by the acceptance of any one of these clauses.

We warn the Miners against being misled by the
agitation against nationalisation into accepting the Re-
port as it stands. Let them recall the story of the
“Tar-baby” and reflect that Brer Rabbit may have an
object in imploring Brer Fox on no account to throw
him into the briar-bush. The present scheme of Nation-
alisation, with just those clauses to which we have re-
ferred, would suit the bankbook and every other sort
of book of the capitalist classes very well indeed; so
well, in fact, that if all that is required to induce the
Miners’ Federation to accept it is a little appearance
of disapproval, the capitalist classes are perfectly
willing to provide it. On the other hand, the refusal of the
Miners’ Federation to accept the Report without dras-
tic changes cannot be conceived as endangering any-
thing more valuable than the objectionable clauses
themselves; for what has the Miners’ Federation to
lose, either as regards the present or the future? The
existing system, it has been universally admitted, has
broken down. No power on earth can set it up again.
The Miners’ Federation, which has put a veto on its
reconstruction, can likewise put a veto on a system
signed to take its place which is not, in fact, the system
recommended by the Miners’ Federation itself. In
other words, the future of the mining industry is in
the hands of the Miners’ Federation; and it will be
their own fault if they do not make it what they choose.
The Case of Smyrna.

By Marmaduke Pickthall.

The following information has reached me from a private source which I have every reason to consider perfectly informed:—

When the Greek army of occupation landed in Smyrna, the Turkish authorities had already given orders that no resistance should be offered, and that Turkish troops and officers should be confined to certain barracks—orders which were strictly obeyed. But the Greek troops broke into some of the places where Turkish officers were collected and shot down all who would not shout "Zeto Venizelos" (Long live Venizelos). Many were thus shot down. Officers were stripped of their uniforms by Greek soldiers. The Vâlí (Governor) of Smyrna was dragged along the quay and carried on board a Greek ship. His fez was taken off his head and trampled under foot—the greatest insult which can be offered to an Oriental. His wife, a veiled lady, was wounded, and his house looted. The Turkish Chief of Staff was bayonetted in the face and thrown into the hold of a Greek cattle-ship, among the animals. The senior officer of the Turkish army corps was murdered and his body mutilated. Fingers of Turkish men and women who wore rings were cut off wholesale. Houses were looted, women robbed of all their jewellery, many families being left utterly destitute without the price of a meal.

In the villages the houses of the Muslims were not merely looted; they were burnt or pulled down. The more solid buildings had the doors and windows and the roofs removed. This was supposed to be an absolutely peaceful occupation in the interests of law and order. Greece had not even been at war with Turkey. In no case did the Turks show fight until they were attacked by the Greeks. The civilian Greeks joined with the invading soldiery in the work of murder and pillage. And the Allied Fleet acquiesced in these proceedings, which were made possible only by its presence.

If that is to be taken as the first example of the working of a "mandate from the League of Nations," Heaven defend us from the curse of any further mandates. Let us hope that it is not to be considered in that light. I notice that the Greek occupation of Smyrna has been declared to be provisional and without mandate. It was made possible only by its being carried on board a Greek ship. His fez was taken off his head and trampled under foot—the greatest insult which can be offered to an Oriental. His wife, a veiled lady, was wounded, and his house looted. The Turkish Chief of Staff was bayonetted in the face and thrown into the hold of a Greek cattle-ship, among the animals. The senior officer of the Turkish army corps was murdered and his body mutilated. Fingers of Turkish men and women who wore rings were cut off wholesale. Houses were looted, women robbed of all their jewellery, many families being left utterly destitute without the price of a meal.

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It is claimed that Smyrna is Greek. It is nothing of the kind. The majority of the population is Christian, but not Greek Christian. Of Ottoman Greeks and Ottoman Turks, the Turks are in a fair majority in the town, and in the country round they are in an overwhelming majority. The hinterland of Smyrna, which the Greeks are brutalising at this minute, is the most Turkish part of Asia Minor, and its Turkish inhabitants are of the most estimable sort, liked and respected by all Englishmen who know them.

Well, Mr. Lloyd George—if it was Mr. Lloyd George—has made his experiment. But even if Mr. Lloyd George, or whoever else it may have been, wishes to persist in this most iniquitous and cruel policy, he must be prevented in the interests of England. For nothing could be more damning proof of our unfitness to deal with any Asiatic problems whatsoever than persistence in so gross a blunder after we have once perceived it. An international commission ought to be sent out to Smyrna, and the Greek troops and officials ordered back to Greece at once.

Economic Democracy.
By Major C. H. Douglas.

CHAPTER VI.
It will be readily understood that the difficulties which are seen to be inherent in the policy of super-production are only an accentuation of those with which we were previously familiar prior to the outbreak of war, and it may be contended, and, in fact, it frequently is stated, that even with the unemployment statistics at their minimum point and the Nation at its maximum activity in Industry, there is still not enough product to go around. Recently, for instance, Professor Bowley has estimated that the total surplus income of the United Kingdom in excess of £160 per annum is only £250,000,000, which would mean, if distributed to 10,000,000 heads of families, £25 per annum per family, assuming that this distribution did not reduce the production of wealth.

The figures themselves have been criticised; but, in any case, the whole argument is completely fallacious, because it takes no account whatever of loan credit, which is by far the most important factor in the distribution of production, as we have already seen. What it does show is that the purchasing power of effort is quite insignificant in comparison with its productive power.

But it may be advisable to glance at some of the proximate causes operating to reduce the return for effort; and to realise the origin of most of the specific instances it must be borne in mind that the existing economic system distributes goods and services through the same agency which induces goods and services, i.e., payment for work in progress. In other words, if production stops, distribution stops, and, as a consequence, a clear incentive exists to produce useless or superfluous articles in order that useful commodities already existing may be distributed. This perfectly simple reason is the explanation of the increasing necessity of what has come to be called economic sabotage; the colossal waste of effort which goes on in every walk of life quite unobscured by the majority of people because they are so familiar with it; a waste which yet is over-taxed the ingenuity of society to extend it that the climax of war only occurred in the moment when a culminating exhibition of organised sabotage was necessary to preserve the system from spontaneous combustion.

The simplest form of this process is that of “making work”; the elaboration of every action in life so as to involve the maximum quantity and the minimum efficiency in human effort. The much-maligned household plumber who evolves an elaborate organisation and etiquette probably requiring two assistants and half a day, in order to “wipe” a damaged water pipe, which could, by methods with which he is perfectly familiar, be satisfactorily repaired by a boy in one-third the time; the machinist insisting on a lengthy apprenticeship to an unskilled process of industry, such as the operation of an automatic machine tool, are simple instances of this. A little higher up the scale of complexity comes the manufacturer who produces a new model of his particular specialty, with the object, express or subconscious, of rendering the old model obsolete before it is worn out. We then begin to touch the immense region of artificial demand created by advertisement; a demand, in many cases, as purely hypnotic in origin as the request of the mesmerised subject for a draught of kerosine. All these are instances which could be multiplied and elaborated to any extent necessary to prove the point.

In another class comes the stupendous waste of effort involved in the intricacies of finance and book-keeping; much of which, although necessary to the competitive system, is quite useless in increasing the amenities of life; there is the burden of armaments and the waste of materials and equipment evolved in them even in peace time; the ever-growing bureaucracy largely concerned in elaborating safeguards for a radically defective social system; and, finally, but by no means least, the cumulative export of the product of labour, largely and increasingly paid for by the raw material which forms the vehicle for the export of further labour.

All these and many other forms of avoidable waste take their rise in the obsession of wealth defined in terms of money; an obsession which even the steady fall in the purchasing power of the unit of currency seems powerless to dispel; which obscures the whole object and meaning of scientific progress and places the worker and the honest man in a permanently disadvantageous position in comparison with the financier and the rogue. It is probable that the device of money is a necessary device in our present civilisation; but the establishment of a stable ratio between the use value of effort and its money value is a problem which demands a very early solution, and must clearly result in the abolition of any incentive to the capitalisation of any form of waste.

The tawdry “ornament,” the jerry-built house, the slow and uncomfortable train service, the unwholesome sweetmeat, are the direct and logical consummation of an economic system which rewards variety, quite irrespective of quality, and proclaims in the clearest possible manner that it is much better to “do” your neighbour than to do sound and lasting work.

The capitalistic wage system based on the current methods of finance, so far from offering maximum distribution, is decreasingly capable of meeting any requirement of society fully. Its very existence depends on a constant increase in the variety of product, the stimulation of desire, and in keeping the articles desired in short supply.

A Guildsman’s Interpretation of History.
By Arthur J. Penty.

"It is no idle Hibernianism," says Mr. Chesterton, "to say that towards the end of the eighteenth century the most important event in English history happened in France. It would seem still more perverse, yet it would be still more precise, to say that the most important event in English history was the event that never happened at all—the English Revolution on the lines..."
of the French Revolution."\* That such a revolution did not materialise in England was not due to any lack of ardour on the part of those who would have brought it about, but the English governing classes and the rising manufacturing class, landlords, Churchmen, judges, and manufacturers, stood firmly together in order to save themselves from the fate which had overtaken the privileged classes in France. By such means they postponed the rise of the threatened England towards the end of the eighteenth century, until the development of railway building came to their rescue by effecting a general revival of trade, and, within certain limits, a redistribution of the wealth of the community.

The fact that the experiment in Revolution to which all Western European countries were moving towards the end of the eighteenth century was tried in France is to be attributed to the writings of Rousseau. "But for Rousseau," said Napoleon, "there would have been no Revolution," a conclusion which it is difficult to avoid, for it was Rousseau who formulated the ideas which exercised such a profound influence on the course of the Revolution. Apart from Rousseau great social, political, and economic changes would have taken place, for the contrasts between wealth and poverty had become so great, famine so prevalent, and the monarchical system of government so unworkable that something had to be done. But there is strong evidence to support the idea that if Rousseau and the intellectuals associated with him had not inflamed the imagination of the French people with impossible dreams, the change would not have taken the direction it did. It would have moved towards a revival of Medieval institutions, for among the peasants the Medieval tradition was still strong, as evidenced by the fact that in the years following the American War when systematic and widespread agitations broke out in many parts of France, notably in the East, against the dearness of food, the peasants, acting on their own initiative, sought a solution of the problem by a revival of the central economic idea of the Middle Ages—the idea of the Just Price. "The rebel bands would compel those who had brought corn to market to sell it at a Just Price, or else they seized the corn and divided it among themselves at a Just Price."† This fact alone is of the greatest significances; its importance cannot be exaggerated, for it indicates clearly the direction in which a solution would have been sought had not the influence of Rousseau and the (generically) operating general anachronism that needed to be abolished, but that it confused the issue by the popularisation of ideas which were antipathetic to the political and economic philosophy of the Middle Ages.

The social, political and economic crisis which precipitated the Revolution was accompanied by a paralysis of the body politic. The Revolution came because the machinery of government would no longer work. This state of things had been brought into existence by Louis XIV, whose policy it had been to concentrate all power in the Crown. Early in his reign he had sought to exclude the nobility from the chief posts in the Government. This led to the revolt of the aristocracy known as the Fronde, which he succeeded in quelling; after which he summoned the nobles to his Court where he undermined what independence they still retained by corrupting them with favours and pleasures. He overcame the difficulty less by his enforcement of his own laws than by haughtily imposing upon it a silence and submission of sixty years' duration. Having by such means succeeded in destroying the independence of all who might offer resistance to his authority, he directed his immense power internally against the Protestants and externally by a aggressive policy against Germany and the Netherlands. For a time success seemed to follow him everywhere. Internal dissatisfaction with his policy was drowned in songs of victory. But at length the tides of mankind turned and the victories ceased, industry emigrated with the Protestants who fled from the country and money because scarcer and scarcer. Indeed, before his death Louis began to find, as other despots have found, that the successses of despotism exhaust its resources and mortgaged its future.

The death of Louis was the signal of reaction; there was a sudden transition from intolerance to incredulity, from the spirit of servility to that of discussion and assertion. And from then onwards, all through the eighteenth century, the disintegration of society increased daily while the individual freedom of the French people with impossible dreams, the change which France was then perplexed; but there was strong and justifiable resentment at certain obvious and concrete evils. It was apparent that the concentration of absolute power in the hands of the monarchy was an evil of the first magnitude, while it was apparent that the survival of feudal rights—of privileges without corresponding responsibilities—was not merely an anachronism that needed to be abolished, but that it imposed a crushing burden upon the poor, who were called upon to support the system. Had Rousseau been familiar with the historical growth of society, he would have known that the concentration of power in the hands of the monarchy and the corruption of Feudalism were alike due to the influence of Roman Law, and that the solution of the problem demanded, among other things, its supersession by the Medieval Law which it had replaced. But not only was Rousseau unaware of the extent to which the evils of society were to be traced back to the revival of Roman Law, but like most if not all of his contemporaries he had a great admiration for it. He was a child of the Renaissance, and as such was an admirer of the institutions of Greece and Rome, of which, like the scholars who idealised them, he was altogether uncritical. He was apparently unaware that the civilisations of both Greece and Rome had been undermined by the unregulated use of currency, and that the problem of its regulation which had eluded the statesmen of Greece had found a solution in the Guilds of the Middle Ages, which had been rendered economically possible by the triumph of Christianity. On the contrary, not understanding that Paganism had proved itself to be morally weak, he ascribed its decline to the eradication of the antique virtues. He was ignorant of the fact that Christianity had triumphed because it was a moral tonic capable of bracing up the fibre of decadent civilisations. He had been prejudiced against Christianity in the days of his youth because, brought up in Geneva, he had only known the Calvinist version of it; and being in-

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\* "The Victorian Age in Literature." By G. K. Chesterton.
\† "The French Revolution." By P. Kropotkin.
interested in the things of this world, while Calvinism was only interested in the things of the next, he jumped to the conclusion that they provide the key to his whole position. In order to understand Rousseau it is necessary to read him backwards. The immediate problem with which he was concerned and which made him favour a Pagan form of worship was his desire to see a unity that he never saw that religion with which he was concerned and which made him with the idea of unity that he never saw that religion was wholly dependent upon economic conditions, that he was so anxious to devise a State which would be mechanically perfect in its workings. If morality is to be dependent upon law it is a matter of vital importance that the State should be so constructed that the evil desires in man will balance and neutralise each other in an equilibrium of good. But, of course, it cannot be done. The search for perpetual motion is not a more hopeless quest, for man cannot by laws be made to go straight in spite of himself. The utmost laws are capable of doing is to secure outward observance of the moral standards of those in power. They may, like Mediæval law, aim at enabling good men to live among bad; or, like Roman Law, at enabling rich men to live among poor; but to create irrevocable standards of morality they are powerless, for if the law attempts to get ahead of public opinion it will not be observed, while the attempt of a Government to secure observance under such conditions would be to institute a tyranny that would be its undoing.

(To be continued.)

In School.

IX.

Another form of incoherence, which I feel almost inclined to welcome, is when some discussion in form has caused a boy’s thoughts to soar entirely beyond his limits of verbal expression. I remember once giving a lower form to learn a passage from Keats beginning—

“Linger awhile upon some bending planks
That lean against a streamlet’s rushy banks
And watch intently Nature’s gentle doings.”

I pointed out that the poem showed how interesting Nature was if you examined its workings closely, and asked the form a few days later to describe a walk by a brook in intimate detail. One boy, aged 12, who generally writes most coherently and often charmingly, and always takes great pains with his work, began as follows:

“*The little winding brook seemed to me something that was meant for a man who studied Nature and the woods, and the tempting flowers seemed to be caught to the thing the naturalist wanted who had long searched for something that was never thought of in details. At last he comes to this happy brook and it puzzles him more and more as to its long hidden beauty. He then notices its winding banks of brown and its continuous rushing water as it hurries round a bend, carrying with it leaves and bits of wood as if they were the boats of insects who travelled many a long way to discover a new world.*

It was quite obvious that this confusion of words meant a great deal to the writer, but the most tactful catechism on my part produced no solution of its meaning. The boy assured me that he could not explain it any further.”

“*The little winding brook seemed to me something that was meant for a man who studied Nature and the* woods, *and the tempting flowers seemed to be caught to the thing the naturalist wanted who had long searched for something that was never thought of in details. At last he comes to this happy brook and it puzzles him more and more as to its long hidden beauty. He then notices its winding banks of brown and its continuous rushing water as it hurries round a bend, carrying with it leaves and bits of wood as if they were the boats of insects who travelled many a long way to discover a new world.*

It was quite obvious that this confusion of words meant a great deal to the writer, but the most tactful catechism on my part produced no solution of its meaning. The boy assured me that he could not explain it any further.”

“Oh words are weak! We need a stronger tongue
To utter forth the heart’s imaginings.
Our deepest deep is full of subtle things,
Things mystic, marvellous—unsaid, unsung
Because they may not anywise be wrung
Into a verbal mode.”

Have I allowed myself to back away at my original principle that thought promotes style until but little of it remains? I hope not, for I know it to be a sound one, but like many other sound principles it must not be pushed too far in practice. I have quoted Montaigne in its support: I will quote him again:

“My fancy and judgment do but grope in the dark,
To utter forth the heart’s imaginings.
Our deepest deep is full of subtle things,
Things mystic, marvellous—unsaid, unsung
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clouds not to laugh at their attempts. One day, per-
chance, they may succeed.

Before proceeding to describe methods encouraging
the production or extraction of subject-matter, I will
transcribe here a few passages to support the theory
that style follows substance of thought. I have given
so many inferior examples recently in illustration
methods that it is time some of the better work of
the form should be shown.

The examples I have chosen will also perhaps serve
anxiously to show how individuality is not necessarily
hindered by the class-system as some educationists
assert. There are many passages of these notes too
apparent; they would be enumerated in a review of
a book on psychological education, which appeared
in The New Age of April 24, and led to the conclusion
that "the love of learning coincided with the revival
of individuality in human nature; it has survived
in spite of our class teachers."

I would not disagree with this statement as it stands,
but am convinced that it is the class teachers who are
at fault, not the class-system, which is a power for
good or ill according to the direction of the teacher. It is
one of the perils of these notes to indicate means by
which he may turn its potential evils to actual
advantage. The principle was discussed in general
terms under the heading of Fellowship in an earlier
article: I hope next week to illustrate a particular
application of it in actual practice.

In order to show how individuality persists in these
youthful productions it is necessary first to say a few
words about the three different writers I have chosen.
C. Bull (aged 12) has a remarkable fund of general
knowledge, and spends at least an hour every day over
the "Times." Being interested in politics and social
questions he thinks of what effect his subject has on
human beings. Wilkins (aged 12) who has a dis-
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Suddenly the clouds again cover the moon. Everything ceases as suddenly as it began. The squirrels run up to their nests, and fairies go to sleep again, and nothing stirs but the wind, which goes on roaming and crowning round the silent guardians of the sleeping forest. — W. Wilkinson.

Everything is still, and a solemn quietness holds the earth. The moon alone is alive, shooting out her silvery beams, brightening and dulling, as the clouds roll on. The hushed wind is mocked by the dismal cry of the owl ringed out in the silence of the night, like the pleading cry of an unrestful spirit. The trees stand gaunt and upright, bathed by the soft moonbeams which sweep through their sleeping leaves and kiss the ground the other side.

Everything is sleeping. Nature is resting; but the moon swins on through the clouds, struggling to keep up its uttering light. Now and then a light breeze springs up and blows gently through the trees. . . .

The Theatre has very little to do with drama. We never doubted her courage, and Bernhardt will not be able to play the part again; and there must be some satisfaction (even if it is not an artistic satisfaction) in following such an artist as Bernhardt. The white uniform certainly sets off the figure to advantage; phthisis, on the stage advantage of an Academy student aping her classical models; to be unintelligible is not to be dramatic. But there Miss Lörh stood, with her fine legs firmly stanced, while the recited the latest news of the Battle of Wagram with occasional pauses for breath. The Duke of Reichstadt, having a hysterical strain in him, probably felt like a ghost among ghosts; but Miss Lörh had no obvious resemblance to a psych's phenomenon. She is a fine woman, but not fanciful; very punctual, she never misses a cue, very painstaking, she really does do her best, brings to her performance everything she can.

Of the rest of a large company, only three were memorable. The women chattered abominably; “three women make a market,” said George Herbert, but on the stage they make a Beiliam—and there are more than three women in this play. The importance of women on the stage seems to vary in inverse proportion to the number of them; one woman may monopolise the universal ether, but three or more are limited to boudoir chatter. But the Metternich of Mr. Henry Vibart was pleasing; he certainly must have had imagination if he could detect any resemblance to Napoleon in Miss Lörh's Duke of Reichstadt, even after she had smashed the mirror with the candelabrum. Mr. Fisher White, as Francis I, had little to do except walk with a stick, sit in a chair, and be a grandfatherly country gentleman; but he did that little with an art that is none the less beautiful for having become familiar. The rôle required to produce the effect of natural expression was given to the Duke's dreams of Empire. If he, the spirit of the man, had not become apparently dangerous? Metternich had no time to waste in making unnecessary experiments in intimidation by suggestion; there must have been a strain of greatness in the character of this man, to test of wills, something that stirred the memory of the father, and, for the moment, effected a transference of Metternich's fear and hatred of Napoleon to his son. The obvious stage advantage of an occasional assumption of the military manner, of the appearance of quick, emphatic decision, of the tone and air of command, was ignored by Miss Lörh; even with her toy soldiers, she showed less of the military spirit than Mr. Wells put into his war-game. The Duke of Reichstadt could at least have marched past with his regiment without loss of prestige; at the very least, he could play at soldiers; but Miss Lörh had obviously excused herself from parades, and showed less of the military manner than a Girl Guide. The consequence was that she made Metternich, the Dictator of Europe look like a play-actor, working up his scene in the second act for no other purpose than that of stage-play.

The third act, with its visionary revival of the battle of Wagram, would tax the powers of a great actress to render sincerely, to produce the effect of natural expression of a modish state of feeling. But Wagram had no terrors for Miss Lörh; she took up a position on the stage, in a posture resembling that of “The Wrestlers” on the Embankment, varied with an occasional movement of the arms to the spread-eagle position, and ranted. All the qualities that cannot be described, of tension, of cadence, of rhythm, were ignored by Miss Lörh; that quality of poetic horror that Rostand obviously aimed to exploit was as far from Miss Lörh's power to express as, let us say, Macbeth's eerie dealings with the witches would be beyond the powers of a girl's school to render. It is not enough to gable here, to grasp the trick of that peculiarly sentimental atmosphere and the trick may have a symbolic value; it may represent, to some minds, the Eaglet flying Lörh and Lörh, “mewing,” as Milton would have it, on the heights, but becoming unintelligible, merely murmurous, as its pinions fail—but it does not produce that effect in the theatre.

Yet it must be admitted that Miss Marie Lörh stimulated the imagination; it was easy to conceive how the part should be played, for the play, theatrical as it is, offers scope for acting. “The poor, little, dear, dead Duke,” may be our final judgment of the son of Napoleon, of the Napoleonic legend that his veterans should cherish this sentimental spirit. Anyhow, Mr. Harding made the most of his “business” with the crottery, producing the Duke of Reichstadt from a score of pockets like a conjurer. The Duke of Reichstadt on a
Readers and Writers.

Mr. Ezra Pound's "Homage to Propertius," a selection from which either has been or shortly will be published in these columns, has drawn an American Professor of Latin into the pages of the American magazine, "Poetry." Professor Hales is indignant at the attributes to him. Is there not, indeed? Accepting creating in English verse a verse-reincarnation, as it least, an ornamental value, and Miss Löhr maintained how many other articles, demonstrated that he had, at last, an ornamental value, and Miss Löhr maintained this tradition.

Pound to "lay aside the mask of erudition" and to confess himself, so I gather, nothing better than a poet. With some of Professor Hales' literal criticisms it is impossible not to agree. Speaking in gnomes the schools he is, of course, frequently correct. But in the name of the humanities, of life, of art, of literature, what in the world does it matter that Mr. Pound has spelled Punic with a capital when he meant a small letter, or that he has forgotten the existence of the Marcan aqueduct? In the first place, Mr. Pound did not set out with the intention of making a literal translation of Propertius. He set out with the intention of creating in English verse a verse-reincarnation, as it were, of Propertius, a "homage" to Propertius that should take the form of rendering him a contemporary of our own. And, in the second place, all criticism based on the text of Propertius is invalid unless it is accompanied by a perception of the psychological quality of Propertius as he lived. Professor Hales, it is clear, has no sense for this higher kind of criticism, for he complains that there is "no hint" in Propertius' text of "certain decadent meanings" which Mr. Pound attributes to him. Is there not, indeed? Accepting decadence in its modern American meaning, Propertius, it appears to me, is full of it. No literary critic accustomed to reading through and between an author's lines, whether they be in Latin, Greek, or English, can doubt the evidence of his trained senses that the mind behind the text of Propertius was a mind which the Latin Professor of the Chicago University would call decadent, if only it expressed itself in English. The facts that Propertius was a poet contemporary with Ovid, that he wrote of the life of the luxurious Roman Empire as one who habitually lived it, that he wrote of love and of his own adventures, are quite sufficient to prove that he was a child of his age; and if his age was, as it undoubtedly was, decadent in a professorial sense, Propertius, we may be sure, shared its decadence. I am not saying, it will be observed, nor, I think, would Mr. Pound say, that to have shared in decadence and to be sympathetic to it are the same thing as to be decadent in oneself. What, in fact, distinguishes Propertius in my mind is his aesthetic reaction against decadence, against the very decadence in which he had been brought up, and with which he had sympathised. But this is not to admit that "no hint of certain decadent meanings? is to be found in him. On the contrary, he could not very well have become the aesthetic reaction against decadence without importing into his verse more than a hint of certain decadent meanings. In effect, Propertius is the compendium of the Roman Empire at its turning point in the best minds. Long before history with its slow sequence of events and the gross senses of mankind, the Empire was a moral and aesthetic blunder, Propertius discovered the fact for himself and recorded his judgment in the aesthetic form of his exquisite verse. But he must have passed through decadence in order to have arrived at his final judgment; and, in fact, as I have said, his verse bears witness of it. Professor Hales, I can only imagine, has been misled by Proper-
tius' reflections, by his habit of reflecting upon his experiences, by his criticism of decadence. But that reflection was only an accomplishment or, rather, sequel, of Propertius' mode of life; it did not, any more than such reflection does to-day, make impossible or even improbable a mode of life in violent contrast with the reflections made upon it.

A former contributor to The New Age, Mr. Gershon Katz, has just published under the title of "Shulamit," a translation from the Hebrew in English rhymed verse of the "Song of Songs." If it is wise to let well alone it is still wiser to let the best alone; and, for my part, I do not envy the Hebrew or the English of a writer who thinks he can improve on the version of the "Song of Songs" already familiar. Mr. Gershon Katz's version is what might be expected of a writer who could undertake it. It is good when it coincides verbatim et literatim with the time-honoured translation; it is shocking when it differs from it. And the attempt to make rhymed verse of the text is only an additional offence. Here is a characteristic passage:

My love is gone down his garden to
The beds of spice, lilies white to wool,
And in the gardens feed; my love is mine
And I am my beloved's.

Faith is thine Countenance as Tizrah's.

The prose translation of the English Bible is probably known by heart to everybody; but to Mr. Gershon Katz's reproach I may as well copy here:

My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies. I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine. Thou art beautiful, O my beloved, as Tizrah. . . .

Comparisons are here more than usually odorous.

In a "Dial" of a few weeks ago Mr. John Gould Fletcher made the most successful attempt that I have seen to give a reasonable explanation of vers libre. Dismissing the various theories current among the vers librists themselves, Mr. Fletcher arrives at the conclusion that vers libre differs from regular verse only in the absence of "an even metronomic succession of beats." Instead of a regular beat, vers libre aims at "the contrasted juxtaposition of lines of equal beat value, but of different metrical origin." And the example he offers us is the following:

I have fled away into deserts,
I have hidden myself from you,
Lo, you always at my side!
I cannot shake myself free.

In the frosty evening
With your cold eyes you sit watching,
Laughing, hungering still for me;
I will open my heart and give you
All of my blood, at last.

Save for the third line—which without explanation Mr. Fletcher marks with four beats—it will be seen, he says, that every line of this stanza contains exactly three beats. The number of syllables varies, but the number of beats is the same. The lines are, however, of different metrical origin. Lines one, two and eight form a similar group; so do the lines three to seven inclusively; finally, the last line (or so I understand) forms a group with the fifth. How can anybody after this analysis, Mr. Fletcher asks, deny that there is metrical unity in vers libre? Is it not visible under the microscope? Before replying, however, let me print this stanza as prose:

I have fled away into deserts; I have hidden myself from you. Lo, you always at my side! I cannot shake myself free. I will open my heart and give you all of my blood at last.
not? Very well, suppose the foregoing passage had appeared only in its prose-print—would anybody, and even Mr. Fletcher himself, have scanned it as he has scanned his metrical print? I not only doubt it, I deny that the subtest of readers would have placed the beats as Mr. Fletcher has disposed them in his typographical version. But verse that can be read as not-verse is not verse, but prose; and prose is, indeed, this passage of Mr. Fletcher's verse libre.

R. H. C.

Ibsen and His Creation.

By Janko Lavrin.

X.—THE SIGNIFICANCE OF IBSEN.

I.

After all that has been said about the inner dilemma of Ibsen, it is hardly necessary to emphasise the fact that Ibsen belongs to those few writers who are pre-eminently contemporary, not because they deal with modern "ideas," but because the spiritual drama of the present epoch finds in them its most intense expression. That is why we study him not only for the sake of art and literature, but, above all, for the sake of ourselves. His personal inner drama (in so far as he expresses it in his works) is like a searchlight illuminating and revealing the spiritual undercurrents of contemporary individuality. With the help of this searchlight we can penetrate to some of the most characteristic features of contemporary "higher man"—to the spiritual cul-de-sac with all its longing, danger and despair.

Ibsen is, in fact, the tragic poet of this cul-de-sac. In his gulf between the moral and the religious consciousness, in his permanent struggle with impending scepticism, in his great but unsuccessful striving for a real creative value, in the cleavage between his intellect and consciousness—in all that, he is so near to us that he might be taken for a symbol of our own "split," suffering, longing and—impotent selves. Through himself he revealed to us our own inner poverty; but he revealed it in such a way that by this very revelation he made us richer.

It is true, his penetrating and seeking eye was much more sharp than profound; his lead has touched but a comparatively small area of that spiritual "underworld" the dark labyrinths of which were so familiar to another great seeker—to Dostoyevsky. Moreover, he even gives the impression of being strong and intense for the very reason that he is somewhat one-sided and narrow. This "narrowness" is, however, due to the fact that Ibsen's eye was directed not so much towards the depths as towards the heights of the human soul. On the other hand, one must not forget that he was much more of an aristocrat in his creation than Dostoevsky, and it was perhaps just his aristocratic instinct that prevented him from entering those apocalyptic depths of the human soul which are far beyond decency and indecency. . . .

An exaggerated psychological daring and insight often lead towards a peculiar type of cynicism which may induce a man to challenge and deride even that which he considers (or wishes to consider) as most holy. This strange spiritual cynicism we meet now and then in Dostoevsky, but never in Ibsen. Moreover, Ibsen's chief mark is a constant and intense ethical earnestness; he is even too earnest, and the fact that he always takes his inner seriousness just a trifle too seriously, makes him sometimes look almost like a moral pedant, or a stern ex-postor.

On the other hand, it is largely due to a certain restriction of his creative sphere that he revealed to us so strikingly the heroic and tragic potency within the contemporary (i.e., most unheroic) individual, even within the contemporary average man. For with the exception of his earlier works his heroes are not on a romantic or a super-romantic plane of life, but on the same plane as all of us; their inner dramas are within the reach of ourselves; more—there are our own latent or potential dramas, and in this fact alone lies the great ethical value of Ibsen's art and of Ibsen's—earnestness.

II.

The tragedies of Ibsen's characters occur, as a rule, just on the verge between the old and the new man. One could even say that his whole creation is nothing but a constant examination of this boundary, as well as an attempt to overcome it. He succeeded more than anybody in denying the "old man," but as he has seen—he failed to overcome him just when he was apparently very near his aim.

A gradual process of this failure we see in most of his post-Brandian works, especially in the "psychological" dramas of his old age with their gloomy and pessimistic atmosphere. And yet, Ibsen is a real pessimist. For if we take his creation as a whole we notice that his attitude toward life was not pessimistic but tragic, although, to a certain extent, he wavered between these two attitudes.

To explain such a point of view, it suffices to state that the pessimistic attitude is essentially negative, and therefore uncreative; the tragic attitude, on the other hand, is an overcoming of pessimism—through pessimism. . . . In other words, one accepts and affirms life, not by virtue of a dogmatic "optimism," and sentimental "idealism," but by facing it bravely in all its evil, in all its most negative aspects—while consciously striving to transform it just because of its vulgarity and evil. Such a tragic attitude overcomes sterile pessimism, as well as that naïve and thoroughly sheltered optimism which endeavours to see in reality only what it wishes to see, and not what there really is. Thus, the tragic view is the most honest, the most manly attitude towards life; more—it is perhaps the only attitude that leads towards a creative transvaluation and transformation of reality.

However, in order to achieve a real transvaluation, two things are required: the first is that he revealed it in such a way that by this very revelation he made us richer. Thus we come to the most typical feature of Ibsen's striving: we see in him a great creative will without a great creative value. . . . And what is more striking, he failed to reach this value chiefly because of his too exaggerated moral consciousness—in so far as this was "autonomous," i.e., differentiated from religious consciousness. Whenever the moral ideologist in Ibsen propounded a solution, his deeper Self tried to undermine and reject it. Consequently, in his search he was bound to come very close to that border where the inner freedom passes into the inner void. That is the reason why in his last plays we do not hear the song of victory, but rather the tired moan of retreat and resignation. And no "ideas" were strong enough to relieve this last act of his own drama.

III.

In my chapter on "Ibsen as Artist," I pointed out the enormous quantity of "ideas," as well as their rôle, in
Ibsen's works. This abundance of ideas, however, may be misleading as soon as we take one or the other drama singly. For in so doing we may often prove that Ibsen tried to indicate such and such an idea; superficial readers may be even induced to proclaim him as a mere social philosopher, as a preacher and propagandist of feminism, of individualism. But as soon as we take Ibsen's creation as a whole and find out the inner connection between his works, as well as their leading undertones, such a division will appear rather one-sided, and we shall fully understand Ibsen's own perplexity and surprise at being proclaimed as a prophet of "isms."

When the Norwegian Women's Rights League, arranged in 1887, a festival at which the author of the "Doll's House" was hailed as a champion of feminism, Ibsen replied somewhat brusquely: "I am not a member of the Women's Rights League. Whatever I have written has been without any conscious thought of making propaganda. I have been more poet and less social philosopher than people generally seem inclined to believe. I thank you for the toast, but must disclaim the honour of having consciously worked for the women's rights movements. I am not even quite clear as to just what this women's rights movement really is."

To me the problem of man as an individual or in general. And if you read my books carefully you will understand this. True enough, it is desirable to solve the problem of women's rights, along with all the others; but that has not been the whole purpose. My task has been the description of humanity."

"The description of contemporary humanity in so far as I personally lived it through," he might have added, for in some respects he lived it through very intensely. And, in fact, the significant curve from Brand to Hjalmar Ekdal, and again from Stockman to Rubek, shows sufficiently that not only in his criticizing and vivisecting, but even in his "preaching," Ibsen was only a seeker—a seeker who, in spite of all his longing for the New Man, remained poised over that abyss which separates the man of the past from the new man of the future. He is a landmark which concludes one era of the human spirit, but is not strong and great enough to open a new one.

Ibsen himself was perfectly aware of that, for this impotence on the threshold, this weight of the "dead body on our back," was one of his chief torments! In his Stockholm speech (1887) he stated: "It has been my lot to see the unit, the cell-lives and forming their bodies; next the cell-lives and forming their bodies held together by, and "vehicle" for manifestation of all attributes."

If we take a man and dissect him above this unit layer the same is the case -- the "lower" layer serves as the vehicle for manifestation of the one "above" it, and, in fact, near the end of the series we come to matter, the vehicle of force. If we take a man and dissect him on these lines we first find the matter of which his body is composed held together by, and manifesting the forces of matter; next the molecules of matter held together by the cell-lives and forming their bodies; next the cell-lives and their bodies held together by, and the "vehicle" of, what we shall probably best describe now as man's "living soul," and so on, till we come to the unit, man, who holds together the various aspects of his soul and uses his whole body.

This unit is, as it were, a zero mark on the scale by which we are measuring and as "below" him his "influence" spreads out till it pervades all the cells in his body, so above this unit layer the same is the case—the unit-man being one cell in relation to the great Self, which is IT.

This is all simple; the difficulties now begin. They depend almost entirely on the exact constitution of this unit. It is, of course, the Ego; but two egos are recognized in many philosophies, and the independence of these two and the connection of one with the other is clearly a very difficult subject to grasp; since it has demanded so many differing descriptions by different writers.

Owing to the fact that each stratum or wave of creation was the result of the activity of what we should call the different Persons of the Absolute in different combination, they differ from each other entirely (as,
for a diagram, a thought differs from an act), and they can, therefore, not cognise each other. In order that interaction (or cognition) may take place between them it is necessary to introduce a link of some kind (as a flame can cause interaction between carbon and oxygen). The same is true also as between the subplanes (from which, in fact, the carbon-oxygen example is taken). Such links are Sparks of the Great Flame. Among them is one which links man’s soul into his body, the spirit of life; and there is another which is closely connected with the Ego.

They are all, in different degrees, connected with the life, or consciousness aspect of the universe, as contrasted with the form or evolutional side. Speaking crudely, what they do actually link is the modicum of “quasi-unevolvedness” which still persists in the evolved, and which is, so to speak, the greatest common measure between two strata. Through this link the two strata can influence the “unevolvedness” in each other, in so far as this is possible owing to its condition.

It practically comes to looking on this link as a door by which anything which by its evolution in the lower stratum has become of “low enough specific gravity” to rise to the upper stratum can pass. If we apply this idea to the Ego, we can suppose it in its entirety as a body and soul. The lower part is the “quasi-unevolved” material of the lower stratum, the upper part the material of the upper stratum to which it is linked, and the handle is the link itself. These are respectively the Personal Ego, the Individual Ego, and the Bridge.

Owing to the fundamental difference of construction of the various strata (which applies not only to “form and matter,” but also to the less tangible thing which we call energy), the conservation of energy on each stratum is local and limited to that stratum. On the assumption of the indestructibility of energy any energy-complex on any layer is indestructible for all time, but on the assumption of linkage we can add, “until by evolution, aided by the occasional addition of some possible component through the link, it arrives at such a condition as to be assimilable by the layer above, through the link.”

Except for this proviso the lower half of the dumbbell is eternally identified with the rest of that material in the man’s make-up from which it originally was, let us say, “polarised” by the action of the linking spark.

On this theory Death is, as it were, due to the retirement upon the lower stratum, and disintegrates from time to time—at the end of his life—so the next stratum, on which are the skandhas, or, roughly speaking, the “soul,” that which we are in the habit of knowing as the man, dies also, at longer intervals, and disintegrates, as he retires, leaves the various mechanisms at a standstill. The Life link, being largely due to the man, is snapped and the body disintegrates. Next, the various soul mechanisms gradually come to rest much as when in a workshop containing various motors the current is switched off, the motors will stop, first one, then another. When the current is again turned on they all start again just where they left off. This is probably as good a diagram as we can find for the whole subject of reincarnation, and I shall, therefore, use it as far as I can drag the analogy, even if somewhat cumbersome.

With our superior knowledge of such things we are aware that the same electric supply may be working other shops too, though we may be quite sure that each man works his own shop for himself: but, anyway, in this shop the electricity would be printing books, let us say. And from one point of view it is true. But looked at more closely what is really the immediate cause of the activity is the magnetic properties in the cores of the motors. Were these made of copper instead of iron, the electricity would come in, run round the shop, and go out again, having done nothing. Now, the cores are the Personal Egos, a lifetime is the day’s “job,” and the electricity the Individual Ego. When the electricity retires, the magnetic properties of the iron relapse into potentialities only. And this leads us to a very important aspect of the position as seen by the Ancients, the theory of skandhas. I will change the metaphor, though much of what follows can be read on the same line.

There is a small one-cell animal called an amoeba. It is a little lump of protoplasm with no real cell-wall—no permanent outside, in fact. Its protoplasm is always moving. It can push out an arm anywhere, and when it draws it in again the arm is lost in the general moving mass. So suppose such an arm to be protruded and to meet a speck of dust which sticks to it. The arm is withdrawn and the speck of dust remains on the outside of the amoeba. Presently another arm chances to be protruded at the same place and carries out again the speck of dust. If we look on the speck of dust as a mark of identity, the arm is the same arm, but it may contain quite different protoplasm from the former one. Still, it is only such an arm as this which can dislodge and digest the speck. This speck stands for the skandhas. Now, if we could identify ourseives with the general protoplasm of the amoeba there would be no reincarnation but merely a passing activity towards a definite object. If we only identify ourselves with the part in immediate contact with the speck we are being forced out, not knowing why, to do an unknown job. And the contention of the Ancients as opposed to the Moderns was that for almost all men the latter is the case.

Specks of dust having been picked up—or skandhas having been made—they have to be disposed of again. One might almost say that it was the stimulus of the skandhas which provoked the outflow of energy, which forced the skandha “down” into a new body in order that the knots of fate, tied in previous times, could be untied again.

From this point of view it is the skandhas which reincarnate, in other words, the energy-complexes in the soul stratum. It is these energy-complexes which constitute almost the whole of a man as we know him, or as he knows himself, and so we may quite well speak of them as a man’s Ego (personal).

In these days this looks rather like hair-splitting, but that is because we do not recognise so clearly the difference in “reality” between the various strata. Just as man’s body on the lower stratum and disintegrates from time to time—at the end of his life—so the next stratum, on which are the skandhas, or, roughly speaking, the “soul,” that which we are in the habit of knowing as the man, dies also, at longer intervals, and disintegrates, as he retires, leaves the various mechanisms with this stratum we do stuff out, but only at the end of an age of wasted labour and sorrow.

Here we have muddled things in our religious language. What we call “eternally,” and take to mean “without end” really means “for an age,” or cycle, and our phrase “for ever and ever” is a mistranslation of “for the ages of ages.”

If, however, our centre of consciousness can cross the bridge we at once have a huge extension of the period in which to “make good” for a real endlessness. Moreover, instead of being the sport of fate during this period, we become a part of the organism which is opposed to, or in co-operation with, fate.

The Moderns have mixed things up further by importing Religion into the question, whereas it is quite a different thing. Religion, as opposed to Evolution, deals with the origin of God and His righteousness: “All these things shall be added unto you” is the knowledge of the job and the power to execute it.

In roughest outline the theory of Religion as taught by the Ancients was that if a man could make a link, not with some higher and “quasi-unevolved” stuff, as by passing over the Bridge, but, with the utterly un-evolved essence of IT, he, so to speak, short-circuited the whole of evolution, as far as his consciousness was concerned at any rate. Thenceforward no possible ac-
Homage to Sextus Propertius.

By Ezra Pound.

II.
DIFFERENCE OF OPINION.

Tell me the truths which you hear of our constant young lady, Lygdamus,
And may the bought yoke of a mistress lie with equitable weight on your shoulders;
For I am swelled up with inane pleasurabilities and deceived by your reference.
To things which you think I would like to believe.

No messenger should come wholly empty,
and a slave should fear plausibilities;
Much conversation is as good as having a home.
Out with it, tell it to me, all of it from the beginning,
I guzzle with outstretched ears.

Thus? She wept into uncombed hair,
And you saw it,
Vast waters flowed from her eyes?
You, you, Lygdamus,

Saw her stretched on her bed——
it was no glimpse in a mirror;
No gawds on her snowy hands, no orfeverie,
Sad garment draped on her slender arms.

Saw her stretched on her bed——
it was no glimpse in a mirror;
No gawds on her snowy hands, no orfeverie,
Sad garment draped on her slender arms.

Her escritoires lay shut by the bed-feet.
Sad garment draped on her slender arms.

And a querulous noise responded to our solicitous attentand.

We were desolated because she had told them her dreams.

She was veiled in the midst of that place,
Damp woolly handkerchiefs were stuffed into her undryable eyes,
And a querulous noise resounded to our solicitous reprobations.

For which things you will get a reward from me,
Lygdamus?

To say many things is equal to having a home.

And the other woman "has not enticed me by her pretty manners,
"She has caught me with herbaceous poison, she twiddles the spiked wheel of a rhombus,
"She stews puffed frogs, snakes' bones, the moulded feathers of screech owls,
"She binds me with ravel of shrouds.

"Black spiders spin in her bed!
"Let her lovers snore at her in the morning!
"May the gout cramp up her feat!
"Does he like me to sleep here alone, Lygdamus?
"Will he say nasty things at my funeral?"

And you expect me to believe this . . .
after twelve nights of discomfort?

* "War and the Creative Impulse." By Max Plowman. (Headley Bros. 2s. net.)
human body as an essential part of its worship. Correspondingly, if we would be rid of war, what we must really attain to is a religious reverence for the body; a reverence which is the antithesis of self-love, or any kind of epicurean care for our own flesh. It will be no solemn or objective idolatry, but a religion of delight and joy in the highest manifestation of the life-giving spirit. In practice, it will be what all true religion is: the overflow of personal appreciation. It will have its roots in the depths of personal human love. It will establish the primary right of every human being to all the health and vigour he was endowed with by nature, and will regard as blasphemy any kind of moral law which puts the body at variance with the spirit. In the degradation of the body it will always see the degradation of the soul, and will, therefore, give religious significance to human well-being, regarding as sin against nature the exploitation of the body for soulless ends.”

Mr. Plowman is very modern in his sympathies, and the suggestions that he makes are all and altogether both with the revival of Christian thought, and the developments of psychology applied to education. A purely negative morality, he sees, is contrary to the nature of man; and he dismisses the Quakers, for example, as inadequate, “the Quaker solves the problem of passion by simply casting it to the devil.” Even on this occasion of war, “they have not so much decided what we ought to do, as what we certainly ought not to do.”

An education that is not an education for liberty, that does not release the thinker and the artist, to use Mr. Kenneth Richmond’s phrase, is, in his opinion, a deliberate distortion of the human mind. An industry that not only deforms the body but deadens the mind by routine and fatigue is, very truly, a horror of horrors; “God hath made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions,” with the consequences that we know.

But all this we know; it is at least as old as Christianity. What are we to do? Mr. Plowman leaves us, as Christ left us, without a programme. “It is when a man sees the value of life that he effectively declines enslavement. Therefore, as we conceive it, the industry that not only deforms the body but deadens the mind by routine and fatigue is, very truly, a horror of horrors; “God hath made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions,” with the consequences that we know.

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Pastiche.

THE CRESCENT GARDENS.

There is a garden, flaunting its array,
Among sick walls and solitary streets;
Here peace with commerce, in a discord meets,
Where flowers in bitter soil make bold display,
And fluttering trees in the cool darkness stray.
On sun-loved turf are set deserted seats;
Their hard respectability competes
With Nature's whispered promises of May.

By night when all the world is hushed in sleep,
And loftily the queen of Cynicus sails,
Two homeless tollers at the garden peep;
They long to enter, but their courage fails.
Thus on they wander till the daylight pales,
Another crop of miseries to reap.

THE SWORD.

To that dear garden, shut since Adam fell,
Grown o'er with moss and fern and ivied tree,
No man shall dare to pass the sentinel
Who bears the sword of God's dread chivalry.

Within those forests crazy and decayed
No panther tracks her game or rears her young;
No bird from Paradise has ever strayed
To build its nest the blessed boughs among.

A fountain of pure silence, dead as stone,
Fixed in its fall and frozen in cascade,
Stands in the centre—since a man alone
Lost his young innocence and grew afraid.

Yet some have cut a path through bush and brier,
And blown a horn in challenge at the gate—
Only to see, as end of their desire,
A sword made sharp, a garden desolate.

Weary their woes through many questing years,
While red rust ate their armour and their shields—
Only to find the grass as tall as spears,
And that the archangel who, in guarding, seals.

This much is given such an one to hold,
Though he be frustrate and denied the grace
To cross the door—a sword made bright and cold,
And anger blazing strongly on his face.

This shall he keep as comfort from his Lord,
Who seeing Eden could not enter in,
The accolade from His indignant sword
The spurs, the crest, the name of paladin!

THEODORE MAYNARD.

PRESS CUTTINGS.

There was a large attendance at the Bristol Rotary Club luncheon at the Royal Hotel yesterday, under the presidency of Mr. E. T. Thornton, when Mr. Ernest Bevin spoke on "Over-production and the Inevitable Revolution." He explained that he used the word "revolution" in the sense that the developments going on throughout the world must inevitably lead to revolution in thought, method, and distribution. It was not as a result of the war, as every great manufacturer was concerned with international production prior to the war, leading to the formation of syndicates and rings to regulate production and distribution. He quoted the International Rail-makers' Association and its control of goods, and the financiers' organised control of capital, and said the ordinary producer, distributor, and workman were more or less pawns in the game of super-capitalist system by organising production, by limiting production, by maintaining an army of unemployed to keep down the economic condition of the workmen, to keep down wages. Immediately that went and unlimited production took place, and the glut that must follow the present standard of consumption, there would be a world revolution in methods, in international commerce, in the hours of labour, and the standard of life. And he suggested that that would come within five years from now, as he did not believe the so-called captains of industry could regulate over-production, and that the League of Nations would grow up bureaucracy and great financial interests, but he believed it impossible to regulate the world's production and distribution by arrangements between countries.

The great world conflict for markets could only be solved by the rising of the proletariat and the reorganisation of the world's supply and distribution. In the coming struggle for supremacy he was satisfied that the present system of society known as the capitalist system would go under, and that the crude black international of trade would go for the real international of the great peoples of the world, which would exchange only that which they had need to exchange. He believed there would be a complete revolution of the world's social conditions of the whole conception of production and trade, and that the whole thing would be looked upon purely from the standpoint of supplying each other's needs, and not from the point of view of profit, bank balances, or mere aggrandisement. — BRISTOL TIMES AND MIRROR (June 17).

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