

THE NEW AGE

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART.

No. 1404] NEW SERIES. Vol. XXV. No. 15. THURSDAY, AUGUST 7, 1919. [Registered at G.P.O. as a Newspaper.] SEVENPENCE

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
NOTES OF THE WEEK	237
BY TELEPATHY. By R. M.	239
FOREIGN AFFAIRS. By S. Verdad	240
TOWARDS NATIONAL GUILDS IN ITALY—VII. By Odon Por	240
ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY (Chapters XI and XII)— <i>(concluded)</i> . By Major C. H. Douglas	243
LISTEN, CHILDREN! By R. H. Vran-Gavran	244
DRAMA: A Temporary Gentleman. By John Francis Hope	245

	PAGE
IN GERMANY—I. By Dr. Oscar Levy	246
TOWARDS NATIONAL GUILDS. By National Guildsmen	247
IN SCHOOL—XIII. By T. R. Coxon	248
VIEWS AND REVIEWS. By A. E. R.	249
REVIEWS: Heritage. Two Months. The Problem Club. Cocktails	250
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR from E. Francis Hammond, Richard Aldington	251
PASTICHE. By Ezra Pound, Ronald Read	252

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

It is enough for most people, no doubt, to have to pay high prices, without being called upon to think about it as well; and this must be held to explain the singular concentration of the popular Press upon anything rather than the most continuous and pressing problem in every household. Sport, murder, celebrations, flying—anything that will serve to make a newspaper-stunt is seized upon by our friends of the Press as a means of diverting us from the daily, indeed, the almost hourly, problem of making both ends meet. It is very kind of the Press to consent to entertain us in this manner; and it must go strongly against their inclinations, which are, of course, all in the direction of explaining and helping us out of our troubles. Everybody knows that the function of the Press is to educate us; and it must, we say, be rather trying to these gentlemen to have merely to amuse us. At the same time, if we may speak for ourselves, it is not always the case that amusement succeeds in making us forget the accumulating bills, the approaching winter, and the prospects of widespread unemployment. Still less, when the pinch comes, shall we be able to recall the present delights of the daily murder-report and reflect that our time has been well spent. On the contrary, it is barely possible that in those days (not so far off now), we may regret having wasted our summer and spent our money, only to find that the Press cannot keep us warm in winter.

* * *

The trick is obvious enough; and an old country like our own ought not to be taken in by it. We may be sure that when the paid Press is strenuously attracting attention to "*this* thimble, ladies and gentlemen," the pea is being manipulated somewhere else. And the somewhere else, in the present instance, is not hard to guess. Why have prices recently taken another leap upwards? Why do they show signs of competing for the altitude-record? *Someone* has his hand on the pressure-gauge; someone is measuring out

prices for us; and the reason is the obvious reason that *someone* has concluded that Labour has too much money in its pocket to be disposed to work at the intensity expected of it. Men with money in reserve are independent to the extent of their tether; though only wage-slaves, they are remarkably like the other classes when they have a few pounds in the family-stock. It must, therefore, be taken from them; they must be bled of their independence; and what is more convenient for the purpose than the subtle, intangible, invisible, indiscoverable device of putting up the prices of necessities? The instinct of the financial classes may be alone to credit for the discovery and use of this instrument of blood-letting. Or, again, it may be only the sacred laws of supply and demand operating their wonders to perform. To romanticists like ourselves, however, it all appears remarkably like reason and policy; and, in any event, no great harm is done by inquiring who or what fixes prices, and why it suits the convenience of these entities to fix the prices of necessities high, while aiming all the time at cheapening luxuries.

* * *

The popular mind, judiciously assisted by the popular Press, has come to the conclusion that profiteering is the main, if not the sole cause of high prices. The "Daily Herald," for example, is willing to allow that "reckless borrowing, the inflation of the currency, and the extravagance of Government Departments" have played their part in diminishing the purchasing-power of the tokens we call money—"yes," it says, "but the main cause of high prices is profiteering." The "Daily News" is of the same opinion; and so, by a strange coincidence, are the "Daily Express" and the "Evening Standard." On the other hand, people who are supposed to know even better, Mr. Roberts of the Food Ministry and men of similar experience, seem rather to deny than to confirm this popular consensus of interested ignorance. "If every profiteer in the land," says Mr. Roberts, "were guillotined to-morrow, it would not bring prices down to the level we desire." And if it be suggested that it is not the individual profiteer but the collective profiteer in the form of the Trust who is to blame, we have the word of Sir Edgard Jones that the Trusts are "efficient," employ "admirable methods," and "do not seek to obtain exorbitant

profits." Which are we to believe of these two reports—the report of the men who know or the report of the men who write for the popular Press? For ourselves, we have made our choice. Profiteering, while, of course, a contributory cause of high prices in special cases, is so far from being the main or even a chief cause of the present high level of prices that if *all* profits were abolished to-morrow, absorbed into price, like the tail of the tadpole into the frog, the resultant level of prices would still be too high for the present level of wages and salaries to compete fairly with it. What, in fact, we have to learn sooner or later is that the "profit" which now forms part of price is only a fraction of the price as fixed by other circumstances than profiteering. We have to go further and learn that if every commodity could be marketed at *cost price*, there would still be an enormous surplus of goods over the purchasing-capacity of wages and salaries. And finally we must be prepared to accept the conclusion (paradoxical as it may seem), that prices must in general be fixed considerably *below* the conventional cost of production in order effectively to distribute the national production.

* * *

We may take it for granted that the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the cause of high prices is not intended to arrive at any conclusion worth the pains of its members. We have seen what Mr. Roberts has to say on the relation of profiteering to high prices; and it may be remembered that, a week or two ago, we quoted Mr. Roberts as remarking that the question of currency and credit had more to do with the matter. By a clever oversight on the part of the Government, however, it is precisely the relation of currency to high prices that is excluded from the directions in which the Select Committee is commanded to seek an explanation. The particular, and, in fact, the only question set for the Committee to inquire into is the effect of profiteering upon high prices; and since, as we have shown on good evidence, the effect of profiteering on high prices is fractional, the conclusions of the Committee are likely to have, at best, only a fractional value. It would be too curious to ask what is the reason of this strange limitation of the spirit of inquiry into a subject of such universal importance as that of the cost of living. We suggest it, however, as a problem for the tea-table when a cup of tea is charged at threepence. For ourselves, once more, we find little need to speculate on the matter; for the deduction appears to be obvious that since, as we know, the Government is in debt to the banks for some thousands of millions of pounds; since, moreover, the banks are concerned with currency, and have a particular interest in keeping prices high by means of currency—the exclusion of the subject of the relation of currency to prices is a financiers' command. A Government, indeed, that dared to appoint a Select Committee with a free hand to inquire into the cause of high prices—would be a Government of yesterday. Better to follow the popular Press and look for the cause where nobody in the know expects to find it, namely, in profiteering.

* * *

We have a respect for the King, which does not seem to be shared by the people who advise his speeches. Nobody will accuse the King of being in the Capitalist conspiracy to maintain and strengthen the strangle hold of Capitalism upon the working-classes of the country. Yet, if his purpose had been to avow his alliance with the super-producers, profiteers and moneylenders, his speech at the Guildhall on Tuesday last could scarcely have been better composed. His flattering references to City finance were as undeserved as many decorations; and his appeal to the workers for "strenuous and unremitting industry" was in the

Ercles vein of Lord Leverhulme and other captains of industry. There is no need for anyone to teach the King the principles of economics; he knows them very well. But to his advisers upon this occasion we would express the warning that they cannot conceal themselves behind the King's popular majesty; and, above all, that it is disloyal of them to employ his Person as their shield. The *intentions* of the group now unscrupulously engaged in exploiting the popularity of the Throne are very well known; and the implications of their programme are matters of simple reasoning. Contrary to the statements innocently fathered by the King, we affirm as facts or deductions accessible to everybody that the "City" has *not* served the nation well in the matter of finance during the war, but spoiled it of thousands of millions of pounds; that "super-production" is *not* a necessity, but, rather, that a better distributive system is the first condition of increased production; and, finally, that "strenuous and unremitting industry," while necessary and desirable upon occasion, is not a task to impose upon a modern nation as an ideal of life. The realm of His Majesty has many troubles to endure; it is with only the utmost good fortune, the utmost goodwill and the utmost intelligence that we shall survive them. But a fatal rock would be created against our passage into smooth water if the King were to allow himself to be used by a system that must pass away.

* * *

The American Federation of Labour, under the able leadership of Mr. Gompers, has never been characterised by the possession of ideas; and in its latest Manifesto, naturally welcomed by the super-producers of this country, it appears to have joined forces with the frenzied producers of America. Its thoughtful leaders, headed, of course, by the friend of princes and potentates, Mr. Gompers himself, have arrived at the surprising conclusion that *since the more there is the more there is to divide*, the business of the Federation of Labour is to "welcome science," and, indeed, to give science all the assistance within Labour's power. Both the proposition and the deduction would be impeccable if, in the first place, such a thing as a community or commonwealth really existed; and if, in the second place, in the absence of such a commonwealth, we could be sure that the super-production rendered possible by science were applied, first and foremost, to the commodities mainly consumed by the wage-earning and salaried classes. These trifles, however, are not provided for in the conditions laid down by a Capitalist society. On the contrary, the more there is to divide, the less the share of Labour; and, again, the more there is produced, the less of it consists of the humble necessities of the wage-earners' life. We must repeat for the instruction of our American second cousins of the Federation of Labour that what is wrong to-day is *not* our productive system, but our distributive system; that super-production is no remedy but rather an aggravation of under-consumption; that the super-production of luxuries positively *ensures* the increasing cost of necessities; and, lastly, that whoever talks of increasing production *before* providing for increased consumption by means of better distribution is talking Capitalism.

* * *

Nobody, least of all the Government itself, is certain at the moment of writing what the issue of the Coal dispute may be, whether it may resolve itself into nationalisation, into the Duckham scheme, or into a scheme not yet defined; but the omens for the present are against nationalisation and in favour of a more or less modified form of the Report and recommendations of Sir Arthur Duckham, summarised clearly by himself in a telegram to the "Daily Herald" as "nationalisation of minerals, unification of areas, re-

presentation of workmen on governing bodies, restriction of profits." Mr. Smillie has already anticipated this decision of the Government and pronounced against the Duckham scheme as "a syndicate of mine-owners and workers against the consumer." And he has, moreover, interpreted the Bothwell election result as a verdict in support, if not in command, of nationalisation. As we said last week, it is clear that if the Miners reject the Duckham scheme, the Government has no power to enforce it. On the other hand, it is no less true that neither can the Miners enforce nationalisation against the will of the Government. It, therefore, comes to this, that each party has a scheme unacceptable to the other; and, moreover, that each party can veto the scheme of the other without, at the same time, being able to carry its own. If no third scheme, alternative to both, and acceptable to both parties, can be discovered or brought to the light of day, the deadlock of the situation is apparent. Something, it is clear, must give way in the end, for a deadlock is not a stable condition of things. Which is it to be?

* * *

The seriousness of the "direct actionists," who are now taking a poll of the Triple Alliance to discover whether the notions of Mr. Brailsford and other Liberals are worth a national strike, does not lie in what they are likely to accomplish by this means—for nobody believes that a strike is probable; nor does it lie in the "challenge to constitutional action" which its authors profess they are making; but in the certain and, we dare almost say, the calculable discredit the movement in favour of "direct action" is bound to bring upon the Labour movement as a whole. If the "Daily Herald" were being employed to depopularise Labour as fast as the increasing pressure of high prices would otherwise be certain to popularise Labour, it could not be discharging its function more efficiently. Nothing is missing in its propaganda—and summarily in its recent Manifesto—to jeopardise every acquisition of public esteem and sympathy which Labour has recently made for itself. Slim arguments, misleading analogies, special pleading, sentimental arithmetic, and false assumptions—these appear to be the ingredients of the mess served up by the "Daily Herald" as nourishment to its readers. The very phrase "direct action" is itself question-begging. Direct implies the shortest line to a given end; and action is presumably a positive means towards it. Is it "direct" to bring about (or, rather, to talk about bringing about) a general strike as a means to influencing Mr. Lloyd George to influence Mr. Churchill to influence the Allies to influence Koltchak? The fetch seems to be almost round the compass. And the action again—what *action* is involved in ceasing to work? One of two things must follow if the attempt is persisted in (as it will not be): either it fails, whereupon all the consequences fall upon Labour; or it succeeds, whereupon—what? Is Mr. Lansbury prepared to take over the Government with the help of Mr. Brailsford and his staff? The directness of that action to anything but chaos does not appear obvious. We set aside the folly of diverting popular attention from the grievance of high prices—the ultimate consequences of which, Mr. Lansbury will discover, are to be found in foreign policy (for foreign policy is only an extension of social policy, and social policy has its roots in wages and prices); we set aside the folly of attempting to "save Russia" while we do not yet know how to save Bow and Bromley; the particular folly of the "direct action" proposed lies, as we have said before, in the certainty that Mr. Lansbury is being made a tool of, for the discrediting of Labour. Direct action, with the people behind you—that is one thing; but direct action with only the Liberals behind you—that is a price too high to pay for the restoration of Mr. Asquith to the premiership.

By Telepathy.

- FIRST FINANCIER: What's the game? I hear you are supplying money to some of these people who are out for a general strike!
- SECOND FINANCIER: Hush! Not a word! We're all in it on the strict Q.T.
- F. F.: I've heard nothing of it! What's up? What's the idea?
- S. F.: I dare scarcely think of it, let alone put it into words. You ought to know the game without having to be told.
- F. F.: Well, I don't; and I don't like what I hear about it.
- S. F.: You know very well that Labour's getting the upper hand, don't you?
- F. F.: So it seems, when you're putting money into it!
- S. F.: Who said it's money? Wait a bit; we can do it very cheaply.
- F. F.: Do what?
- S. F.: Well, as I was saying, you know Labour's getting the upper hand. Well, that's got to be stopped! You agree about that, I suppose.
- F. F.: Naturally, but you're doing nothing to stop it; you're encouraging it!
- S. F.: Steady, my boy, steady! Am I likely to? Not in these clothes!
- F. F.: What the deuce are you after, then?
- S. F.: I was telling you as fast as I dared. You tell me why Labour is getting on top!
- F. F.: Everybody gone mad. I suppose.
- S. F.: Not good enough—doesn't carry us forward. Now let me tell you. Labour's getting on top for the simple reason that *nearly* everybody has a grievance. High prices, unemployment, and so on. Do you catch me?
- F. F.: Nope; no trade!
- S. F.: Well, what's going to happen if everybody except a few of us finds himself in the soup and thinks the Labour people alone know the way out? Do you catch me now?
- F. F.: You mean a revolution?
- S. F.: You've partly got me; but I mean something worse—a successful revolution; a revolution led by Labour and backed by everybody with a grievance about high prices. Between you and me, Labour has the chance of its life. It's only to sit tight and behave itself and talk high prices to have everybody on its side—everybody, I mean, but people like you and me and a mere handful of us. We shouldn't stand a chance against 'em. They'd have a General Election and a Labour Government in two ticks. You know the winter is going to be a scorcher for everybody who hasn't the means of making money.
- F. F.: I still don't see what your game is!
- S. F.: Come again. Suppose you could persuade Labour to kick up such a stink that everybody would drop it like a hot brick!
- F. F.: I'm beginning to see the light!
- S. F.: Good for you. Then I needn't go on. The game, you see, is quite simple. We're playing for the public which, at present, is disposed to look for shelter under Labour's umbrella. Let's get Labour to make a fool of itself—try a General Strike about some crazy notion or other—get the backs of everybody well up—and there we are! Labour knocked out for ten years at least.
- F. F.: Surely some of the Labour fellows will see the game; and they'll tell the others?
- S. F.: We who are running this thing weren't born yesterday. The Labour fellows who know have no influence. Nobody takes any notice of them. And the Labour leaders who *don't* know have all the say. They've got the Labour daily; and you'd better back that if you want your money's worth.
- F. F.: I thought Lansbury was above that sort of thing.
- S. F.: That's just the game. So he is—miles and miles. *That's* why he cannot be bought. Everybody knows he cannot be bought. It makes him cheap for our purpose. I told you there was no money in it.
- F. F.: Well, well, I suppose all's fair in love and finance. But I hope there's not going to be any trouble.
- S. F.: Only enough to stave off the bigger trouble of a popular revolution.
- R. M.

Foreign Affairs.

By S. Verdad.

I HAVE gladly stood aside during the latter weeks while Mr. Marmaduke Pickthall was presenting the case for the Muslims. Had it even been the case for the Muslim peoples alone, the charity of the British Press should, I agree, have been sufficient to include it—if not in a more widely circulated paper than THE NEW AGE, at least in as independent a journal. But it was not the Muslim case alone that Mr. Pickthall was presenting, but the case of a considerable majority of the people we are pleased and, occasionally (on high days and holidays), proud to remember from the British Empire. Except as the result of unavoidable repetition, no exaggeration of the facts or of the seriousness of the facts was contained in the whole series of Mr. Pickthall's articles. They contain a sober and truthful, though, of course, and rightly, an entirely sympathetic statement of the psychological situation as it stands between our politicians and a considerable part of the Empire they are governing in our name. The responsibility upon those who have now had an opportunity of realising the facts is tremendous. It will not do for us to say that "nobody told us," "nobody warned us." We have now been both warned and told.

Leaving the general question aside, and coming to the particular case of India, the Joint Committee of the two Houses considering the Bill for the future government of India are probably deciding the fate of the Empire—deciding whether to hold India by force or by affection. At present there are in India only two parties; the officials, eager for repression, at least, for the moment; the rest of India united in opposition. For sixty years British officials have framed political policies and carried them out—efficiently, honestly, and with some consideration. Indians have demanded for thirty years a share in designing and executing the future of their own country. The Morley-Minto scheme admitted Indians to consultation but not to power, and ten years' experience has shown that officials yielded nothing to the united request of Indian representatives, even in trifles. Throughout the war, India, as a whole, supported even official administration, believing in the claim that the war was for Right. The visit of the King brought the redress of a grievance of years—the re-union of Bengal. Lord Hardinge openly sided with Indian feeling roused by the oppression of Indians in South Africa. By them India was won to the support of the Empire during the war. Another European, Mrs. Besant, seeing the youth of India drifting rapidly to the extreme Left formed a party for constitutional agitation for freedom—and was interned. Bureaucracy lived on its alleged efficiency. It declared its inability to educate India. Its army at Kut was marched into captivity by the least efficient of all European Powers—the Turks. Fifty Mauser pistols in Bengal paralysed the administration. Failing even to maintain order by the ordinary processes of law, the Executive were placed above the law. During the war India submitted. After the Armistice the Rowlatt Bills were introduced to further strengthen the Executive, and Northern India broke into revolt.

India cannot be governed by force alone. If it takes 80,000 British troops to maintain a semblance of order in Ireland, where there is a nucleus in support of Dublin Castle, how many troops would be required to garrison India where no party is in love with the present system of administration? The problem is how to restore a belief in the British element as a force working for orderly freedom. Even now there is but a negligible section anxious for separation from Britain, but an almost universal passion for national equality with the rest of the Empire. The Montagu

Bill proposes to introduce in the Provinces Indian Ministers for certain offices, subject to a veto on their proposals by the Provincial Governor. If that Governor is an ex-official, or relies on official advice, the veto will be constantly enforced in the name of strong government. The future of the Montagu scheme in Provincial Governments depends on the strict limitation of the veto. In the Government of India, the Central Government, there is to be no real power for Indians—over the purse, the policy, or the administration. Should the Bill pass without considerable improvement, India can only be saved by instructions to the future Governors that Indian opinion, even if misguided, must prevail in all cases where no serious danger is involved. It is true that only a small section of the population is to have the vote, and it is claimed that power must not be given to the representatives of so small a minority. Bureaucracy paid no heed to the clamour against partition of the whole people of Bengal maintained for years. Moreover, there can be no doubt on which side the common people will be found, should there be a division between the British officials and the representatives of the voting minority. The contrast between 1,000 foreign officials in power and 300 million people politically helpless can only lead to ruin.

No solution is possible which does not unite in equal power British and Indian leaders. British officialdom can only endure if British officials become recognised guides on the road to freedom instead of supposed agents of repression. For the present, India has lost faith in its Government—in its efficiency or its goodwill. Nor will it regain faith unless its own people secure equality, and ultimately control, in the machine. For the Empire, the problem is what changes in the letter and the spirit will restore faith in Britain's temporary guardianship of India, until such time as that country can take its place as a free member of the Commonwealth. For the Joint Committee the question is, what is the most that can be given, not what is the least.

Towards National Guilds in Italy.

By Odon Por.

VII.

It has been sufficiently proved in the preceding chapters that co-operative farming is a widespread institution in Italy and not a local experiment conducted by a few enthusiastic idealists. Indeed, the various types of co-operative farms—those under united management, those under divided management, and the mixed type where a central administration decides when and what work is to be done collectively or on individual lots—correspond exactly to the technical, financial, and social conditions and to the spiritual preparedness of the members. While the forms are different they all have in substance the same object: to secure for the farm workers the direct management of agriculture.

While the actual needs of agriculture, considered as a modern industry and a social problem, largely determine the form of organisation, the co-operative types are preferred by those who work for a substantial social transformation, inasmuch as in them there operate more intensely those forces of solidarity which, through difficulties and struggles, will undoubtedly be finally victorious. As a tendency, as an effort, therefore, the socialists prefer and advise the creation of co-operative farms under united management and the foundation of Agrarian Universities, while the conservative and the catholic organisations lean towards the divided type.

Moreover, the type in which all members participate in the cultivation of the whole estate, under an elected director, is generally believed to offer the greatest

facilities for the ownership and use of machinery and the application of everything that modern agricultural science has invented, in short, for scientific management. But the socialists readily admit that co-operative farms under divided management are not merely creations of conservative intentions, but often are determined by necessity. Often the centuries-old system of tenants on share or the special conditions of the fields are great obstacles to united management, while there are certain operations, especially in intensive agriculture, the execution of which in a collective way is very difficult and for which the individual or family management and responsibility is a necessity. The socialists do not therefore reject the divided type for abstract reasons; above all, they want to avoid economic errors; and when, by the conditions of the fields or the traditions of a locality, they are obliged to adopt divided management they try to correct it by providing for a single technical direction and the common management of everything that can be done collectively—the buying of raw materials, fertilisers, machines, the transportation of products and their sale, collective insurance, etc.—and by insisting upon active solidarity amongst the members and amongst the various organisations.

The remarkable success of these various types of co-operative farms, their adaptability to the varied agricultural conditions in all parts of Italy, the demonstrated fact that they improve the land, increase and improve production, and raise the status of the agricultural workers, and the fact that they have outgrown their initial scope and temporary purpose—the relief of unemployment—and have become stable enterprises demonstrating the capacity of the agrarian proletariat to manage associatedly the farming industry, have given them a national importance. Their more recent developments, characterised by a strong tendency to expansion by the absorption of more technical experts, more members, and by the leasing and buying of great estates, have assumed such vast proportions that their disciplining on a national scale became an urgent necessity, and they have at length decided to pool their forces into a National Federation.

The aim of the "National Federation of Agricultural Co-operative Societies with a Commercial Agency" is thus defined in the legally approved statutes: "In order to co-ordinate and concentrate for the greater development of Italian agriculture all the scattered forces of labour and co-operation, a strong organism of production is to be created in which, under the stimulus of a more direct interest, the farm-labourers shall become factors of economic progress both for the working masses and the nation."

To realise this aim the Federation proposes:—

- (a) To favour the constitution and development of co-operative societies, colonies, and collective leaseholding societies in all parts of Italy;
- (b) to emphasise the moral and economic superiority of agricultural co-operation, combating all the forms of profiteering and parasitism of the middlemen who stand between the landowner and the labourers, facilitating by all means and methods the direct assumption of the control of the estates by farm labourers united in agricultural co-operative societies;
- (c) to institute commercial offices and agencies for the collective buying of the raw materials necessary for agriculture, of machines, tools, etc., and for the sale of the products;
- (d) to create and manage factories for the production of fertilisers and articles useful in agriculture;
- (e) to provide the best defence of agriculture against the damages of fire, hail, stock diseases, etc., by direct and mutual insurance;
- (f) to assume directly or on the account of the federated societies—leasing or buying—the management of the fields;
- (g) to set up scientific centres and experimental labo-

ratories in order to provide the affiliated societies with the greatest possible amount of guidance and practical advice.

The co-operative societies which seek admission to the National Federation must be legally constituted and must conform in their action to the principles and policy as laid down by the national organ of co-operation and trade unionism. This means that they must accept and act upon the socialist ideals.

The Federation is already at work; it embraces more than 500 affiliated co-operative societies; expert agriculturists are directing it; it sums up the experiences of a long period and is shaping a national policy out of them. It comes into being at a moment when great activity prevails in agriculture.

Farming is becoming a modern industry scientifically managed. Few private landlords have either sufficient financial means, administrative capacity, or area of property for the conduct of agriculture on modern industrial lines. The great tenants are regarded by them, and still more by the farm-labourers, as exploiters with no vital functions or interests in the permanent improvement of the land. Even if they are able men, they have no other interest than to squeeze out from the land the greatest possible output for the time being. And if profiteering considerations weaken in the long run any industry in general, they bring about exhaustion in agriculture still more certainly. The Italian farm-labourers, living and conscious factors of the agricultural industry, are determined both to avoid the destruction of the land and to improve agriculture; and they are not willing to suffer any longer the exploitation of their forces.

At present they are fighting in many districts where agriculture is an industry, for the eight-hour day on the land, for the improvement of the housing conditions, for standard wages. They have established their control over agriculture in the private farming enterprises through "shop-committees," which have now the power to determine the methods of cultivation, the number of labourers employed, as well as all other matters regarding the management. This struggle has been victorious in many localities, and a law is now before Parliament to regularise and legalise the eight-hour day in agriculture which has been won directly by the workers.

But the trend towards great agricultural enterprises cannot be dammed, nor would this be in the interest of the farm-labourers; it is rather in their interest to back it. A rational development of agriculture in many Italian districts is technically and financially impossible without large-scale farming. This may assume two principal forms of realisation: private joint stock companies, leasing for a long period or buying great estates and managing them under the direction of experts and employing farm-labourers at wages—this is the trend towards Agricultural Trust; or agricultural co-operative societies, which represent the trend towards Agricultural Guilds.

Capitalist great-scale farming—recently introduced in a few places—has come, however, too late; it comes at a time when great co-operative estates have already established themselves successfully and permanently; it may succeed temporarily, especially where the agricultural labourers are still unorganised or at the beginnings of organisation, but it has no chance whatever in the districts where the agricultural labourers are fully conscious of their industrial capacities and social mission and refuse to be wage-earners.

Logically, then, the technical function exercised in industry by the great combinations should fall in agriculture to the guilds of farm-labourers. If for technical reasons the great agricultural enterprises are inevitable, it is not equally inevitable that they shall take the form of capitalistic trusts. The National Federation will become an organ for the conducting of large-scale agri-

culture, for the industrialisation and socialisation of farming, in two ways:—

- (a) By assuming the management of vast estates and by their cultivation with all the established modern methods and means.

In this case it will become the strongest and most successful opponent of the anti-economic, anti-technical, and anti-social schemes of breaking up those great estates in small farms in which the superior efficiency of large-scale farming is beyond discussion; of all those schemes, in fact, which are proposed partly by the landowners in view of the great profits to be made out of the sale of their *latifondi*, partly by conservative politicians who hope to silence the growing discontent amongst the farm-labourers by settling them on small allotments, without regard to the question whether these may yield a decent living to the settlers and their families.

This work of the Federation will be increasingly facilitated in proportion as it seeks the support of the agricultural unions; and in the measure in which it draws its strength from the monopoly of labour formed or held by the agricultural unions. Relying on a monopoly of agricultural labour it will be in the position to dictate the price of the land and of credit. . . .

- (b) By creating an understanding between the various affiliated co-operative farms for the cultivation of such products as can be transformed industrially in the factories owned or managed by the Federation or by the co-operative societies of production or by the municipal bodies.

The National Federation, controlling directly and indirectly through its affiliated societies vast masses of agricultural labourers, having at its disposal a sufficient number of expert agriculturists, cultivating already hundreds of thousands of acres, and being in close relationship with the co-operative societies of labour that specialise in reclamation works of all kinds, is actually the greatest agricultural enterprise in Italy. It is capable of assuming in any part of the country any species of work relating to farming, from the reclamation of waste lands to their transformation into fruit gardens. It is already a "national enterprise" for the very reason that it has its affiliated estates scattered in many parts of the country. It has all the technical elements—lands of various quality, staff, labourers, machines, etc.—that are indispensable for that unity of management and purpose which makes the co-ordination of production possible under an organically conceived scheme characterised by permanent features. It has already all the advantages of a great agricultural enterprise and none of the drawbacks of unwilling labour. It truly represents effective organised energies with a potential capacity of directing the re-organisation of agriculture on a national scale so as to put the land to the fullest possible use for the benefit of the collectivity as a whole.

A practical example will illuminate the latent possibilities determined by the fusion of local and limited initiatives into a national institution. We read in the annual report of the Co-operative Farm of Santa Vittoria (in the province of Reggio-Emilia) that it has planted about 25,000 Canadian poplars along the banks of the irrigation canals and in other places that were hitherto neglected; soon the number of poplars will reach 40,000. These trees do not figure amongst the assets of the farm, and are considered by the management as constituting the reserve fund to meet unforeseen losses. This is, of course, an excellent device. But as well as constituting a reserve fund the trees may also become a source of great and regular income. It is well known that the Canadian poplar is used chiefly for the manufacture of cellulose of which Italy imports thousands of tons annually. Italy has practically no cellulose industry; paper is dear for it is made of imported cellulose. Poplar, after six years, is big enough

to be used economically in the cellulose industry. How many poplars are needed to supply a great cellulose mill? How much capital is needed to build and run such a factory?

The Federation will, no doubt, study these questions. By agreement with the affiliated farms, the Federation could organise the cultivation of as many poplars as may be needed by a great cellulose mill. The co-operative farms would willingly undertake the cultivation of these trees for they would have for them an assured and regular market. Their "reserve fund" could easily be increased without any special effort or waste of land. On the other hand, they could not very well enter upon a similar enterprise singly, nor could a cellulose mill—needing millions of trees annually—rely upon a single farm for its supply. It would not be difficult for the Federation to find the capital for such a factory. The paper mills themselves—now indebted to foreign countries for their cellulose—would willingly subscribe it. Nor could the State refuse its support to such a useful and necessary industry.

A series of such new possibilities for new industries could be enumerated; but this one example suffices to emphasise the "capital value" of "national organisation." The very fact of the national organisation of co-operative farms has a latent capital value which brought into action and associated with other enterprises and initiatives acquires real value.

No doubt all the latent forces in the National Federation will be realised through assigning them special and new functions. The new functions will create a source of new rights; for more important and advantageous leases, for security of tenure, for vaster credit and finally the exclusive right of the co-operative farms to manage public lands.

The Federation, functioning nationally, may be able not only to evade and supplant, but also to jump a phase of capitalist organisation that hitherto seemed inevitable. It might realise on a truly national scale that which the capitalists and the State have failed to realise and upon which Italy's economic prosperity depends: the establishment collectively of organic and continuous relations between agriculture and industry for the supply to the existing industries of raw materials obtainable by the intensification and re-organisation of agriculture. Italy could produce many of the raw materials hitherto not produced in the country chiefly because of lack of co-ordination, of mutual confidence and of stimulus between industry and agriculture. Consequently, many industries could produce more, and many new industries could be created.

The Federation is obliged by its own constitution, derived from the propulsive forces of its constituting bodies—to follow an agricultural-industrial programme with features of permanency and not of speculation. The various effects of such an activity are evident, but above all it will stabilise and impose co-operative farming and co-operation in general. Nor could the State remain indifferent to such an organising activity on a national scale. By now it has become axiomatic that Italy's economic stability depends on a thorough renewal of its agriculture. This cannot be done without some form of State control or interference. It seems that nationalisation but not the bureaucratisation of industries is the only comprehensive measure to save the State from ruin. Following the course of this tendency the State—if for nothing else but intrinsic technical motives—will seek the support of an organism of production capable of guaranteeing technical efficiency, moral integrity and public spirit; and will in the end turn over to it the management of the industries.

It will not be difficult for our National Federation of Agricultural Co-operative Societies to demonstrate its readiness to function as a "public service" in agriculture. It is already tending to function in this sense on

its own initiative. And there are not wanting signs that the State is preparing to ally itself with the Federation. When this alliance materialises, the Federation will become the Italian National Agricultural Guild, and its activities will develop at a very rapid pace.

Economic Democracy.

By Major C. H. Douglas.

CHAPTER XI.

THE awful tragedy of waste and misery through which the world has passed during the years 1914-1919 has brought about a widespread determination that the best efforts of which mankind is capable are not too much to devote to the construction of a fabric of society within which a repetition of the disaster would be, if not impossible, unlikely; and the major focus of this determination has found a vehicle in the project commonly known as the League of Nations.

The immense appeal which the phrase has made to the popular and honest mind has made it dangerous to fail in rendering lip service to it; but it is fairly certain that under cover of the same form of words one of the most gigantic and momentous struggles in history is waged for the embodiment of either of the opposing policies already discussed.

The success of an attempt to impose an economic and political system on the world by means of armed force would mean the culmination of the policy of centralised control, and the certainty that all the evils, which increasing centralisation of administrative power has shown to be inherent in a power basis of society, would reach in that event their final triumphant climax.

But there is no final and inevitable relation between the project of international unity and the policy of centralised control. Just as in the microcosm of the industrial organisation there is no difficulty in conceiving a condition of individual control of policy in the common interest, so in the larger world of international interest the character and effect of a League of Free Peoples is entirely dependent on the structure by which those interests which individuals have in common can be made effective in action.

Now, unless the earlier portions of this book have been written in vain, it has been shown that the basis of power in the world to-day is economic, and that the economic system with which we are familiar is expressly designed to concentrate power. It follows inevitably from a consideration of this proposition that a League of Nations involving centralised military force is entirely interdependent upon the final survival of the Capitalistic system in the form in which we know it, and conversely that the fall of this system would involve a totally different international organisation. A superficial survey of the position would no doubt suggest that the triumph of central control was certain; that the power of the machine was never so great; and that, whether by the aid of the machine-gun or mere economic elimination, the scattered opponents to the united and coherent focus of financial and military power would within a measurable period be reduced to complete impotence and would finally disappear.

But a closer examination of the details tends to modify that view, and to confirm the statement already made that a pyramidal administrative organisation, though the strongest against external pressure, is of all forms the most vulnerable to disruption from within.

We have already seen that a feature of the industrial economic organisation at present is the illusion of international competition, arising out of the failure of internal effective demand as an instrument by means of which production is distributed. This failure involves the necessity of an increasing export of manufactured goods to undeveloped countries, and this forced export, which is common to all highly developed capitalistic States, has to be paid for almost entirely by the raw

material of further exports. Now, it is fairly clear that under a system of centralised control of finance such as that we are now considering, this forced competitive export becomes impossible; while at the same time the share of product consumed inside the League becomes increasingly dependent on a frenzied acceleration of the process.

The increasing use of mechanical appliances, with its capitalisation of overhead charges into prices, renders the distribution of purchasing power, through the medium of wages in particular, more and more ineffective; and as a result individual discontent becomes daily a more formidable menace to the system. It must be evident therefore that an economic system involving forced extrusion of product from the community producing, as an integral component of the machinery for the distribution of purchasing power, is entirely incompatible with any effective League of Nations, because the logical and inevitable end of economic competition is war. Conversely, an effective League of Free Peoples postulates the abolition of the competitive basis of society, and by the installation of the co-operative commonwealth in its place makes of war not only a crime, but a blunder.

Under such a modification of world policy, interchange of commodities would take place with immeasurably greater freedom than at present, but on principles exactly opposite to those which now govern Trade. The manufacturing community now struggles for the privilege of converting raw material into manufactured goods for export to less developed countries. Non-competitive industry would largely leave the trading initiative to the supply of raw material. Since any material received in payment of exported goods would find a distributed effective demand waiting for it, imports would tend to consist of a much larger proportion of ultimate products for immediate consumption than is now the case; thus forcing on the more primitive countries the necessity of exerting native initiative in the provision of distinctive production.

Again, International legislation in regard to labour conditions under a competitive system must always fail at the point at which it ceases to be merely negative, because it has ultimately to consider employment as an agency of distribution, and rightly considered distribution should be a function of work accomplished, not of work in progress, i.e., employment. As a consequence, this most important field of constructive effort resolves itself into a battleground of opposing interests, both of which are merely concerned with an effort to get something for nothing. The inevitable compromise can be in no sense a settlement of such questions, any more than the succession of strikes for higher pay and shorter hours, which are based on exactly the same conception, can possibly result in themselves in a stable industrial equilibrium.

Examples of the same class of difficulty might be multiplied indefinitely, but enough has probably been said to indicate the disruptive nature of the forces at work. To state whether or not the general confusion and misdirection of opinion will make a period of power control inevitable, in order to unite public opinion against it, would be to venture into a form of prophecy for which there is no present justification; but it is safe to say that whether after the lapse of a few months, of a very few years, the conception of a world governed by the concentrated power of compulsion of any description whatever will be finally discredited and the instruments of its policy reduced to impotence.

CHAPTER XII.

As a result of the survey of the wide field of unrest and the attempt to analyse, and as far as possible to simplify, the common elements which are its prime movers, it appears probable that the concentration of economic power through the agency of the capitalistic system of price fixing, and the control of finance and

credit, is of all causes by far the most immediately important and therefore that the distribution of economic power back to the individual is a fundamental postulate of any radical improvement. While this, it would seem, is indisputable, it must not be assumed that by the attainment of individual economic independence the social problems which are so menacing would immediately disappear. The reproach is frequently levelled at those who insist on the economic basis of society that in them materialism is rampant, and in consequence the bearing of sentiment on these matters is overlooked, and the immense and decisive influence on events which is exerted by such factors is very apt to be ignored. There is a germ of truth in this; but if such critics will consider the origin of popular sentiment, the influence of economic power will be seen to predominate in this matter also, whether considered merely as the tool of a policy, or as an isolated phenomenon.

It is claimed, and more particularly by those who utilise it, that "public opinion" is the decisive power in public affairs. Assuming that in some sense this may be true, it becomes of interest to consider the nature of this public opinion and the basis from which it proceeds, and it will be agreed that the chief factors are education and propaganda.

Now, the bearing of economic power on education hardly requires emphasis. In England, the Public School tradition, with all its admirable features, is nevertheless an open and unashamed claim to special privilege based on purchasing power and on nothing else; and with a sufficient number of exceptions its product is pre-eminently efficient in its own interest, as distinct from that of the community. It is one of the most hopeful and cheering features of the present day that this feature is increasingly recognised by all the best elements comprised within the system; and the danger of reaction in the future is to that extent reduced.

But by far the most important instrument used in the moulding of public opinion is that of organised propaganda either through the Public Press, the orator, the picture, moving or otherwise, or the making of speeches; and in all these the mobilising capacity of economic power is without doubt immensely if not preponderantly important.

When it is considered that the expression of opinion inimical to "vested interests" has in the majority of cases to be done at the cost of financial loss and in the face of tremendous difficulty, while a platform can always be found or provided for advocates of an extension of economic privilege, the fundamental necessity of dealing first with the economic basis of society must surely be, and in fact now is, recognised, and this having been established in conformity with a considered policy the powers of education and propaganda will be freed from the improper influences which operate to distort their immense capacity for good.

The policy suggested in the foregoing pages is essentially and consciously aimed at pointing the way, in so far as it is possible at this time, to a society based on the unfettered freedom of the individual to co-operate in a state of affairs in which community of interest and individual interest are merely different aspects of the same thing. It is believed that the material basis of such a society involves *the administration of credit by a decentralised local authority; the placing of the control of process entirely in the hands of the organised producer* (and this in the broadest sense of the evolution of goods and services) and the *fixing of prices on the broad principles of use value, by the community as a whole operating by the most flexible representation possible.*

On such a basis, the control of the sources of information in the interests of any small section of the community becomes an anomaly without a specific meaning; and the emancipation of the Press and of similar organs of publicity would no doubt within a measurable

time disappear because it would lack objective. But there would still remain the task of eradicating the hypnotic influence of a persistent presentation of distorted information, at any rate so far as this generation of humanity is concerned, and it seems clear that a radical and democratic basis of Publicity control is an integral factor in the production of the better society on which the Plain People have quite certainly determined.

Thus out of threatened chaos might the Dawn break; a Dawn which at the best must show the ravages of storm, but which holds clear for all to see the promise of a better Day.

[THE END.]

Listen, Children.

By R. A. V. G.

II.—THE BOOK REVELATIONS.

What is book revelation, brothers?

There is no book revelation, but there are only book records of revelation.

What are temples, the abiding houses of God, brothers? Temples of stone are only copies of the real abiding houses of God.

Man is the vehicle of God's revelation, brothers. Books are merely a projection of what the vehicle bears in itself.

Men are the abiding houses of God, brothers. The stony temples are merely projections of an original building. Every temple is a book written in special letters, and, like every book of revelation, it is a memento of what has happened in the living man.

How can the book-records of somebody else's revelations of God be useful to you, brothers?

By evoking similar revelations in yourselves. As long as they remain somebody else's revelations, those books will be to you objects of curiosity or idolatry.

How can temples of stone be useful to you, brothers?

By reminding you how to build the temple in yourselves of the chaotic material which is in you. Unless they move you to build similar buildings in yourselves, they have failed in their mission and will be to you objects of curiosity or idolatry.

A company of men stood in a sandy desert before a sign-post, upon which was indicated the right way to go to get to the oasis. Instead of going the indicated way on the board, the men bowed day and night before the board, worshipping it and singing in chorus: "This way leads to the oasis." But they did not make a move on the way. The revealer of the way knew the way, for he went it and saw the oasis and wrote the words on the board in order to help other travellers. Yet the travellers, instead of going that way, stood there worshipping the revealer's revelation and suffered thirst and heat.

I asked them: Why don't you go, then?

Whereupon they answered:

If we go, who will worship the great revelation?

First of all, said I, you do not know whether it is great or small or no revelation at all unless you make the same revelation yourselves. Secondly, the revealer in the other world would rejoice more if he see you going without worshipping than if he see you worshipping without going. Thirdly, could not you combine both?

Brothers, I am not showing to you the way which somebody else went, but which I went myself. Believe me, and try the way. Try the way and you shall believe me.

The revelation I am making is not the repetition of a real book, but it is the first-hand music which is played by a new-born player on the mortal reed of myself.

The temple I am leading you to is not a temple that

you get in from outside, but it is a cradle in which God is born.

And now listen to the romance of life of the new-born child in me.

THE SERPENT THAT BITES ITS TAIL.

One morning when the Earth was warming her shoulder, upon which I lived, in the sun, my eyes opened and I saw a cobra coiled upon my breast, its upper body bent in the air, its glistening head hanging over my face, its fiery awaiting look fixed upon my eyeballs. My whole body shivered for a second. My brain stood still, and all the millions of my subconscious cells awakened to the danger of death.

In the next second, my whole life, my known and unknown past, contracted itself into one word—God. In fixing with my eyes the metallic eyes of the serpent, I whispered in my heart:

Where are thou now, O God? In me—or in the beast?

And I felt as it were a deluge of flame running through my body. And I heard a childlike voice in me:

I am both in you and in the beast. In you I am a born child, in the serpent I am a sleeping child. If the serpent kills you, I shall suffer; if you kill the serpent, I shall suffer. It is I that always suffers in all sufferings, in Heaven and on earth.

When mountains fall upon the cities of men and when the green valleys turn into cemeteries of dead armies, it is a stroke upon me to bring about my birth. It is my pain, my loss, and my gain.

Starry wheels and dancing dust are mothers, whom I shaped in order that they should give birth to me. All mothers are meant to be my mothers, all fathers also to be my fathers.

I am a virginal God emerging from sleep. I set traps for myself upon my way. Yea, my way is sown with deadly danger. Dangers shake me and make me wake.

You are a trap for me that am in the cobra. And the cobra is a trap for me that am in you. My path is full of pitfalls. Cumbersome is my lonely walk.

You count but little; the cobra counts but little; it is I that count in both of you. A golden cradle is of less worth than the child, and a slummy cradle is of less worth than the child.

When the cradle is more praised than the child, the cradle will be kept well and the child will be suffocated under silks and jewels. But when the child is seen in the cradle, not the cradle but the child is praised and admired.

I am the builder and sweeper of every cradle. Even while sleeping I build and sweep every cradle. Less I care for cradles when asleep than when awake. Yea, when awake I am taken by wonderment more about what is in the cradle than about the cradle itself.

Now, you are a cradle of me and the cobra is another. In the cobra I am anxious only about the cradle which bears me. In you I am a little child awakened, which can think of itself both in you and in the cobra and in everything moving in the Universe.

All the cobra knows—and that knowledge comes from the sleeping child in it—is that it—the cobra, the cradle—is in deadly danger. And you know something more—i.e., that both your cradle—yourself—and your young God—myself—are in deadly danger.

It is always a god that threatens another god. All struggle in the world is the struggle of gods. In you I know this, in the cobra I do not know.

In you I know this, and in angels I know it still better, and in archangels still better.

If you lay full stress upon me in you, you shall reach unity and might, and the sleepy child in the serpent will not prevail against you.

Well, well, well! Look how the cobra is slackening, slackening, slowly but steadily slackening. There its eyes are dim, its neck no more stiff. Look, look, look! It is falling off, it has fallen off—off.

Drama.

By John Francis Hope.

THE war was responsible for a shortage of many things. I remember that even a shortage of curates was reported; but it was also responsible for a glut of some things, particularly gentlemen and the titular distinctions of gentility. The civilian gentlemen have not yet received their full meed of dramatic recognition; but the military will probably wish that they had not been so conspicuously genteel if Mr. H. F. Maltby's "A Temporary Gentleman" sets a fashion, as its successful production at the Oxford may. There is no more legitimate subject of comedy than the correction of manners, no type more in need of that correction than the prig, clothed in a little brief authority, no more obvious example of that type than the military officer. There is no more obvious audience for such an exercise, I may say, in a final affirmative of positivism, than an audience consisting largely of demobilised men, as it obviously did when I saw the play performed. With such an audience, such a play cannot fail to be theatrically successful; there is the instant apprehension and appreciation of every point made by the author, because the audience has the culture of experience in the subject-matter. Indeed, we are all judges of manners—other people's manners—and comedy therefore has a natural advantage over tragedy, which depicts passion and reveals mind and will intertwined in disaster. We may not sympathise with the passion, nor understand the revealed mind; but we can all condemn the "bounder," and derive our enjoyment from the fact that we are not and would not be as he is.

The manner in which Mr. Maltby administers his correction is also perfectly legitimate; he allows the natural order of events to admonish the person, makes the wisdom of experience the real teacher of manners (although Mr. Maltby does also permit some characters to deliver lectures on the subject). The demobilised officer, mistaking his temporary gentlemanliness for a permanent elevation, is confronted with the difficulty of getting a living in a world where people are expected to do their own work. The modern Cincinnatus does not return freely to the plough; he looks around for a junior partnership, or a seat on a board of directors (preferably as a "guinea-pig")—and finds no overwhelming demand for his services in these capacities. Having been a gentleman by the King's commission (it is a legal doctrine that "the King can do no wrong," but he is not always successful in the manufacture of gentlemen) does not entitle the holder to equal rank with those who are ennobled by the King's will—although Sir Herbert Hudson is wise enough not to use that argument. He adopts what has been called the "functional principle" in argument; the officer had held the position of junior clerk, he was not technically qualified to hold any other position, therefore, so much, and no more, power than the function of junior clerking demanded should he be permitted to exercise. He who had commanded men, and horses, and other things of which he understood nothing, repudiated the suggestion as unbecoming to one who had held the King's Commission; he held no military decorations, and so was disqualified, as he said, for the Hippodrome chorus; but at last he accepted a post as commercial traveller for a firm that made stoves. This, as we learned in the last act, was a position with emoluments superior in value to those accruing to the rank of officer; it was a position that entailed a considerable acquaintance with men without too exclusive an application of the principles of selection, and this acquaintance resulted in an increasing callosity of the epidermis which may reasonably be supposed to continue until sensibility is entirely destroyed.

It must be admitted, also, that Mr. Maltby has chosen a corrigible character for correction, and his

"temporary gentleman," therefore, is not a mere butt for witticisms. In the third act, indeed, Walter Hope develops an appetite for correction that is nearly as gross as his previous priggishness; he will learn the manners of a gentleman even from the admonition of a servant girl—and servants, as we all know, are the real custodians of tradition in this matter. His sister, who had somehow maintained the dignity of a V.A.D. without perishing of inanition, suffers an equivalent transvaluation of values; and bids fair to become one of those women who have not manners enough to permit other people to do their own work. The downward road is an easy one, and the servants' hall seems to be its terminus; and Alice, while developing the servant's virtue of practical ability, seems to be developing the lady's vice of meanness and to have adopted the saving of halfpence as her creed. "The tact to let external forces work for us" is as necessary to the good life as the determination not to permit others to do for us what we can best do for ourselves; and a miserly busy-body is not an improvement on a supercilious and idle woman.

The defect of the play as a comedy is that it reveals no clear standard of manners. Its sympathies are obviously what are called "democratic"; the "Tommy's" and the "Waac's" standard is apparently the accepted one. It is a good standard, but it reveals more virtues than graces, is a standard of conduct rather than of behaviour. Indeed, as represented in the play, there is a marked tendency to "desecrate, belike, the deed in doing," the manner is so grossly subordinated to the matter. There are forms of hospitality, for example, that are not to everyone's taste, however much they may express the host's goodness of heart; and one need not be a prig to decline to join a party of demobilised soldiers in a "sing-song," with the added attraction of a bottle of whisky. It is true enough that Walter Hope did decline for a priggish reason, as the corporal so shrewdly suspected; he was trying to maintain the dignity of a position he no longer held in preference to expressing his real self in his pleasures. He wanted to go to the sing-song, and legitimately did; but hospitality urged, as this was urged, exemplified good-heartedness more than good manners. The Jacks, although they were, as Mrs. Hope said so often, "very nice people," were too insensitive to personal influence to be really tactful, and were incapable of the supreme virtue of hospitality, that of giving a guest what he wanted. They offered freely what they had, but without due regard to the fitness of the thing to the person.

The object of comedy should be what Hazlitt said its effect was, the abolition of its subject-matter—which is singularity of behaviour. A gentleman, I suppose, is in the final definition one who can express the virtues by means of the graces without being singular; he should be at home wherever he is, and where he is should be home. Shaw said once that universality of spirit is impossible without a share of vulgarity; but the real object of comedy is not to import vulgarity into universality of spirit, but to make universality of spirit common, that is, vulgar. This is not done, as Mr. Maltby seems to imagine, by accepting the standards of common people, but by devising common standards for the people. The object of comedy is not to make vulgarity, but gentility, common, to refine manners, not to corrupt them. Accept the Jacks, as Mr. Maltby does, and we accept people who do gracious things in a graceless way, who have the root of the matter in them but not its appropriate flower. In the strict sense of the word they are abortions; they "arise not" even to the heights of their great argument, which really is the sentimental one that "kind hearts are more than coronets." Ibsen's ideal was to make every man in the land a nobleman; the comedian aims higher than that—to make every man a gentleman, and "the people" have yet a lot to learn.

In Germany.—I.

By Dr. Oscar Levy.

BERLIN, JUNE 18.—The journey here has been awful. I had taken a first-class ticket, but a second-class would certainly not have been so bad, for the cushions from the first-class compartments were all missing, and I could not get a wink of sleep without any support for my head. Every article of leather had likewise disappeared, down to the straps on the window-sashes. Many interesting discussions nevertheless took place on the journey, most of them of a serious and even gloomy character. The German women, who are naturally given to laughing a good deal, appeared to be particularly depressed; and even the youngest of them had care-worn lines between their brows. They talk to men with an air of complete indifference. In a journey of twenty-four hours I didn't catch the sign of a flirt. In the dining-car the same sense of strain and the same apathy were noticeable. However, after a time I was able to engage some of my fellow-travellers in conversation. One of them, for instance, told me that what he deplored most was that the Germans were not united. "But they were for four years," was my reply. My interlocutor was the owner of some shooting, being, I gathered, a rich man. Before Easter he had gone for a whole week without meat, and since then he had been thankful enough for deer shot on his estate. The dining-car was so stuffy, and the food so unappetising that I couldn't stay in the place, and I contented myself with a pound of cherries for my dinner. Money consists almost entirely of dirty pieces of paper, many of them ragged almost beyond recognition. Each town prints its own money, which naturally does not circulate freely. How are the mighty fallen!

At Frankfort, the train was taken by assault. The first-class carriages were invaded by third-class passengers. Deputies of the National Assembly, it appears, are on the train. They have a free travelling-pass and a salary of a thousand marks a month. On the other hand, thirty marks are deducted for every sitting they fail to attend. In my carriage were men from Mayence and Frankfort; and they talked quite openly of a Rhenish Republic, considering it, apparently, an excellent solution of their problem. They only deplore the fact that the project was so clumsily initiated that it appeared to bear all the marks of a criminal conspiracy. The conversation proceeded without a suggestion of temper and aroused no opposition. I thought of Bismarck, who used to say that the Germans were without any national sentiment, and were only held together by a common loyalty to the dynasty. This is confirmed by the attitude of the nobility of Upper Silesia who, so M. tells me, have foresworn Germany and declared themselves in favour of union with Poland. My companions throughout the Rhenish provinces, like all South Germans, are for the signing of the peace. It is not so in Berlin and in the East, where opinion is strongly against it, and where national sentiment—even without the dynastic bond—is likely to prove more durable.

A horrible night, but thank Heaven I shall soon see the end of it. At four o'clock the day begins to break. The train passes through Thuringia, and already, even at early dawn, the peasants are hard at work in their fields. In the carriage, the noise of quarrelling and swearing is now incessant. Every corner of the train is crowded, even the passages, where men are sleeping on their luggage so that it is impossible to move. There is only one train a day, which explains the crowding; and besides, considering the depreciation of the value of money, travelling is still relatively cheap. At the station-restaurants bread is not to be had, even for bread-tickets. Drinks likewise are not to be obtained, either for love or money. I was therefore particularly fortunate to be able to exchange at Nuremberg a cup of Ersatz coffee for a small bar of Lindt chocolate. (Lindt chocolate, I may say, has proved to be the

favourite currency so far.) About ten o'clock in the morning I was really hungry, having dined the night before only upon cherries. My neighbour, who had a bag of provisions with him, must have guessed my plight, for he very kindly gave me a slice of bread and butter. Everybody here carries his food with him. A lady gave me a travelling food-card. A social-democratic deputy is cursing the Scheidemann party, and predicts their early fall. At last, two and a half hours late, we arrive in Berlin at Anhalt station, where I have the satisfaction of finding that Madame J. has come to meet me. She informs me that I must stay with them, since it is impossible to find accommodation in the hotels, where in any event the food is wretched and the charges exorbitant. There are no porters on the station, but a boy undertakes to carry my bags to a carriage. Carriages, however, are rare, alas! We ask a driver how much he would charge to take us to Tiergartenstrasse. Thirty marks, he said; to which Madame J. replied: "You must be mad; I'll report you." Amiable Berlin, where women and cabmen talk to one another in this fashion! We make our way to the tram, my porter along with us. My hostess warns me not to let the boy out of my sight, in case he should go off with my luggage. She even warns me against her own maid, though the latter has been with her over two years. Everybody steals nowadays, she says.

At table in the evening, she and her husband, a big manufacturer, talk of the terrible situation prevailing throughout Germany. Robbery with violence is of daily occurrence in Berlin. Some days ago a neighbour's house was completely stripped. Mme. F.'s husband had given her 3,000 marks with which possibly to buy off at any rate the violence of some intending burglar. They keep no firearms in the house, in the earlier days, because it was forbidden, and now because "the burglars can certainly shoot better than we." Mme. J. recalls the remark of a friend: "Every morning, nowadays, I congratulate myself when I awake on finding myself alive, still in good health, with something to eat in the house, burglar-free, and no longer under the government of the Bolsheviks. I used in former times to suffer from boredom, but now every day brings its fresh surprise. I used to complain of indigestion, but nowadays I eat less and the trouble has gone. I used to ride a good deal too much for my health. Nowadays I walk and feel all the better for it. Vive la revolution!"

The food-conditions in Berlin are worse than anywhere else. The difficulty, Mme. J. told me, is to get anything at all. The question of money is quite secondary. One can no longer trust one's shopping to servants, since everything is subject to "arrangement," and servants are at their own discretion in the matter of prices. Besides, the tradespeople fight shy of giving receipts, and thus the chicanery of the servants would be still further encouraged. Mistresses are, therefore, reduced to doing their own shopping. Those of them who used to complain that they had nothing to fill up their time have no ground for complaint to-day. Getting in supplies is to-day a sufficiently fatiguing pastime. Whatever else you do, you must keep on good terms with your tradespeople, remembering to inquire after the schooling of their children, the health of their parents, and, even then, resigning yourself to be treated cavalierly upon occasion. If this is the way with the rich, what must it be with the poor? Everywhere in the streets the unusual sight is to be seen of wandering vendors offering for sale stolen goods or goods acquired, at any rate, surreptitiously. A story was told me of one of them. A man met a hawker in the Friedrichstrasse and asked him if he had a pair of boots for sale. The hawker offered him a pair of number nines; and the man asked if he had a pair of tens, which were his size. What, said the hawker, do you want to put me to the trouble of stealing a pair just to fit you?

(TRANSLATED BY R. H. C.)

Towards National Guilds.

[In the following series of Notes we have in mind the scheme already several times referred to for bridging over, without social catastrophe, the interregnum between Capitalism and Economic Democracy.]

WHY is Production flagging? At least as good an answer as the usual reply is that Production is flagging from a defect of Consumption. Two causes may produce abstinence from eating. One may fail to eat because one has no food; or one may fail to eat because one has no appetite. Production, likewise, may flag for two causes: one, a shortage of raw materials, the *food* of Production; the other, an insufficient Consumption or power of absorption or *appetite* for the product. From which of these causes is Production suffering to-day? There can be no doubt of the answer. Production is flagging because of an insufficient Demand. Consumption cannot take the goods off the machine of production fast enough to enable it to go on working. The productive processes are in such advance of the distributive processes that they must be idle from time to time to give distribution time to catch up.

The association of production with distribution, however, tends to bring about this result: that as soon as Production ceases, Distribution also ceases. Note the paradoxical state in which this lands us. Production, we have assumed, has been brought to a standstill *because* it has overtaken Distribution. Yet the moment it stops, Distribution has to stop as well! The absurdity of making distribution depend upon production: or, rather, of making the process of distribution depend on the process of production, cannot be more clearly demonstrated. The sensible arrangement would be to *separate* distribution from production; and to make distribution a process apart from the process of production. This, however, would involve a separation of the two processes so complete that, in effect, two different authorities would be necessary. On the one side, we should have our productive machine controlled and administered by the producers—organised in productive Guilds. On the other side, we should have our distributive machinery organised to distribute the products of the productive machine. The latter would be relatively independent of the former; and might be therefore expected to keep it always busy.

Cost equals the cost of production. Price equals the means of distribution. Our aim in the first process is to produce at a minimum cost in labour, wear and tear of machinery, and in the amount of raw material consumed. This, in general, is the economy of Production. Our aim in the second process is to distribute by means of Price, and the purpose of Price is to facilitate the distribution of the commodities produced. Price, we may say, has, therefore, no *necessary* relation with Cost; for the aim of Price is not to recover Cost, but to distribute goods.

Consider society first as an organisation for Production. Assume, for the moment, that Society needs to consume nothing, but that its whole and sole purpose is to produce. What are the conditions of and inducements to maximum production? Stated generally they are three: duty, pleasure and profit. When Society finds it simultaneously a duty, a pleasure and a profit to produce, maximum production is the natural consequence. A producing society, thus motivated, would

in all probability organise itself into Guilds; *not* because Guilds in the abstract are desirable, but because, as a matter of practical fact, a Guild organisation is the best instrument for maximum production. Guild-organisations, in other words, would follow from the desire for maximum production.

Now consider Society as Consumer. Assuming production to have taken place, what is the best means of distribution? The best means is obviously not to distribute according to share in production—for, in that case, distribution would be according to production. That is to say, *only* the producers would receive any commodities whatever. The non-producers of all kinds would be absolutely dependent on the goodwill of the producers. The best means, on the other hand, is to distribute according to (a) the amount available for distribution, and (b) the number of people among whom the distribution is to be made. In other words, price, as the means of distribution, must bear a relation *not* primarily to Cost of Production, but to the two factors of (a) amount to be distributed, and (b) the number of the beneficiaries. Let us repeat: Price is a means of distribution; and must be fixed in such a manner as to bring about the most equitable distribution.

The question of a "Fair Price" or a "Just Price" will thus be seen to be fundamental in social consideration. If Price is the means by which goods are distributed; and a fair or just price is the condition of a fair or just distribution; then, plainly, not only is distribution a function of Price; but price-fixing is a function of the community at large. Under the existing system, Price is fixed by the producers as a whole; and their object in thus fixing prices is neither to produce the maximum nor to distribute the product equitably: it is, on the other hand, to produce as little as possible for as much as possible, and to distribute, not according to equity or social need, but according to share in production. Price-fixing, it follows, must be taken out of the hands of the producers. It must be resumed or assumed by the community as a whole. *Only* by fixing prices in accordance with social needs can the community ensure a social distribution.

Mark what follows. The community as such has now a double duty: to provide the conditions for maximum production; and to provide the conditions for a just distribution of the product. The first of these duties the community can perform *indirectly*: that is to say, the community can entrust to Guilds the responsibility of producing as much as possible at as small a social cost as possible. The second of these duties, however, the community can perform directly—by the simple process of fixing prices. It is the duty of the Guilds to produce: it is the office of the community to distribute by means of a Just Price.

Keeping our categories separate, we may say that relatively to each other the process of production and the process of distribution are different functions exercisable by different authorities. From the standpoint of the consumer, anybody can produce that can or cares. From the standpoint of the producer, anybody ought to be able to consume that needs. Production is not the direct concern of the consumer; nor is Consumption the direct concern of the producer. We do not want Production controlled by the consumer, but by the producer. Equally, however, we do not want Consumption controlled by the producer, but by the community. We must produce as Guilds and distribute as a community.

The immediate inferences to be drawn from these considerations are these: No nationalised production—but production by responsible producers; No individualised distribution, but consumption regulated by the community by means of Price.

NATIONAL GUILDSMEN.

In School.

XIII.—INSPIRATION FROM LITERATURE.

WHILE children's powers of observation and sincerity of thought can be greatly increased by the practice of making Lists of observations it is possible to effect a simultaneous improvement in the same direction by the objective process of reading or giving for purposes of dictation to the form passages from authors containing "observant" thoughts of the nature aimed at in the Lists. I cannot say that I actually coupled the two methods systematically in teaching: these notes are the result of vague experiments, but the two requirements, confidence by experience and inspiration by example, ought to go hand in hand.

Whenever the form showed obvious appreciation of some subtle thought I never failed to impress on them that this very appreciation proved that the thought had already been dormant in their own minds, and that they had it in their power, if they liked to make the effort, to produce equally interesting and fascinating thought. It was merely a question of digging below the surface, not necessarily to any great depth, and searching for the real truth.

One of the passages which the form enjoyed to the full was Sterne's Colloquy with the Ass in the seventh volume of *Tristram Shandy*, not to be confused with the episode of the dead ass of Nampont in "The Sentimental Journey." Every boy seemed moved at the well-known ending:—

The poor beast was heavy loaded, his legs seemed to tremble under him, he hung rather backwards, and as I pulled at his halter it broke short in my hand. He looked up pensive in my face. "Don't thrash me with it; but if you will you may." "If I do," said I, "I'll be damned."

Having finished reading it I suggested to the form that a few days later they should write on similar lines an account of the headmaster's dog Sam, a large black retriever. This suggestion met with much disapproval at the time, owing partly, no doubt, to resistance provoked by what psycho-analysts term the inferiority complex. ("How can I attempt to follow in the footsteps of Sterne?") Few of the ultimate results, however, were entirely unsuccessful. Here are three of the best ones.

THE HAPPINESS OF A DOG.

One afternoon I was playing in the playground at St. A.'s with a tennis ball. . . . Sam was lying on the lawn with his head between his two fore-paws, pretending to be asleep, but really he was watching out of the corners of his two huge eyes for a chance of securing my ball. There were many other balls in the playground, and it was not only mine he wanted. He at last got his chance, and before I knew what had happened the sly old dog—for such was the name I called him at the time—had taken my ball and began trying to bite it to pieces. He was now quite contented, and, although I did not want to take it away from him, I cautiously approached, wondering what he would do. When I got to within about three yards of him, up he jumped with the ball in his mouth and ran to another part of the lawn and then began trying to destroy my property again. I tried to secure it two or three times, but all in vain. The last time I came near him I noticed a kind of wistful look in his eyes.

"Please leave me alone," he said. "Look at all the other things you have to play with, but I—I have nothing but this. Take it if you will. I know I have no right to it." And, wagging his tail, he laid the ball at my feet. Touched by this, I picked it up and put it in my pocket. Sam followed my every movement with his eyes, and when it was hidden from view he began sniffing as though he had smelt some good cooking. His wet nose slowly penetrated into my pocket, but at last it could go no farther. . . . He made one last effort by looking up at me with a sorrowful face. Whether it was put on or was really sincere, I don't know, but it so moved me that I immediately took the ball out of my pocket and threw it along the ground. At once a

new light—a light which thrilled me through and through—came upon his face, and, tearing after the ball, he began his old game. . . .—H. SILO (aged 13).

A SILENT CONVERSATION WITH SAM.

One day I was on the playground, playing with a tennis ball, when Sam came out. Seeing the ball, he went towards it at a half-run, with a dubious look in his eyes, wondering if it was worth his while to capture the ball. He evidently thought it was, and began chasing it with a laughing and mischievous expression, as though to say, "I'll have that ball; see if I don't." I picked up the ball, and he stopped and looked at it with an eager expression. "Oh, put it down! It's no fun playing like that; be sporting." I put it down, and he managed to catch it, and ran with it on to the lawn. I ran after him, but looking at me defiantly, as though to say, "Catch it if you can," he started running round and round, I after him. I succeeded in getting back the ball, and went on to the playground again. Sam followed me and made a dash for the ball, but he did not get it, and after a while, with a look of boredom, he lay down, not troubling to look at me or the ball again, as though he despised us.—P. KINGSCOTE (aged 14).

Most four-legged animals have the extraordinary power of making any unsuspecting, innocent child have an unbounded sympathy for them; their sad and wistful faces act as a magnet on one's feelings. The other day, as I was walking on the lawn, I found the dog Sam basking in a lazy, comfortable manner in the sun. His face was away from the sun, and he was lying on his side towards the house. I immediately gave way to his wonderful pleading eyes, and, going near him, I began to stroke the top of his head. The feeling of his soft head filled me with a liking for him which I cannot express, and I put my face close to his. He then pawed the air in an effort to say, "Thank you; I cannot do any more because I am too lazy." With this he rolled over on his back and feebly waved his paws in the air. I then fell to pushing the folds of his skin up and down, and he looked very unconcernedly up at the sky—"It is all very well you doing this, but I don't think your liking for me is at all genuine."

"Come," said I, "it is," and I began to pull the flabby part of his jaws out and to let them go with a flip. Suddenly he put his dirty rough paw on my nose.

"Do you like it? What are you laughing at?" he said, with a puzzled expression on his face, as I began to laugh at the ridiculous position I found myself in.

He seemed a little piqued at my laugh, and rolled over, turning his back on me, but he found the sun a little too bright for him, so he reluctantly turned round again and faced me with a more humbled look on his face. He jerked his head along the grass and stretched his hind legs and gave a little quiver as a fly settled on his nose.

"I am sorry; I know that I am not equal to you; it must be very—"

"Sam," said the stern voice of Nurse, "come here."

Sam clumsily, yet very eagerly, got up and went running sideways towards Nurse, who had a large basin in her hand. . . .—R. RADCLIFFE (aged 14).

Another passage which has always made a most striking appeal to the form is a Description of a Hot Day by Leigh Hunt, full of intimate touches such as:

Now the mower begins to make his sweeping cuts more slowly and resorts oftener to the beer. Now . . . horses drink out of the trough, stretching their yearning necks with loosened collars . . . and the traveller calls for his glass of ale, having been without one for more than ten minutes; and now Miss Betty Wilson, the host's daughter, comes streaming forth in a flowered gown and earrings, carrying with four of her beautiful fingers the foaming glass, for which, after the traveller has drunk it, she receives with an indifferent eye, looking another way, the lawful twopence.

This simple essay had a most beneficial effect on both the thought and style of the form. It inspired, for instance, the following description of a Cold Morning, which was written by Radcliffe when he was not quite fourteen.

There is a stealthy mist creeping over all the town, and a freezing breeze is blowing, and there is an air of superiority over everybody. Now there is a chatter

and a bang which seems to echo through all the neighbouring streets, and the milkman, having knocked sharply at the door, proceeds to get his tin jugs ready with the air of a man who has really done a great thing in getting up on a cold morning. Now the door is slowly opened and a muffled-up figure comes out and murmurs something about a cold morning. The door is closed, the milkman gathers up his jugs and disappears in the mist with his cheery cry of "Milko!"

Now it is half-past seven, and there is a slight stir in the town. Windows are boldly thrown open, but quickly shut again with a bang; a few carts amble by, and greetings are exchanged in a sullen way. The city man is up, and walks, head bent, briskly to the nearest station. Now little children with satchels over their backs are thrust out of the front doors and told to hurry on. . . .

Now there is a rumble in the distance, and a gay young bread-man comes tearing round the corner with a steaming horse. Having pulled up, he springs down from his perch and raps sharply at the front door, which is slowly opened by the same muffled-up figure who took in the milk. It greets the bread-man very curtly, and, having taken in the bread, slammed the door to and went upstairs. The bread-man then walks slowly back to his cart, wondering why everybody is so disagreeable this morning.

T. R. COXON.

Views and Reviews.

A MOCK CLASSIC.*

THE diary of "Samuel Pepys, Junior," needs no recommendation from me. The first volume is in its ninth edition, the second volume in its fourth edition; and the reading public will be on the watch for the appearance of this, the last, volume. The success, I may say, is really deserved; the author has really given us a diary of the war, and has reproduced with quite remarkable fidelity the general tone and style of the original. There is a public for this sort of thing, just as there is a public for the mock antique or mediæval styles of furniture; Tottenham Court Road and Grub Street are akin in spirit, and perhaps are in neighbourly situation. Besides, there is a game, played in the correspondence columns of the "Times" by gentlemen with Latin names, which consists of quoting ancient saws to illustrate modern instances, and proving thereby that everyone who says anything is two or three thousand years behind the times. If Mr. Lloyd George says: "No something without something else," up springs "Quidnunc" in the "Times" with his "Hic i me, hac i me, O," from Horace, or Terence, or Gilbert the Fidbert, as the case may be; and we are left to infer that Mr. Lloyd George need not have said, "No something without something else," because it was said by a man now happily deceased. There is more ingenuity, as there is more labour, in "Samuel Pepys, Junior's" treatment of the war; but the intention is very similar, to relate our modern instances in the terms of an obsolete dialect, and to see affairs through the eyes of a man who would be incapable of understanding them.

Let us admit that this diary so represents him. "Samuel Pepys, Junior," chronicles the facts, deplures defeats, applauds victories, counts his gains (if the figures given are accurate, Mr. Lane paid him handsomely for the first two volumes), nearly thanks God for the invitations to the houses of the nobility, and behaves generally like the Pepys of history. But the defect of all tradition is that it maintains not only the spirit, but the form: Samuel Pepys is certainly not dead, his little meannesses, his snobberies, his commonplaceness and lack of imagination, are among us to-day—but are not expressed in the quaint style of the Restoration writer. The modern Samuel Pepys sat on Tribunals and was appalled to discover that some men professed to have a conscience; Samuel Pepys was an

* "A Last Diary of the Great Warr." By Samuel Pepys, Junior. (The Bodley Head. 6s. net.)

Army contractor, who made a fortune and obtained the O.B.E.; Samuel Pepys said that we would fight to the last man and the last shilling, which would be graciously bestowed on the dependants of the last man. Samuel Pepys was just the ordinary man who was above military age and was "in the swim," was just the man who made the war the mockery that it became. He is now, I believe, engaged in the governing of Ireland, with the usual results.

The simple fact is that the diary of the great war cannot be written in the terms of Samuel Pepys, and only the dull, artistic sense of the Pepys type could assume that it could. This was a war that nearly taught us something, but so many of the Pepys family were elected last December that we have forgotten what it was. For a moment the heavens opened; and there was a vision of a reconstructed England, of a reconstructed world modelled on the City of God—but the vision passed, and what we saw was the frontispiece of this volume, Mr. Samuel Pepys, Junior, on "the greatest day ever known in all the world," as he describes it, dancing with Mistress Cripps "from Swan and Edgar's shopp so far as to Beak Street." When Napoleon was crowned Emperor, Augereau said that the ceremonial wanted "nothing to complete the pomp of it, nothing but the half-million of men who had died to put an end to all that." This war was a war to abolish Samuel Pepys in all his varieties, the Holdfasts, the Sit-Tights, the Stand-pats, and their connections; but the very reason that Mr. Pepys had for dancing disqualified him to write a diary of the war.

For the true diary of the war is the record of a broken heart. It is true that there was, even at the beginning, the bestial appeal, but it was confined to a few specialists in hysteria, such as the "Referee" and "John Bull." Certainly of the first million men it is true to say that the majority were idealists, responding to a chivalrous appeal and hoping, at least, that the world would be better for their sacrifice. But the quality of the appeal steadily declined, until, by the time that America entered the war, the very objects for which we had engaged had become cant phrases of recruiting campaigns. Perhaps they appealed to some of the Americans, and evoked a similar response to that which came from the English at first; but the moral appeal lost its freshness when it was discovered that it was only made *ad hoc*, that morality was only a technical word in the art of politics. It was a disinterested war only so long as we were not winning it; after that it became a war just like any other war, but on a much larger scale. It became a Pepys war, in short, without imagination or any glimmer of a prospect of a reconstructed world. It had declined from a war for freedom to a war for victory, and from a war for victory to a war for vengeance.

But of all this there is no trace in the diary of Samuel Pepys, Junior. His sham antique style and mind would not permit of any handling of ideas. With Europe tumbling about his ears, with the class-war (very imperfectly suspended during the actual period of hostilities) flaming again into activity in every direction, Samuel Pepys can still thank God that he is alive, with his "estate increased beyond my best expectation of four yeares' warr [how much did he expect to make?]; my body coming again to its former weighing, to my yesterday turning 12 st. at the club." The war, which was to have brought blessings to the world, has only brought blessings to the Pepys family—except in Russia and in other places where they revile the bourgeoisie. Jeshuma waxeth fat again, and kicketh—this time against taxation; but, in spite of taxation, "thou are waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation."

It is possible to regard this book as a quaint literary exercise; but only if we accept the principle of "art for art's sake," which Samuel Pepys, if he could under-

stand it, would be the first to repudiate. It reproduces the form and spirit of Pepys' Diary for no other purpose than that of reproduction, and that purpose is a superfluous one—for we have the original, and need no copy. Samuel Pepys strays into twentieth-century England not as its interpreter, not even as its critic, but as a mere mummer in costume, saying quaintly what we already know clearly, and by sheer lack of sympathy saying nothing of the most characteristic qualities of the time. He endures, as Pepys could not have borne to endure, as a curiosity, as a man out of touch with his time, playing the sedulous ape to his model in everything but the full expression of himself. He has written a diary of a seventeenth-century war with the addition of twentieth-century figures; and his book will be found wherever the "artistic temperament" is not equal to the appreciation of art.

Reviews.

Heritage. By V. Sackville-West. (Collins. 6s. net.)

Miss Sackville-West has attempted to show the effect of a strain of Spanish blood on a stock of Sussex farmers, as shown in the persons of a young woman and her cousin, whom she marries. It is a first novel, and bears on the face of it the author's fear of direct handling of such a powerful subject. Part of the story is told by an onlooker, with a genius for psychological analysis that only describes, but does not express, the tragic struggle of passion. Then his friend takes up the task of observer, and once again, we get only description instead of direct expression. The rest of the story is told in correspondence; and the total effect is that Miss Sackville-West was afraid of her subject, and had to keep it at arm's length lest it should overwhelm her. Seen thus at two removes, the stress of the story is slackened; and we get only a descriptive reporter's account of an unhappy marriage, with a long interlude of excavation at Ephesus. In spite of its loose construction, and remote treatment, the story does manage to interest the reader; but the figures are imperfectly projected, and the motives of their being remain obscure.

Two Months. By Herbert Tremaine. (Daniel. 7s. net.)

Mr. Herbert Tremaine has written a curiously vague study of a small group of people during two months of the war. It is indeterminate in aim and indeterminate in treatment, and over all there hangs the mental haze of a minor Russian fiction that passes in this country for psychology. The reader gets an impression of vignettes that have sequence certainly, but apparently have no structural significance; there is a multiplicity of pictures that are not focussed into a design. There is a pacifist who shoots himself to escape military service, there is another pacifist who joins the Red Cross after seeing the results of an air-raid, there is another pacifist who (perhaps for love, perhaps for the pleasure that some people obtain by acting contrary to their desires) "always wanted to do striking things," but decided for some unknown reason that "I've got to be against it all—not to tolerate anything connected with it, not to touch it or think of it except to destroy it." This is not propaganda, certainly, but also it is not art to leave us ignorant of his motives or principles, or even of his intended actions. All that we know certainly is that he intends to go on loving a writer of novels that sell (eighteenth century fustian called "Fortune's Fan" is the last of them) while she intends to go on loving his soul, presumably while he is in jail. Intermingled with these children of the mist are various

members of the Tribunal, one of whom, a doctor, begins to develop the faculty of introspection, and feels vaguely responsible for the death of the pacifist who shot himself, while at the same time he is contriving to deceive the pacifist who joins the Red Cross concerning the money held in trust for him by the doctor. The whole crowd of people seem to moon about thinking of themselves, or of what people may be thinking of them, or of the "reality of things"; and we have never seen a clearer demonstration of the thesis that thought is continuous activity beyond the bounds of Space and Time than is provided by this book. But *what* they think still remains a mystery to us; they seem to have monopolised the ineffable and to be engaged in rendering it into terms of the incomprehensible. Perhaps they communicate with each other by nods and winks unseen by us, and to the meaning of which we have not the clue; at least, we hope that they are intelligible to each other, for they certainly are not to us.

The Problem Club. By Parry Bain. (Collins. 7s. net.)

Admit Mr. Barry Pain's incredible assumption, that clubmen will not only use their brains, but will form a club for the purpose, and this series of short stories may serve to pass the time while travelling. The problems were set by the head waiter (who later became a lord and a member of the club), and include questions such as: "It is required to induce a woman who is unaware of your intention to say to you, 'You ought to have been a giraffe'"; "It is required within the space of one hour to kiss ten females," etc.; "It is required to steal as many handkerchiefs as possible from a member or members of the Problem Club"; "It is required to discover the identity of the head waiter." In all cases there are conditions attached which add to the difficulty, and what amusement these stories afford is derived from the attempts to fulfil the conditions. The device of giving a prize for each solution keeps the whole scheme well on the level of a weekly paper trying to secure or increase its circulation; and the humour is as dry as a mummy. Perhaps one would have to be a club-man (of a really exclusive club) to appreciate it properly.

Cocktails. By Lieut. C. Patrick Thompson. (Collins. 7s. 6d. net.)

Lombroso once demonstrated that no work of genius had ever been produced at a greater elevation than three thousand feet above sea-level; and it is a common experience that imaginative work, although performed with apparently greater ease on the heights, is as disappointing as fairy gold when reviewed under more normal conditions. We wonder whether this is the explanation of the failure of flying men to render properly the spirit of the air. Lieut. Patrick Thompson, in this series of short stories, makes a gallant attempt to deal with the subtler experiences of flying; but even in "The Cloud Girl" he achieves no more than sexual illusion, and, for the rest, rises only to the height of the higher cinematographics. The melodramatic tendency is, of course, natural to healthy youth, particularly when it is over-stimulated by extreme activity under abnormal conditions; and the story of the patrol who used to descend to make love to a woman who was a German spy, and thereby left a gap in our aerial defences, is a natural expression of that tendency. The other story of the "tester" who used to come over from France and do "stunts" over the estate of his beloved, and was chased and brought to earth as a suspected enemy, is a similar lapse into the all-too-probable. The man who rides in a "bus" may very well "annihilate Space and Time" to call his beloved "old thing"—but the experiences of the new dimension are not adequately expressed by the incident. Possibly the conditions of service-flying act as an effective counter-check to the

exercise of creative imagination, with the consequence that we get from airmen only the symbols of the magazine-story with an aeroplane added. We may say that Lieut. Thompson does his work very well; he is so vigorously assured that the conventions of the magazine-story are the real data of experience that he convinces us that even flying is only an extension of their range. "There are nice girls everywhere," even in the clouds, and the young Deus ex machina may be pardoned for discovering the fact. But those who already know that the North Pole is covered with advertisements of a "white sale" will wish that airmen may soon cease to discover the familiar in the unknown, and give us, as simply as Herodotus did of earth-dwellers, particulars of the native beings and things that inhabit the upper regions. The poetry and natural history of the air have yet to be written.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

PRIZE-FIGHTING.

Sir,—The bare-fisted prize-fighter of the past descended in spirit in a direct line from the gladiator of ancient Rome, and both were put up with and patronised by a debased people, who loved to witness the brutal animal in man coming out in all its degrading ugliness, and calling it sport.

Is that spirit still alive? Yes, very much so. A few days ago, in Toledo, Ohio, eighty thousand people assembled, in a fearful heat of brazen sunshine, to see one Dempsey pit himself against another, Willard, for a bag of gold and so-called honour. It was a fearful smashing fight. Dempsey boasted he would lay his man out in one round and did so, after inflicting terrible punishment. Will any fair-minded real sportsman call this sport? Boxing in its proper form is a manly game, as is football, cricket, running, rowing, etc., and vastly improve the race, but these ugly bashing matches should be shunned by decent people, for it is a lie to call them sport. Why should these performances be arranged for huge sums of money to provide a Roman holiday for the rough-minded patrons? Real sport never looks for the money element in big figures. No; a cup or medal brings out the very best efforts of real sports for the sheer love of it. Boxing helped to win the war, not prize-fighting; the world fought to put it down. Now we are informed that some enterprising manager is trying to arrange in the country a prize-fight between the winner of the Beckett-Carpentier fight and the celebrated smasher, Dempsey, for a mighty fortune of £25,000. Then the victor will make yet a larger sum by exhibiting himself in Vaudeville shows. The real sportsman is a gentleman who loves to exhibit science and skill, but these slogging matches, degrade all noble and manly games. To see clearly the peculiar twist in the mental make-up of a section of the public we must remember the recent incident of the mayor of a certain town meeting the winner of a fight for a big prize with all the civic honours and a band, while the real heroes of to-day, the men who stood between us and utter damnation, creep home unnoticed to commence their hard task of finding a job and a house.

E. FRANCIS HAMMOND.

* * *

A CORRECTION.

Sir,—I regret that there are some errors in my versions of Anacreon, published in your issue of July 31. I have this excuse—that I made the translations in France, "O.A.S." and had no grammar with me and only a wretched little dictionary. My corrections are:—

(1) For "The earth drinks the darkness" read "The dark earth drinks."

(2) For "A man of Cythera" read "The husband of Cythera."

(3) For "strong" read "heavy" (in "Love's Dart").

(4) For "He is three times old" read "He is old in grey hair." (A very bad blunder!)

I hasten to make these corrections to forestall the many kind friends who will no doubt charitably attribute them to a failing intelligence. RICHARD ALDINGTON.

Pastiche.

THE REGIONAL.

V.

THEY have it, the French; one does not escape it by crossing the Channel—"romancies" at two ha'pence the cup. I have not—let the philologists and professors of thoroughness blame me to their livers' content—yet, *confiteor*, I have not read all the bad literature in French, or even all the cheap current fiction.

Here follows but a scaffolding of opinions based on some four dozen volumes. I have been resting, only in a state of relaxation, with the mind as near as a mind human and, in its better moments, intelligent, can approach to the state of the type "tired business man after dinner" for whom the alleged British drama is alleged to be written, could one approach this pile of "literature" at 50 to 1 fr. 50 (prices provisionally increased). With the mind capable of anything but loafing, a month among these books would be a task insurmountable. As it is, let me sum up the past month and add a few earlier memories.

The collection Calmann-Lévy contains that classic among farces, Ludovic Halévy's "La Famille Cardinal." It contains also Jules Renard's "Poil de Carotte," which, funny or not as the reader may choose to regard it, reads like a vengeance on circumstance. "Les Transatlantiques" of Abel Hermant might form the third in a series of "best French humour." All these three are worth reading.

"Bourget, Maupassant et Loti
Se trouvent dans toutes les gares;
On les prend avec le roti," etc.,

rhymes Laurent Tailhade, on whom Gauthier-Willars ripostes at frequent intervals, describing a Belgian winter evening as "a night when one wouldn't let even a Tailhade sleep out," or more basely jeering at a possibly southern accent, "L'orang Tailhade."

Gauging, not French genius by its finest production, but the French public by what it reads—i.e., by what all the bookstalls have on sale, and what may therefore be supposed to be in demand—one finds a deal of bad writing, a magazine standard as low as that of America; bad novels as bad as English bad novels; publishers' slush describing every author as "maitre," impertinent as the more lengthy mendacities of the American salesmen. Leaving Dumas fils—catalogue more or less reasoned and wholly incomplete—Edmond de Goncourt is for some unfathomable reason included in these cheap popular collections. One can but suppose that "La Fille Elisa" sells on its uncompromised title, and its indisputed and indisputable merit sells "Faustine." The less brilliant member of the Goncourt family possessed such ideals and such industry that one regrets having to fall back on them to excuse his stupidities, as, for example, the recocking of the "bird" and "bath" paragraph in "Faustine."

This kind of recocking is prevalent in inferior French work. The precepts of clarity (?) lead them to go on fussing over an incident after it is decently "closed" and wholly revealed—i.e., unless, as may well be, the authors aim at a stupider public than one can easily imagine as being a "reading public" at all. Loti is not good enough; more recocking. A *Merimée* in-achieved or a *Kipling* not quite come off. Neither brilliant enough to amuse one's weariness, nor is his work well enough written to hold attention by style. *Marcelle Tinayre* and *Gyp* unreadable; *Gyp* a sort of lady-like slither about sex; *Colette* has at least something to her—i.e., some sex to infuse into the work. Mentality almost negligible, but a sort of silly sincerity gives moments of tolerable intensity. The work is highly "feminine," but *Gyp* is constantly the outsider, the duchess interested in nothing else but maintaining a pretence of believing in proprieties for the sake of the children. Moral of *Colette*: Females and males should enjoy themselves and each other. Superior female has moments of thought, is lifted above mere physical details, retires to *villegiatura*, bull-pups, etc. Moral of *Gyp*: Young society ladies should be kept distracted

by social frivolities, teas, operas, etc., otherwise they will have *liaisons*, *Décor à la 1880*, old countesses, etc.

Apart from "Willy," we have little to envy the French in the way of living writers of "gros tirage." After a few dozen assorted names and authors jumbled together, I understand why my host is so firm in recommending me Balzac, why so scandalised to hear my "Balzac m'embête."

Nineteenth century thought, the nineteenth century novel, the real novel: *Stendhal*, *Flaubert*, occurred without England's connivance, and England learned little from them. The arc completes itself: *Maupassant* finishes the movement; his work is perhaps an out-growth, suckers on *Flaubert's* trunk. *Laforgue* satirised the historic *Salamambo* manner and closed the circle.

James grows out of Balzac, but the French have had nothing like him. Why he, James, read *De Regnier's* novels will probably remain a mystery. *Anatole France* is "decadence" of the eighteenth century, delightful, but a decline. The result of all of which is that, when their second-rate authors try to present a social situation, a social pressure, anything, in fact, but the simplest of sexual equations, the result is utterly banal and puerile. One must back to *Madame Bovary* or even to Balzac.

In the cheap reprints I doubt if one finds a "serious" effort as well made as even *Mrs. Belloc-Lowndes' "The Lodger,"* or in a comedy a grand duke so well done as *Hueffer's*.

EZRA POUND.

TROUBLE.

She lay and thought of the dead;
Night's hours dragged by;
Dark grew to dim grey
With her pondering, Where? Why?

At the dark dawn a bird cried.
It seemed from out of space
The cry of a child waking
In a strange place.

It came twice out of stillness;
That call, and no reply:
And the thought cruelly swept through her
How lonely it is to die.

This was so like the dead searching,
And finding no heaven's door,
Her worn spirit dared not suffer it
Any more. . . .

And then—some other bird called,
Answering, not the same;
And another, and others, others,
The wakened carollers came

Breaking through the silence,
Till all heaven seemed one crowd
Of wakeful, busy, jostling, happy songsters!
Giving praise, she laughed aloud. . . .

Then as the dawn came slowly
Out of the grey
She slept; and the carol ended
In broad day.

RONALD READ.

Subscriptions to THE NEW AGE are at the following rates:—

	United Kingdom.	Abroad.
One Year	28s. 0d. ...	30s. 0d.
Six Months.....	14s. 0d. ...	15s. 0d.
Three Months.....	7s. 0d. ...	7s. 6d.

All communications relative to THE NEW AGE should be addressed to THE NEW AGE, 38, Cursitor Street, E.C.4.