## NOTES OF THE WEEK.

It is with no surprise that we observe that prices, and particularly the prices of necessities, are still rising, and, moreover, that they show no signs of doing anything else. Rationing, with all its humiliating circumstances, has had to be resumed nine months after the war has ceased; and still it is probable that by the time winter is here, the purchasing power distributed among the masses will be insufficient to purchase them the means of subsistence. Unemployment doles—in other words, the free distribution of purchasing-power—will in a few months have come to an end; and by the same date, at their present rate of expenditure, the working classes will have frittered away in one thing or another the savings they may have accumulated during the laborious days of the war. How will it be when this state of affairs is contemporaneous, as it certainly will be, with a cost of living beyond the level of anything known by the oldest of us? Or is it the celebrated “box” which contained the Government’s present spending, and the pretty pictures of the Press adverse trade balance,” a “sensational decrease in output”; we were not paying our way and were making straight for the rocks. In fact—and in words that, as we say, should have produced widespread consternation—it was a question for consideration whether we should not “quit the country,” that is to say, we presume, give ourselves up for a lost nation. Why, then, is it the speech, containing these intrinsically ominous and despairing words, was little more than an evening’s wonder? The explanation is to be found in the incredibility both of the facts and of Mr. Lloyd George himself. He has cried, Wolf! Wolf! so often that the general public simply does not believe him; and, moreover, the obvious and superficial facts of our present spending, the Government’s present spending, and the pretty pictures in the Press of one form and another, make it difficult for most people to believe that we are on the steep edge of disaster.

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Mr. Lloyd George did all that Mr. Lloyd George could do in his speech on Monday to emphasise the seriousness of the situation; but his words, we fear, do not carry the weight that properly belongs to their extraordinary content. Any other Prime Minister who should have delivered Mr. Lloyd George’s speech would have expected to produce a panic; and a panic, in fact, was the logical sequel of a speech so sodden with gloom and despair. Almost everything, it appeared, had taken Mr. Lloyd George and his advisers not only by surprise, but infinitely for the worse. There was an “alarming
would have the effect of increasing production—for would it not leave a larger surplus of commodities for export? The proposition, however, is quite as easy to prove when it is put the other way round; for since prices do not depend altogether on the supply and demand of commodities, but wholly upon the relation of the supply and demand of commodities to the supply and demand of Money in its various forms—it is perfectly clear that an increased production may (and in fact must) have the effect of reducing the purchasing value of fixed wages and salaries. We are not inquiring now, it will be observed, why the labour of increased production must fall upon the wage and salaried classes only (the other classes being obviously off on their holidays again); or why Labour that exercised no control whatever over production should be implored to increase production; or, again, why a saving campaign should not be undertaken among the wealthy classes, as a possible alternative to increasing production at the expense of the working classes; we are not, in other words, inquiring into the problem from the negligible Christian and humane point of view. All that we are contending for is the cold scientific affirmation that increased production under the present capitalist system is certain to result in an increase in the cost of living of the working classes. It cannot be otherwise; and it cannot be otherwise for the simple reason that the increased production will not take place in those and commodities for foreign exchange. Our increased production, on the other hand, would be direct, in the first place, to the production of the commodities actually needed by the majority of our own people; and, in the second place only, to the production of commodities for foreign exchange. The notion that the people of any country grow rich by allowing a surplus of their production to be exported in exchange for the materials of further production is preposterous. A capitalist class may grow rich by this means, it is true. Such a class may, in fact, empty their country of its natural resources in order to make other nations their debtors. But the people in general of every exporting country under the capitalist system actually lose the value of the exported surplus, and only its profit by the wages paid them to produce it. As a practical measure for the rehabilitation of our nation, the present cry for increased production puts the cart before the horse. It demands increased production as a condition of better distribution. The real order, however, and the only practicable order, is the reverse. Make distribution equitable; ensure, that is to say, that the actual producer shall share equitably in the increased production—and increased production, under those circumstances, would arise as a matter of course.

It may be asked at this point whether we are, then, in favour of reduced production or of the policy of capitalism. We are not. On the contrary, we are in favour of increased production, but of increased production in those commodities which are in general demand. There is all the difference in the world, we would point out, between an increased production of commodities non-consumable and unpurchasable by their producers, and an increased production, such as we advocate, of commodities consumable, purchasable, and distributed by and among the actual producers of them. The increased production of which Mr. Lloyd George and the Federation of British Industries speak would have the effect of creating a surplus of goods in this country for export, and for export not in exchange for commodities purchasable by the producing masses at home, but in exchange merely for raw material for further export. Our increased production, on the other hand, would be directed, in the first place, to the production of the commodities actually needed by the majority of our own people; and, in the second place only, to the production of commodities for foreign exchange. The notion that the people of any country grow rich by allowing a surplus of their production to be exported in exchange for the materials of further production is preposterous. A capitalist class may grow rich by this means, it is true. Such a class may, in fact, empty their country of its natural resources in order to make other nations their debtors. But the people in general of every exporting country under the capitalist system actually lose the value of the exported surplus, and only its profit by the wages paid them to produce it. As a practical measure for the rehabilitation of our nation, the present cry for increased production puts the cart before the horse. It demands increased production as a condition of better distribution. The real order, however, and the only practicable order, is the reverse. Make distribution equitable; ensure, that is to say, that the actual producer shall share equitably in the increased production—and increased production, under those circumstances, would arise as a matter of course.

As was generally expected, Mr. Lloyd George declined to proceed with the nationalisation of the mines and recommended, instead, a modified form of the Duckham scheme. For ourselves, we are glad that the Government has decided against nationalisation (for reasons we have often given, and shall, no doubt, often have to repeat), but a dilution of the Duckham scheme is not escaped by one of its horns only: and the fact remains that if the Miners' Federation has so far been unable to force nationalisation upon the Government, it has still sufficient power to put an effective veto upon the adoption of the Duckham scheme. Here, however, we are presented with a fresh illustration of the possible conspiracy of the governing classes to do nothing whatever. It is not to be supposed that Mr. Lloyd George and his advisers were unaware of the resistance likely to be offered by the Miners' Federation to the Duckham scheme. If not certain, it is at least probable if not certain, of the effectiveness of that resistance. In other words, unless they are the victims of an exceptional ignorance, they must have been aware that, in refusing the nationalisation which the Miners demanded, and in offering the Duckham scheme which the Miners had already rejected, they were ensuring the sterility of their proposed legislation. Why, then, did they do it? What was the object in declining a recommendation that would have been accepted, and substituting for it a recommendation that was certain to be refused? We can think of no more satisfying explanation, in the intellectual sense, than the very consequence that appears likely to follow from this policy—continued deadlock.
resulting, in the end, in the despair clear that the Miners cannot accept it without doing defect of the scheme. As the scheme affects the vital person or persons who control the industry. . price. But that is not the only or even the most certain pointed out before, altogether illusory. Nay, it would every solution. Time, it must be confessed, is invariably plausible the consequence of an inability to discover every Mines in profit-sharing, is to be added to the returns on the capital of the industry—in other words, to, price. But the scheme affects the vital question of Labour control, the share in control which it offers to the Miners' Federation is, as we have pointed out before, altogether illusory. Nay, it would still be illusory, if not only the material conditions of the mines were subordinated to power in control of the Miners, but if, instead of two, any number less than a clear majority of the directorate were appointed by the Miners' Federation. Let us be clear about this even at the cost of repetition. The essence of control does not lie in the control over the management, does not even lie in representation on the directorate: it lies in the power of the purse! Who signs the cheques? Who is authorised to deal in the industry's credit? Who exercises financial control? It lies in the power of the purse. Everybody is aware that (in theory, at any rate, and virtue of its power over the purse), is superior in point of over the House of Lords. It was due to the fact that the House of Commons had no more than a tight of power over public taxation and public expenditure—the House of Commons was an inferior assembly to the House of Commons was an inferior assembly, with nothing better than a protest as its weapon or instrument. That the House of Commons is now, at its own discretion, the paramount power in legislation is due to one fact, and to one fact only—its power over the public purse. Take away from the House of Commons its control over public taxation and public expenditure—and its function as an Executive organ instantly declines to that of an advisory body—an advisory body whose advice may safely be ignored. The parallel, it will be seen, with that of Labour seeking control to-day, is almost identical. There is no analogy with the Stuarts stood in relation to the Government. Labour to-day seeks, as the Commons sought, a share in control. The only control that can be effective for Labour is the control that has proved effective for the Commons—the control of the purse. And it is a misuse of the Duckham scheme not only excludes Labour from any share in the financial control of the Mining industry, but explicitly confines Labour to advice and procedure that the scheme must be and will be rejected. It does not follow, however, that the Miners' own scheme of Nationalisation is any better. We understand, we believe, all the arguments for Nationalisation advanced by its advocates, and we share all the wishes, if not the hopes, entertained by the Miners about it. Nationalisation, they believe, will provide an intermediate stage of control; will lead up to a National Guild, in fact; and, moreover, will enable increased production to be brought about and, therewith, the lowering of the price of coal. It is tragic to contemplate the good will combined with the utter naivete involved in these assumptions, for, indeed, they are nothing more than assumptions, devoid of any foundation in fact. In the first place, Nationalisation does not bring the power of the purse, which we have seen to be vital to control, one degree nearer to the Miners' Federation. It simply transfers the power from the existing proprietary to the State; from a private Bank, that is to say, to the Bank of all the Banks. We leave anybody to judge whether the financial control exercised over the Coal Industry by the Treasury is likely to be less than the financial control now exercised by the private owners. In the second place, upon what foundation is laid the belief that Nationalisation may pave the way to Guild-control when, in fact (as has become more and more evident of late), it is in the nature of things that Nationalisation will be, if ever it is, conceded? Nationalisation is centralisation; and when, in the history of the world, has a centralised power voluntarily decentralised itself? Finally, the most distressing assumption of all is that an increased output of coal such as the Miners promise in return for Nationalisation, (a) is within their power to guarantee, so long as they do not, in fact, control their industry; or (b) would necessarily result in a decreased price, that is, would necessarily cheapen coal. If, indeed, the only element in price were the supply of the commodity in question, an increased production of coal would undoubtedly bring down the price, other things remaining constant. But since we know that a second element exists in price, the element of Money or Currency or Credit, and, furthermore, that this element is quite as powerful in its effect upon Price as the element of supply, it follows that an increased production of coal is quite compatible with an increased selling price. Whoever controls the finance of the industry can control the price of the product, be the amount of the production what it may. The Coal problem is, in our view, easy to state; and we will risk annoying our "brothers" by affirming, likewise, that it is easy to solve. The conditions to be fulfilled by x, the solution of the problem, are as follows: it must provide for a progressive share in real control (financial control) by the actual producers—the Miners' Federation; it must encourage increased production and progressive economic efficiency; it must raise the purchasing power of the "money" earned by the men engaged in the industry; it must reduce the price of coal to the ultimate consumer not infinitesimally, but appreciably and considerably; it must satisfy the reasonable sense of justice of the existing proprietary and of all owners similarly placed; it must be immediately practicable and call for no other qualities and organisations than now exist; it must be capable of development and of application to other industries; finally, it must open the way to economic democracy in the fullest sense. These are the conditions to be fulfilled by any completely satisfactory scheme—a scheme, that is to say, that would satisfy the reasonable demands and ideals of all but a fraction of the population. If any political party, Trade Union, newspaper or publicist has the solution that meets all these requirements, it is dying to hear of it. If not, it is barely possible that, before the world dies, even Labour may listen to ours.
Towards National Guilds.

[In the present 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.]

The history of Socialism has been the story of Jarnyce v. Jarndyce—an interminable litigation in the course of which several generations of clients have died with their just claims unsatisfied. In many cases, as everybody knows, the two parties to a dispute would meet and settle their difference, if only it were not for the pedantry; and it is this pedantry to pretend to be more than you are. It is pedantry, again, to fight a case on legal issues or in the legal method not apply the principles of the debating hall to it. They contend exclusively; and this is what the pedants.

Confiscation is a case in point. Confiscation is impossible and purchase with compensation is undesirable, no means exists for obtaining control of Capital. How can Capitalism be got rid of, since it cannot be either expropriated or bought out without involving us in murder or suicide? The dilemma indicates that we have reached the phase when a "grand attack on the citadel of Capitalism" is no longer hopeful. Certainly Capitalism can be taken; equally certainly, however, it cannot be taken by assault or purchase. The case is one for strategy.

Suppose we could draw a line to-day at the existing capitalist values, and decree that, while willing to pay a dividend on the capital now existing, all future capital should be supplied by Labour. If this had been done fifty years ago, it is clear that by the present time the majority of the shares held in every industry would be held by the producers. Capital, as we know, has trebled and quadrupled during the last half-century and less. Had all the fresh capital been provided by Labour, Labour would by now have been the pre-dominant partner, not only as Labour but as share holder. It is never too late to begin. Suppose the process were begun to-day—in Coal, for a start. The existing owners continue to draw their dividends on their existing capital; but with every access of Capital.
Labour becomes an increasingly important shareholder, encroaching on the control of the industry in the exact proportion of its encroachment on the sum total of the capital of the industry. Private capital is not thereby expropriated; nor is it bought out; it is simply swamped and reduced to a fraction.

IV.

My business took me into the centre of the city to-day. Near Alexandra Station I was held up by an astonishing block of tramcars. They seemed to have got themselves into a regular tangle. There were over fifty trams, and the number was growing every minute. The drivers abused the crowd, the crowd abused the conductors, and the conductors blackguard each other. Two policemen were present, but they took no sort of notice, as the regulation of traffic is no longer reckoned among them alone, that the rascals were found who upset any blessed thing. And jolly sensible, too! Wonderful the healing effect of a little amiability on the raw nerves of these inmates of the German sanatorium!

Conversation soon became general. We had plenty of time for it, as the train was not due to start for an hour, "even if," as one of our passengers interjected, "it ever starts at all; if the railwaymen don't strike at the last moment, for instance!" "Let us only get out of this hell," said another. "This vile hole ought to be soaked in petrol and a match put to it," added a third. Then the first said: "It's all due to the Bolsheviks forerunners, a kind of Bolsheviks, you see. They are only too well used to them." And she was right, too, for in every street one met wounded soldiers hobbling along, others grinding barrel-organists, others, again, begging, their caps held out with a trembling hand. I talked to this pale and intelligent girl. She told me that the Post Office people stuck to their work all through both the war and the revolution. It was among the extra hands taken on for the tremendous work of dispatching food-parcels, and almost among them alone, that the rascals were found who committed the notoriously numerous postal robberies.

These men would often arrange to pass their own homes with the delivery van, leave half their contents there, and distribute only the remainder. In answer to my questions she told me of the sufferings of her fellow-operators during the blockade. Many of them had died. "Of course, people did not fall down dead in the streets. As a rule it began with a cough, followed by cold on the lungs. The weakened system, heads and legs appear and disappear, absorbed into the confused huddle of human forms. This scene is the dim gaslight reminded me of some mediaeval picture of lost souls. But on the bright side, the good and the just who in the old drawings gazed with enraptured eyes from the open gates of heaven. In the whole long train, however, not one single soul, just or unjust, has as much even as a comfortable seat. We are just crammed in, penned up like a natural result of their sad, disappointed faces and tearful eyes. The children, too, have to be in the secret and are told to say nothing about it. It follows that they are brought up in an atmosphere of deceit, for how can you say to them in the same breath: 'You must hide the truth' and 'You must never tell a lie'? Alas, how will they therefore be brought up?"

Berlin, July 1—Yesterday the papers announced a general transport strike. It began this morning and everywhere were to be seen crowds of workpeople trudging in from the outskirts to factory or office. Crowds were streaming through even the lesser and usually nearly deserted streets. The great arteries of traffic being blocked, the lesser veins of the city organism came into use. And once again it was conclusively proved to me how deep-rooted in this people is the sense of discipline and of work. Every day with un-failing conscientiousness, in spite of all the difficulties and inconveniences, in spite of the revolution—yes, even at the risk of life itself—the work of the people gets done. So far the strike has been confined to Berlin, but as the papers talk of its probable spread to the provinces I have decided to leave Germany at once. There is no conveyance of any sort to be had, but my host has lent me one of his men to carry my traps to the station. They had told me to be at least an hour and a half ahead of time if I wanted to secure a sleeping compartment in the train. There was just one place vacant in the middle of a seat, and I had just put my belongings there when a woman's shrill voice exclaimed, "Is that your bag?" "Yes." "Take it away at once. That's my place." I turned to my questions she told me of the sufferings of her work. Her job is one of those which have suffered most from the rise in prices. Wages have not risen due to the revolution; formerly we Berliners were only too well used to them." And she was right, too, for in every street one met wounded soldiers hobbling along, others grinding barrel-organists, others, again, begging, their caps held out with a trembling hand. I talked to this pale and intelligent girl. She told me that the Post Office people stuck to their work all through both the war and the revolution.

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guard when we ask, but she manages somehow to drag us to Wittenberg. It is nearly midnight, but the bright moon allows me to detect the outline of the Schlosskirche upon a hillock to the right. It was the day of this church that Luther, in 1517, nailed his 95 theses. They set the world afame, just as the three declarations of war that, four hundred years later, went out from Potsdam. Potsdam and Wittenberg are the two fatal towns of Germany; fatal to Germany no less than to the rest of the world. For the Reformation, too, ruined Germany for two hundred years: the peasants' revolt, the anabaptistic anarchy, the destruction of their powerful Hanseatic trade, the thirty years' war were its direct outcome. . . . And so did the four declarations of war which were sent out in one week by the Germanic Powers in 1914. . . . But evil and good resulted from the German Reformation—is it idle to think that good may likewise come out of the second German attack upon the world, the attack made by material and not by spiritual means, but whose very force proves its likewise spiritual origin? Let us hope so—for the sake of Europe which can perhaps live on, but never be quite well with a disease of its very heart. Let us hope so, too, of that fatal German people, of that martyr people which twice in half a millennium have shown the hope of humanity to sink into the abyss of dreamland and disappointment. . . .

At last the train moves on again and the silhouette of the Schlosskirche disappears from the sleepy, dreamy eye of a sad European. We cross Thuringia, with its rolling valleys, and follow the course of rivers, their banks crowned with romantic castles, the countryside showing up gradually more clearly in the growing dawn. I slip into the corridor in order to get a little air at the open window. Delightful was the freshness after the evil-smelling inferno of the tightly closed compartment. Suddenly at my shoulder I heard the voice of last night. "I was rude to you, sir," she said with a sob, "and I ask your pardon." "But, my dear lady, please—" "We are so unhappy—I have lost in this war my fiancé and my only brother." Meanwhile everybody was awake again and last night's talk was resumed. The man who had taken the Russian's seat turned out to be an officer in the "Cockchafer," the well-known Berlin Guards regiment, and also, to judge by his accent, a native of that city. Two other of our fellow-travellers had been through that window to rush upon the foe." The train passed near the bridgehead of Mayence, now occupied by the French. In the station, through which we passed slowly, was a sentinel in "sky-blue" doing his 100 paces. The Silesian nearly burst with rage at the sight of him. The Berlin "Cockchafer," not taking the situation with quite such tragic seriousness, said laughingly to the other, who was furiously shaking his fist, "I shall have to hold on to you, my friend, or you'll be jumping through that window to rush upon the foe."

The remarks of these officers on the causes of the German defeat were very interesting. The two infantrymen agreed on the following point: that the so-called "elastic" method of retreat was the principal cause of their failure. This plan, conceived in an official study far from the realities of the field, cannot, as a matter of fact, be carried into operation at all. It consists in leaving the least possible number of men in the advanced trenches in order to keep the losses down to the possible figure of 2000. But it only understands the one order: "You are to make a stand here at any cost. Whatever happens, this trench must be held." And when their officer says: "Boys, we must now get back a bit and hold another trench in the rear," a certain process of evasion is initiated. "They have a professional style," said the Cockchafer, "to delight the soul of any true soldier." The Americans, the best equipped of all, were inferior as soldiers. "That is not much to be wondered at," said a Reserve officer from Baden, "for the Germans and French were by that time used to the war. We could tell, as we heard every shot, and pretty accurately too, whether the fire of that particular big gun was likely to concern us or not, and we could go on with our game of cards without bothering. But the Americans, coming into the war three years late, had everything to learn. No wonder they were a bit nervous at the start." Of the English also the Baden officer spoke well. "They are men of their word, those fellows," he said. "I had with me, in the retreat across Alsace, five hundred of those fellows as prisoners. Of course, there were more against us than even France itself. The people there used to make faces and spit at us. They crept up and whispered to our English prisoners, 'Why don't you clear out, you can't stop you? They'd be jolly glad to be safely out of themselves.' In this they were not far from the English and the French. Their heads to make off I should have had neither the power nor the will to stop them. But they stayed because they had surrendered and were determined to keep their word. Yes, they are very decent fellows, these English. It was against the Jews and against them alone that they seemed inhuman and serious grudge. "I have been in Poland," said the third soldier, an old artillery officer in a Silesian regiment. "They are quite right to have porgens there—no mistake about that. We ourselves shall have to look to our own Jews by-and-by. They have attacked us behind our back and are largely responsible for our defeat. We must either keep them under or pack them off to Palestine. Perhaps the latter is the best way to settle the business." The Silesian hated the French as well as the Jews—not the French soldiers, whom, indeed, he respected, but the political people. "Before the war I was a pacifist and even during the war I still remained one, and I assure you that it was only against my conscience and with the utmost repugnance that I fought against our enemies. I thought them even better people than ourselves. But the Peace they have forced us to sign has opened my eyes and shown me my mistake. They are only a low rabble, far more contemptible than we are. Our duty from now on is to teach our children and our children's children to hate and loathe the French." To which remark his friend of the Berlin Guards replied more reasonably: "Come to think that good may likewise come out of the second
An Open Letter to a Novelist.*

Dear Ernest,—I know that you are not writing against your convictions. You are not bought or even consciously influenced by the money that is in the exploitation of the querulous fears of the English middle classes. That you believe what you write is your greatest crime, for sincerity coupled with the endoctrined wrongness you display in every line you write on industrial matters is more potent for ill than a ruffianly but open and honest malice. . . . You lend to wrong, through sheer muddle-headedness, a quality that is the attribute of right. This is a finer crime than the other, but it is also one more offensive to the nostrils of God. You link the moral fervour of a saint to the mentality of a Boy Scout. The burden of your article was the need for propaganda to counter the Labour malcontents. This irritates by its three accompanying false assumptions:

(1) That there is no Capitalist propaganda—when the wells of information are foul with it—there is only one newspaper among hundreds that is not tainted with it;

(2) That the Authorities innocently leave the field to Labour propaganda—when Labour propaganda and propagandists are being suppressed with an access of blue funk comparable only to the national ebullitions of Brillat-Savarin, surely an authority, has said: “Cafés mitigate our stupidity.” They do more, however. It seemed to me that the heavy fog on my brain had been dispersed. The German nightmare had left me. Vive la Suisse! (Translated by P. T. K.)

(3) That the sort of propaganda you suggest is based on higher motives than that of the working people’s propaganda.

You rewrite the nauseating bilge of the professional anti-Bolshevist as though these bechewed morsels, wet with the saliva of your predecessor, were really the diet of your soul. But you have no right to write on industrial matters. This, of all matters that exercise us to-day, is the one that calls for the discipline of thought, and you have not that discipline. This excitation of the glib surfaces of things that gives you the pleasant sensation of intellectual exertion is not thought. The industrial problem will not be solved by a policy of appeals to extraneous emotions—to love of country or to love of beer, or to the maxims of Baden-Powell. It will be solved only by the betterment of the system, and I doubt whether there is a Labour agitator, in gaol or out of it, who is not more sincerely trying to better that and more sincerely doing good than you.

My irritation with you is that you assume your glib acceptance of the theory of super-production to be at once as wise as Jesus and as moral as Christ. I swear you have never read a reasoned criticism of its doctrine, even if you have heard of the existence of such. Ignorance of its existence would excuse you everything with the preposterous air of information; but it will not excuse with the just. You are wrong in thinking working-men have but to know what you know about industrial things to be again the obedient raw material of trade supremacy. They know them, Ernest, they know them, but they do not share your different conclusions from them. In fact, they know more about industry than can be learnt from all the statistics a grateful Ministry has evolved for you. They are the statistics, in fact—statistics in revolution towards a grouping of their own. They know many fundamental things denied to you—the basic importance, for instance, of the cleavage between their interests and those of the capitalist, which seems to you so trivial as, in fact, not to exist. Also, they are more sceptical of you than you. They do not share all its fullness your own admiration of yourself. They have found you out, Ernest. Of course, I do not mean you personally, but you—the middle class. The war did a lot of it. You provided them with the most incompetent officer class in Europe and the civilian control—what hostile criticism does it not justify? No, it does not think your class is as competent as the newspapers tell us, in the same breath as they expose its failures.

But it has no hostility to the middle classes that is not largely the reflection of theirs to it. The English middle classes are the degradation of the present industrial system. They are degraded by it, but their profoundest social instincts are gratified; it degrades others more! That these others would remove that degradation from all so degraded, irrespective of class, is an attempt to reduce the working-classes to the degradations of the English caste system to a loathsome common dignity. This is an abiding if subconscious passion of the slightly better classes that has made them, with brilliant exceptions, always eager to welcome an exposition of Labour tendencies that painted them as agents of ruin and anarchy. You pander to that passion—in spite of laudatory references to responsible and sober Labour leaders, by whom you mean those Labour leaders who prove they are as well able to govern as the governing classes by being willing to copy all the vices of the governing classes.

You hint at conspiracies—do you also see this industrial situation as a vast scenario for the cinema? Do you look beneath your bed for Bolshevists? You have the timorous alarm of your own aunt. Did you, when you took over her opinions, also adopt her megrim? For five years you and your kind have been the pocket of any English agitator one authenticated kroner; it ended before you had discovered in the pocket of any English agitator one authenticated kronen of their elusive horde. But you are still hinting at mysterious subsidies to Labour propaganda. In fact, ninety per cent. of the cost of English Labour propaganda is paid by English labourers, the rest by English friends. The large proportion of its production is sold to English labourers; it is the propaganda organisations of your friends that flood us with gratuitous propaganda. You speak for a class that was loudest in its protestations of the new England that was to be the reward of the heroisms of the common people of England. That class is now moving hell and earth to prove that any attempt to make it fulfil its promises is a criminal conspiracy backed by Bolshevik gold. Any man who talks of “English Bolshevism” as you do is inciting the middle classes to violence. He is instigating a middle class and governing class terror. And the thing to be terrorised is an unarmed and non-responsible class which is by its very nature no more willing that upon its shoulders shall be put the burden of a greater public responsibility than it at present bears. It is demanding, in effect, the right to help to run industry better, more efficiently, more humanly than it is run to-day. It is asking for demands spring from that parent stock. And the thing to be terrorised is a class that are, if not the intellectual

*For instance, “Boyd Cable,” who has recently been lecturing Labour in the columns of the “Times.”
equals of their superiors, wanting only a chance to become it.

This class, or that part of it that does not accept the panacea of more work for the individual as the solution of the individual's demand for less of it, you call by inference of Bolshevik!—You mean, of course, that your friends have previously carefully given the word a connotation more sinister than any other word in the language. To have called them murderers would have been weaker, for Bolshevik is that and other things. To have called them perverts would have been weaker — the Bolshevik is that and other things. Also raper of women, thief, liar — a Bolshevik is all of these in one — and other things. This is the meaning you attach to the word Bolshevik and you attach the word to a vague and undefined section of an English movement that historically has been constitutional and docile and patient in its methods beyond the bounds of human credibility. Is this decent?

The man who so writes to-day must inevitably be regarded by posterity as we regard the men who wrote in this strain prior to, and produced thereby, Peterloo. In kindness to yourself I will not particularise the amount of loathing proper for those men. Forbear before the Peterloo has been produced. Do not imagine it can produce anything for your side more heroic than a Peterloo, and one on a scale in keeping with the superiority in engines of destruction that would be at the command of the modern Mr. Hulton and the modern Derby. There can be no stern-eyed soldiers of the truth deploying in grim heroism against any of those odds that lift killing from the status of murder. All the machine-guns and all the miserable panic will be on one side; on the other side will be Bill Jones of the Putty-workers Union, with no weapon but a determination to do no work.

No, Ernest, you are on a side that is lying with the meanness of area sneaks and the phraseology of empire-builders. Surely there never has been such an orgy of exalted mendacity. It begins with Cabinet Ministers who live in a realm where falsehood carries no penalty, material or immaterial; where the problem of being honourable men without ceasing to be liars has been happily solved. Any propaganda that comes from that quarter and in that interest must take the colour of its origin. And the propaganda in favour of the big business interests—in favour of vast production as outlined by the Mad Mullahs of super-production—must take on that colour. It is based on a big lie, and little lies must be propagated in shoals for its support. They are being so propagated with a fecundity that is less shaking the moral of the English revolutionaries—gentle people—than paralysing them with a cynical bitterness. You know that I have never had respect for the myth of English public honour; but I, who normally would have been rather gratified at the exposure of this as of any other fetish, am overwhelmed with shame at the reckless prodigality with which the ruling rich of England are proving themselves or allowing themselves to be proved to be a class, a class that knows nothing of civilisation but its comforts.

Is it not appalling to you that the engines of propaganda that were used against the Germans are now turned upon the British—workers! The same machinery and the same method—one could almost swear to produce the same result. And spies—this vile and poisonous growth that seems so to the taste of our governors is the creation of people who hate England and loathe her—hate England and loathe the English—those would give a bonus for the development in England of that comparatively rare beast, the professional spy, when there is not even the justification of "conspiracy" for his existence. There is nothing in the English labour movement to spy upon. Its decisions and intentions are shouted from the housetops. The one avenue of activity open for the spy is in the date and hour of a lightning strike. If the Govern-

ment is subsidising spies for the gathering of this information for employers, common justice demands a similar activity on its part in the interest of the employed; a branch of Scotland Yard for the keeping of a sleuth eye upon the secret intentions of the capitalists needs only to be suggested to be adopted.

When you cry that the workers must be told the truth you forget the earlier necessity that you should tell the truth about the workers. That you do not prejudices else you say in the name of truth. With a common sense that is, after all, elementary, they believe all that comes from the sources indicated by you is tainted, especially when it is matter of advantage to those sources. What lies about them lies to them—that is rock-bottom.

Also, Ernest, to tell the truth it is necessary to know it — Do you? Nonsense, Ernest, you neither know nor want to know the Industrial Truth, and if you did I doubt whether you would write about it. You are a professional writing man and interested primarily in subjects capable of attractive statement. The industrial truth is not one of them. — Yours,

WILL DYSON.

Homage to Sextus Propertius.

By Ezra Pound.

VI.

When, when, and whenever death closes our eyelids, Moving naked over Acheron Upon the one raft, victor and conquered together, Marius and Jugurtha together, One tangle of shadows.

Caesar plots against India—Tigris and Euphrates shall from now on flow at his bidding, Tibet shall be full of Roman policemen, The Parthians shall get used to our statuary and acquire a Roman religion;

One raft on the veiled flood of Acheron, Marius and Jugurtha together. Nor at my funeral either will there be any long trail, bearing ancestral lares and images; No trumpets filled with my emptiness; Nor shall it be on an Attic bed. The perfumed cloths shall be absent.

A small plebeian procession—Enough, enough, and in plenty. There will be three books at my obsequies Which I take, my not unworthy gift, to Persephone.

You will follow the bare scarified breast; Nor will you be weary of calling my name, nor too weary To place the last kiss on my lips When the Syrian onyx is broken.

"He who is now vacant dust Was once the slave of one passion"—Give that much inscription—"Death, why tardily come?"

You, sometime, will lament a lost friend, for it is a custom—This care for past men—Since Adonis was gored in Idalia, and the Citherean Ran crying with out-spread hair In vain you call back the shade; In vain, Cynthia, vain call to unanswering shadow—small talk comes from small bones.
Drama.
By John Frenell Hope.

The next best thing to seeing good plays is to wish for them, and the British Drama League has been formed to "go for the wish," as Mr. Kenneth Richmond would say. The purpose of the League is not to produce plays, but to act as a sort of General Staff to the dramatic movement of the country. It will maintain a studio for experimental research into all the possibilities of technical stage equipment, lighting, scene-painting, dresses, furnishing, and so on; it will be a Bureau of Information and a lending library of plays and books connected with the stage; it will provide a Clearing House for good plays of all kinds for the use of affiliated bodies; it will undertake research into theatrical movements and activities in foreign countries. It will promote the foundation of repertory theatres in the principal towns; it will try to improve the training of professional actors and actresses (some of the actresses need it badly); it will send lecturers in the hope of encouraging the formation of groups for the practice and study of the drama—and generally it will behave like the friend of man. To those activities it adds another, the production of a bi-monthly periodical called "Drama," the first number of which appeared before me as I write. The League, I may say, has a most impressive list of officials, the president being Lord Howard de Walden, the vice-presidents including two Labour M.P.'s, one dramatic author, one actress, and two knights, one of whom is decorated with the Star of India. Mr. Granville Barker is chairman of the Council.

But, in spite of this impressiveness of personnel and goodness of intention, I find the first number of "Drama" disappointing because there is, apparently, no fundamental change postulated. Years ago Shaw said that there could be no new drama without a new philosophy, which is only tantamount to saying, in an unnecessarily abstract way, that drama does, or should, bear a vital relation to life. The British Drama League, lacking this new philosophy, is really no more than an instrument of culture. It is a little more practical, perhaps, than the Home Reading Union (as I think it was called), it will mainly serve a similarly educative purpose; but the possibility of its achieving more success than did that institution is not apparent. It is true that the activities of the Home Reading Union resulted in a large increase of demand for cheap reprints of classics. But the same generation that "swotted" classical literature in home reading circles is the generation that tolerates and produces the appalling rubbish that is called "Drama," and the generation that sat at the feet of Gamaliel lecturing on the form of life, and that is why it vaguely feels are intolerable.

I regard "The Actor" (the organ of the Actors' Association) as offering a much more attractive prospect. It is certainly cheaper in price as in style than "Drama"; it caters for both players and public in a style that is singularly in contrast to the deadly seriousness of its objects. The activities of the Actors' Association, at present, mainly confined to the improvement of the conditions of employment, and the paper necessarily airs grievances which it insists shall be remedied. But trade unionism for actors has the same implications as it has for other classes of workers; sooner or later it must tackle the question of production, must either supersede the present system or be suppressed by it. Capitalism will refuse to finance a revolution, as Shaw once did; and if Manchester refuses to spend £5,000 for "a thing which was going to work right down to the roots of life," the managers and syndicates of London may well develop activities that do not require actors. Sport is quite as attractive as art to the English public; the boxing and dancing manias have been developed; and it would be easy, if the necessity arose, to engineer a slump in theatrical affairs (to teach the actors a lesson) and recoup the losses by financing some other form of public entertainment.

But the actors have the "goodwill" of the public, which they may use for their own benefit and that of the public as easily as they now use it for a gang of financiers. Amelioration of conditions is a mere palliative, which will be as successful a policy in the theatre as it is in industry—only so far as it is financially profitable to the employer. It is a policy that, by itself, leads nowhere; the workman is just as much at the mercy of a good employer as of a bad one. But the policy that Mr. Norman McKinnel outlined a few months ago has in it the germs of progress; it is a Syndicalist policy, certainly, but there is so little of public spirit in the public at present that a State ownership of theatres, and the Actors' Association management of them, would probably find no support. But that the Actors' Association should go about its work in a much more promising way than that of the British Drama League, although, if the two bodies could work together, the combination would probably have a more revolutionary effect. I should like to see "The Actor" digging down to first principles as Mr. McKinnel has done recognising not only that the art of a "wage-slave," but that the art that he is permitted to exercise is an expression of wage-slavery.
Readers and Writers.

I FORGOT to mention in my recent note on "The New World" the "startled and offended" comment of Mr. Gosse upon Anatole France's literary judgment. "What," asks Anatole France somewhere, "what are the women of Sophocles or Shakespeare by the side of the women of Racine? . . . They are dolls!" And upon this Watson remarks it is "an exasperation of Latin prejudice," and, in Anatole France, "a momentary failure in good taste." It is something more than a momentary failure, however; for there are few such things as momentary failures; it is a momentary revelation of a bad taste which is always present in school-children. He confirms my experience that he is surprised to learn that the answers to the problems of consciousness—that is to say, reason and logic and "sense"; just as we, on the other hand, have always been in danger of spinning wool from our unconsciousness. But Anatole France has carried the tendency to absurdity; he has apparently succeeded in denying the existence of the unconscious altogether. In view of his remark that the women of Shakespeare are "dolls," I find myself recalling the observation made upon the women of France by the late Mr. Robert Ross (in these columns, I think): "After all, one is impelled to say, 'What tarts!'" The foreign exchange of inequalities is now, I fancy, at par.

Mr. Lilliman sends for my examination and approval a number of exercises in casuistry which he has recently set, upon an old suggestion of mine, to a class of school-children. He confirms my experience that children enjoy exercising their judgment, but I am a little surprised to learn that the answers to the problems varied so greatly. The "cases" chosen by Mr. Lilliman are, however, somewhat beyond the complete grasp of children; the material is unfamiliar. A has a false diamond worth £100. B, believing it to be real, offers A £1,000 for it. Is A justified in selling it to B for £1,000?" The terms of the proposition, it is clear, are in themselves a little confusing. Diamonds and transactions running into hundreds and thousands of pounds are off the track of school experience. It would have been better, I think, to confine the cases to the common experience of school life.

The "Dial" continues to be the best topical magazine I receive from America, and perhaps my readers would be glad of the address. It is 152, West 13th Street, New York. There is nothing or very little belles-lettristic in the "Dial," but the thinking and the writing are both on a level of high seriousness. Its province is the world. Several correspondents have also asked me for the address and subscription rates of the "Little Review," a magazine which may be said to be the very complement of the "Dial," since it contains no politics and aims only at pleasing a coterie of literary craftsmen. Twelve shillings a year sent to the "Little Review," 16th Street, West 152, New York, entitles the English subscriber to twelve monthly issues, any one of which contains ample irritation to cover the cost of the total subscription.

"W. S." in one of his occasional but always welcome letters to me cites Mr. J. M. Robertson against my theory that Shakespeare was the editor, but not the actual writer, of the plays. "Men of those days," he says, "had more energy, more abundant vitality, than we have, and there is nothing impossible in the actor being the playwright too. Who shall set bounds to the exertions of genius?" It is this kind of special pleading that mars, in my opinion, not only "W. S.'s" case, but the whole case for the actor Shakespeare's authorship of the plays. Because the plays are there, and are traditionally attributed to Shakespeare, therefore we must construct a mind capable of having been their author. Men of those days had more energy, for example; genius cannot be confined; both of which propositions are, I think, untrue. The late Mr. Nat Gould wrote over a hundred novels after he was nearly forty. Mr. H. G. Wells has probably written three or four times as much as Shakespeare. Mr. Belloc's energy in literary production was once responsible for a dozen books in a single year. There are literally hundreds of writers alive whose length of works exceeds that of the most prolific of the Elizabethans; and in point of energy or vitality, thousands of men to-day could give volts to the Elizabethans and not miss them. That explanation, therefore, will not serve. And as for setting bounds to genius, it appears to me, in the first place, that if Shakespeare's genius be less, if it be confined to the choice and editorship of the plays; and, in the second place, that it is none the greater for being undefined. There are limits to genius; and every genius is susceptible of fairly precise definition. In the case of "Shakespeare," his limits were obviously well within the capacity to create a plot; it is no derogation from his greatness to admit that he depended on ghosts for his raw materials. However, I have said all this before; and I do not wish, at present, to revive the controversy. My view that "Shakespeare's" genius was a super-editor and nothing less remains unchanged.

The July issue of the quarterly "Quest" (2s. 6d. Watkins) contains some interesting articles, but none of more immediate importance than the Editor's "Regenerative Reconstruction." The Editor's political views are somewhat conventional; they may, I am afraid, be said to be the views of the "Times" sublimated; but they are of no great importance in comparison with the views expressed on the spiritual (in this case, the super-conscious) conflict now in progress towards a fresh crisis. The issue of "Quest," as I believe I have occasionally said myself, is whether a new sense is about to come into consciousness; a sense enabling mankind to realise and to know at first hand "the profound spiritual truths" of the survival of the soul after bodily death and its subsidiary reincarnations. Hitherto, these "truths," of course, have had to be taken or left on trust, on the rumours of seers, the authority of priests or the dogma of religions; and their realisation as matters of common human knowledge would naturally make an enormous and an epochal difference. "Let the masses but once grasp that it is so, that it is a scientific fact ... but once regain the belief that love and unselfishness and care for their fellows are the most vital basis of their future well-being ... there would be no need for any new religion of a formal nature ... and the reconstruction of human society could be square-based on reality." How near we are to such a "conversion of the will" resulting from a realised knowledge of these spiritual truths, nobody can say. The Editor, however, believes that the knowledge may arrive "immediately." "Indeed, I am persuaded that, but for the intensification of the life of this planet by an influx of the spirit from above [from the super-consciousness?], there would never have been so terrible a reaction from the depths as we are now witnessing and have just witnessed. The reaction, in fact, is a measure of the action; and since, in the spiritual world, the order of cause and effect appears to be reversed, the reaction has naturally appeared to precede its active cause. It may be, therefore, that after the storm the calm will reveal the birth of that which all new schools of a new sense will create a new world." R. H.
Of Popular Education.

By Charles H. Barker.

In my undergraduate days before the war I had been accounted peculiar inasmuch as I was keenly interested in educational affairs. When, therefore, in the autumn of 1917 I was invalided home from Mesopotamia, it was a weird experience to find quite a number of people talking of Mr. Fisher and education. Even really "practical" folk seemed genuinely concerned about "technical training." . . . It actually gave me a homesick sort of feeling. . . . When, after the usual delays, I succeeded in obtaining my discharge from the Army, I was seized with the idea of gaining some inside knowledge of elementary education. A relative told me that it would be easy enough to get a temporary appointment as assistant teacher in a Council School; moreover, experience of this sort was often helpful in obtaining quite desirable directorial positions under Education Authorities. . . .

Thus it was that, soon afterwards, I received an official letter informing me that I was forthwith appointed "supernumerary teacher," and ordered to attend at the Shuder Street Elementary (Boys') School at 9 a.m. on the following day.

I was a cheerless morning when I set out; and the school was situated in the midst of an appalling "model estate." Despite my enthusiasm, as I climbed that dingy, smelly staircase down whose "hygienic" glazed-brick walls a thousand tiny trickles of moisture wriggled their grimy courses, I felt suddenly chilled; a huge depression came over me that I vainly tried to throw off.

The boys were already in their class-rooms when I presented myself to the head master. He was seated at a raised desk situated at the end of the school hall, under a large coloured print representing a debonair Christ blessing a number of remarkably chubby infants. A ranged round the desk were a number of late-comers, shuffling uneasily under the threatening mien and angry voice of the head master.

"I'm never late!" he was saying. "Do you think I should 'ave reached my important position if I'd been unpunctual?"

He looked at me questioningly, with fierce blue eyes, and I told him who I was.

"Ah! well!" he said, doubtfully, "you may be able to make yourself useful;" and pondered awhile.

He was a tall, thin man, extremely tidy in his person except for his whiskers, which wandered weedly over his puffy cheeks. He looked harassed, tiny drops of perspiration oozed from his brow; his voice was sharp, yet he did not strike me as an ill-natured man, though later I was often incensed by his glaring partiality, and by the clumsy and coarse facetiousness he affected toward the boys, for most of whom he had a more or less opprobrious nickname. His own name was Williams.

"Ave you done any real teaching?" he asked.

I had to reply in the negative.

"Then, as you know nothing of our work," said the head master, "I think you'd better 'eip Mr. Young until we get into our ways."

He led me along a corridor; its once green-washed, now sadly discoloured, walls were partially hidden by shiny yellow maps, and still shinier yellow cupboards. Mr. Williams discoursed all the time. He showed me his "science cupboard," containing an untidy collection of broken glass and cracked basins, together with a number of reagent bottles, mostly empty; then "my museum," a melancholy huddled mass of heterogeneous "curiosities," from dead birds to Zeppelin relics.

By this time we had reached a class-room, the door of which bore an inscription on cardboard:—

MR. YOUNG—STANDARD IV.

Here Mr. Williams paused. "Remember," he said, solemnly, "all your theoretical psychologica! stuff is lumber 'ere; learn to keep discipline; that, alone, is the secret of the successful teacher." And went on to misquote and misinterpret Pope's famous line about "order" being "wham's first law." We entered the room; it was perfectly quiet but seemed crowded and stuffy; round the walls were pinned dusty specimens of the boys' exercises; ground glass filled the lower half of the windows, producing a prison-like effect; the subject of this, I found, was to prevent the children "wasting time in gazing at the sky." Mr. Young was a shabby, tired-looking man of middle age, to whom the head master said:—

"You will help Mr. Maddam to get into our ways."

Mr. Young nodded: he betrayed no sign of enthusiasm.

"By the way," inquired the Head, referring to a large note-book, "did the lad Miller come this morning?"

"Please, sir," chimed a youngster on the back row, "Mrs. Miller told me 'e was ill in bed with a sick 'eadache."

"We can't 'ave that!" exclaimed Mr. Williams. "It's a lame excuse. Run along and tell his mother to let him 'obble along to school. Tell Mrs. Miller he needn't do any work; he can go to sleep in the 'all if he likes!"

Then, turning to me, he added, "I take a great pride in my attendance, Mr. Maddam."

I had watched this curious scene, scarce knowing whether to regard it as tragedy or farce; but, seeing some response was expected, I asked what purpose would be served by Miller's attendance, if he was incapable of doing lessons.

"Purp me!" cried the head master, with raised eyebrows. "Purpose! It will improve my attendance! Could you guess my percentage of attendance for last week?"

Utterly bewildered, I could only shake my head.

"98.97 per cent!" he said, with slow impressiveness, and marched in triumph from the room.

I turned to Mr. Young to find him smiling.

"When you get into our ways," he said, "you will know that school attendance is an end in itself. You will discover how large a part of education is a matter of making returns, compiling statistics, drawing up fancy syllabuses, and window-dressing generally. We are always being told that our raw material is soul stuff, but our work is valuated by rule of three."

He then invited me to sit down while he "finished the Scripture Lesson." The subject was the Prodigal Son; neither teacher nor pupils seemed to have any real interest in the proceedings; the deadly aimlessness of the whole thing was truly appalling; obviously the class was going through a routine task, mechanically working to a prescribed time-table.

At length, Mr. Young, glancing at his watch, stopped.

"Now write out all the lessons the parable teaches you": he ordered, adding, for my ear, "That'll keep them busy a few minutes while I 'close' the register."

At that moment the door opened, and there entered a pale-faced boy, obviously ill, who said, "Please, sir, Mr. Williams told me to let you know that I'm present."

"All right, Miller!" said Mr. Young, and the lad dragged painfully from the room.

The register being "closed," Mr. Young told me that he would "get the boys to work on sums"; in order to give us an opportunity to "int about things." Books and papers were quickly distributed, and soon the boys were busily at work. Mr. Young sighed his relief.

"Thank God for the multiplication table!" he said, fervently.

So we talked, and I told him why I had come.

"You'll soon get sick of this!" he said.
"Is the work as terrible as that?" I asked, smiling.

Mr. Young shrugged his shoulders.

"I talk of what I know," he returned, bitterly: "and I mean by jarring monotony—of jarring monotony. Look at these boys—fifty of 'em—decent enough little chaps; but I've been teaching these same boys for eighteen months; eighteen mortal months on end I've had them; taking them in every subject from music to vulgar fractions—six hours a day, five days a week! We're simply bored to death with one another! Is it any wonder that we go through the lessons like a dog-trainer and his animas performing their tricks? And we haven't even the stimulus of an audience!"

"But don't you specialise?" I asked.

Mr. Young made signs of disgust. "I could show you almost any day in this place a good 'music' man painfully struggling through a science lesson, while next door Jones, who is a B.Sc., is wondering whether his class is singing up the scale or down it.

I produced signs of astonishment. "But why?" I inquired. "What reason is there against specialising?"

"No reason," was the response, "except that it isn't done."

"I'm not surprised you get sick of it," I said.

Mr. Young busied himself a while with the class, leaving me wondering. . . A little later he returned to me: "How long do you imagine I've been teaching?"

I answered, abruptly.

I looked at him; I guessed his age somewhere near forty-five.

"About twenty years," I hazarded.

He laughed; the laugh was not pleasant to hear; one or two boys looked up in some wonderment.

"I'm forty-three," he said, "and I've been teaching over thirty years."

"Yes," he continued, answering my look of amazement. "I was actually responsible for a large class at the ripe age of thirteen years."

He opened a drawer and rummaged about among a multitude of documents from which he selected a large envelope neatly endorsed in blue pencil, "Testimonials." From the envelope he extracted a sheet of notepaper and handed it to me:

"Read that," he said, "it was written years ago by the vicar of the Church School where I served as a pupil-teacher."

What I read was as follows:—

The Rev. F. James has pleasure in testifying to the blameless character, promising ability, and general fitness of H. Young for the office of schoolmaster. Since the age of 13 he has taught in my school, where he has been in charge of a class of not less than 80 boys. He is an assiduous communicant; for five years he sang in the choir.

I was getting inside knowledge with a vengeance.

"Is it a bad joke?" I asked.

"Curious, isn't it?" said Mr. Young. "And curious, too, is the fact that while a whole literature has pictured the agonies of the child slaves of the industrial revolution, so far as I know, no pen has depicted the scarcely less wretched slavery of the pupil teacher of my time."

I confessed my own ignorance.

"Some improvement has taken place of late years," he continued. "But try to imagine my position, typical of tens of thousands of boys and girls, mostly the children of parents with a passion for respectability. From 8 to 9 in the morning I received instruction from the head master, from 9 to 4:30 I was set to 'teach' a crowd of boys; all the evening I crammed masses of stodgy knowledge. This was bad enough, though I didn't think so then; and that I should be working at 'learned stuff' like algebra, filled my parents with pitiful delight. The really devilish thing about the system was that while enslaved and exploited by my elders, I was a pariah among boys of my own age, compelled, while yet a child, to put away childish things; warned against 'undue familiarity' with my 'pupils,' forbidden to join in their games, encouraged to keep on their doing and working continually to 'cultivate the manly virtues.' In school, I was bullied by the head master, outside I was jeered at by the boys. 'There goes the big schoolmaster!' was the common taunt. 'Schoolmaster!' How I hated the word! For me, it will always contain a gibe and a reproach! I recall how often I turned on one of the most persistent of my tormentors and gave him a 'severe thrashing. The incident came to the ears of the head master, who sternly rebuked me, told me I had 'disgraced my profession,' threatened to report me to the Vicar.

"What made you do such a thing?" he asked, fatuously.

"I told him: he laughed, derisively.

"'Ugly words hurt no one!' was his unctuous remark.

"'They do!' I answered sullenly. 'They hurt me. You wouldn't like it yourself!'

"'Don't speak to me like that!' he roared, in a passion. 'I'm not surprised you're disliked,' and sent me away."

Mr. Young paused: "I really must attend to the boys now," he said, "but I often wonder, of all the people who talk education, how many take into account the fact that the vast majority of those who are to-day teaching in the elementary schools have gone through the devastating experiences of which I've been telling you."

I murmured something about it being a ghastly system.

"Ghastly, yes!" said he, picking up the "Arithmetical Answer Book for Teachers' Use Only"; "but it produced just the sort of people our Authorities want as teachers; people at once timid and tyrannical, wholly pre-occupied with the non-essential trifles of the schoolroom, who get really enraged with childish peccadilloes; while our examination methods have trained us to regard nothing of educational significance except 'pleasing the inspector.'"

And Mr. Young proceeded to recite the "answers."

In School.

XVI.—EXPERIMENTS IN VERSE LIBRE.

If my memory were less untrustworthy and I chose to put it to such an idle purpose, I should probably find on analysis that the origin of most of the methods of teaching I am endeavouring to describe was mainly fortuitous. Certainly the following experiment resulted more from objective circumstances than conscious design on my part.

It may be remembered that I described in my last article a lesson in which the form was given the choice of writing in blank verse or prose. Among those who chose the former medium was Radcliffe, whose technical powers are of no high order. After writing two very inferior passages in blank verse he drifted quite unconsciously into the following:

THE STREAM.

The stream is like some city man
Who bustles about to get to town;
Wending his way through winding streets,
Up this road, down that hill,
Round the corner, up the lane,
And ends at last upon the train
Which whirls him about to business sea.

Analysis revealed that the first two lines were a sudden inspiration and the rest a conscious attempt to elaborate the simile. I attributed its failure to the fact that his unconsciousness hit on a happy metrical opening, and realising its appropriateness refused to surrender to the more exacting methods of the abacian metre.

The lesson I learnt from it and from the form's growing inability to write blank verse took some time
to filter through to my conscious mind and to bring me to the conclusion that one cannot expect the child's unconsciousness always to express itself adequately if technical limitations are objectively imposed. At first I acted upon it only to the negative extent of practically abandoning blank verse altogether. It was, in fact, not until eight months after Radcliffe's effort in free rhythm had been written that I was effectively reminded of it by reading in the New Age a skit written in vers libre on D. H. Lawrence's "Look, We Have Come Through." All parodies of D. H. Lawrence are probably seldom suitable for boys of twelve and thirteen, and it was quite out of the question to read this particular one to the form. However, I wrote the following detached lines on the blackboard, explaining that they were a skit on a certain style of writing. The admirable cadence of the third line was regretfully sacrificed to propriety:—

... I will brush my teeth.

How the glass cleaves to the oil-cloth covering,

Grey-veined in streaks [like breasts recovering from bruises] !

I will not wrench it off suddenly;

Aware of my ultimate supremacy,

I will be gentle for a time...

The glass is suddenly light in my hand,

A thing of negative weight in the uplift...

The brush agitates against my teeth, fierce in attack

(And my mouth is all submission),

Seeking out cainties, each bristle functioning.

I alluded shortly to the irregularity of the metre and observed how its rhythmical nature distinguished it from pure prose. I also suggested that it was apparently not a bad medium for the expression of one's inmost thoughts, and that intimately sincere detail could render interesting the description of such an unattractive subject as the process of brushing one's teeth.

This was literally all the data the form had to work upon, but I could see that some, if not all, of the boys interested and amused, and my suggestion that they should try their hands at writing a few lines in vers libre on "Going to the Baths," a subject which I knew would make a strong appeal to their feelings, was welcomed with modified enthusiasm. Before they began to write I impressed on them how essential it was for them to express their inmost feelings and to achieve some sort of rhythm.

Most of the results were disastrous: I have not the heart to give examples. Even the facile Wilkinson failed completely. Out of ten efforts only two were successful. Radcliffe (aged 14) laid bare his inmost soul, but so many of the details were connected with the private life of the school that it is only possible to quote here a few detached lines:—

I am going to the Baths. No; someone will stop me.

My clothes are all hot: they cleave to my skin...

"Don't crush there!" someone shouts;

But I take no heed of warning with excitement in my heels...

I undress with careless haste, regardless of watch and stud,

As they clatter to the floor 'midst towel and every-

thing... My bathing costume is so light, I feel just like a feather.

"All in!" Oh, such a splash! Now I am bewildered:

How shall I go in? Will I jump or drop or dive?...

How silent and still it all is; only the opening of a curtain;

Only X——whistling a tune!

All is changed to stillness.

The Baths are finished.

Silo (aged 13) wrote at great length, and in the midst of much banality produced a few tolerable lines:—

... The day is a hot one, yes, sweltering hot,

And this is the pace that I like best to ride,

And as I am riding I gaze round about

At the hot blue sky and the fleecy white clouds,

And the distant hills and the bright green grass,

And the ribbon of road a-winding about,

And I feel the world was made for me...

The cows in the meadows are full of interest,

And they look o'er the hedgerow at me

With their comical stare which betokens no ill,

But simply their pure inquisitiveness...

W. J. Lamb (aged 12) first time completely overcame his incoherence and wrote more than thirty lines which, if not attaining to any great heights, were far superior to anything he had written previously:—

When I get on my bicycle

I feel a feeling of joy.

The cool breeze fiddles with my hair

And makes it into a wall in front,

And makes the water come into my eyes.

I sit upright and enjoy a slope;

Pedalling easily and making no sound,

I feel as if I could do anything.

At last I come to a long steep hill;

Now I get hot and bend down low,

Keeping time with the pedals I move.

At last I reach the top,

Here is road level and smooth.

I sit upright to stretch my back,

And a feeling of lightness comes over me,

And again the breeze plays with my hair.

Suddenly my legs get as heavy as lead,

And I feel I cannot go any farther.

I feel as if I want to sleep.

But at last I come to a nice descent;

I give a little sigh

And loll back in my seat, ...

Down I go, half-shutting my eyes—

The wind is angry with my hair,

And it takes my breath away...
Views and Reviews.

A TELEPATHIC DEMONSTRATION.

The sense of wonder is, I suppose, the most nonsensical of senses; it makes us marvel at wireless telegraphy or telephones, for example, because there is no wire, and ignores the equally wonderful phenomenon of the understanding of human speech. Think of it! A localized current of air vibrates a membrane which causes the air to assume a wave-like motion; this impinges on another membrane, and there brings into play (under normal circumstances) a series of nerve currents, phenomena of a different medium. At some stage of this vibration another is stimulated, and the sound is physically heard; it proceeds another stage, and the sound is psychically heard; and sometimes it proceeds to another stage and is understood. There is no wire, there is nothing to see; we only infer that when we hear a voice someone's larynx and lips are in operation. Yet we do not think it wonderful, merely because we are familiar with it.

But telepathy is almost as common, as it is certainly more ancient, than human speech. It dispenses with the preliminary vibrations of the larynx and of the ear (so does print and the deaf and dumb language) and acts directly at the point of psychical perception; but from there proceeds exactly similar effects. There is no difference between a thought conveyed by telepathy and a thought conveyed by speech; the man who makes his wife or his nurse understand what he means when he says: "I am dying" has performed exactly the same feat as he could have performed had he been a thousand miles away in similar circumstances and thought intuitively of his wife. Distance may lend enchantment to the view, but it lends none to mental phenomena; the abounding miracle is that we are conscious of each other's existence (not to be so conscious is to be insane), and aware, in a multitude of ways, of what ourselves and others are thinking and feeling.

So when I received an invitation to witness a performance by Madame Zomah I did not go to marvel. My usual mood is that of Mahomet as described by Carlyle: "Miracles?" cried he. "What miracle would you have? Are not you yourselves there? God made you, shaped you out of a little clay. 'Ye were small once; a few years ago ye were not at all. 'Ye have beauty, strength, thoughts, 'ye have compassion on one another.'" I did not go to marvel; Madame Zomah could not deepen the mystery of existence for me. But all displays of special skill have, at least, a technical importance, at least to her. A public performer usually sets some store by Royal recognition; and as Zomah is a public performer, and mystery is one of the chief assets of such a performance; and that she is capable of a schematic interpretation which enables us to make a provisional use of them. We do not know what electricity is, or why we are here; but by observing certain changes in the behaviour of both electricity and people we are able to work with both. Zomah, I am willing to believe, is a genuine telepathist; no word is spoken by her husband, and if the possibility of a verbal code were not ruled out by that fact it would be by this one. I accept the situation proposed to me. I go to Mrs. Zomah a ticket, which the lady began to indistinctly write that Mr. Zomah had overlooked it. The error, and Mr. Zomah's justification of it, appeared to prove the genuineness of the rapport.

An extension of the telepathic sense, it is common to believe, is the clairvoyance. In many cases, the most notable being the announcement of the birthday of a young lady who had not spoken to Mr. Zomah, but who was in contact with him. A further extension took the prophetic form, although card tricks are so common that it had less evidential value. Still standing on the platform before the audience, of course, she announced which of two gentlemen would win, and by how many tricks. With her back to the audience, she told the players which cards to play—all this at a distance of some yards from the players. But Mr. Zomah went between the players with the cards; most of us saw the card before she announced it—it was a simple case of thought transference of the easiest possible kind, and the literature of the Society for Psychical Research is full of such cases. The performance served the purpose of demonstrating to the President (who all professed to be "completely mystified") that Zomah is possessed of, and has trained, a common human power. The fact that she works with her husband suggests that she is most sensitive to his influence, and I have no information regarding her susceptibility to other influences. Telepathy is common between lovers and friends, and the records of mesmerism are full of similar instances between the operator and the subject. Mr. Bligh Bond's experiments with the automatic writing gift of his friend produced another and more recent example of the answer to an unspoken question; Madame Zomah has demonstrated no new power, although she has brought the power to a remarkable degree of perfection in working.

But I am really amused to learn that "the doctors have bought her brain in the hope that after her death they will find some extraordinary physical development." We are not told which doctors these are, but anyone acquainted with the history of modern brain research knows that the search is likely to be unsuccessful. There are few doctors who believe in the localization of mental functions (even the war, with its thousands of head injuries, has produced no affirmation of any relation existing between the brain and mental phenomena), and the method of dissection by slicing now practised. I am told by a specialist, the possibility of demonstrating organic structures of the brain. Gall, we are told, could unfold the convolutions of the brain, a feat which my informant tells me he has never seen performed in the whole of his experience. Microscopic examination of the brain will only reveal its cellular structure, not its organic function; and a naked eye examination will tell nothing to men who do not know what to look for. A dead brain produces no telepathic phenomena, and the observation and comparison of living brains with manifest powers demands the assumption of the localization of mental functions which the modern doctor refuses to make.

Until the laboratory and the clinic work in harmony there can be no satisfactory demonstration of the localization or nature of mental powers. It is possible that Madame Zomah may have, for example, abnormalities of large or abnormally small cerebellum, but the fact would not demonstrate that the cerebellum was the organ of the telepathic power. Even if a number of skilled telepathists were shown to have abnormally large or small cerebellum this would not be demonstrated; a scientific demonstration would require that those who manifested no telepathic power, or very little, should show a contrary development. But this would be to adopt the methods of Gall, who is in disrepute—and I expect nothing from the doctors in this case. But there remains the fact of the faculty of telepathy which almost everyone may develop with practice, although they may not attain to such skill as Madame Zomah appears to have.

A. E. R.
Reviews.

Home Fires in France. By Dorothy Canfield. (Constable. 8s. net.)

Miss Dorothy Canfield is a fluent writer, with an imagination that “thinks pink” in the American tradition. These are studies of heroism, studies of generosity, studies of endurance, studies of sheer loving-kindness, that almost make the reader wish that he was French, and had such fine American friends. Miss Canfield has a flexible style, as she also has a versatile mind, ranging in the best phrase of “The Pharmacien” to the rather obvious treatment of the mystery of fashions in hats, from the “think pink” romanticism of “A Honeymoon” to the contrast of ideals of life in “A Fair Exchange.” There is the American “quaintness” in “A Little Kansas Leaves,” the equally American adoration of French practicality in “The Permissionnaire”; and all the time, in spite of her finery, of her skill, of her virtuousness, her studies lack the authentic touch of reality. It would be an exaggeration to say that Miss Canfield has everything but genius, but she certainly has not genius; although she has the skill of a born journalist in selecting her details, she thinks too pink for literature.

Marqueray’s Duel. By the Author of “Jenny Essenden.” (Melrose. 6s. net.)

The incurable sentimentality of its main theme prevents this story from developing into an efficient study of the influence of finance in political affairs. Marqueray might have been at least as vivid as one of Seton Merriman’s secret service men if the author had not chosen to pick a waltz from Chelsea Bridge as a suitable waltz for him. She is Irish, a “Peg O’My Heart” discarded by her husband, the villainous financier; and as only an Irishwoman can, she retains her purity of soul, her essential innocence, in spite of experience that would have taught anyone else a little less respect for the sacramental idea of marriage. There is so much beauty in the political world that the figures hardly emerge into humanity; and Marqueray’s “duel” with Lord March is at such long range, and is fought under such elaborate cover, that Lord March was for a long time ignorant of the fact that Mr. Isaacson has understood him. Indeed, it is curious that all the great musicians approve of Mr. Isaacson’s interpretations of their genius; most of them being dead, they can hardly kick him downstairs—but his imagination, we think, works in a medium different from that of musical creation. Of the spiritual adventure of music Mr. Isaacson does not speak; but he has monopolised the Infinities, the Immensities, the Eternal Sentimentalities in an attempt to show us that even a great musician is a man, and he has made us wonder whether he is.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Psycho-analysis.

Sir,—I fear that Surgeon Alcock’s criticism of my article on Psycho-analysis is partly due to my own fault. I should, perhaps, not have written “prove to the patient that his ‘logic’ is wrong.” For even though I put logic in invading the subconscious, it is just open to misunderstanding, and that “prove” should have been in itans. I intended “logic” to refer back to ‘thinking’ both conscious and subconscious. It is so obvious that proof of anything subconscious cannot be by argument, but, as your correspondent says, by making the subconscious convince itself, that I never contemplated it would be misunderstood.

The analogy of midwife is, however, not a true one, for the psycho-analyist is, rather, a part-parent of the child. Even if he were truly non-sensical, he is practically as active as an anvil, but in many cases he takes the part of the hammer. I fear I cannot see the connection by which Surgeon Alcock attaches “dirty” to this paragraph, which deals with the therapeutic aspect of psycho-analysis. The whole article was occupied with the mythology of psycho-analysis, and it was to this that “dirty” clearly refers. The paragraph on the therapeutic aspect should perhaps have been placed later, when the confusion could not have occurred.

M. B. OXON.

Catholicism.

Sir,—It is with a special joy that I attempt to reply to “A. E. R.’s” review of my book of essays, because it was in controversy with this writer that, about six years ago, I wrote today’s essay. I had then just published the first part of my published prose. He must be considered as in some sort my literary father—and who could have a better right to lecture me? Yet it seems odd to think that, whereas in our first meeting I defended our blessed Lord from “A. E. R.’s” attacks, the positions are now reversed, and “A. E. R.” is actually defending our blessed Lord from me!

Perhaps, however, Christ has no need of any defense, even though my essay on “Sanctity and the Sanitary Inspector” may be in need of a little explanation. I like cleanliness, just as I like a warm room in winter—and comfort’s sake. But I protest against anything unwholesome being made a religious observance. Water is indeed used sacramentally—to cleanse the soul from sin, not the skin from grime; and as the pious Catholic dips his hand into the probably dirty font and crosses himself, saying “Asperses me Domini,” he puts things in their due order, leaving outside of the features to look after itself and wiping the more obvious maladies of mankind. How near “A. E. R.” is to being a Pharisee is to be seen from the fact that he would drag St. Simon Stylites forcibly to the casual ward for a thorough scrub. I do not object to service and charity and to the sanctity of the individual and the tyranny of Eugenists; and I suggest that “A. E. R.” might employ his energies more usefully in climbing the pillar and emulating sanctity.

Theodore Maynard.
Pastiche.

THE REGIONAL.

VIII.

Provincialism of time is as damned as provincialism of place; our evils come in great part from the fact that we are governed by men who take count of too few of the facts, as the poverty of modern art movements lies in the paucity of the mental reference of the artists.

In art and in politics this paucity of reference results in febrile stirs and excursions; legislator and artist alike are over-excited by a phenomenon because they have no means of judging the frequency or infrequency of its occurrence. The rare faculty and the significant datum are over-excited by a phenomenon because they have no means of judging the frequency or infrequency of its occurrence. The rare faculty and the significant datum are over-excited by a phenomenon because they have no means of judging the frequency or infrequency of its occurrence.

Provincialism of time is not only in the futurists and the Shavo-Bennetians who know no day before yesterday: it is equally in the specialists who exaggerate their particular periods, who see all good in the Elizabethans of the fourteenth or five hundred years, and all ill in the mediaeval guilds, or in the grand siecle of the eighteenth century's inherited debate on the relative importance of classics and moderns (another flocking to shibboleths) rather than entrust themselves to the terrors of discrimination with its unceasing calls on the mind.

The star turn of the ancientists is to play all antiquity, or in the mediaeval guilds, or in the grand siecle of the eighteenth century's inherited debate on the relative importance of classics and moderns (another flocking to shibboleths) rather than entrust themselves to the terrors of discrimination with its unceasing calls on the mind.

The judging machine thus affected, a modern man's facts are largely what he is told-i.e., what is said to him by people whom he (according to his four sons of discrimination) believes to be intelligent, or informed, or speaking the truth for the moment.

Unless a man keeps a tobacco-shop in a sociable neighbourhood, or is engaged in some other profession (say a tobacco-shop in a sociable neighbourhood), he is constrained by poverty, or by the terror of poverty, to do certain things that he dislikes.

A man judges his own age according to his digestion; secondly, according to whether or no, as a small boy in school, he encountered more skunks than decent fellows.

Reflection engendered by scene at Tarascon, where two small boys had just forced a piece of horse-dung into the mouth of a third, who departed weeping, terrified, and threatening imminent vengeance.

There is in Bouché's Life of Napoleon no more picture than that of the young Buonaparte bullied by his schoolmates, and muttering, "I hate these French and I will do them all the harm that I can!" I don't imply that this sort of thing is indelible.

Thirdly, a man judges in accordance with the element of necessity in his own life—i.e., the extent to which he is constrained by poverty, or by the terror of poverty, to do certain things that he dislikes.

There are also the effects of experience, largely to be considered under heading A (digestion)—that is to say, a man's character makes his destiny.

There were in the past bugaboos, and Ovid, an extremely intelligent person, "went to pieces" in exile.

And silence came with a waft of an unseen wing, For sorrow roused the heart of a wondrous thing— The dim deep life of the woodland, known of few, Rose up, rose passed, and glided gazed along the glades, Stretched out two shadowy arms, bloodless and shades: And the arrows of the sunlight pierced them through and through:

And the wings beat back with sound of a dream that fades.

From the woods and the corn land gilded,
From the heavens lit with a lambent gold,
From the hollows of the hills rock-built,
From the lake where the sunlit waters rolled—
From the little lives of the earth and trees and air—
Bright-eyed and furry and feathered and soft and fair—
Came wind, came rays and tremors and fragrances,
And a voice was upon them all:
"Farewell, farewell!"
So into the night that never suns dispel
Through the open portals of the sunset's loveliness
Passed Hiawatha with his peace to dwell.

MARSHALL E. BROWN.

EADEM, EADEM SEQUENTUR.

The Gods were sitting dreaming at a pool;
A spider trapped a fly, a bird, a bee,
A knave with specious arguments, a fool;
One raised his head and murmured, "Yes, I see!"
Whilst one with droopy eyelids gazed along the glades, and
And mumbled something low about a noise.
Another languid pointed to the ground:
"Those children should not play with dangerous toys."
The eldest yawned and stretched himself and said:
"Always it was the same, and still must be;
Give each his wants, and his contentment's dead.
Forthwith he rushes into mutiny!
Since first the day was severed from the night
Was ever heard the same unceasing cry,
Justice and Freedom, Liberty and Right!
Nay unto these whoever cometh near?
Defeats and victories all must pass away,
Each leaves its little mark upon the hour:
And the hours fading follow with the day,
Alone Eternity doth keep its power.

E E A N I. M O R G A N.