

THE NEW AGE

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART.

No. 1412] NEW SERIES. Vol. XXV. No. 23. THURSDAY, OCT. 2, 1919. [Registered at G.P.O. as a Newspaper.] **SEVENPENCE**

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THE immediate causes of the railway strike are not, of course, what they are given and made out to be. It pleases the puerile Press, led by Mr. Lloyd George, to pretend that the causes are to be found in an "anarchist plot" or in the machinations of some sinister group of revolutionaries; but this attempt to muddy the waters so as to obscure the real issue is the only plot for which there is any evidence. A few years ago, if the strike had taken place, the cause would have been discovered in "German gold." Only a few months ago it would have been "Bolshevist gold." Wanting the quality of plausibility—for such lies do not really wear well—these stories have now been abandoned for the new weapon of an "anarchist plot." We could find it in our minds, indeed, to wish that there were some "plot," anarchist or any other, behind the strike of the railwaymen; for if there were a lodgment in their intelligence for an intellectual theory that was wrong, there might at the same time be a place for an intellectual theory that is right and practical. But the fact is that so far from "ideas" or even "notions" having anything to do with the strike on the men's side, all the evidence tends to prove that the notions and ideas are upon the other side. What "plot" there is is certainly more the plot of Sir Eric Geddes than of Mr. Thomas and his colleagues; for the latter are patently truthful when they affirm that the last thing they wanted was a strike at all.

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Even in the case of Sir Eric Geddes, however, there is no occasion for turning the tables upon him and declaring him to be the arch-conspirator. The commonplace facts are too numerous and weighty to make it necessary in the present instance to look beyond them. The financial situation of the Government is well known to be desperate; and in view of the recent economy campaign it was not to be expected either that the subsidy to the railways would be indefinitely continued or, still less, that it would be first transferred to fares and freights and afterwards passed on to the men in the form of increased wages. What, indeed, would the public have said if fares and freights had been considerably increased (as in any case they must be) ostensibly to relieve the Treasury, but in reality to

raise the wages of railwaymen? That the wages of railwaymen have always been excessively low, that they remain, even under Mr. Lloyd George's present scheme, very low, may be true enough; but for the moment and, indeed, for a prospectively long period, the consuming public is and will be sore upon the question of prices; and a decision of the Government to advance wages at the cost of fares and freights would almost certainly have contributed to its speedy downfall. We cannot think that it is necessary to look beyond this for the motive of the Government; nor does it appear to us that the railwaymen's leaders have taken these facts sufficiently into account. Like the Government—in fact, like almost everybody—the railwaymen accept the fundamental basis of the existing system—the equivalence of price and cost; and they must, therefore, be prepared to abide by the natural consequences of the theory even when these press most hardly upon themselves. Would Mr. Thomas have the courage to contend (as we do) that the Government should run the railways at an apparent loss? Has he any proposal for reducing prices to the ultimate consumer without simultaneously reducing wages? If he has not, and is unwilling to listen to one, the case of the Government must convince him that Sir Eric Geddes is doing no more than, let us say, Mr. Thomas himself would be compelled to do in Sir Eric Geddes' place. Assuming that the railways must "pay," the money must be found either by the consumer or by the "producer." And since, as we say, the consumer is already at his wits' end to make ends meet, it is only natural that a "popular" Government should try to cover the deficit out of the wage-bill.

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If the case for the Government is strong, however, it must not be concluded that the case for the railwaymen is weak. It is not weak either absolutely or relatively. In fact, it is precisely as strong as the case for the Government upon the minor issue, and infinitely stronger on the major issues. We have just seen what is the contention of the Government: it is that the railways cannot be run permanently at a loss nor can fares and freights be indefinitely raised to meet a never-ending demand for increased wages. The breaking-point on that side of the fence has now been reached. But equally it is the case of the men that the breaking-point on their side of the fence has been reached. It is all

very well, they say in effect to the Government, for you to say on behalf of the State and the consumer that you cannot continue to be responsible for the railway system while we insist upon our present demand for increased wages; but we, the railwaymen, are in a similar boat, and neither can we be responsible for our share in the railways unless we obtain the wages we demand. There is nothing arbitrary or revolutionary or ideological in our demand (they might continue); we are not aiming at syndicalism or any other fanciful end; our simple case is that the wages and rates you propose to pay us are insufficient to meet our needs; and we cannot undertake to carry on the railway system upon these terms. Thus clearly and impartially stated, the respective merits of the two sides to the unhappy dispute will appear to any fair mind to be equal. On the superficial facts of the situation, neither side is to be blamed more than the other.

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When a deadlock of this kind has been reached, with equal blamelessness upon both sides, the solution is not to be found in force. We may take it as the most probable conclusion that, as the community is stronger than any section of the community, the issue of the present strike must be a "victory" for the State. But what is the value of a victory that only determines which party is the stronger; and, above all, of the "victory" of one equal right over another equal right? If the State is correct in maintaining that the railways must "pay" and in refusing to burden the consumer with the cost of more wages than the consumer can bear—the defeat of the State in the present instance would clearly involve the realisation of the State's fears; in other words, the railways would cease to be a national asset if the wages demanded by the men were actually conceded. On the other hand, if the men are correct in their assertion that the wages proposed to be paid them are insufficient to the discharge of their functions, the "victory" of the State will equally clearly prove to be no victory at all; for it must inevitably follow, if the men are right, that the refusal of their demands will have the consequence of ruining the railway industry equally with their concession. There is nothing less to be done, in fact, assuming both sides to be equally right, than to make a complete transformation of the system under which such a deadlock of contending rights has been created. Something must be wrong somewhere in a system that, without blame to either party, throws them into such a condition of antagonism that neither can function if the means to the functioning of the other is conceded. What is it that is wrong? Wherein lies the real cause of the conflict of rights? What is the system that produces it? Until these questions have been asked and answered, no solution by force can have more than a precariously temporary value.

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In his speech at Olympia last Tuesday Lord Weir raised this issue quite clearly. The Government had to make up its mind, he said, between "evolution" and "revolution"; between such improvements of the existing system as would make it work, and its "demolition" followed by bold experiments in revolution. Which was it to be? For himself, of course, Lord Weir had no doubt about the proper answer to the question. He was in favour, naturally, of evolution: that is to say, of ameliorations designed to enable the existing system to continue with, on the whole, as few changes as possible. The demands of the men, he thought, had been considerably exaggerated in the literature of the advanced school. He did not find among them any effective desire to "share in management," still less, to take over and run by themselves the industries of the country. On the other hand, all their "legitimate" aspirations, all their effective demands could, he thought, be met by the provision of a "more efficient directional control," including, first

and foremost, the general re-institution of the method of "wage-payment by results." It may be true, we admit, that Lord Weir's diagnosis is correct; and that, in fact, no transformation of the industrial system is contemplated by the mass of the workers and their leaders. We find it the rule ourselves, indeed, that there is more talk than meaning in the Labour movement concerning the "change of system." But a movement such as the Labour movement is not to be estimated by what it says or by what it understands; its consciousness, in short, is an almost entirely negligible factor in its conduct and behaviour. What is to be considered is the scarcely more than mechanical consequence of the meeting of two monopolies, that of Labour and that of Capital, and the effect of this upon industry as a whole. It is perfectly clear to our mind that *whatever* the articulate aspirations of Labour may be, the mere existence of the power involved in such a monopoly as Labour now possesses is incompatible with the continuance of the "present system," however it may be "improved." For the present system, it is clear, was built up in the absence of a Labour monopoly; and, hence, cannot be expected to adapt itself to a tremendous fact of which, at its inception, it could take no cognisance.

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The immediate result of the present strike being what we have seen it is likely to be, the after-effects of the conflict cannot be without influence upon the problem now facing the Miners' Federation. What "atmosphere" there was or may said to have been developing in favour of nationalisation will undoubtedly have received a considerable chill; and the practical conclusion must be drawn that the proposed nationalisation of the mines is further off than ever. We write, it is true, in ignorance of the developments that may arise in the course of the present industrial war; but they can scarcely be such as, in our opinion, to favour nationalisation whatever form they may take. With this in view, the situation as it prospectively confronts Mr. Smillie and his colleagues, is grave in the extreme. For they have apparently committed themselves to a demand for nationalisation which, always difficult to conceive as being likely to be gratified, is now clearly seen to be impracticable. If the "atmosphere" favourable to nationalisation was doubtfully sufficient last week to bring nationalisation within the reach of the active propagandist campaign the Miners were proposing to undertake this autumn, it is much more doubtfully sufficient at this moment; and it will be still more doubtfully sufficient after the present strike is over. In a word, as we have already said, the nationalisation of the mines is no longer practical politics. The problem of the mining industry, however, remains for all that exactly where it was; for here again a deadlock has been arrived at. On the one hand, it will have been demonstrated that no section of the community is able to coerce the whole community into the adoption of an unpopular policy. On the other hand, the possession of a monopoly of Labour, capable at any moment of stopping industry, will be a guarantee that no coercion of Labour is any more possible than the coercion of the community. Each side, once again, is in the wretched position of being able to exercise a veto over the other; but neither of them is able to impose its will on the other. The need for a "way out" is obvious and urgent.

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It cannot be denied that at the back of all the unrest, social no less than Labour, lies the problem of high prices. It is, as has been said before, the problem, not only of our own day and generation, but of civilisation. Every civilisation which has ever existed in the world and become extinct has perished in consequence of its failure to solve this problem of the Sphinx; and every civilisation now existing, we may be certain, will perish, if it should perish, from the same cause. It is

superfluous to observe that at bottom even the present railway strike is the outcome of the prevailing price-system; for the fact is too obvious to be missed. Would the workers on the railway be so much concerned about their rates of wages if these did not represent the only purchasing-power at their disposal? Would the community, on the other hand, object to increased wages if they were certain to be accompanied or followed by a reduction of prices? From whichever angle we approach the problem it will be discovered that at its centre is to be found one question and one only: the relation which price bears to income—in other words, the distribution of purchasing-power. It may amuse the Press and give employment to pedants to imagine that the causes of our present discontents are ideological, quasi-spiritual, or resident in natural human wickedness; but the common human fact is that they are thoroughly human causes, and would not suffer any change if the whole personnel of our society were transformed. As matters now stand it is true that the working-classes appear to be the initiators of the unrest with their supposedly wilful demands. For the same reason the classes now in possession appear to be relatively anti-revolutionary and law-abiding. But turn the wheel so as to reverse the position of the two economic classes, and precisely the same social phenomena would be found to arise. The problem of prices and of the agitation dependent upon high prices is not to be solved by argumentum ad hominem.

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Mr. Lloyd George was not very certain in his interview with the Railwaymen that the general level of prices was about to fall. We, on the other hand, are very certain that it is not; and, from this point of view, Mr. Thomas, had he been aware of the truth, might well have accepted the wages offered, in the certainty that not for some years, at the very least, would they need to be reduced in consequence of a decline in the cost of living. It may be true that the recent Profiteering Act has had the effect, as we never said it might not have, of reducing the local price of this article or that; but no such Act can have the effect of reducing the *general level of prices*, for the simple reason that no such Act comes anywhere near touching the real cause. It is presumed in such Acts, for instance, that the main if not sole cause of high prices is "profiteering," that is to say, the extraction from the consumer of unwarrantable profits by the middleman. But the far more serious fact to be recognised is that if all profit were to be entirely eliminated, if commodities were sold "at cost," the present high level of prices would be only fractionally reduced. What is it that prevents the general public, Labour leaders, and Labour journalists from realising this fact that is so patent on the smallest examination, and that is so significant a factor in the situation? Is it an induced inability due to a capitalist environment to look at the question of money without the common capitalist prejudices? Is it wilful ignorance or just intellectual defect? Whatever the explanation, the fact remains that in concentrating on the factor of "profit" or on the factor of production, the Labouring movement is condemned not only to mere tinkering with the problem, but, much worse, to virtual agreement with the practical conclusions of the capitalist classes. We have seen already how the case stands with Mr. Thomas and Mr. Smillie. Accepting the premises of Capitalism that industry must "pay" its costs in prices, Mr. Thomas and Mr. Smillie are driven to one of two conclusions, either that the consumer must pay, or that the worker must produce more. Either conclusion, in a certain sense, is acceptable to Capitalism; but neither conclusion, as we affirm, ought to be acceptable to Labour.

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If the proof of knowledge is prophecy we are prepared to make the forecast that prices in general, so

far from declining, will continue to rise throughout the coming winter. And the reasons for our confidence in this assertion are anything but recondite; they can be conveyed, perhaps, in an illustration. Let us suppose a cistern containing water up to a certain level; and let us imagine that a pipe of ingress through which water is pouring into the cistern is larger than a second pipe of egress through which water is escaping. We are perhaps flattering our Labour leaders when we assume that the effect upon the level of water in the cistern of the double operation of ingress and egress is obvious; in short, that the level of the water will rise. Nothing more academic, however, is involved in our deduction from the existing facts that the present level of prices will rise; and whoever can understand the illustration may understand its application. For the cistern in question is no more than society, the level of water no other than the level of prices, and the two pipes of egress and ingress respectively, the increasing productivity of Labour and the increasing volume of currency or money created in consequence of it. What is perpetually happening under our present system is precisely what is conceived to be happening in our hypothetical cistern. Faster than the increased exertions of Labour can bring down prices, the concurrent and still faster influx of "credit" or capital or money, based on that increase, tends to raise prices; with the inevitable consequence which we have seen in the cistern, that the general level of prices is always rising. Nothing less than a transformation of the system can possibly put an end to this rise. So long as for every increased exertion of Labour a correspondingly increased credit is attributed to Capital, for so long will the two pipes continue to produce their natural effect. The problem of Prices, we repeat, is the problem of goods in relation to currency; and of these two elements in price, it is currency that is much the more important.

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Mr. Massingham of the "Nation" is among the "advanced" journalists who accept the bases of the existing system without serious question. He has now arrived at the conclusion that, after all, the criticism of Karl Marx is wrong, and that Marx's theory of surplus value is only a "stirring fallacy" and "obviously untrue." We do not attach much importance ourselves to the mass of the theories associated with Marx; but of all theories he invented and adopted, the least "obviously untrue" is the theory now thrown over by Mr. Massingham that "the product of Labour, after the subsistence of the workers has been subtracted from it, is absorbed by the capitalist classes." Major C. H. Douglas has shown in these columns and elsewhere the mechanism by means of which precisely this theory of Marx's is demonstrated to be "obviously true"; for if the sum of the wages and salary and profit is insufficient to purchase, at their market selling-price, the whole products of any given industry, it follows, as a matter of mathematics, that the "surplus value" must be absorbed by capital. And since, moreover, wages, salaries and profits only suffice to purchase the means of subsistence of the three economic classes that live by them, it no less clearly follows that the whole product *minus* the subsistence of the producers, is absorbed by Capital. An actual instance of the operation was provided by a "Yorkshire miner" in a recent issue of the "Daily Herald." This man, now 33 years of age, has worked for twenty years in a coal-pit. His record is as follows: 4,170 days of labour; an output of 16,000 tons of coal; the fixing of 7,120 props; assisting in 1,350 yards of packing; and the cutting through of 2,277 yards of coal. The capital or credit value of this labour we estimate at between £20,000 and £30,000; it is probably much greater. The total amount received by our miner was £2,050. Perhaps Mr. Massingham will tell us where the surplus value has gone.

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.]

ONE of the neatest pieces of analysis made in our time is the demonstration of Major C. H. Douglas that "the sum of the wages, salaries, and dividends distributed in respect of the world's production is diminishingly able to buy that production at the price which the Capitalist by his system is forced to charge" ("English Review," August, 1919). Various consequences, it will be seen, follow of necessity from this proposition—if, indeed, it cannot now be regarded as an axiom. Let us set some of them out in a simple form:

(1) There must always be a surplus of production over consumption, since consumption, as represented by the purchasing-power of wages, salaries, and dividends, is always less than production as measured in price.

(2) This surplus is an increasing surplus. It increases with the "economy of Labour"; for the economy of Labour consists in *reducing* the sums disbursed in wages and salaries while *increasing* the product. Wages, salaries, and dividends are thus less and less able to purchase the product of their industry in the exact proportion that their industry becomes more and more economically organised.

(3) This surplus, which cannot be absorbed by wages, salaries, and dividends, must nevertheless be disposed of somehow, somewhere. Since it cannot be consumed at home—the purchasing-power distributed in respect of production being insufficient to buy it—it must be either exported or wasted—that is, destroyed. If exported, it enables its owners to put another country into debt to them—that is to say, it is "loaned" to foreign countries, the interest being credited to the exporting capitalists. Its destruction, on the other hand, is by means of waste and other forms of luxury or sabotage.

(4) The competition of our own "surplus" and the "surplus" of other manufacturing countries for "foreign markets" leads, however, in the long or short run, to war. War, in fact, results from the competition of ever-increasing "surpluses" for an ever-diminishing market.

(5) Since the *difference* between the sums dispensed in wages, salaries, and dividends and the Price charged for the product is the true origin of the "surplus," it becomes necessary to consider *how* that Price is fixed, *why* it exceeds the purchasing-power of the wages, etc., dispensed in the production of the goods so priced, and *what* should be done to remedy the discrepancy.

(6) The *how* and the *why* are one and the same thing. Prices are fixed by Cost of Production plus Profit.

(7) In that Cost of Production, however, is included a Cost which is not actually dispensed in wages, salaries, or dividends—the cost, namely, of "overhead charges." Overhead charges represent an element in the cost of production which is *not* dispensed as purchasing-power in any form whatever. It is included in Price, but it is *not* included in the sums dispensed in production. It is a book-debt that is represented in the *figures* of production, but is not actually paid to anybody.

(8) A costing system which includes this item is, therefore, bound to result in a Price beyond the ability of the sums actually disbursed to pay.

(9) To enable wages, salaries, and dividends to purchase the product of their labour without leaving a surplus it is necessary, therefore, to eliminate this item from Cost as at present determined. In other words, Price must be fixed *below* Cost as now reckoned.

(10) A just Price would be one that enabled the producers to purchase the whole of their product or its

equivalent—counting as producers the whole community.

(11) This can be arrived at either (a) by selling below Cost as now reckoned, or (b) by changing our costing-system so as to eliminate the element of book-keeping.

(12) Both these, in the end, work out to the same thing: namely, a transfer of overhead charges to a credit account separated from the current trading account of Consumption and Production.

(13) Let it be granted that "overhead charges" are on credit account, since they have to do with the estimate of the ability to produce. They represent, therefore, transactions of credit, and are of such a nature that they can be separately balanced. Regarding an industry as a single business, its "overhead charges" can be set against its credit account in the following form: To Credit—all the economy involved in the services rendered; to Debit—all the charges entailed by the same. This balance-sheet of the mere *Credit* of the industry is separate from the current trading account; and the latter, in fact, should take no cognisance of it. By this means, the Cost of overhead charges being eliminated from final Cost of Production, *Prices* could be reduced to pure Cost—that is to say, to the cost represented by wages, salaries, and dividends.

(14) Under these circumstances, a country so industrially organised would require, as it were, two sets of books: one representing its Credit (that is, its ability to produce), and another representing its actual Consumption and Production. The element of Credit would be kept separate from Price, with the consequence that Price would approximate to current Cost, and thus Price would be purchasable by the sums actually dispensed in production.

(15) The object of Production is to produce for Consumption. But if the sums dispensed for the purposes of Consumption are insufficient to absorb Production, the purpose of Production is defeated. The means to enable us to consume what we produce is the fixing of Prices in accordance with the sums actually dispensed in the course of Production. Prices must be fixed, therefore, by the ratio of our consumption to our productive ability. A just Price is that which enables Consumption to equal Production.

(16) As Consumption is to Production, so must Price be to Cost. If Consumption and Production are equal, Price and Cost will be equal. If Consumption is less than Production, Price will be less than Cost. Price will thus *increase* with the increase of the ratio of Consumption to Production; but it will *decrease* with the decrease of Consumption relatively to Production.

(17) Under these circumstances, an increase in Production would immediately be reflected in a decrease of Price, which would have the effect of increasing Consumption. Similarly, a *decrease* in Consumption would be instantly reflected in a *decrease* of Price.

(18) Since the aim of Price is to enable us to consume all we produce (in other words, to maintain a balance between Consumption and Production), Prices should *rise* as Consumption threatens to overtake Production, and *fall* as Production threatens to exceed Consumption.

(19) The Costing system is one thing, the Pricing system is another. We must keep them separate. Costing concerns Production, Pricing concerns Distribution or Consumption.

(20) The aim of a sensible Productive community is to distribute fairly over the whole community the cost of production in (a) expenditure of energy and (b) the depreciation of raw materials and machinery. The accounts of Production are concerned with these two factors only.

(21) The aim of a sensible Distributive community, on the other hand, is to distribute equitably over the whole community the sum of the commodities produced, and this can be effected by Price.

NATIONAL GUILDSMEN.

Collective Bargaining in Politics.

"COLLECTIVE bargaining" and "the socialisation of the means of production" are the two phrases most familiar in discussion of the international labour movement. Now that war and revolution have re-stated the Marxian formula with new implications the gap has perceptibly widened between the American trade unionist, content with collective bargaining, and the proletarian of Europe, ambitious to achieve the control of industry.

From the earliest days of the A. F. of L. the American labour movement has been predominantly economic—or better, mercantilistic—in character. Its ideals have been those of the tradesman—its mechanism that of the trust. To sell labour in a monopolised market, to meet combination with stronger combination and thus to secure a "fair" share of the product of industry—that is to say, a share commensurate with the strength of the labour group—such are the aims that hold craft unionism everlastingly within a system that buys and sells labour as it buys and sells logs—a system born blind to the possibility of the control of industry by the workers.

The Great War gave to American trade unionism a recognised place in the established order of industry. From the conflict Mr. Gompers and Mr. Wilson emerged blood brothers in the business of defending things as they are, intent first of all upon the maintenance of stability. But at the moment when the Federation was beginning to purr contentedly in the lap of a bourgeois civilisation the old ambition of European labour was stirring to new activity. In America reconstruction was to take the form of whitewashing a solid edifice little injured by the war. In Europe the capitalistic structure had been shaken to its foundations. Stability would give the A. F. of L. a sure position among the vested interests; turmoil would offer European labour an opportunity for conquest and control—an opportunity which would be indefinitely postponed if Governmental reconstruction programmes were allowed to move deliberately to their common goal.

With much to lose, the A. F. of L. had become conservative in the full sense of the word; it was inevitable that its interests should clash with those of European Radicals who, having gained less, hoped everything. Thus there has developed in the two movements a fundamental difference in political policy which has thrown the forces of American and European labour into opposite camps. In Europe the control of government is considered necessary to the full realisation of the labour programme. Russia and England are not of one mind as to how this control is to be effected, but no disagreement as to means can hide the fact that these movements hold their ends in common. The end once achieved, time may forget the difference between bomb and ballot; it can never unite a labour movement content to serve a bourgeois government with a movement that will be satisfied with nothing short of sovereignty.

It is a matter of some interest that labour leaders in England, France and Italy contemplate the use of industrial means to effect political ends—the stoppage of armed intervention in Russia, for instance. Of far greater significance would be a decision on the part of the A. F. of L. to use means of any sort for the achievement of fundamentally important ends. We have Mr. Gompers' word for it that the Federation is not a non-political organisation; since the announcement of its campaign programme in 1906 the Federation has been instrumental in securing the passage of a very considerable amount of reformatory legislation. Mr. Gompers might have added that the A. F. of L. is not a non-industrial organisation; craft unionism has won much for labour in the way of high wages and endurable working conditions. Federated shop organisation in industry and party organisation in politics hold

the possibility of control; but the A. F. of L. is unambitiously content to bargain collectively with the acknowledged masters of production and of government, thereby achieving in the course of long negotiation an occasional reform.

The period between the suspension of hostilities and the signing of the Great Peace witnessed the triumph of collective bargaining in world politics. For a full understanding of what happened at Paris it is necessary to delve somewhat into the history of international labour relations during the war. The 1914 Convention of the American Federation of Labour adopted a resolution which proposed the holding of a congress of labour representatives of *all* countries at the same time and place as the Peace Congress; this action was reaffirmed by the conventions of the four succeeding years. In 1916 the Federation went a step farther and suggested that the labour groups of the several belligerent countries prevail upon their Governments to include labour representatives among their plenipotentiaries to the Peace Congress. With America's entrance into the war the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labour came into most intimate relations with the National Cabinet. Direct connections with labour groups in Allied countries were not so easily established. America was not represented at the Inter-Allied Labour Conference held in London, February, 1918, and when the first American Labour Mission finally sailed for Europe it was not armed with powers to negotiate with Allied Labour for the formulation of a common policy, and was at much pains to make it plain that the A. F. of L. would not participate in the proposed conference with Labour representatives from enemy countries. The second mission assumed a more pretentious character; Mr. Gompers himself was the chief emissary, and a representative of the American Diplomatic Service acted as escort of the party. A few sentences from the report of the latter functionary may prove to be of interest:

"Wherever the Mission went it was received by the highest personages as though it had been officially representing the Government of the United States. . . . It was indeed evident that the French and Italian Socialist Labour Leaders appreciated the honours paid to the American Labour Mission as reflecting upon themselves and their own class. When the Americans went from luncheon at the Quay d'Orsay Palace of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to confer with the Confederation Generale du Travail at its offices in the working-class quarter of Paris, the French labourer naturally felt that he was receiving a share of the honours paid to his American colleagues."

According to this same State Department report, the Mission succeeded in making it very plain to the restless workers of England, France and Italy that "the attitude of vigorous and militant labour leaders need not necessarily be hostile to the Government . . ." but that they may merge their interests so completely with those of the State as to be "worthy of every official support." In fact, the demeanour of the Americans was so exemplary that they earned the goodwill not only of their own Government, but of every other Government with which they came in contact—that is to say, of the governing class in general.

At the Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist Congress of September, 1918, the Mission secured the adoption of the A. F. of L. war programme, providing, among other things, for a World Labour Congress to be held at the same time and place as the Peace Congress, and asking for the representation of Labour in the membership of the latter body. The Americans also made it emphatically clear that they would not participate in any war-time conference with Labour men from enemy countries. Finally, they succeeded in blocking a resolution that condemned intervention—"in behalf of a real democracy"—in Russia.

The history of these activities forms a fitting preface to a most interesting diplomatic correspondence just published by the A. F. of L. While the world was still breathlessly awaiting the outcome of the negotiations which preceded the Armistice, Oudegeest of Holland cabled Mr. Gompers (then in the United States) asking that the Federation appoint delegates to a Labour Congress to be held at the same time and place as the Peace Conference. Mr. Gompers replied three weeks later that, in accordance with the instructions of several conventions of the A. F. of L., he himself proposed in due course to issue the call for this Labour Conference. After another month's delay proposals arrived from Henderson, of Great Britain, setting out detailed plans for a general conference of representatives of Trade Unions and Labour parties, from allied, neutral and enemy countries, and suggesting that Switzerland be selected as a meeting-place, for the reason that the personal liberty of Austrian and German delegates could not be guaranteed in any but a neutral country. Refusing to deal directly with Henderson, the A. F. of L. cabled Bowerman, Secretary of the Parliamentary Committee of the British Trade Union Congress, in part as follows:

"... the American Federation of Labour delegation will meet with delegations from Trade Unions of all national centres, but must decline to be governed by political parties, and hence regard meetings with representatives of political parties conducive to no good results."

If the Americans had ever at any time been inclined to participate in the International Labour and Socialist Congress, eventually held at Berne, this idea was banished from their minds at a private conference such as has prepared the way for more than one open covenant openly arrived at. A man who was present at the conference has related to the writer just what took place there; it is supposed that this is the first publication of detailed information relative to this affair. Like most conferences with the President of the United States, this session was a short one; no time was wasted by the American Labour delegates in stating their case. The meeting at Berne was certain to be predominantly Socialistic; the Americans were bona-fide Trade Unionists, with no taste for politics; if they went to Berne they would surely be voted down and would be obliged to bolt the convention; it was considered best that the Americans should absent themselves from this too ambitious gathering. Mr. Wilson listened, "looking the Labour spokesman straight in the eye." "Gentlemen," he said, "I agree with you entirely."

If the good resolutions of the delegates required further reinforcement, this was supplied at a conference with members of the American Commission to Negotiate Peace. Here the shady character of the Berne conference was again discussed; it appeared certain that the delegates to the Trade Union section as well as those to the political section would be Socialists; chiefly interested in political aims; yes, the Americans should by all means stay away.

They did stay away. "While the Berne conference was refusing to condemn the Bolsheviks, failing to fix the war responsibility upon the Germans or to remove the International (Trade Union) Secretariat from Berlin, and declaring for an impossible international super-parliament, the A.F. of L. delegation" buzzed busily in the diplomatic sunshine of Paris; the American Socialists champed the bit on the farther shore of the Atlantic, held up by the Washington passport bureau; two Social Democrats got as far as France and then repudiated the conference; a third member of the same brotherhood was discredited when he attempted to speak at Berne.

Mr. Gompers did not succeed even passably well in his attempt to get together at Paris an inter-allied Trade Union congress, and the Peace Conference Com-

mission on International Labour Legislation began its work with no general policy to guide the Labour leaders except that embodied in the programme adopted at the Inter-Allied Conference of September, 1918. Since the close of the Commission's labours, Mr. Gompers has complained that he did not have the support of the Radicals for his more advanced reformatory measures; he could explain this situation if he would. Another American who attended the sessions of the Commission has done so, and the explanation is this: the Radicals were not deeply interested in welfare measures because their eyes were always upon the political possibilities of the Peace—foolishly enough, they insisted on trying to plant in the International Labour Conference, under the shadow of the League of Nations, the seeds of a working-man's world government! The day that the American Federation of Labour appeared in Europe, ready to trade unlimited support of the old order for limited reforms, this high aspiration of the internationalists was doomed to failure. At the last moment, when it seemed that Lloyd George must be acting under the urge of English Labour in his efforts to modify the Treaty, Mr. Gompers cabled President Wilson for instructions as to what action the A.F. of L. was expected to take. In compliance with the President's answering cablegram, the convention of the Federation voted by a majority of 29,909 to 420 to endorse the Covenant of the League of Nations with its Labour provisions (now "somewhat weakened," says the President), and by implication the Treaty as a whole. The world Labour conference had come short of its object; the promised inter-allied conference was a failure; the thoroughly governmentalised Commission on International Labour Legislation had fathered a governmentalised International Labour Conference to carry on its work under the League.

If American Labour in this time of opportunity did less than the war made possible, it was not for lack of power, but for lack of will. The plain fact of the matter is that the men who control the American Trade Union movement do not want to participate in the control of industry. The craft unions that have matured under their guidance are not so organised as to be capable of assuming the rights and responsibilities inherent in the control of production. The habit of collective bargaining has been carried over into politics, where the Labour lobby forces the individual measures it desires by the threat of boycott—the use of a political "unfair list." Neither in politics nor in industry does the Federation accept any responsibility except to its members; by economic pressure it may impose conditions upon an employer which will eventually destroy his business, thus curtailing production; by political pressure it may force an administration into a position distasteful to itself and to the public; the public may then vote the administration out of office, but the union is invulnerable. The labourer as such has no part in the responsible direction either of politics or of industry.

And yet a few of the men bound within this system are beginning to dream of control. Confessedly the ambition is chiefly economic, and economic means suggest themselves as most natural for its attainment. As this ambition widens, shop-unit and industrial organisation will gradually replace the craft system, and as the possibilities of Labour control become self-evident, impatience with the Government—conservator of the old order—must grow astoundingly. What shall we do with the Government?

There are three answers:

"Kill ambition, and support the State," says the Trade Unionist.

"Smash the Government and start over," says the Russian Bolshevik.

"Control the Government and make it over as you go along," says the British Labour Party man.

Control the Government! By votes? Yes! By partisan organisation such as is growing up in Seattle,

Detroit, Chicago, New York? Yes! By strikes? By sabotage? By boycotts? Yes! The men who are to-day doing most to eliminate the possibility of violent revolution in the United States are not those who deny that anything new is happening in the world, or those who use the machinery of State to sweep back the rising tide of proletarian ambition, but those who stand ready to use any device that will effect in the Government immediate and partial changes in terms of the new time, thus making the means of violent revolution superfluous by peaceful achievement of its ends.

GEROID ROBINSON.

Russian Thought.

ALTHOUGH President Masaryk lacks the fluency of Brandes' "Impressions of Russian Literature" and the graceful style of De Vogue's "Le Roman Russe," anyone interested in Russia or in the history of the human race in general will be held captive by the thousand and odd pages that compose this book.* The historical facts are correct, being based upon official documents and statistics, while the author's treatment of Russian literature shows a profound knowledge of his subject; and in every line discussing Russian philosophy can be discerned the inquiring spirit of the critic and the well-balanced mind of the logician unshaken by enthusiasm yet receptive of Slavonic sympathies and ideals.

Speaking in general, however, Russian philosophy cannot be said to exist. President Masaryk dwells on the absence of criticism in the works of Russian thinkers, on the avidity with which they absorbed without real inquiry the theories of Hegel and Feuerbach and Marx. They are enthusiastic students, but are seldom original. As everywhere else, there are two camps among them—the mystics and the scientific thinkers, those who attempt to uproot religion and the established conventions, and the others who glorify the slow evolution of the past and make it the supreme test of ethics. Tchadaieff was the first Russian thinker to inquire critically into the mission of Russia. He pointed to the English as exemplars of a truly religious people. He was sceptical that Russia would ever become the home "of the ideals of duty, justice, of law and order." Alas, his scepticism has been only too well justified. He deplored the absence of a "Russian humanitarian policy based upon the logical and syllogistic thought of the West," sighing "we grow, but we do not ripen." Contrasted with the modern spirit evinced by Tchadaieff is the Slavophilism of orthodox theocracy as enunciated by Kirievsky and Homjakov—enlightened thinkers with an enthusiasm for orthodoxy and mysticism. These are purely temperamental doctrines, possessing the merit of more than usual originality: it is, however, improbable that they will have much influence on the modern mind. President Masaryk's criticism of their conclusions, therefore, is only of academic interest. An even narrower-minded thinker of this school was Aksakov. He "repudiates Europe and the European state in the strongest terms, going so far as to see nothing in Europe but slavery, whereas he discerns true freedom in Russia." The influence of Rousseau, for whom civilisation was decadent, evidently inspired these re-

marks, just as later it inspired Tolstoi. How refreshing in comparison is the Western spirit of Belinski! Belinski, champion of the Westernisers, possessed the spirit of true liberalism. He was free from the defects of Herten, the most influential of the revolutionaries, who thought he could force the pace of natural evolution and pass at a single bound the "bourgeois stage" and arrive at once at proletariat government. Neither was Belinski subject to the extravagance of Bakunin, who wished to create a new world by violence, or to the wild recklessness of Tchernishevsky, who entertained the ambition of becoming a modern Aristotle for the instruction of mankind, and whose ideal of communism was to say to your neighbour: "My linen, your linen; my pipe, your pipe; my wife, your wife."

A truly rational philosopher was Mihailovski. His ethical standpoint is finely expressed in the following characteristic utterance: "Morality incontestably begins from the moment when man imposes any sort of bridle upon his ego, from the moment when he is willing to give up any of his wishes in the name of something which he regards as higher, as sacred, as inviolable. Until this moment comes we have nothing but customs." How contemptible in comparison with the free spirits of progressive thought are the official theorists—Katkov, Pobedonoscev, Leontev! As for Soloviev, he was probably the one thinker in Russia who made philosophy his life's work, though he had "no school, no successors." But his original mind drifted towards mysticism, and the first Russian thinker to investigate for himself the problems and objects of philosophy left no visible impression upon the political and ethical condition of his people. The revolutionary Plehanoff gained far more influence by his exposition of the principles of Social Democracy. Henceforth all Russian thought was to be either Marxian or anarchistic or even chaotic. Nestroev formulated the five demands of Maximalism: "Promotion of the class consciousness of the workers; the revolutionising of the will; the destruction of the fetishism of private property; the destruction among the people of the sentiment of legality and the strengthening of the sentiment of revolt." And Kropotkin, the anarchist, goes farther and says that "men are endowed with natural sympathy, which suffices as a principle of morality." Therefore, down with all ethical and political laws! Lenin, the leader of the Majority Socialists (now famous as the Bolsheviki), who is alluded to here and there, laughs at the policy of "killing with kindness": centralisation and the dictatorship of the proletariat was his aim. And Ropshin, the terroristic philosopher, seriously discusses in his book, "The Pale Horse," the question, "Why not kill?" "If I have no God," he says, "I am my own God." Surely this is a philosophy just as egotistical and even more decadent than that of Nietzsche. In the sequel, which is to follow these volumes, President Masaryk will deal with Dostoevsky, "the great analyst of the Russian revolution," and probably also with Tolstoi, who is only briefly alluded to. Further light will then, no doubt, be thrown on the recent march of events; for all President Masaryk's knowledge did not enable him to foresee the Russian revolution as it proved to be, nor are there any indications that he discerned the probable division of the great Empire into various nationalities, each for itself alone politically, economically, and culturally. A word of praise is due to the translators, Eden and Cedar Paul, who without much knowledge and sympathy could scarcely have rendered so much weighty thought into such lucid English. To the student of the truth in Russian deeds and ideals, and to all who appreciate a masterly exposition of a complex subject, these classical volumes are commended.

GERSHON KATZ.

* "The Spirit of Russia." By Thomas Garrigue Masaryk (First President of the Czecho-Slovak Republic). Translated by Eden and Cedar Paul. (Allen & Unwin. Two vols. 32s. net.)

The Presidential Address.

CONSIDERING the part which Science has been playing during the last five years it would have been strange had the Presidential Address to the British Association dealt with other than utilitarian matters; and Sir Charles Parsons chiefly recounted marvels and adumbrated wonders. His address was, in fact, a pæan to utility by one of the most eminently successful of our practical engineers, and any suggestion in it of the spirit of the time must be looked for apart from the main theme. From this point of view the chief idea of interest is the suggestion which is left in the mind of a reader that the Government be called upon to subsidise scientific schemes of a utilitarian kind, and to provide money in amounts calculated in minutes or days of the War. This latter detail may seem a trifling affair, but it is really far otherwise. It is true that this manner of representing huge sums may be useful under certain circumstances, but not when it is used to make huge sums appear to be of normal dimensions. For it must be clearly remembered for what these huge war expenses were undertaken. Never mind what the ultimate factors in producing the war may have been—the underlying cause was the revolt of free-will from even the most beneficent Compulsion, and it is only for such great ideals that such great costs are fitting, and Science must not think that she is among the prophets. All the Practical Science in the world does not compare with the abstract principle which underlay the war. In fact, were it not so soon as to make such an accusation seem almost indecent, the idea that Science can even consider treatment on a war scale must be noted as a warning of future danger, for Science is among the activities of man what Germany was among the nations.

In speaking thus it is necessary to discriminate carefully between the small utilitarian science which strives only to make the world comfortable and the great Science which cares nothing for this end, and studies only the ways and moods of its great mistress, Nature. Clearly it is to the former that the stricture applies. Such Science tends to fix us and our aspirations more firmly to our environment, and both by precept and example teaches us that only by method can we move mountains. It is the opponent of religion; whereas Great Science is of the same essence as religion, and only differs from that form of adoration to which we more frequently apply the name by the subject matter to which it devotes itself. For religion is an attitude of mind and not a category of subjects. The detailed mind which confuses means with ends—electricity with a warm home—and values a small thing known in detail above a great idea after which we may for ever strive in vain—is the same mind which sacrifices religion to ethics, and art to technique. Ethics, technique and utility are all of the order of scorpions as compared with fish, unsatisfying to the Real Man, and only made acceptable by the savour of success. Success is but an anodyne for weary hearts, a substitute for the balm of faith, as most drugs are but substitutes for normal happenings, either in our bodies or souls, which we ought to be able to accomplish without their aid, but cannot. They are illegitimate entrances into the greater world which we long for, though we call it illusory or imaginary.

But Man is a god and an animal combined; and so though it is disastrous to forget the god in him it is foolish to forget the animal, and for the animal, ethics, technique and utility in moderation are very desirable; they are good, sound, nourishing food. But, to follow our analogy, they should be estimated for their food value and not for the success with which we flavour them, for this leads to satiety. I often fear that the advertisement of the sauce which says that it makes all the world hungry is not such a ghastly lie as it at first sight appears to be; it only disguises a great truth.

The Science of formal mind promises us all the world and the glory of it if we will fall down and worship. So did Germany, and for fifty years we worshipped, only to find out our mistake when it was almost too late. It is not formal mind, however, that is to blame, but its adorers. In its proper place it is the most wonderful tool which Nature has yet produced; but we must not become dependent on it for all our worldly needs, unless we are prepared to hand over all such things to its charge unreservedly and occupy ourselves otherwise. This is not an easy thing to do, for psychologically speaking it means passing our formal mind down into our subconscious as the latest of a long series of displaced consciousnesses, and though it may well be that this will happen first in the mass, it is not likely to happen even there without a struggle.

M.B. OXON.

Drama.

By John Francis Hope.

MR. ROBERT HICHENS has played for, and secured, popular approval in "The Voice from the Minaret," now being played at the Globe Theatre. A clergyman in love is a sure attraction, for, like most other men on the stage, he can only fall in love with someone else's wife. Indeed, when we come to think of it, Mr. G. K. Chesterton's "Manalive" is about the only fictional character who ever fell in love with his own wife. There is (or I should say, was) some piquancy in placing a clergyman in the eternal triangle; he is professionally committed to the suppression of what he calls "unlawful passions," and perhaps the crowds of women who flock to see such plays as "The Voice from the Minaret" are really interested to see how their exemplar will behave in a dilemma that is probably more familiar to them than to him. The answer to "Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?" is "The congregation"; and no clergyman dare exhibit himself on the stage in this familiar situation without making what is called "the great refusal," and preaching a little sermon on self-sacrifice and the virtue of truth.

There is reason to believe that such plays attract a special audience; religion, in England, is mainly a matter of sex morality (that is why the Church regards the stage as another pulpit), and a problem play is bound to be as innocuous to morals and as innocent of literature as a sermon is. But if this special audience (mainly composed of women and clergymen, when I saw the play) finds such a theme edifying, the dramatist certainly did not find it inspiring. The effect that he wanted to produce was obvious; on the one hand, what the clergyman called "sin," on the other hand, sanctity, symbolised by the voice from the minaret calling to prayer. But this contrast of effect is not made; Mr. Hichens makes his Andrew Fabian behave like a shame-faced schoolboy concealing from his father confessor the traces of his intrigue, and the contest between the woman's pleading and the muezzin's call to prayer never rises above literal matter-of-fact.

Some of the feebleness of the scene must be attributed to the actors. Lady Caryll, for example, is obviously intended to be a seductive woman, an Elinor Glyn lover; but Miss Marie Löhr sticks her red roses all over the place, and talks of her "sin," without any trace of the raptures that Swinburne attached to the "roses of vice." She is the most decorous sinner that I have ever seen on the stage, and the critics who praised her acting must have conveniently forgotten what such a part demands. Physically, she makes love like a wrestler; vocally, she has the cadences and intonations of a public speaker, instead of the soft, seductive sibilance of the siren. The absurdity of talking about undying passion is never more manifest than when one merely talks about it, as Miss Marie Löhr does; and the effect of her incompetence is that she re-

duces Mr. Arthur Wontner, who is really a good actor in his own style, to the level of what is called a proficient amateur. Mr. Wontner, too, becomes a poseur and shouter of commonplaces, walking through a part without giving it character, forgetting his own inherent dignity and subtlety of vocalisation under the paralysing influence of Miss Marie Löhr.

There is only one actor in the piece who is free from this paralysis of conventionality, who produces the authentic feeling of reality that all character acting does. I have seen Mr. Norman McKinnel play many parts since I first saw him (in 1904, I think) play the clergyman in "Candida" at the Court Theatre; and the more I see of him the more I marvel at the number of effects that he can produce with the normal complement of the actor. His genius is revealed in the fact that he always plays a character, not a type; he does really conceive a character and projects it into real existence. There is a different feeling so soon as he walks on the stage in the second act of "The Voice from the Minaret"; he is quite definitely the husband of Lady Caryll, and not Mr. Norman McKinnel supporting Miss Marie Löhr. He nearly makes her act in the breakfast scene—a feat which is impossible of perfect accomplishment until someone has broken her heart. He has no better material to work with than the others; but instead of saying his lines and looking nice, he puts into his walk, his actions, his intonations all that the character requires. He makes all that has gone before seem mere puppetry; and he not only conveys a sense of reality, but he deludes us with a sense of familiarity. His Sir Leslie Caryll seemed quite familiar to me until I tried to recollect of whom he reminded me, and discovered that he was not a copy, but an original.

The retired Indian official is a very familiar figure on the stage, and is usually played as an exhibition of the inflammatory effects of curry. But Mr. McKinnel gives more than a study of irascible cantankerousness; the very walk of him betrays a self-importance that only a perfect regard for appearances prevents from degenerating into pompousness. There is a most curious blend of domestic familiarity with the bullying manner of cross-examining counsel throughout the breakfast scene; and Mr. McKinnel conveys the impression that this man is so determined to obtain the information he requires that he will control his obvious irascibility into some semblance of suavity. He conveys at every moment a clear understanding of this man's character, developing trait by trait a sinister picture of hatred. Even when he does nothing but stand by the window and smoke a cigar, when for the moment he is beaten, the very pose of him shows how immune he is from the delicacies and scruples of the others, how incapable he is of even crediting them with other motives than those that actuate himself. That is great acting, to reveal to an audience not only what a man is supposed to be feeling, but what he is. It is easier to follow and understand Mr. McKinnel's impersonation than it would be to visualise the character from a written summary of it; and the nuance is only intelligible in the performance. It is easy enough to play the part of a thick-skinned person, for example; but it is not easy to convey the impression of intelligence at the same time. Mr. McKinnel produces the impression of a man whose hide is so thick that he does not need to bother about defence; so sure is he that none of his opponent's shafts can penetrate that he can concentrate his attention on attack. He becomes a terrible figure at the end, when he uses the assurance of his own early death as a justification for his scheme of revenge. Even his death-scene is powerfully characterised; simply played as it is, Mr. McKinnel none the less produces an extraordinary effect of helplessness and loneliness. One snap, and he dodders into death whimpering like a child in the dark. It is a great performance, and I wish that I could believe that the audience went to see it.

Readers and Writers.

MR. HUGH WALPOLE'S appeal (in the "Times Literary Supplement" of September 18) on behalf of new novelists does him a great deal of credit. Secure enough of publication for himself, he is concerned for the fate of the young novelists—the novelists of the future—whose present prospects of publication are just about nil. Several publishers, it appears, have told Mr. Walpole that to publish a novel that is not certain to sell at least 2,000 copies (and, it may be added, within six months of the date of publication) is too risky in view of the costs of production; and since it is certain that not more than one in ten new novelists arrives at that selling-point at a single bound, the chances against their appearance at all are high. It might be supposed, Mr. Walpole goes on to say, that this restriction of publication to the good-sellers, the certain sellers, would be all to the good. It would naturally occur to the simpleton public that all a publisher has to do in these circumstances is to publish only the best. Alas, however, the best from a literary point of view is not always the best, and still less often, the most immediate, seller; and the inevitable consequence of restricting publication to the largest and quickest sellers will be to put a premium on the worst novels and a corresponding embargo on the best.

Mr. Walpole's complaint is just, and it is sufficiently serious to cause alarm. But his remedy, I fear, is impracticable. He invites, or, rather, he appeals to "some enterprising publishers" to produce, for love or adventure and at their own risk, "some *cheap* series of first novels that will not need so large a circulation to justify their existence." In other words, he pleads with publishers not to be commercial, but to consider the interests of literature rather than the interests of their own business. Why, however, should Mr. Walpole demand or expect of publishers a greater capacity for disinterestedness in commerce than is displayed by other men of business? Why, again, seeing that the original complaint is derived from the attitude of the publishers, does Mr. Walpole imagine that the publishers will voluntarily amend its cause? They are quite frank about the difficulty. They say that it does not pay them to publish novels that are not certain of immediate commercial success. Any other proposal, therefore, must either assume that they do not know their business, or that they should be prepared to subsidise novels at their own expense. That they should publish "a *cheap* series of first novels," a series requiring only a small circulation to justify their existence, is, in effect, an impracticable paradox of advice; for the cheaper the series, in the absence of any certain sale, the greater the loss a publisher must face. And, once again, why should he? It may be true that he lives by literature; and that he ought not to allow the goose to die that lays him golden eggs—but, after all, *some* geese, it seems, can manage without his special assistance. The big-sellers are there; and he is naturally disposed to let the others perish.

My defence of the publishers, it will be seen, is not intended to be flattering to their public spirit, or to their self-esteem as patrons of literature. They are as other men. My purpose is to direct attention to the proper remedy for the present unhappy state of things—which is not to be found in blaming the publisher, or in persuading him to undertake risks which no commercial firm would accept or would be expected to accept—but is to be found in one of two directions—in a general attack upon the problem of high prices in general, or in a determined effort on the part of critics and men of letters to raise public taste. It would appear, on the surface, that the former of these remedies might prove the more practicable and the more efficacious; and the latter the more ideal. Mr. Wal-

pole himself assumes that if only first novels were "cheap," they would be bought in sufficient quantities to justify their existence even in the present state of public taste. But is it a fact that it is the dearness of literature that alone or mainly restricts its sale? Is it perfectly certain that either cheap publication or (what amounts to the same thing) a generous diffusion of money among the masses would ensure the success of good first novels—in the present state of public taste? After all, we have had some experience both of cheapness and of the diffusion of money. Publication was cheap enough before the war in all conscience. New novels could be brought out for a shilling. Was it the common experience that the best of them proved a commercial success? On the contrary, the best of them were nine times out of ten a commercial failure. And, in respect of the diffusion of money, what has been our experience of the direction in which the diffused money has been spent? Have the masses accumulated libraries? Have they patronised the arts? Have they encouraged literature with discriminating taste? Have they sought out and bought the young authors, the promising writers, the writers of to-morrow? We know they have done nothing of the kind. The diffused money has fallen, for the most part, into two sets of hands: the hands of the ignorant profiteers and the hands of the ignorant masses. And both classes have naturally neglected literature in favour of sports and furs, display and amusement. It is idle to pretend that things are other than they are. We need not necessarily be discouraged by the fact, but it is necessary to recognise the facts. And the facts in the present case are that the people who have the money (much or little) do not care a shilling for literature and accept no responsibility for its existence. Their *excuse* for the moment is that literature is too dear; but it would be all the same if it were cheap. I have never observed, for example, that rich or poor have complained that their sports and amusements are too dear; nor does anybody appeal to cinema-proprietors or yachting entrepreneurs to pity their clients and ruin themselves commercially. When the public wants literature as much as it wants to be entertained, there will be no need of anybody's charity.

In the meanwhile, what is the young writer to do? In particular, the young novelist? I confess that I am much concerned about his fate; for he appears to me to be about to be among the most miserable of mankind. To be published and to be a commercial failure is bad enough in a country like our own, where a succès d'estime is almost a certificate for pity. But not to be published at all is infinitely worse. Instead of appealing to commercial publishers, however, is it not possible for Mr. Walpole to appeal to the Guild of Authors, to the fraternity, that is to say, whose function and responsibility are the creation and encouragement of literature? Who should be patrons of literature if not men of letters themselves? And whose duty should it be, if not that of novelists as a whole, to secure the succession, and to provide for the future princes? If publishers are willing to assume the burdens of literature—always heavy in proportion to the ignorance of the public—let them by all means. So much the more honour to them. But I repeat my contention that the proper shoulders for the burden, in the absence of an enlightened public, are the shoulders of the Guild of Letters, the shoulders, in particular, of the *successful* men. There is no lack of money among them. I should roughly calculate that the income of our successful novelists is more than equal to that of all our publishers put together. Why should they not subsidise literature? Why, out of their abundance, should they not set aside a portion for their literary posterity? Mr. Walpole knows very well, however, why he does not appeal in that quarter. The Guild of Authors is the last that will ever be formed.

R. H. C.

Catholicism and Persecution.

IN "A. E. R.'s" second article on Catholicism (NEW AGE, September 18) are to be found a number of interesting historical judgments which may be summarised as follows: the Reformation was not the contrary of Catholicism; Luther was a good Catholic; the doctrine of persecution of heretics was a Catholic doctrine which was allowed to fall into abeyance only, if at all, when Catholics did not take their religion seriously; and "Luther gave a new lease of life to the Catholic Church." Not one of these statements is true. In addition to the above there are to be found in the article in question other assertions with which it is less easy to deal owing to lack of precision in their statement. Among the latter is one about "the Inquisition," by which, I imagine, the Spanish Inquisition is intended, though it might conceivably refer to the mediæval Inquisition; it certainly cannot refer to the only Inquisition for which the Catholic Church was completely responsible—namely, the Roman or Official Inquisition. As there are many incidents in the history of the Church of which all Catholics are, or should be, ashamed, it is a pity that charges should be made which cannot be substantiated and of which the proof is not prompt. And as misconception of the truth about the Catholic Church and persecution is frequently to be found among both Catholics and non-Catholics, a consideration of "A. E. R.'s" statements may not be without value. The fact that the question is not one of religion but of history ought to make it possible to conduct the inquiry without any of the acrimony of religious controversy.

To discover the real truth is, of course, far from easy in any historical question, and few are the historians whose guidance we can accept with complete trust. Some historians, Froude in particular, have held that the facts of history are so numerous and at times so contradictory that they can be used to support almost any thesis, and, like letters of the alphabet, can be made to spell anything. Such a conception of history, however, is unscientific and would leave us at the mercy of those with whom history ministers to other ends than those of truth. In considering the statements we have above declared to be untrue we shall find evidence which is little, if at all, short of conclusive.

The views summarised at the beginning of this article may be said to deal with two questions; first, what, in history, has been the position of the Catholic Church with regard to persecution? and, second, the real nature of the Reformation, and what Luther really believed. As will be seen, these questions may be profitably considered together.

As indicated previously, it is confusing to speak of "the Inquisition" because there were three, with all of which the Church was connected, but for only one of which she was completely responsible. The first of these was the mediæval Inquisition, and its remote germs can be traced to the Crusaders of the eleventh century, who thought they might as well kill heretics at home as seek them in the Holy Land. Its chief activities were in the thirteenth century and were directed against the Albigenses of the South of France, who were disappointed if not martyred and whose creed culminated in suicide. The chief object of the mediæval Inquisition was that the Albigenses should not perish without a trial. How little mediæval persecution was due to the Church alone may be gathered from the fact that one of the chief authors of the sanguinary laws of the thirteenth century against heresy was Frederick II, who was the most tyrannical oppressor of the Church to be found among the German Emperors.

The Spanish Inquisition, which is most commonly known, was a revival of its mediæval predecessor. It was not controlled by Rome, but by the Spanish Crown, and was a strong support of that political absolutism which was so dangerous to the claims of the Church,

leading to the loss of England from the Catholic Church in the sixteenth century and nearly causing the loss of France in the seventeenth. To charge Rome with responsibility for the acts of the Spanish Inquisition is to misunderstand the whole temper of the sixteenth century, in which the predominant feature is not religion, but the growth of political absolutism. While we are condemning Rome for the Spanish Inquisition the real culprit is escaping, for the real culprit is the modern State, guided then, as now, by the maxims of Machiavelli (whose works are, I believe, on the Index). In the sixteenth century persecution was almost entirely an instrument of State policy. Francis I and Henry II of France, for example, persecuted Protestants at home but encouraged them abroad. Popular fanaticism was rare, and, where it existed, was directed by calculating politicians. After the massacre of St. Bartholomew, Catherine de Medici said she would have no objection to Elizabeth treating Catholics in the same way, and more than one Pope was in virtual alliance with the Protestants of Germany against Charles V, in whose Spanish dominions the Inquisition was inflexibly in force.

It is the Official or Roman Inquisition for which Rome was alone entirely responsible. But for it there is no sanction in the dogmatic teaching of Catholicism. To deduce the teaching of Catholicism from particular acts of particular Popes would lead to conclusions as absurd as that drawn by "A. E. R." from the teaching of Augustine, to the effect that the Church taught the duty of persecution. The fact that an individual Catholic held a particular view is no presumption that such a view is that of the Church. We cannot even say that the Church favours Whig politics, although St. Thomas, now her official theologian, taught the Whig theory of revolution. The statement that the Catholic Church taught the duty of persecution cannot be maintained. Freedom of conscience was believed in by a long line of eminent Catholics from St. Athanasius and St. Ambrose down to Erasmus and More, and in so far as the Catholic Church was responsible for persecution, as in the Roman Inquisition, she was unfaithful to her own teaching in early times and to that of her most distinguished sons.

The argument that there is little to choose between Catholicism and Protestantism so far as persecution is concerned is also inadmissible, although it is perfectly true that Catholic persecution has been more cruel and on a larger scale than Protestant persecution. And the argument is inadmissible because a Catholic who persecuted was acting in opposition to the teaching of his Church, while a Protestant who persecuted was obeying the teaching of his. Luther, for example, required that force should be used to convert "heretics" if it was not used to destroy them, and the idea of mercy tempering justice he thought a Popish superstition. In his "Table-Talk" Luther says: "Of old, under the Papacy, princes and lords, and all judges, were very timid in shedding blood. . . . Thus they were persuaded by monks to be gracious, indulgent, and peaceable. But authorities, princes and lords ought not to be merciful." Zwingli, the Swiss reformer, taught that magistrates were bound to enforce uniformity of religious belief, and Calvin believed that "true" religion should be extended by force.

The statement that Luther was a good Catholic, unless taken to refer to his early years, is, of course, the direct contrary of the truth. Luther believed that the Pope was anti-Christ, and he got the idea from Lorenzo Valla, who was once an official of the Papal household, though it is true that Luther failed to impose this view on the Lutheran Church.

There is one last question to be considered, and that is whether the Reformation was or was not opposed or contrary to Catholicism. If "the Reformation" were taken to mean the Catholic Reformation for which men like Erasmus, Pole and Contarini were anxious, the

statement would be true. Or, again, if by "the Reformation" is meant the official doctrine of Lutheranism as drawn up by Melancthon, it might be arguable, though it probably would not be true that Lutheranism is compatible with Catholicism. But the statement contains no qualification and must therefore be taken to refer to the movement as a whole, including Zwingli and Calvin, not to mention others. And as the precise point of difference between, for example, Luther and Erasmus was that Luther attributed the abuses of the Church to dogma and Erasmus attributed them to misgovernment, and Erasmus alone remained in the Church, it will be obvious how much meaning we can attribute to the statement. G. EUGENE FASNACHT.

THE BANQUET AT KRUSHEVATZ.

(A Fragment of a Folk-Ballad from the Kossovo-Cycle.)

Prince Lazar his patron saint doth honour
In the hidden fortress of Krushévatz,
With his lords is seated round the table,
With his lords and with his youthful nobles.

On his left the Jug Bogdan is seated,
With him the nine Jugovitch, nine brothers,
On his right Vuk Brankovitch is seated,
And the other lords in their due order;
Facing him is Milosh, that great warrior,
And with him two other Serbian leaders
Kossanchitch, and young Toplitsa Milan.

Tsar Lazar lifts high the golden goblet,
Thus he speaks unto his Serbian nobles:
"Unto whom shall this my cup be emptied?
If it be old age that I should honour,
Then, oh Jug Bogdan, I must now pledge you;
If it be high rank that I should honour,
Then Vuk Brankovitch, I must now pledge you;
If the voice of feeling I should follow,
To the Tsaritsa's nine well-loved brothers,
To the Jugovitch my toast is owing;
If it beauty be that I should honour,
Ivan Kossanchitch, I must now pledge you;
If heroic looks I now should honour,
Then, Toplitsa Milan, I must pledge you;
If heroic deeds are to be toasted
I must drink to the great warrior Milosh,
I can surely pledge no other hero.
Milosh Obilitch, I drink now to thee,
To thy health, oh Milosh, friend and traitor!
When the battle rages fierce to-morrow,
Thou wilt then betray me on Kossovo,
And wilt join the Turkish Sultan Murad!
Drink with me, and pledge me deep, oh Milosh,
Drain the cup; I give it thee for token!"

To his feet leapt Milosh, that great warrior,
To the black earth bowed himself, and answered:
"Tsar Lazar, for this thy toast I thank thee,
Thank thee for the gift and for the pledging,
But for those thy words I do not thank thee.
For—else may the truth be my undoing—
Never, Tsar Lazar, was I unfaithful,
Never have I been, and never will be.
And to-morrow I go to Kossovo
For the Christian faith to fight and perish.
At thy very knees there sits the traitor,
Covered by thy robes he drains the wine-cup;
'Tis Vuk Brankovitch, th' accursed traitor!
And when dawns the pleasant day to-morrow
We shall see upon the plain Kossovo
Who to thee is faithful, and who faithless.
And I call Almighty God to witness,
I will go to-morrow to Kossovo,
I will slay the Turkish Sultan Murad
And I'll plant my foot upon his false throat;
And if God and fortune so befriend me,
I will take Vuk Brankovitch then captive,
Bind him to my battle-lance! Yea, tie him
As a woman ties hemp to her distaff,
And I'll drag him with me to Kossovo."

Translated from the Serbian by HELEN ROTHAM.

Northern Lights.

By Leopold Spero.

II.—PROMENADE.

THE great, round stronghold of Marstrand, lair of savage Gothic pirates, a mark out at sea for a clear fifty miles, towering, inaccessible, a menace to peaceful merchantmen long before the eye could tell on which among those barren patches of rock its outmastering bulk was raised, must now brood helpless in the summer heat, while below, at its outraged feet, polite trippers and well-to-do business men make a bathing resort of its island home, bringing in from Gothenburg all they need for the life of fashionable simplicity which yet does not disdain the completest outfit of creature comfort.

The old King Oscar, last of the Bernadottes to rule over both Sweden and Norway, must bear the blame for bringing this last indignity on the departed henchmen of his Danish predecessors. He discovered Marstrand, set a fashion for the tiny fishing village among the foolish, anachronous grandees of his twentieth-century Court, the empty-headed, Teutonised counts and baronesses at whom every sensible Swede pokes fun, while his wife defers to them and hangs upon their lightest word. The simple-minded, kindly, beloved old litterateur, who was yet diplomat enough to keep in one yoke during his lifetime the awkward and ever more awkward team of the Scandinavian Peninsula, saw in the golden, landlocked bay nothing more than a gentle haven of repose for his latter days, where he might be free for a few blest weeks from Courts and diplomats and all the miserable business of politics and scheming human nature. But he was not to be without them; they followed him to his retreat, keeping maybe a deferential distance in the background, but always within hail.

So Marstrand is fashionable, the most fashionable seaside place on the West Coast, the home of a smart dolce far niente, flannelled, expensive, always overcrowded, full of proud landladies and indolent orchestras, visited every few hours by elegant tourist steamers from Gothenburg or Christiania; a very portent of style among the myriad island ramparts of granite, some bare and deserted even by the querulous seagull, some with corners and shelves here and there where a patch of green vegetables or a yellow square of wheat shows up in harvest time, some with nothing to bring men in their rough, high-prowed rowing boats or broad-bottomed motor-trawlers but the skeleton frames of wood on which the fishing nets are spread out to dry; and others the seat of villages of pink and yellow pinewood houses, perched like birds upon the hard, forbidding crags, or of flourishing canneries like Gräbbestad and Fjällbäcka, or of some fishy metropolises like Lysekil or Stromstad. But Marstrand is the queen of all, from Gothenburg to the mouth of the Kristiania Fjord.

When the white boats come in with mail and parcels, heralding their arrival round unseen corners by the hooting of a fussy, good-natured siren, there is a general concentration upon that portion of the cobbled quay where the First Mate will throw out his line to fasten "St. Erik" or the "Bohuslän" to the appointed staple. From the pigmy square of garden seats and lime trees, from the terraces of absurdly pompous hotels, conservatories giving themselves all the airs of a caravanserai in a capital city, from the tiny back alleys and the ineffectual shops and stores, so incredibly expensive that one waits eternally for the hand of a justly incensed deity of commerce to strike the proprietor down weltering with all his assistants in the ghastly retribution of a common conspiracy (but never to be visited, in sober fact, with any worse fate than the natural variation between the plunder of this season and the next, with retirement in physical comfort and moral self-confidence at the end of it all)—like bees

they swarm to those few square yards of rustic esplanade, as if no such adventure had ever happened in their lives before, as if the harbour, virgin of adventure, was receiving the first blest visit of a wondrous industrial evangelist.

But there is not always such a climax of the day's interest, or where would Marstrand find her fame as the source of all that is healthfully indolent, beneficially restful, desirable, in short, for the rehabilitation of a nervous bourgeoisie and an aristocracy pathetic in the contemplation of its own delicate, patrician weaknesses. For the greater part of the languid summer day, so precious in this land of long winter and snows that lie forbidding and oppressive through long months when the despised Southerner still basks in the sunshine of idle hours, there is nothing more to disturb the peace of the deep waters and placid sky than the passage across the bay of the electric ferry from the low foothills of the opposite shore, moved by unseen forces like a child's toy through the smooth cobalt depths of such a glassy serenity as one might purchase at Hamley's for a schoolboy nephew, with a dozen painted soldiers, stiff and attentive, men-at-arms who cost a shilling apiece, to guard it with the latent menace of a brass cannon. The stately yachts moored in line along the jetty, which is also a High Street and a promenade, never move at this time of day. Round the point, where the grey cliff swarms up to meet the grim sovereignty of the Fortress, there is the open sea, the wide horizon, the realities and the majesty of life. But here, at midday, nothing is alive. The smart ladies, in their white duck skirts and sailor blouses, are climbing the rough-hewn steps up the cliff, to sit and sun themselves in the sea breeze and earn the fees the doctor will charge them; and the men are sunning themselves no less, but naked and unashamed, on the boards of the wooden bath-house. The University Costume is unknown in Sweden, where a sturdy common-sense prescribes no costume at all, and swims the easier for a mind free from the conscience of a Watch Committee and the terrible problems that face the unhappy legislator who shall prescribe the decencies of mixed bathing to his expectant fellow-citizens.

Convention, arrived in the midst of all this repose in very sickness of its own savourless and yet pretentious daily round, can achieve nothing more than the repetition, in an atmosphere of forced simplicity, of the vapid rules of dress and social intercourse which keep its deadly existence in motion at home, buoyed up only by the eternal confidence that it is still the subject of envy and approval for unhappy snobs and impossible fools. But all are not cast in this mould, even in Marstrand. That same German tramp from Luebeck has come in here to take a cargo of fish. She has been lying idly at ease in a secluded corner for many days, and her crew are disporting their unholy bodies in waters unvisited by the inquisitive patrols of the Red Ensign. Should Germans be Happy? is the question that rises unbidden to the surface of a patriotic mind. No matter. Let them be. There is no one by to write to the "Morning Post" about it or to complain to Mr. Bottomley.

And other shouts of happiness and merry abandon rise clear as bells in the shimmering haze. In the square enclosed bathing pool, shaded on the side of the dressing boxes and the north and southern ends, but open to the sun at the east, where the brown jelly-fish slither in from the bay, the boys splash to and fro, their elders lying unpicturesquely meanwhile drying in the sun on white towels, like slabs of dough in a light oven. Two lads pole an ungainly boat around the tank, fishing up the stingers with a net, and slamming them down below the seat, to lie, an ugly, rusty mess of slime, they that but one moment since were things of beauty moving delicately with tendrils outstretched to feel the caress of the weeds and the ripples. Old men, young men, men of middle age, fat, slim, hirsute and

bald, protesting paunchily to the tolerant heaven, or stretched on their stomachs, limbs flung out in abandon. Some talk business as they pass, oblivious of their lack of tall hats, tail coats, gold watch-chains, and all the paraphernalia of Capital in its outward and visible expression. The effect is more than ludicrous. It is iconoclastic.

But see, who comes here, slowly, solemnly, with careful eyes looking down to see he takes no more false steps, holding by the hand two little lads as frail as tadpoles, but certain that what their father does must be right, where he goes be the appointed place? Is it not Herr Salmonsohn, of Berlin and the Discontogesellschaft, pillar of finance, a man of countless fingers for foreign pies, member of Germany's economic General Staff, one of those men who, in very truth, have lost the war? There is a solemn detachment in his air, serious if not sad, as of one who has made his first and biggest mistake and is determined that in future the smallest detail shall be organised and prearranged beyond any human possibility of débâcle. See how, after a careful and comprehensive survey, he decides to allow the elder tadpole to venture by itself into the raging maelstrom, while he retains the younger in his grip, so that there shall still be one scion remaining of the Salmonsohn stock, though the other may have perished in all the sudden horrors of a twenty-yard storm in a foreign swimming-bath. And now he has become more confident; both the little, skinny, black-haired, gentle-faced froglets are disporting themselves at their ease among the fair-haired young Vikings, while our magnate, podgy benevolence masking a power which Throgmorton Street has felt in the past—ay, and shall feel again, I am traitor enough to predict—swims slowly, carefully, but very efficiently to the resting-point of his desire. But, in fact, there is nothing of the comic paper about him, not even that sign-facial of immorality, unscrupulous vice, and shamelessness, that concentration of Antichrist, the Hook Nose of the Jew. One recalls those pious artists of every age and clime, who, to spare their Saviour the final disgrace of looking like a member of the race and faith in which He was born, have made Him look like a Christian; and one is grateful for that supreme demonstration of ethics and logic.

In Marstrand to-day there is more to see than meets the eye. Preoccupied with the details of its internal economy, the middle age of Marstrand's Kurliste is not deeply concerned in the matter of how unfortunate Youth shall divert itself an evening—love-making is somehow not in place, or that might solve the problem quick enough; but one could as soon make love in Bournemouth. . . . !! So there are dances here and there, now and then, not pre-arranged and followed out to the bitter end, as they would be in England, but arising at random, proceeding on sufferance, and maintained only by the presence of the elders seated round tables of punsch—which is not punch—of expensive and inferior sherry, of vermouth and soda, horrible dictu! The reason for the difference may be simply and definitely explained by the statement that in Sweden nobody knows how to dance, nobody ever knew how to dance, nor will anyone in the unhappy country, except perhaps Jenny Hasselquist, ever know how to dance; whereas in England the very gutter children, the very stockbrokers' daughters, have more natural grace and more gift of beauty in movement than the finest artists of this or any other continent. And yet, such is the amazing British blindness to the national virtues, as well as to the vices, we suffer ourselves to listen to the voice of foreign dancing teachers, shrill, upbraiding, impudent and impertinent.

The fiddle strikes up an American rag, young men rise, drain glasses, move across to distant tables and click heels deferentially before the mothers of pleasant

daughters. First one, then the next, then all take the floor to the swaying strain of a Fox-Trot.

The only Londoner present, unable to contain his anguish of body and soul, rises before the dance is two minutes old to try and show them at least the elements of how it should be done. . . . The elders turn in their seats and stare, impressed. The young folk crane inquisitive necks and bump each other as they watch resentfully. But they, too, are impressed.

After all, a Fox Trot is a Fox Trot!

Sanātana Dharma.

["Establish virtue, not for thine own sake, but for charity universal; save and deliver all beings; let them attain the wisdom of the Great Way."—"The Udāna."]

INDIA, the land of all wealth, the birthplace of the *Eternal Religion*, what makes her for us a non-entity? Is it she who is dull, unable to transmit her knowledge, or is it we who are deaf and blind and altogether senseless?

Beneath this question there seems to lie a terrible, a withering, answer—an answer of such utter condemnation that for very mercy hearing stands bereft of ears to receive it.

What magic, then, shall we not summon from the depths, what tasks shall we not assign to High Heaven, lest this unutterable calamity befall us?

But we are not magicians, and we have long lost the way by which the Gods are approached.

We are, instead, a people of darkness, ingrained in the ways of darkness, and to any other way altogether estranged.

How then shall we realise a blindness, incomprehensible because all-pervading? The answer is:

By piercing the veil of our own entirety and realising ever so dimly the living truth which lies beyond.

But how shall we pierce a veil so impenetrable?

By a process which will demand the highest endeavour of which the living spirit is capable; by an active renunciation of all of which we are so miserably proud—of our enduring certainty and inaccessible completeness, of all that for which and by which we seem to live—a renunciation which would amount to self-crucifixion every waking and every sleeping moment of our lives—the willing acceptance of the accumulated debt of all our error—a veritable mountain of misconception, every atom of which, by the grace of that same Highest Heaven, must needs be transmuted in accordance with the spirit of rectitude and light.

Of what use, it will be asked, is such a process to a whole people, all of whom are equally incapable of rising to such a task and to whom Heaven is unknown? The answer is well nigh unutterable, even as in actuality it transcends all possible anticipation. To say that, other things failing, Nature herself will come to the rescue is to make a sinister assertion. Cataclysms, rapine and murder, famine and pestilence—these things have done their work in the past, and will come again in the future at any time when they are needed. Of this even fools may have knowledge. What cannot reach us from above will reach us from below. Nor is it even that the prospect of such happenings will awaken us. Being without prescience all things are non-significant, and the law of analogies remains hidden. We are therefore without the help of saving terror. It follows that actual immersion of the body will alone prove effective—steel in the flesh and spilling of the blood—widespread tribulation and death. And after the awakening, the infinite accumulations of error! the vast labour of regeneration! But a beginning will have become possible. A small fire will have been lighted, a glimmer of its light will have been

seen, and from that moment we shall have begun to realise our darkness. And in proportion to the strength of our suffering and the honesty of our humiliation will that realisation grow. It will grow and there will come a time when we shall understand that not only are we the product of darkness, but that our very error has suffered distortion.

It is the law indeed that in proportion to the great magnitude, directness and courage of man's descent into error, so also shall he build his basis for higher existence. But in our downward course we have not been courageous and rather than directly face the darkness have turned in every direction for subterfuge. Original sin we have converted into a myriad varieties of falsehood and hypocrisy, and rather than stand upright in denial, our wriggings on the ground have traced the picture hideous of our own curtailment.

There remains, therefore, the possibility that we shall fail to win our initial glimmer of light, the first inkling of inner darkness, or that, having seen, we shall falter and eventually flee from the task before us. . . . We have bone in the heart and base metal in the bone—concomitants of the will-less state which, without alternative, leads to destruction.

Or if, perchance, we shall not flee, then must the whole debt be paid, the whole path, inch by inch, must be retraced.

And for the intelligent undertaking and fulfilment of this reversion (in the direction of light as against the direction of darkness) the East and its true understanding of Religion, India and her heritage of knowledge is altogether necessary.

But only when at last we have seen our darkness and have accepted, unconditionally, the task which it implies (the task which is our task, known only to us, and to be found only in our footsteps) shall we be enabled to recognise the immediate significance of so high an entity, and the supreme purpose of so great a testament, or to fully understand that beneath the symbol of the East lie the essence and the substance of the whole volume of life, and for *Christians regenerate*, high foreshadowings of the *New Manifestation*.

MILLAR DUNNING.

Views and Reviews.

A LAST WORD ON CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION.

My recent review of an American book on the conscientious objector has brought the usual amount of correspondence protesting against my shortcomings. I am accused, for example, of unduly simplifying the problem by writing of "the conscientious objector"; I am told flatly that "he does not exist," and that "it might be difficult to find any two whose reasons for objecting were exactly the same." I should have thought that the various forms of conscientious objection could at least be unified as "conscientious," that the "reasons" were irrelevant to the understanding of the categorical imperative to which the conscientious objector proclaims his allegiance. That a man may be right, while his reasons are wrong, is so elementary an observation that it ought not to be necessary to recall it; the well-known story of the judge who refused to give reasons for his judgments, because judgments are nearly always right while the reasons given for them are nearly always wrong, is an example of it. The diplomatist who advised: "Above all, gentlemen, let us suspect our first impulses; they are nearly always good," was as concerned to remove political matters from the sphere of morals as are the conscientious objectors themselves.

We have advanced one step; we have discovered that conscientious objection is not conscientious, but reasonable, and that the reasons are many and various. "Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but

the Lord pondereth the hearts," said the writer of the Book of Proverbs. Let us consider what this argument means. The conscientious objector (I call him so for convenience) claims immunity from a common duty because he has a reason, or more than one reason, to urge against it. Politically, this claim implies, as I have said so often, a voluntarist society, if we are to assume that the conscientious objector is democratic in political theory; if we are not to assume this, then the claim may imply an autocratic caste system, in which certain classes are exempted from common duties. Just as the Russian nobility was exempted from taxation (and the French nobility before the great Revolution), so this new nobility of men who can give reasons claims the right to be exempted from whatever common duty its members object to perform. Either their objection implies a purely voluntarist society, or it implies a system of privileges; however various the "reasons" of the conscientious objector may be, their political implications are no more complex than these alternatives reveal. The difficulty in arguing the question is that the conscientious objector never will admit the implications of his reasons. His objections may range from the simple ignorance of and indifference to politics of the Mennonite to the deliberate hostility to established forms of government of the revolutionary International Socialist; but whatever his "reasons" may be, he claims the rights and privileges of communal living, and also claims the right to contract out of its duties. He bases his claim on an abstract doctrine of absolute liberty, and once again, he ignores the implications of this doctrine. For the abstract doctrine of liberty is only the intellectual perfection of the concrete liberties which are guaranteed by the very society in which he lives; and the alternative to the compulsion of society is the compulsion of Nature. But even in the world of abstract ideas, Liberty is not the sole principle; the tri-une manifestation of reality is admitted again in the historic phrase, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. Whichever way we look at the claim of the conscientious objector, he is ignoring the two-thirds of reality that imply his duties, Equality and Fraternity, and insisting on the one-third of privilege (for liberty is only a "right" so far as it is guaranteed by the law) that is granted by the constitution under which he lives.

Until the conscientious objector admits the implications of his own doctrine, and formulates his own theory of society, there is nothing to be done but to enter a simple negative to his claim. At present, so far as my knowledge of him extends, he has not got beyond sharp-shooting at some bug-bear that he calls the "State," which he seems to think is always on the point of perpetrating some insane atrocity which he invents for the purpose. In this case, for example, my correspondent says: "If food shortage had led to compulsory cannibalism, many would probably have considered that that limit [of the State's right to obedience] had been passed." Perhaps they would; and in that hypothetical state of public opinion, they would have been the first to be eaten. The limit of the State's right to obedience may be theoretically difficult to define; practically, it is defined by public opinion, by what is called "the will of the people." I have quoted before the following passage from Leslie Stephen, but it summarises so powerfully the whole argument, and is so apropos, that I state it again: "Lawyers are apt to speak as though the legislature were omnipotent, as they do not require to go beyond its decisions. It is, of course, omnipotent in the sense that it can make whatever laws it pleases, inasmuch as a law means any rule which has been made by the legislature. But from the scientific point of view, the power of the legislature is, of course, strictly limited. It is limited, so to speak, both from within and from without; from within, because the legislature is the product of a certain social condition, and determined by whatever determines the

society; and from without, because the power of imposing law is dependent upon the instinct of subordination, which is itself limited. If a legislature decided that all blue-eyed babies should be murdered, the preservation of blue-eyed babies would be illegal; but legislators must go mad before they could pass such a law, and subjects be idiotic before they could submit to it." The hypothetical question of the limits of the State's right to obedience may engage the attention of those who care for the discussion of hypothetical questions. But, for me, the issue is limited to a much simpler question: "Can disobedience to law be regarded as a political principle? Can you found a society on it?" It is obvious that you cannot; and although, practically, a considerable latitude of protest is possible, the underlying assumption that, precisely because we are members of a community, we must act at times in common, is the only one that will permit of the continuance of society. It matters nothing what form of society we may exist in, or may desire, obedience to its mandates will always, in the last resort, be compelled, or failing that, the society will dissolve. National Guilds themselves will tolerate no disobedience to their commands, however conscientious the objector may claim to be. It is desirable, of course, that the activities of society should outrage no man's conscience, but it is not possible to do anything without offending someone. There are manufacturers in the country to this day who conscientiously object to the Excess Profits Tax; but if they were to push their objection to the point of refusing to pay it, they would cease to be manufacturers. The conscientious objector has made the mistake of pushing his objection beyond its proper limits of protest into resistance to the law, and refusal to recognise its authority; he has, in short, converted what should be a spiritual impulse into an anti-social principle, and his claim to immunity has put him outside the pale of citizenship. If he can found a society on his principle, he is, of course, entitled to make the attempt; as a matter of fact, he has at various times since Coleridge preached Pantisocracy made the attempt, but, so far as I know, without any success. Even Mr. Homer Lane's Little Commonwealth had to invent laws for itself, and administer them strictly; and the conscientious objector cannot escape the ordinary compulsion of communal living except by suicide or solitude.

A. E. R.

Reviews.

The Taker. By Daniel Carson Goodman. (Boni and Liveright. \$1.75 net.)

Mr. Goodman is one of those novelists who would be a psychologist if he only knew how to do it. He chooses a character (if one can call him a character, for he remains singularly obscure to the reader) who alleges a determination to get the best from life, and apparently fails. He begins as an alleged artist, with an alleged determination to express himself in creative work—but what his alleged self may be, we have been unable to discover. Anyhow, it serves as the subject of his conversation with women, and as his standard of criticism of their effect upon him. He marries his employer's daughter (when he discovers that his employer is likely to die suddenly), succeeds to the business, and rebels against his subsidence into the position of a much-beloved husband and prosperous business man. Having negotiated the divorce, he tries the marriage for ideals with a bony but progressive secretary; and when inevitably he turns again to love and adipose tissue his wife conveniently commits suicide. This time he avoids marriage as an encumbrance to his soul, and inevitably begins to discover that he wants wit, aplomb, savoir faire, je ne sais quoi, in addition to the "youth, beauty, and clean linen" that Farquhar described as the objects of love. Inevitably he breaks with his mistress, inevitably she commits suicide; and

then he does the only sensible thing of his life—he tries to chloroform himself. He fails, of course; and returns to his first wife, and we leave him contrasting her unfavourably with a cigar-seller in the hotel. His excursions into philosophy read like a précis of book reviews of the "new thought"; and the book hovers uncertainly between introspection and smart life in New York without handling either satisfactorily. As a "giver," he does not exist; as a "taker," he is a failure, because he never takes as much as others are prepared to give. He knows not what he wants, and wants it with a typical velleity of spirit; the other imputations, that he was a strong, stern, business man, and one whom women loved for ever, must be lies. He is just a "thought-form" of the author, and the author has not given enough thought to the subject to give it form.

Yashka. By Maria Botchkareva. As set down by Isaac Don Levine. (Constable. 8s. 6d. net.)

This autobiography of the Commander of the Russian Women's Battalion of Death has at least the merit of frankness. That gigantic country seems to breed giants, or, perhaps, as they exhibit so many pathological traits, it would be more accurate to say that it suffers from giantism. The epithet "tremendous" recurs at every exhibition of the native qualities of the Russians; their tenderness is as appalling as their ferocity, they are explosive in their emotions and cyclonic in their activities. Maria Botchkareva, born a peasant and only, through the exigencies of war, brought before the notice of the civilised world, only confirms the general impression conveyed by Russian literature, art, and history. She has the physical proportions of a giant, the giant's roaring cataclysm of emotions, the giant's microscopic intellect. It was alleged in her favour that she "had no politics," and apparently she believed it herself even when she was negotiating with Kornilov. She is the sort of woman of whom anything may be believed, even what she says about herself; and her own account of her life reads like a summary of the catastrophic theory of evolution. She is now only 30 years of age; but in that time she has been married twice and seduced once, has attempted suicide and murder, and suffered hanging at the hands of her second husband. She has been domestic servant, asphalt worker (she rose to the position of foreman in this occupation), butcher, and finally soldier and counter-revolutionary. She faced death in many forms before she organised the Battalion of Death, had a long record of distinguished service as a soldier in the field before she put the women in the forefront of the battle. The brutal vigour of the woman is amazing; even when, in the heat of battle, she discovered a soldier making love to one of her women, her moral censure took the form of a bayonet thrust through the girl. She has seen officers trampled to death by mobs of infuriated soldiers, has seen them shot by the score by Bolsheviks in a scene reminiscent of the worst excesses of the French Revolution, has faced the tribunal and the firing squad herself—and withal retains a touching faith in the essential sanity of human nature.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

SAVED AGAIN.

Sir,—Can any of your readers who dabble in the occult explain the amazing luck of Mr. David Lloyd George? As soon as the masses begin to "rumble" our war-winner, something happens to save him from the consequences of his political genius. A week ago he and his Government were being criticised and execrated from one end of the country to the other; and now, irrespective of the merits of their case, the broad backs of the railwaymen will be made by Press, Parliament, and Public to bear the responsibility for all the ills from which the country suffers. Mr. David Lloyd George is saved again. ROWLAND KENNEY.

Pastiche.

REGIONAL.

XII.

"The proper way to see France" is to remove one's collar, replace same with a bandana, and assume some sort of clothing that will cause you to be mistaken for a baker, a pedlar, or even in some cases for a tinker; almost any collection of garments will serve, provided it does not include the *faux-col*. Outside Paris, the Parisian accent is unnecessary, and the departmental intonations so varied that one's foreignness may easily pass undetected for some time. As Paris makes fun of the Midi, the Midi replies with a "*Hch kcomme ilh etait Pharissien il parla toujchours poinhtu*."

The Bolshevik, Hottentot, prelate, cow-puncher, or other exotic desirous of visiting England should disguise himself as a gentleman; the requisites may be found between Piccadilly Circus and the north end of Bond Street, and a week or so covert and anonymous but very careful observation should suffice for guiding the selection; only after obtaining the complete trousseau should the candidate announce his arrival officially. These directions are regardless of personal character, and suppose the visitor naively anxious to exploit the situation to its uttermost.

For visiting America, I find instruction more difficult. The costume of the college-boy, college-man, both terms signifying, in English English, student at some university, has or had, so far as my experience went, certain advantages and no very palpable drawbacks; it could not, however, be assumed to advantage by a middle-aged foreigner; nor could the rôle be maintained.

I am, after careful meditation, inclined to think that one should visit America as a lord; not a Continental noble, nor an heir to a peerage, nor a prince in disguise, nor even a Polish pianist, but with a solid and regulation title, private, authentic, or borrowed, but carefully printed on one's cards, stationery, cuff-links, underwear, baggage (luggage), etc.

The place is, after all, democracy. A lord succeeds in America as a negro in France, in ratio to his rarity.

Fewer people visit America for pleasure, and the lists in the peerage and gentry are quite long enough to cover the contingent of voyagers present at any given instant of time.

True, there would be scoffs and jests at one's expense, but these would emanate wholly from people one had not met. "Life" makes merry with royalty on this system.

Corroborative incident: "That man is a decadent!" I follow the gaze of the speaker; speaker having white hair and a pink skin of cheap texture. My eye comes to rest upon a titled Russian, very, very blond, and looking rather as the late and not very widely lamented Czar might have looked if he had been able to look rather intelligent.

I am still uncertain by what computation the Russian's decadence was deduced. He had made a democratic marriage; he had written several plays, of which one at least was supposed to be entertaining; he was very kindly in conversation; he was bored by travel on the trans-Siberian railway; he declined to make a scene in Waldorf when told that he could not be served with beer after twelve midnight.

With these facts at my disposal I followed the gaze of the ex-American reporter and mine-owner; the difference of skin-surface was entirely to the advantage of Prince Z. Five minutes later my interlocutor was "introduced"; he has never since referred to the decadence of the Russian nobility—at least not in my hearing.

This little fable, or slice of life, is intended to indicate the manner in which a lord's troubles would tend to disappear in democratic surroundings.

Against the pink figure I must in justice set the lean tobacco-skinned type who, being invited to call at Kensington Palace, only discovered, in the act of calling, that his destination was not the Kensington Palace

Hotel. He was a man of the older era, and one does not know how long the Jeffersonian tone will maintain itself against on-the-make-ist immigration.

EZRA POUND.

CLOUDS.

This Sunday morning
I will not go to Mass,
I will not do anything
But lie in the grass
And watch the great clouds pass,
Moving with a slow majesty
And peace unknown high, high
Above the world of men and church-bells calling
On fields of the infinite blue. . . .
Where is God sending them? and to—
To what? (I wonder)
Rain, hail, snow, thunder?
Or can it be
That He
Thought on such men as lie
Like me, this sunny morning,
In grass, watching the sky,
And blew them humorously
Like bubbles out
To please such little children and truants from school
And make them shout:
"Oh, God, how wonderful, how wonderful!"

F. W. HARVEY.

IF SUDDENLY . . .

A foolish thought, I ween—and yet I wish
That suddenly somewhen I could come upon
That thing that bears my name, and see him sit
And walk and talk and smile and turn his head
To catch some sound, or watch him touch a child
Or beast or flower: for how else know one's self?
The friend that says the little more than truth,
The foe that says the less, the lying mirror—
Who shall trust these? Yet if, I think, I saw
That outer carnal husk and met his eyes
I'd know what carved the lines upon his face,
Whether of earthly origin or no,
And tell what lit the lamps within the eyes,
Or shameful pride or proud humility;
And haply give the succour that he needs
And set his feet upon the hidden path . . .
If suddenly I might come upon myself.

H. H. M.

BOWLER HATS.

You have hair more beautifully spun
Than the robe of the Wizard in the sun.
It is frail, it is chaste, it is thinned
Like blown hay thrown by the wind.
It is choice and delicately wrought
Like the processes of close thought.
Like the petals of flowers it is fine,
Like the voice of morning or of wine.
But neither lilies nor rare
Anemones in woodlands wear
Rotund black debonnair
Foul lecherous bowler hats;
But only toadstools and
Black bibulous spiders bland,
Thick rabbit-gluttled snakes, wet rats,
Are the only other things but you
That cover their heads with blue
Foul lecherous debonnair
Pestiferous bowler hats.

LOUIS GOLDING.

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