THE

NEW AGE

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART.

No. 1413] NEW SERIES. Vol. XXV. No. 24. THURSDAY, OCT. 9, 1919. [Registered at G.P.O. as a Newspaper.] SEVENPENCE

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

IT has been contended, on the one side, that the strike is due to an "anarchist plot"; and, on the other side, that it is a mere dispute about wages and conditions. If it were the former, it would be something to marvel about, and even, perhaps, to congratulate ourselves upon, for it would undoubtedly be flattering to the Labour leaders to be able to convict them of any idealistic intentions; while, if it were wholly the latter, namely, a dispute about wages, we should find it hard to account for the uncommon obstinacy of Mr. Thomas and his colleagues. Our own explanation is simple, and has the additional advantage of being true. The strike is mainly due to suspicion of the Government in general, and in particular of the brothers Geddes and Mr. Churchill. It is, of course, perfectly true that the concrete thing in dispute is the schedule of wages to be hereafter paid in the railway industry; but it is no less true that the determination of such a schedule would have been comparatively easy in the absence of the sinister atmosphere created by the brothers Geddes. From the very first, for some reason or other, the Trade Union movement has fastened its suspicions upon these two men, with the consequence that at the moment neither the Geddes brothers nor the Government that contains them are in a position to negotiate without risking the kicking over of the table by the men's representatives. It is a lamentable situation in which to find ourselves; but honesty and sense must admit that the Government is much to blame for it. No doubt the Government has a good case; we could state it much more plausibly, indeed, than it has yet been stated. But this excellent case has been obscured and distorted by the fact that Sir Auckland and Sir Eric Geddes are known, or, at any rate, sincerely believed, to have been intriguing and manœuvring for precisely such a trial of strength as has now been brought about. It was not a settlement of this particular dispute about wages that they were believed to be after, but a final settlement (in their opinion) of the whole issue between Trade Unionism and Capitalism. "The Lord has delivered them into our hands," said Cromwell, when he saw the Royalists preparing to accept battle at Dunbar; and we are credibly informed that Sir Auckland Geddes said words to the same effect when he knew that the strike was certain to occur. It is this element, we believe, that has not only prolonged the strike, but transformed the character of Mr. Thomas from that of Privy Councillor to that of "anarchist" strike-leader. He and his colleagues are justified in their resolution not to be beaten by the recollection and anticipation of the brothers Geddes and Mr. Churchill jubilant. Come what may, they appear to be thinking, a victory for the Geddes can spell no good for Labour; for if the Geddes win to-day, there is no knowing what they will not be at to-morrow.

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The carefully taught parrot Press has been repeating the phrase, as if it were a mantram, that this is a "strike against the community." So, in effect, it is; but in this respect it does not differ from any other strike, great or small, or, for the matter of that, from any lock-out, or even from any of the normal operations of capitalist industry. The very conception of capitalist industry is anti-social, or, at least, social only by accident; and it comes ill from a "community" that tolerates profiteering and other and worse forms of social robbery to complain that the employees of its robbers are "striking against the community." In the particular case of the railwaymen, moreover, the "community" has almost fewer claims to a decisive opinion than in the case of some other industries. The railways do not belong in any effective sense to the community; they are not run by the railway directors in the interests of the community; the railwaymen themselves have no kind of responsibility for the management and control of the railways; and the "community" at large takes so little interest in the industry that even properly audited accounts are not demanded of its directors. Such a strike might be a "strike against the community" if the community had ever bothered itself with railwaymen's affairs, or had even taken some pains to appoint trustworthy deputies. But since, as we know, the "community" has concerned itself as much with the Martian canals as with the English railways, and has been quite content with the administration of men like the brothers Geddes, the community has really only a small title to respect for its opinions. Its feeling, its needs, its conveniences—these, we admit, are another matter. But the plain fact is that the community must be prepared to take a more active and responsible part in their satisfaction—at least, to the ex-

tent of exercising a right choice of public servants—before it can claim the privilege of judgment between the contending parties.

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Though the Government (and the "community") may be said to have the strikes they deserve, it does not follow that the character of the strike is justified, except as a pathological phenomenon. In the present instance, for example, it is obvious that the men have all the excuses it is possible to make for a Trade Union strike. They have been provoked, they have been threatened, they have been the victims of a "plot," and they may well say their general situation has been rendered intolerable. With their known lack of ideas, in short, they had no choice between a strike and a final surrender. On the other hand, we cannot pretend that these excuses appear to us to be more than excuses; for when we come to consider, apart from the suspicions surrounding the strike, the kernel of economic fact contained in it, we cannot shut our eyes to its fallacious and empty character. The ultimate issue of the dispute, it is claimed, is the schedule of future wages; whether the standard rates are to include or exclude the war-bonuses added to pre-war wages during the period of the war. Very important, no doubt, if the nominal amount of wages, the mere figure in which they are expressed, were a fixed or even a relatively fixed quantity; under such conditions a wage-strike might, indeed, be said to be concerned with reality. But since we know that the value of wages depends upon prices, and that prices rise faster than wages, a strike for nominal wages ought to appear as the error it is. The wretchedness of the present strike will be most clearly seen if we assume that the railwaymen win upon their issue of wages at the same time that the Government maintains its constitutional right to arbitrate in communal interests; in other words, if we assume that the dispute has the happiest possible conclusion. In that event, we ask, how much better off will the railwaymen be in the possession of the nominal wage-rates they are demanding? Is the 51 shillings weekly minimum anything in itself? Is it any guarantee of a correspondingly adequate purchasing power? Has it, in short, any necessary relation with the general level of prives? If Prices are fixed—as they certainly are—by factors of which Labour is only one—it is not only conceivable, it is in the highest degree probable, that the nominal wages obtained by the railwaymen, whatever their amount in figures, will only serve to cover the cost of subsistence, and progressively less even of this. To return to our muttons, it appears to us that the issue of the present strike is entirely obsolete. It is a nominal wage-strike, from the most successful issue of which nothing can be expected by the men but increased prices more than sufficient to cancel the increased wages obtained.

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It is unreasonable to expect that the Labour movement will suddenly realise the folly of its attempt to raise wages at the cost of driving up prices. The education of Labour in even the simplest propositions of economic common sense is painfully slow; and only the experience of the hardest of brickwalls—such as Labour has not even yet encountered—seems likely to bring home to Labour the truth, which a little thought would demonstrate with ease. Nevertheless it is conceivable that as a consequence of the present strike Labour may for once put on its thinking-cap and set itself to compare the advantages contained in the two policies clearly implicit in the following propositions. The acquisition of purchasing power being the end in view of all economic agitation (on the side of Distribution), there are two methods and only two methods conceivable: one is to raise Wages, and the other is to reduce Prices. Hitherto, it is clear, the whole and exclusive policy of Labour has been concerned with the first of these methods. Since as long as we can remember, Labour has been intent on raising wages.

But it is no less obvious that, in comparison with the second method—that of reducing Prices—the attempt to obtain increased purchasing power by means of increased Wages has nothing to commend and much to condemn it. See what is involved in the adoption of the first method. In the first place, it isolates Labour and sets it in sharp opposition to the consuming community whose interest naturally lies with reduced prices. Higher wages under the existing system mean higher prices; and thus, not only is Labour condemned to forfeit the presumed advantages of higher wages, but the community likewise suffers in the consequent increased prices. Again, it is perfectly possible to represent wage demands as arising from the "selfishness" of organised Labour, and as aimed at the throat of the community. All the moral advantage of Labour, in short, is thrown away when the wage-policy is adopted. On the other hand, the adoption of a price-reducing policy would not only spare Labour the onus of the foregoing unavoidable and justifiable charges, but it would, for the first time in history, unite in a common enterprise Labour and the general public. At present and for as long as Labour continues to aim at higher nominal wages, the consuming public is *bound* to be hostile to the claims of Labour. The public is represented economically by Price; and since the effect of higher wages is to increase Prices, only by a rare impartiality can the public be expected to favour wage-strikes. But let it be assured that Labour aims at reducing Prices and at once the situation is transformed. From a force necessarily antagonistic to the interests of the consuming public, Labour becomes a friendly and, very soon, an indispensable and a leading force. From an unpopular movement, Labour would certainly become in a very little while the most popular movement in the country. It is amazing that Labour should have so seldom found occasion for revising its strategy in view of the obstacles it has hitherto encountered, and of which the undoubted opposition of the general public is the greatest. There is not the least need for such an opposition. On the contrary, as against the capitalist system, the real interests of Labour and the public—that is to say, of ninety-nine hundredths of the population—are identical. Labour has only to abandon its present suicidal policy of raising nominal wages and to direct its attention to reducing prices, to bring about a revolution both in its own and in the national history.

* * *

The moment for making the decision herein suggested is distinctly favourable. In the reaction certain to take place after the present strike, whatever may be its immediate results, not only will an opportunity be offered to Labour for a re-consideration of its policy, but the grey dawn will reveal to the general public the mounting cost of living as affected equally by the success or by the failure of the present strike. Prices will more than occupy the stage in the rôle, temporarily dropped by Labour, of the villain of the piece; and in no long time the minor villain of Wages will return to bear Prices company. For it cannot be assumed, however the strike may end, that the Wages arrived at will permanently or even for as long as a year satisfy the economic demand of the railwaymen, even if the general public should accept the consequent increased burden of Prices with relative equanimity. Moreover, as we have observed before, Prices are bound to rise and to continue to rise; they constitute, in fact, a perpetually intensifying problem; and long before the winter is over, the agitation now associated with Wages will be reinforced even if it is not overwhelmed by an agitation against high and ever higher Prices. That we are not merely guessing at this conclusion, but calculating in the most coldly scientific method, may be realised by anybody who will take the trouble to examine the facts. Price, it has been pointed out, is the product of two factors, that of the supply

of commodities and that of the supply of currency; and if, therefore, we discover that of these two factors the second is increasing faster than the first, no great exertion of brain is necessary to forecast with certainty that Prices will rise. Is it then the fact that the currency—in other words, the purchasing tokens in circulation—is increasing faster than the production of goods? We have only to ask the question to answer it. Everything demonstrates the existence, for the moment, of two streams of opposite intensity but of a single effect. Production is at this moment declining while the currency is being increased. Their common effect cannot possibly be any other than to bring about in the course of the next few weeks another and a serious rise in the general level of Prices.

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It was reported last week that during the last 10 days of September the Government's over-draft at the Bank of England was increased by the net amount of 45 millions. In all probability the statement has no significance for the vast mass of the people who may have read it; but in the concrete issue of Prices it has, nevertheless, the most direct and immediate bearing upon our daily problem of making both ends meet. Let us suppose that some clever forger were to pour into circulation 45 million poundsworth of Treasury Notes. What would be the effect of them? In the first place, he himself would become possessed of purchasing power to that amount, enabling him to go into the common market and to purchase goods and services up to the market value of 45 millions; and by so doing he would, it is obvious, "capture" the market to the degree specified. But that is not the only consequence to be observed; for, in the second place, by reason of the increased supply of purchasing-tokens brought about by the forgery, the purchasing value of all the other tokens in existence would be infallibly reduced. The Treasury Notes in your wallet, the very shillings and pence in your pocket, would undergo depreciation as purchasing-tokens by the mere coming into circulation of the 45 millionsworth of forged notes. The operation, however, is not a whit different when it is undertaken by the State than when it is undertaken by our hypothetical forger. The Government's over-draft at the Bank of England is no more and no less than the printing and circulation of 45 millions of purchasing-tokens, for which there is no more justification in increased production than in the case of the forger's sinister procedure. And the effects upon goods and prices are precisely the same. The Government is thereby enabled to become a purchaser in the common market up to the amount of 45 millions; and, by the same amount, the currency of the country is "inflated," that is to say, reduced in purchasing-power. It should be obvious with this simple fact before us that Prices and the cause of Prices are more important than Wages and the cause of Wages. For here it is seen that by an alchemy, usually concealed, a body of men (in this instance, the Treasury) has the power to nullify all the supposed effects of higher wages, and by operating on currency to advance Prices beyond any possible exertion of Wages to overtake them. Once more we repeat our advice to the Labour movement to stop talking of Wages and to fix its attention on Prices. Provided Prices can be controlled—and we have no doubt about it—Wages can be increased in their real purchasing power without troubling ourselves with their nominal value. On the other hand, nominal Wages may be increased ad infinitum without any other effect on Prices but to raise them.

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The methods employed by the Government in the present dispute are not such as to make nationalisation popular, least of all, we should say, with the rank and file of organised Labour; and even the Trade Union leaders themselves must begin to entertain doubts concerning the desirability of giving to the State more power over Labour than the State now possesses. It is common ground that the railway industry is at present only partially nationalised. As we interpret the facts, Sir Eric Geddes (an old railway manager) undertook the office of State bailiff in the interests of the private companies over the difficult period of post-war reconstruction, intending, when the trouble had been settled by means of State control, to return the industry to its original private owners. But the interim character of the State's present control must not be allowed to obscure the fact that in all probability the State's permanent control of the railways would be characterised by still more unscrupulous diplomacy. If while acting merely as a warming-pan for the private capitalist companies, the State can discriminate in the matter of unemployment pay between strikers and non-strikers, and even order the withholding of the pay actually due for work done by the railwaymen, it is not difficult to conceive what action the State might take if the strike were indeed a "strike against the community" under a nationalised railway industry. And if, in addition, the proposal of Mr. Bevin's Union were adopted, to give the State a monopoly of the existing credit or purchasing power of the community, the absolute despotism of the State would be theoretically and practically complete; not a soul would be able to live without the permission of the brothers Geddes and Mr. Churchill. In view of this obvious possibility, made abundantly clear by the action taken by the State during the present dispute, if the movement towards Nationalisation is not immediately dropped by the Miners and Railwaymen, we shall know that they are men incapable of learning even by experience. Nothing ought to be more clear than the character, the *natural* character, of the State when entrusted with the supreme power resident in economic power. In the supposed interests of the community it will stick at nothing to suppress liberty. Wanting control over their own economic power, even the greatest Labour organisations are powerless against the tyranny of the State. Unless, therefore, the Trade Unions are prepared to obtain control over their industry *without* the intermediation of State control, they are preparing for themselves and the public an era of unparalleled State-slavery.

* * *

The verdict on the printers' unions which have attempted to exercise a censorship over the Press in the interests of Labour must be: "Not guilty; but don't do it again." As an exception, rendered necessary by the exceptional malice and mendacity of the kept Press, the protest of the printers has every justification; and what years of reasoning, appeals for fair play and moderation of statement on the part of the Labour Press have failed to accomplish, the threatened strike of the printers has brought about in a day or two. It is true that the action of the printers is an exception which ought to establish more firmly the rule of free speech and free publication; for these are essentials of civilisation, and, still more, of democracy; but even our dearest rights need occasionally to be reminded that they are not absolute rights, but rights conditional upon responsibilities accepted and duties performed. It is ridiculous to pretend that the Press is "free" but for the printers, or that, without any other censorship than its own, it is "fair." The Press, like other commercial institutions, is under the permanent censorship of its capitalist proprietors, or of the capitalist advertisers; and its conception of "fair play" is usually that of repeating lies the more blatantly as they are reasonably exposed. Moreover, it has become almost a rule of the Press never to enter into argument with the critics of its policy, or to advertise the fact that reasonable objection exists. If the printers' action induces the kept Press to have some respect for truth and fair comment in the future; in short, to do its own censoring—we shall owe to the printers a moral reform of incalculable value.

Towards National Guilds.

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

THE whole of the Socialist movement has been based on an intellectual error: the error of supposing that it is the business of the community to socialise and control production. The business of the community is to socialise and control the product.

* * *

Whoever, among theorists, first attempts to get something done is regarded by the rest as a heretic. Practice is heresy to theory, as theory is, too often, foolishness to practice.

* * *

In Utopia there is a cotton factory so perfectly designed that one man, by pressing a series of electric buttons, can turn out cotton goods sufficient for the whole of the neighbouring population of 100,000 persons. Alas, they have not the spending-power to enable them to purchase the product; and, as for the engineer himself, if he lived upon cotton he could not absorb the fruits of his industry. Utopia is not a remote country. In a measurable time, at the present rate of invention, many of our industries will be able to be operated by a small minority of the population. If this minority should price its product at cost the rest of us will have to go without, since the sums dispensed to us in labour and salaries and dividends would be equal in purchasing-power only to a small fraction of the price put on the goods. It is necessary to sell below cost if consumption is to equal production. In other words, let production go on as it will with the aid of all the invention of which the producing geniuses are capable, but let us fix the price of the product for the social end of equitable distribution.

* * *

Why should the producer be the distributor also? Skill in production does not necessarily imply skill in distribution; and a system organised perfectly for production has no necessary affinity with a system organised perfectly for distribution. Lord Leverhulme is a great organising producer, a producer of genius; but his ability to distribute equitably is lower than that of a Bantu chief.

* * *

Miner: "I have the coal, which has cost me so-and-so much labour to produce. I'm prepared to dispose of it to anybody who can give me my cost for it *plus* a little bit of makeweight in the way of inducement to go on getting coal. If I get only my costs it wouldn't hardly draw me down the mine to-night, daddy! I don't want to be paid in money; money's no good to me, unless it will buy something I want; in fact, all I want. Give me money, but give me money's worth, and make the money worth something. I'll part with my coal to anybody who will give me money enough to cover my costs plus the extra. That's true. But I'll do better than that, if you haven't got the money on you; I'll take a little sum on account and an I.O.U. to say that you'll share with me in the goods you make with my coal. I'll do better than that if you like: I'll take an I.O.U. down for a share in the proceeds—provided your I.O.U. is good enough to enable me to raise money on it. What's that? You've got a better idea still? Right you are! I'll let you have the coal at half it cost me if you'll let me have a share of the goods at half they cost you. Good all round. We each get our costs, and each get our goods below cost."

* * *

Compare the *real* credit of a Bank of Producers with the credit of a Bank of Property-owners. The credit of the Producers' bank is backed by Production; the credit of the other bank is backed by titles to property. The one is a real, the other only a legal, credit. If the latter banks all failed nobody need be a penny the worse off, provided the Producers' banks continued to be backed by Production.

* * *

We are aiming at bringing into existence a new kind of credit—credit based on ability to produce—Labour credit. Labour credit, backed by the power to produce and deliver the goods, would quickly subordinate the credit that is based only on property.

* * *

A Producers' Bank, say in the mining industry, would bring about the following results: enable the price of coal to the ultimate consumer to be considerably reduced; put the miners in a position to pay the current dividend on all the existing capital invested in the industry; ensure Producers' control in course of time by their acquisition of the right to introduce fresh capital based on their Labour-credit; put a premium on efficiency of production by raising wages (or reducing prices in general) after each economy or labour-saving discovery; enable the industry to dispense with State-aid or State-control; bring about a revolution of price and conditions in a few months; make the transition from Capitalism to National Guilds easy, expeditious, and to the public advantage all the while. A Producers' Bank is worth striking for, if, indeed, there were any public opposition. But of what would the opposition consist? The public would sympathise with a demand that meant the instant reduction of the price of household coal; the existing proprietary could not object to a proposal to continue to guarantee their dividends and to respect their proprietary rights; the miners could not object to a scheme designed to increase their purchasing power, improve their conditions, unite them as prospectively senior partners in the industry, and bring them into public favour as the saviours of the nation. Who, then, would object? There are left only the finance-merchants, the dealers in proprietary credit, and the ultimate price-fixers for the community. Even they, however, would have no just title to object; for we do not propose to confiscate or nationalise or, in any way, trench upon their present monopoly. All we intend to do is to create a new form of Credit, based on Labour's ability to produce; and to employ that Credit in Production. Why, then, should even the financiers object, unless their purpose is to retain their monopoly by the suppression of a possible competitor? There's the rub! As has been said before, however, the people (including the public, the coal-proprietors and the miners) are many, while the financiers are jew.

* * *

"Nobody has ever lived in a healthy society." A healthy society is one in which the Distribution of commodities keeps pace in equity with the Production of commodities. Every century the capacity to produce is multiplied four-fold; but in this present century, the purchasing power of a day's labour is less than it was a hundred years ago. The criterion of a healthy and advanced society is the amount of goods (of all kinds) you can obtain for an hour's or a day's labour. An advanced society such as ours that rewards a day's labour with a day's food is advanced—towards corruption. With the mechanical resources and organisation of modern civilisation at our disposal, a few years' labour should keep a man in comfort for life! The incredulity felt on reading this confirms the truth of the opening sentence.

* * *

"Ring the bell," as Bacon said, "and call the wits together." Give us the leaders of the Miners' Federation, the leaders among the colliery-proprietors, and the heads of the Government, and our combined wits could perfect a plan which without further ado would settle the Labour v. Capitalist problem for all time.

NATIONAL GUILDSMEN.

Northern Lights.

By Leopold Spero.

III.—WILD RASPBERRIES.

The wisdom of dining in an Automat, ay, and of lunching and breakfasting, too, in the same earnest and respectable milieu, becomes most apparent only when you have learnt the unbelievable lesson that Great Britain, compared with Scandinavia, is a very Paradise of cheap living. The Swedes blame our blockade for this misfortune, more in sorrow than in anger; not that they are at all discomposed for having been pro-German, but are just a trifle disappointed in themselves for having backed the wrong horse. It was so obvious, they will tell you, in 1914 that the war would be over in three months, with Deutschland ueber alles, that they made all their preparations with an eye upon that result; played "See the Conquering Hero Comes," in pleasant and friendly anticipation of an event which was never to mature, and even extended and stretched faith into two and a half years of trial before they were finally persuaded that things would not perhaps be so after all.

It is curious that in the early months of 1917, when the submarine campaign first began to be pushed to its logical eventuality, when in this country for the first time the sea-power of Germany was felt in all its bitter force and nearness, the power of Great Britain and her function in the war began to be felt in Sweden for the first time. That we were not taken very seriously before then was due to the fact that Sweden frankly disbelieved everything we said, and this disbelief dated from the days when Liege remained more than humanly impregnable for us, and the sinking of the "Audacious" was no more than a wicked lie, devised by our foes for our confusion, and presumptuously discrediting the solemn pledge of Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B., and his Sisters, Cousins, and Aunts. And indeed, in these days when indemnities are a feature of practical politics, duly apportioned against those who have variously damaged us, what indemnity are we to demand from Mr. Winston Churchill, let us say, not to mention the scores among his understrappers who joined in the conspiracy to discredit the good name of our country in the eyes of neutral peoples?

Let us leave an unfruitful subject. The Swedes began to respect our naval power just when, loathing its spirit as much as ever, we began to respect that of the Germans. For two years they had combined Grasshopper with Ant; storing up the money they made, they stored up nothing else, neither reserves of food in Sweden nor of goodwill in the countries of the Entente. Always hoping that their sheet-anchor across the Baltic would come to their aid in time of need, they at length realised in what deadly need stood Germany herself. Then, for the first time, they became polite to us, and took it more than ill when their new good-feeling was not reciprocated. Perhaps a waft of that strange disease which kills the sense of humour had found its way across the Eastern sea; at all events, we were branded unreasonable—but, we were respected the more in proportion to the stubbornness of our unreason.

True, with money enough, one could still get what one needed for the table, by dint of scheming, lying, and playing the whole gamut of the old devices which we, too, learnt in our season. But for the poor there was nothing except higher wages; and when these did not suffice to still the clamour of hungry bellies, the blessed word Bolshevism appeared to save the moral situation. Simultaneously, it is true, there appeared in Stockholm some hundreds of unwelcome visitors from Russia, whose conduct and activities made it all the easier to arouse among the bourgeoisie that hatred of the proletariat which is the proper meed of those who have the impertinence to be hungry without being as rich as those who have enough, and the result is the present-day political situation of Sweden, where all the consequences of aristocratic and militarist blindness, plutocratic scoundrelism, and bourgeois snobbery and untruth, is laid upon the broad shoulders of the working man, now become strangely unwilling to bear the burden. The middle-class citizen, exasperated by the bad state of the investment market and by the knowledge that his own economic reserves are not without their limit, and being far too deeply awed and impressed with the goulasch-merchant either to legislate towards effective taxation of his ill-gotten gains or towards removing the possibility of propagation in the species, finds comfort in referring broadly to those who are poorer still than himself as "These Bolsheviks." Well, it may be that the quickest way to make Bolsheviks of the working-class is to call it Bolshevik long enough and with enough earnestness and consistency. We shall soon find out, here at home just as soon as in Sweden.

The Automat mitigates the shock of Sweden's dearness, for here at least you can get a sort of beer for threepence and a sort of false steak and potatoes for a florin, and sandwiches of certain kinds for anything between fourpence and a shilling. But to one who remembers the pre-war glory of the Swedish smoergosbord, that apotheosis of the spirit of hors d'œuvres these thin scraps of cheese or cucumber frailly posed on a slice of roll and butter partake of the nature of a tragedy, for they arouse both pity and horror in the mind of the spectator. Sooner or later, you are bound to face this reflection, if your purpose has been to keep within the limit of a pound a day, and leave the luxuries to profiteers. At the same time, it is not fair to picture Scandinavia as a land where the tradition of hospitality and good feeding has been suffered to languish into something pale and repellent, in caricature of its former self. It is still possible to be well fed—at a price. Let us have our four o'clock lunch on the good ship "Göteborg," bound for Kristiania from its godfather port. The saloon tables are scarcely decked for the sacrifice, the diligent stewardess has hardly set down on the sideboard the little hand-bell which has the happy destiny of sounding a message that is always one of joy and comfort, than the hungry ones troop in, square-shouldered, square-jawed, handsome business men of plethoric habit, calm-eyed, portly mothers with solemn children, frivolous yellow-haired girls, a freakish tourist with a carmine beard that bristles out from his face as if it were made of splinters of pine-wood, dyed for effect and to please the whim of his slab-faced, unaccountable wife, who looks like a mixture of a whiting and a mermaid, and digs great holes with her knife into the dish of butter. One is horrified . . . suppose there should not be enough! But there is more than enough of everything. Insinuatingly, while you are still thinking partly about the butter and partly about the girl whose skirts blew close around her as she stood on a jutting crag of granite at Fjällbäcka, or it may have been Gräbbestad, shading her eyes and staring out to sea and totally ignoring the "Göteborg's" inquisitive nose poked almost into the door of a red-plank house among the cliffs, seeing a better and more enduring sight than the visit of a small white steamer with letters and soda water and a few steel pipes and a case or two of dry goods . . . insinuatingly, the stewardess murmurs the word "schnapps," and you nod a far-away assent, as if these things were not for you to decide, but in the hands of the gods, who would not have brought you in the reach of aquavit unless they had meant you to take your share. There is lager beer, too, at this remarkable meal, and a tangled wilderness of cold dishes, salt herring, cucumber salads, tomatoes, sausage, veal, tongue, ham, hard-boiled eggs, anchovies, sardines, cheese. Against your better knowledge, you are convinced that there is more than sufficient for any man's lunch; and yet, it is not the

lunch at all, but only the outposts of the vast entrenchment of cooked fish, meat, vegetables, biscuits, stewed fruit, tea and coffee that will be found behind and be attacked, taken at the point of the best Eskilstuna knives, forks and spoons, and utterly destroyed, even by that frail, ethereal-looking, flirtatious young virgin with the corn-coloured hair, who has been exchanging glances with you all the morning on deck from the corner of her eye, and who now, as you look her way, idly toys in your sight with her flash engagement ring, to intimate discretion to you lest a sleepy fiancé awake at last to the sad realities of his position. What a formidable race!

Stromstad, where we must put up for the night on account of grave but unexplained sea-perils, has a cosy harbour to itself, an esplanade in the best Eastbourne manner, shops and other attractions to tempt the overfed passengers to land and see what is doing. Some of them find a dance in progress on the boarded floors of the Kurhaus, the children and very young folk among the visitors—for this is one of your Marstrands—much excited about it, for they are the chief revellers, and some of them have put on fancy dress, and those who have not gone so far are nevertheless a comely sight in their flannels and white cotton dresses. But that is no reason for the horror that follows, a minuet danced to the tinkle of a maltreated piano by a thin-cheeked spinster rigged out à la Pompadour and a silly ass in knee breeches and a powdered wig—the worst kind of silly ass, a youth whose face is all puffed up into blobs of self-satisfaction crossed by an inane, insane razor-edged grin, as he points a toe and postures and twists and smiles into the eyes of his partner, who was old enough to know better long before the war began. The healthy, innocent pleasure of the modest ball room must stop, forsooth, while this goes on; even the profiteers at their champagne and unspeakable Government cigars shift their fat knees uneasily under the round tables, and the pert, attentive waitresses in pseudo-Japanese gowns are abashed into silence, and crowd into corners. The head and front of the whole conspiracy, the stout lady at the piano, is without remorse; she construes the polite applause into an invitation for an encore, and the shocking business occurs again. One slips out on to the balcony, where the boys are making shy love and the girls thrilling to the delight of a new sensation, where the soft wind blows in from the sea and the lap of the tide upon the stones makes the eternal music of its Master.

And so to bed, and on the morrow the Fjord of Kristiania, wonderfully blue, with high, pine-clad banks, and mountains fading into the far distance, such warmth and loveliness in all the colours of sea and sky and earth that the barren shores we passed the night before seem harsher than themselves. And when Kristiania comes into sight at the end of the deep and splendid water, she seems no more than a rust of twinkling roofs scattered lightly over the mighty hills. Indeed, Kristiania is no more. As a metropolis, there is no place for her. Even her main street, with its Royal Palace at one end, its House of Parliament at the other, and in between the Park and promenade for the idle noonday hour, fails to convince; and beyond that, there is nothing, not a highway as imposing as the main street of an English provincial town, not a shop whose window can say, "Stop! Look at me!"; not a dockyard, a square, an hotel worth the eye of a sightseer, hardly a church, even, out of the commonplace, provincial rut. The chief railway station is a slovenly toolshed; Torvet, The Square, the very centre of the city's history, a cheap, second-class market place. It is well for Kristiania that the great hills sweep up around her, that the mighty pine forests look out over her head to the stretch of the long blue gulfs, that a mountain railway carries her comfortable citizens quickly out of their feeble and undignified metropolis to the heights where silent tarns lie brooding in the shadow of the woods three thousand feet above the sea, where the wild raspberries grow ripe for the little fingers that will pluck them soon, where the rains leave each fringe of fir, each leaf of silver birch bejewelled and flashing in the return of the sunshine. Noisy roysterers come to desecrate these solitudes with the melody of concertina and mouth-organ, or, still worse, with the unholy roar of intoxicated ribaldry; for Norway has gone over to Prohibition, and by consequence an important section in all classes of the population is permanently intoxicated. But the sweet air cools foolish foreheads, and it is better to stumble over a pine root and lie in the moss and the bracken until the beastliness has passed than to welter below in the kennel among the sounds and sights and smells of an untidy city.

Agin the Agitators.

DEAR BILL,—

I'd gladly "cut the cackle (of personalities) and come to the 'osses" (of our opposing beliefs), but this isn't altogether easy. One difficulty is that I can't well throw a brick at an agitator without hitting you, and the other is that you seem to me to be shifting the ground of the argument all round the compass.

You began by strafing me over those articles in the "Times" and my urging therein propaganda to combat the agitators, you shift on to objections to my beliefs that greater production is good, and finally you shunt production matters as of minor importance and want to argue on the evils of the present system of distribution. The production and distribution matters are tempting enough red herrings trailed across the real track of our argument, but I prefer to stick to the first track and explain my objections to the agitator, and why I recommended propaganda counteracting his.

(I am not deliberately shirking the stating of a case on Production matters, and have stated it elsewhere many times to the best of my ability, when and where I thought it would do most good.)

Yours may be a sound argument that the main thing to attack is the evil which breeds agitation and agitators, but that is no reason for failing to squash the agitator if, as I believe, he is harmful to industry and society.

If you have a splinter in your eye I'd try to remove the splinter before trying to cure the eye. If I have a nasty open sore on my arm and you insist on prodding at it and irritating it with a dirty stick, I'd do my best to throw you out of the house before even reaching for the healing lotion and bandage. If we were at sea together in an open boat in rough weather and you kept on pulling the plug out I'd tie you up, or knock seven bells out of you, or throw you overboard, rather than have you risking the boat and crew—then plug the boat and bale her dry. If my house is on fire I'd stop any fellow throwing kerosene on the blaze, before giving my help to the fire brigade.

And because the agitator is the splinter in the eye of Industry, the irritating stick in the sore, the fellow trying to sink the boat or throw the kerosene on the blaze, I want him outed as quickly and effectually as possible.

I do not say, and have not said, the agitator is the sole cause of Industrial unrest. But I do believe and say that he hinders or prevents any cure of the unrest, that he foments it, tries to prevent settlements of vexed questions, makes trouble and keeps it alive, breeds class hatred, stirs up perpetual strikes, acts as an irritant and a disturbing quantity on every possible occasion. I don't say that if or when the agitator is silenced all industrial troubles will cease. I do say that there would then be more chance of curing them, that when employers and workers are at outs on any subject there is less chance of making peace between them if the agitators are allowed to raise and magnify points of difference, to "sool on" one side at the throat of the other.

Industrial ills may, as you say, be the outcome of a bad system of production and distribution; but I fail to see how it is going to help eliminate those ills to have never-ending strikes and quarrels in industry.

I believe all the ills can best be got rid of by calm consideration of them, peaceful reasoning, experiment, and amicable settlement—and then further reasoning, experiment and settlement. The agitator is against this. He appears to hate peace, and to miss no chance of stirring up strife. You may tell me all this is not true of the agitator, that he honestly wants peaceful settlement, and wants most of all to wipe out industrial ills. I believe some do want to wipe out the ills, but I think they go quite the wrong way about it—as in your own case, for instance. You say your fury was lit not by the fact of my lecture, but because of my unacquaintance with the facts of the case—the facts accepted by the agitator. I'd ask you to look at it another way. If two men are fighting and I see a third man egging them on to the fight and recommending them to use axes instead of fists; and if the third man refuses to stop egging them on, I should feel entitled to do my best to persuade him he was wrong or to recommend others to so persuade him. You have no right to be furious with me for doing so. Even if I don't know the facts of the fight you ought not to object to my trying to stop it, especially if I believe the disputed points can be better and more satisfactorily settled without fighting.

I repeat that you may tell me I am wrong in these beliefs about the agitator, that he doesn't try to make strife, that he is disposed to industrial peace. I don't believe it, I can't believe it, because all my experience goes to prove the opposite. I've heard too many agitators talk to the workers, have argued with too many myself, have seen the effects of their agitation too often, to believe them anything but a cause of trouble.

I'll put a blunt question to you, Bill. Does not the average agitator try to stir up industrial trouble, to set class against class, to make workers believe employers as a class are tyrants and brutes against whom no weapon is too bad to use? Is not your own earnest work likely to attain these ends?

I must object to your formula of my beliefs as set against yours. For one thing it is impossible to set these formulæ against each other. You state mine, "A. Greater production is for the good of society," as against your "A. The present system of distribution of the products of industry is an evil one—and a worse one the harder it is worked." This is like saying "The cat is white" as against "The dog is black—and the bigger it is the more black about it."

Still preferring to stick to the original cause of these letters, I'd put my formula :—

A. Industrial war is bad for all concerned.

B. The agitator supports war.

C. The agitator is the enemy of all concerned.

As for stating a case that the agitator supports industrial war, I need only refer you to the average speech of any "rebel against constituted authority," I need not go outside instances of your own work. Even if you and they are specialists in hate of a hateful thing or system, it does not justify breeding hate between the people engaged in the hateful system.

You say that "a change into the most amiable intentions all round would make no great improvement." I think it would, and that's why I think the agitator harmful in choking at birth any such change. You say that a piece of mechanism producing certain results will go on producing those results regardless of the morality of the operator. That is no reason why the agitator should fight anyone who wants to examine the machine and see or try if altering a wheel here, a cutting tool there, won't alter or improve the product; or that he should urge the operator to take a sledge-hammer to anyone who tried to alter and improve; or that he should refuse to allow any alteration short of smashing the whole machine to scrap iron. You believe the present machine is producing discontent and unhappiness; I believe the machine can be altered, is being altered, to produce content and happiness. And I know that where such alterations have been suggested or tried (in the shape of various profit-sharing schemes, for instance) the agitator has fought tooth and nail against such schemes.

I had quite determined to stick to the original argument and finish it on the ground where it began, on the goodness or badness of the agitator, and not to sidetrack on the fresh points you raise about production and distribution. You might even doubt my competence to argue on the latter since you tell me plainly I don't even "know there's a war on" between us consumers and the system of distributing commodities to us (although, to be sure, you state on the other hand that "Boyd Cable supports it and the harder working," the "it" being your A., "The present system of distributing, etc.," so that apparently I'm supporting a side I don't know exists, in a war I don't know is on—which is rather confusing, Bill); but I can't refrain from some remarks on this new argument of yours that the war between Capital and Labour over the system of production is a mere minor affair, and that "the real tragedy" is in the process of distribution. I wish you'd advertise and propagate more widely these views of yours that there is no real war about production and nothing but "some sectional and technical quarrels with this of greater or less importance." In the last year or two I've talked and argued and debated with all classes and grades of labour, have lectured to many thousands of workers, have been heckled and questioned, have engaged (as I still am) in correspondence with many workmen, have listened to the speeches and demands and threats of agitators in and out of factories all over England; and I had formed a firm opinion that there are serious causes of dispute on this very subject of production, the sharing of the profits therefrom, the hours and wages of producers, the whole production question. I thought, and still think, these points of vital importance to the mass of workers, the matters that disturb them most urgently.

You tell me it is not so. You surprise me, and I fancy you'll surprise a good many of your admirers. In fact, I think most of your admirers firmly believe the war you wage so hotly is in the main one between Capital and Labour and over production issues, and I don't know they won't consider this avowal of yours as rank heresy on your part. If I could only feel that you'd do your best to disseminate your views that any quarrel on matters of production is "sectional and technical," etc., and only more or less important, I'd gladly conclude these letters had performed some real service.

And be consoled, Bill. If you have "failed to bring me nearer to God," you've given me the satisfaction of hearing you (as it seems to me) in part disavow the Creed and True Faith of Agitators by this declaration about the unimportance of Production quarrels, the admission that "In heart they (the capitalists) are as good as the average," and that you don't think "personal capitalists are responsible for the evils of society."

Quite honestly and seriously, Bill, I believe that if you ceased to make your followers believe that the capitalist is necessarily a monster, and instilled a belief that at heart he is on the average quite a decent sort, you would be doing real good. You would be helping to do what I'm trying to do—bring both sides to a reasonable frame of mind ready to listen to and consider each other's grievances, settle them amicably without the waste and wickedness and misery of strikes over every trifle, and class war everlasting, and in the long run bring about decent content and happiness amongst producers, distributors, and consumers of all classes.

BOYD CABLE.

Drama.

By John Francis Hope.

THE recent revivals of Restoration comedy by the Incorporated Stage Society have been enthusiastically received by its members; and to meet the demand for more frequent presentation of Elizabethan, Restoration, and later plays (up to Sheridan, I suppose), the Council of the Stage Society has decided to form a new Society for this purpose. Organised under the auspices of the Stage Society, "The Phœnix" now appeals for membership and support; its address is the same as that of the Stage Society: 36, Southampton Street, Strand. "The Phœnix" will give its first performance on Sunday, Nov. 16, and Webster's "The Duchess of Malfi" will be the play. The programme for the first season will be the play already mentioned, Dryden's "Marriage à la Mode," the first part of Heywood's "The Fair Maid of the West," Otway's "Don Carlos," and Ben Jonson's "Volpone"; and the main purpose of the Society is to restore our classic drama to the stage, instead of letting it rot in the library.

It is a most gallant enterprise, and I wish it all success. I have my own quarrel with modern dramatists, but there is this excuse to be made for them—that they have not before their eyes the classic models of English drama. Modern drama propagates itself after the manner of the thistle; a man writes, let us say, a bedroom scene, the seed is blown hither and thither by the wind of popularity, and instantly there are fifty plays running to advertise somebody's furniture and somebody else's lingerie. That a bedroom scene may be dramatic, may have the poetic quality of mystery, Shakespeare showed in "Othello"; but the model is so rarely before the eyes of modern writers that the limits of the dramatic possibilities are reached by them when, as in "Scandal," they make a man refuse to go to bed with his reputed wife.

Modern drama suffers chiefly from two things, the epicene convention and the ignorance of classic drama. I think it was "R. H. C." who, some years ago, put forward a plea for a Theatre for Men Only; and, although the phrase is unnecessarily aggressive, the main conception is sound enough. There is no real objection to be made to women seeing plays for men, any more than there is to women reading men's newspapers, but there are powerful objections to be made to compelling men to see plays that are fit for women only. The epicene convention has ditched the art of drama in feminism, the interests and the values of drama have become feminine. Shakespeare himself, if he lived in these times, would not dare to write "Hamlet," "Macbeth," "Othello," "King Lear," and so forth; but would offer us "Ophelia," "Desdemona," "Lady Macbeth," "The Three Sisters," and take the women's point of view of his male characters. There are two main themes of modern drama on which all manner of variations are played, and they reveal clearly the extent to which the modern dramatic imagination is obsessed by purely feminine influences and values. Those two themes are, of course, "Virtue in Danger" and "The Concealment (or Discovery) of Unlawful Love"; and in the treatment of these two themes the emphasis has shifted from the dramatic expression of passion mounting into poetry to the mere parlour-game of preserving appearances and talking in the style of "Home Chat." The literature for the Theatre for Men Only exists in the classic English drama that "The Phœnix" is formed to produce. It was written before the epicene convention was invented, when women were a part of life instead of being merely the censors of it. The virility of it is shocking to those who accept the epicene convention; the works of Beaumont and Fletcher, of Massinger, of Webster, and the rest, are not "nice." But "if it be true," said Swinburne, "as we are told on high authority, that the greatest glory of England is her literature and the greatest glory of English literature is its poetry, it is not less true that the greatest glory of English poetry lies rather in its dramatic than in its epic or lyric triumphs. The name of Shakespeare is above the names even of Milton, Coleridge, and Shelley; and the names of his comrades in art and their immediate successors are above all but the highest names in any province of our song." Yet, by one of those paradoxes that have made England what she is, most of these works are known only as literature to a comparatively small body of students, and as drama, even students know little of them. France continues to play Molière, Racine, Corneille, Voltaire, and incidentally to maintain the tradition of acting in the grand manner; but in England, we are told, only four of Beaumont and Fletcher's fifty plays have been produced within the memory of living man, and those only at odd intervals and for a few performances. Massinger wrote nineteen plays, of which one has been revived, Brome's fifteen plays attracted the attention of a dramatic club in 1913, which produced one of them; with one exception, the whole of Webster has been forgotten; Shirley wrote thirty plays, one of which was revived last summer; Mr. Poel has revived one of Heywood's twenty-two dramas; amateurs have attempted to play one of Dryden's twenty-eight plays, and another was semi-privately produced in 1886; Chapman, Middleton, Marston, Wycherley, Etherege, and others have never in our time been seen on the stage. We need not wonder that modern English drama, like Disraeli's mule, is without pride of ancestry or hope of posterity.

The prime difficulty attending this revival of the classic drama will be the renewal or establishment of an acting tradition. There were a few meritorious performances in the Stage Society's production of Restoration comedy, several more of promise, and many of appalling incompetence. There is no reason why "The Phœnix" should not become the nucleus of a classic theatre if it concentrates rather more attention on the acting than the Stage Society could do in war time. These plays require not merely actors with the dramatic imagination, but also actors with something of the historic imagination, and most particularly of all, with the ability to speak verse and prose without trying to make it sound like the language of telegrams. If Benson could be induced to superintend the rehearsals of the Elizabethan plays, the delivery of verse would not be such an obvious embarrassment to the actor and such a painful ordeal to the audience. The modern actor, trained in the "natural" technique, plainly feels ridiculous when reciting verse; yet Mr. Quartermaine's recitation of the "Queen Mab" speech in Miss Doris Keane's barbarous production of "Romeo and Juliet" was one of the few successes of the revival. Verse is a most "natural" form of speech, although English people usually adopt their most affected manner when reciting it; and it will probably be easier to secure a performance homogeneous in style of the verse plays than of the prose comedies. I shudder when I remember how Mr. Basil Sydney and Mr. Gilbert Cannan walked through Congreve, and translated the cadences of his prose into the commonplace sententiousness of the undergraduate. We cannot reasonably expect to recover at once the acting tradition of high comedy; but much may be done by careful casting to give those who have the talent the opportunity of developing it. An actress like Miss Ethel Irving, for example, with her almost uncanny flair for the period, would need very little experience to enable her to perfect her technique; while, on the other hand, Miss Lilian Braithwaite, who is "so lovely fair" and makes such a good photograph, would remain hopelessly modern if she wore Restoration costumes, and played Restoration comedy, for the rest of her life.

On the Translation of Poetry.

V.

But it is one thing to point out faults, and another to suggest a remedy for them. Here, perhaps, it will be as well to formulate the real nature of the problem with which we are confronted. It is the clash between two opposing tendencies—the artistic inspiration produced by the original, and the process akin to mechanical versifying, which the attempt to translate the original will almost inevitably involve. What we have to decide is whether, and if so, how, a reconciliation can be effected between these two factors. Let me add that the reconciliation must be effected so as to leave no trace of the conflict. Now can the thing be done without recourse to the deplorable methods of Longfellow? The examples of good translation which I have already quoted show that it can, but as an additional and more convincing proof, I will take a case where the sonnet-form imposes considerable restrictions on the translator. This is Ronsard's original:

Quand vous serez bien vieille, au soir, à la chandelle,
Assise auprès du feu, devidant et filant,
Direz, chantant mes vers, et vous esmerveillant:
Ronsard me célébroit du temps que j'estois belle.

Lors vous n'aurez servante oyant telle nouvelle,
Desja sous le labeur à demy sommeillant,
Qui au bruit de "Ronsard," ne s'aille réveillant,
Bénissant votre nom de louange immortelle.

Je seray sous le terre, et fantosme sans os,
Par les ombres myrteux je prendray mon repos;
Vous serez au foyer une vieille accroupie,

Regrettant mon amour et vostre fier desdain.
Vivez, si m'en croyez, n'attendez à demain;
Cueillez dès aujourd'huy les roses de la vie.

Andrew Lang has translated it thus:

When you are very old at evening
You'll sit and spin beside the fire, and say,
Humming my songs, "Ah, well! ah, well-a-day!
When I was young of me did Ronsard sing."

None of your maidens that doth hear the thing,
Albeit with her weary task foredone,
But wakens at my name, and calls you One
Blest, to be held in long remembering.

I shall be low beneath the earth, and laid
On sleep, a phantom in the myrtle shade,
While you beside the fire, a grandame grey,
My love, your pride, remember and regret.
Ah, love me, Love! we may be happy let;
And gather roses while 'tis called to-day.

C. Kegan Paul's rendering of the same sonnet is worth quoting to show how the technical difficulties may be variously overdone by two skilful translators—

When very old, at eve, while candles flare,
Chatting and spinning by the fire you sit,
And, marvelling, you hum the lines I writ,
Say, "Ronsard sung me once when I was fair."

Then every serving-maid who slumbers there,
Nodding above her task with drowsy wit,
Hearing my name, will rouse at sound of it
And bless your name, your deathless praise declare.

A disembodied ghost, I shall have laid
My bones to rest beneath the myrtle shade,
While you, a crone, crouch o'er the embers' glow,

Mourning my love, and your sublime disdain;
Live, trust me, wait not for to-morrow's pain,
But cull to-day life's roses as they blow.

I must leave the reader to decide for himself which of these two translations is truer to the original. But I think it will be agreed that if we allow for the restrictions which the sonnet-structure has imposed upon the translators, neither of them has taken undue liberties with Ronsard's text. I shall return to the special cases presented by difficulty of poetic forms, when I discuss the fulfilment of my third demand.

I think it may reasonably be agreed, then, that the process of translating poetry without sacrificing sense or beauty is, in most cases, a possible one. How it is to be accomplished is a matter which can scarcely be indicated by precise directions. For we must remember that, after all, it is a process which springs from the same impulse as original composition. So much, however, may be said: Stubborn passages, which seem to defy all attempts to master them, must be dealt with by a patient system of coaxing and judicious paraphrase. In the end they will generally yield. A felicitous rendering may result from an immediate flash of inspiration, or it may have been arrived at after days of thought. But if it is really felicitous, it will bear no trace of the labour which achieved it. Above all, the translator should be his own sternest critic, and not not be satisfied (as many seem to be) with the first solution of his difficulty, unless he himself is thoroughly convinced by it. Carlyle's "infinite capacity for taking pains" applies with peculiar aptness to the translator. In the preface to Freiligrath's translation of "Mazeppa," which was published posthumously, his wife makes this interesting comment: ". . . . as the poet took his art more and more seriously, he made almost incredible demand upon himself. No difficulty daunted him, and if a passage proved obstinate, he would carry it about quietly with him for days, weeks, nay, even months, until he had given to it the form which he deemed the right one. With all the mastery which he thus obtained, and with all the severity which he accorded to his own productions, even he was sometimes fain to acknowledge that he had accomplished some perfect translations in his early youth, half unconsciously at it were." To this I can only add that by no other method would it have been possible to translate with equal dexterity, as Freiligrath did, such varying originals as Shakespeare's "Venus and Adonis," Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner," and Tennyson's "Lady of Shalott."

Of course, there will always be a certain number of poems which cannot be translated adequately at all. Even Freiligrath with his enormous industry and skill, his abilities as an original poet, and his intimate knowledge of English, had to admit himself defeated now and then. Thus we are told that he was baffled by Wordsworth's lines "To Lucy," Burns' "To Nancy" and "To Mary in Heaven," and he quoted the opening line of the latter poem: "Thou lingering star with lessening ray," as an example of language which was beyond translation. (This, I think, shows the deceptiveness of appearances.) Freiligrath also regretted his inability to render "Hark, hark! the lark!" from "Cymbeline," and he deplored the feeble German text which formed the basis of Schubert's setting. Finally, he admitted being unable to make anything of Herrick's "Delight in Disorder," the particular stumbling-block here being the "tempestuous petticoat." The instinct of the translator will enable him to discriminate between the technically difficult and the fundamentally impossible, between what can be obtained after long search if necessary, and what will elude all search. For the true translator is master of his medium, and is consequently aware of its natural limitations.

VI.

The emotional effects produced by poetry are so intimately connected with its form, that the necessity for preserving the latter in translation would seem beyond argument. Such details as the external type of the stanzas, the distribution of stresses in each verse, the arrangement of the rhymes and the nature of the dic-

tion, must therefore inevitably find their approximate counterparts in any serious attempt at poetical translation. If I appear to emphasise this aspect of the subject unduly, it is because the assertion has been made by persons who cannot be altogether devoid of intelligence, that the only satisfactory method of translating poetry is to reproduce it in prose. As regards this, Matthew Arnold, in his essay "On Translating Homer," says: "There are great works composed of parts so disparate that one translator is not likely to have the requisite gifts for poetically rendering all of them. Such are the works of Shakespeare and Goethe's 'Faust'; and these it is best to attempt to render in prose only." But he immediately proceeds to discredit whatever critical authority might be attached to this opinion by adding the following extraordinary statements: "People praise Tieck and Schlegel's version of Shakespeare: I for my part would sooner read Shakespeare in the French prose translation, and that is saying a good deal; but in the German poet's hands Shakespeare so often gets, especially where he is humorous, an air of what the French call niaiserie! and can anything be more un-Shakespearian than that? Again, Mr. Hayward's prose translation of the first part of 'Faust' . . . is not likely to be surpassed by any translation in verse."

I intend to discuss the Schlegel-Tieck translation of Shakespeare in a later section of this work. As for Mr. Hayward's prose translation of "Faust," which "is not likely to be surpassed by any translation in verse," I will content myself with the opening lines of the "Walpurgis-Night" scenes where Mephistopheles is made to remark:—"Do you not long for a broomstick? For my part, I should be glad of the sturdiest he-goat. By this road we are still far from our destination."

The argument underlying many of the current ideas about prose translation is, as I understand it, that in his endeavour to preserve the form of the original, the translator obtrudes an alien personality between the original poet and the reader. How this is to be avoided by utterly destroying the most prominent features of the original poem is a mystery which is left unexplained by the advocates of prose translation. I cannot attempt to fathom it, and I must confess myself a believer in the proverb which fixes the relative value of half a loaf and no bread.

I have no desire to be dogmatic over this. The great epic poets who can be read for the contents of their narrative, without regard for the structure and style of their verse, may, I am prepared to grant, be submitted to such treatment with fairly satisfactory results, and so we have good prose translations of Homer and Dante. But as far as lyric poetry is concerned, I can sanction no other method but that of the most scrupulous fidelity which is compatible with the spirit of the translator's language. Even with Dante, for instance, I would rather read a translation which made some endeavour to preserve the euphony of his rhyme-scheme, than a more verbally accurate one in plain prose. But we can easily put this to the test. Here is an extract from the "Purgatorio" (Canto XXVIII, ll. 13-33) in the prose rendering by Mr. Thomas Okey:—

> . . . yet not so far bent aside from their erect state, that the little birds in the tops ceased to practise their every art;
>
> but, singing, with full gladness they welcomed the first breezes within the leaves, which were murmuring the burden to their songs;
>
> even such as from bough to bough is gathered through the pine-wood on Chiassi's shore, when Aeolus looses Sirocco forth.
>
> Already my slow steps had carried me on so far within the ancient wood, that I could not see whence I had entered;
>
> and lo! a stream took from me further passage which, toward the left with its little waves, bent the grass which sprang forth on its bank.
>
> All the waters which here are purest, would seem to have some mixture in them, compared with that which hideth naught;
>
> albeit full darkly it flows beneath the everlasting shade which never lets sun, nor moon, beam there.

Shelley translated the same lines as follows:—

> Yet were they not so shaken from the rest,
> But that the birds perched on the utmost spray,
> Incessantly renewing their blithe quest,
>
> With perfect joy received the early day,
> Singing within the glancing leaves, whose sound
> Kept a low burden to their roundelay,
>
> Such as from bough to bough gathers around
> The pine forest on bleak Chiassi's shore,
> When Aeolus Sirocco has unbound.
>
> My slow steps had already borne me o'er
> Such space within the antique wood, that I
> Perceived not where I entered any more,
>
> When, lo! a stream whose little waves went by,
> Bending towards the left through grass that grew
> Upon its bank, impeded suddenly
>
> My going on. Water of purest hue
> On earth would appear turbid and impure
> Compared with this, whose unconcealing dew,
>
> Dark, dark, yet clear, moved under the obscure
> Eternal shades, whose interwoven looms
> The rays of moon or sunlight ne'er endure.

Without questioning the merits of Mr. Okey's translation, I am not convinced that he obtrudes less than Shelley between Dante and myself.

I am aware that the alleged universal practice of French translators is also urged in favour of this method. Apart from the fact that English and French are two languages with certain fundamental differences, this argument is based upon an inaccurate generalisation, for the French do sometimes produce metrical renderings (and excellent ones) of foreign poetry. Here, for example, are the opening lines of Goethe's "Faust," as translated by M. Monnier:—

> J'ai tout appris: philosophie,
> Droit, médecine et chirurgie,
> Même, hélas! la théologie,
> Tout fouille d'un esprit fervent;
> Maître et docteur—âne savant!—
> J'en suis juste aussi long qu'avant.
> Les écoliers dont je me charge,
> Dix ans je les ai promenés,
> En haut, en bas, en long, en large
> En travers, en biais, par le nez.
> Je vois qu'on ne sait rien au monde,
> Voilà ce qui navre mon cœur.
> Quand j'entends ergoter en chœur
> Les nigauds dont la terre abonde,
> Magister, docteur, moine ou clerc,
> J'en sais plus qu'eux tous; jamais doute,
> Ni scrupule ne me déroute,
> Ni peur du diable et de l'enfer.

This is Mr. A. G. Latham's English version of the same passage:—

> I have studied, alas! Philosophy,
> And jurisprudence, and Medicine too,
> And saddest of all, Theology,
> With ardent labour, through and through!
> And here I stick, as wise, poor fool,
> As when my steps first turned to school.
> Master they style me, nay, Doctor, forsooth,
> And nigh ten years, o'er rough and smooth,
> And up and down, and acrook and across,
> I lead my pupils by the nose,
> And know that in truth we can know—naught!
> My heart is turned to coal at the thought.

I am wiser, true, than your coxcomb-tribe,
Your Doctor and Master, your Parson and Scribe;
To no idol of scruple or doubt do I grovel,
I know no fear of Hell or Devil.

I think, therefore, we may agree that the preservation of poetical form is more desirable than its abandonment. In the next section we will examine a few of the difficulties arising from this aspect of the translator's task.

Conscience and Fanaticism.

By Captain Anthony M. Ludovici, R.F.A.

WHEN, at the end of his career as a philosopher, Herbert Spencer wrote his Autobiography, it will be remembered that he expressed the view that if a young man should ever come to him declaring his intention of writing upon philosophy, he would most certainly discourage him, for the simple reason that the whole field had already been explored—or words to that effect. (I write only from my memory of a passage read eight or nine years ago.) William Morris likewise, in an address on the Decorative Arts, maintained that no man, however original he might be, could sit down to-day and design anything new in the nature of decorative ornament. In the same manner old musicians, appalled as they may be by the incomprehensible development of modern music, will, nevertheless, explain it by saying that, since everything in melody has been done to death, innovation must take other directions—harmony, for instance. It is this impudence on the part of old age, this tendency of senility to assume that they and their like are normal, that they and their habitual exhaustion and sterility are *the* standard, which has always seemed to me the most exasperating feature of our old gaffers. The high-spirited swagger of the boy reaching manhood, which, as we know, almost makes these old relics burst their calcified bloodvessels with indignation, at least has exuberance and a promise of life to recommend it; whereas the insolence of senility has nothing whatever even to make it tolerable, much less pardonable.

When Spencer spoke as he did about the future of philosophy, the whole field of the science of values and valuation was still practically virgin ground; nor can it be said that Psychology had been more than introduced as a subject of inquiry. It is possible that the future of philosophy depends upon the progress made in these two sciences, unless the truths they may yet reveal will come too late—too late, that is to say, for there to be any future for anything.

In "Conscience and Fanaticism,"* at any rate, Mr. Pitt Rivers—precisely one of the young men whom Herbert Spencer would have discouraged—attempts an honest inquiry into the various factors, spiritual and material, which ultimately combine in the human being to produce that composite mental attitude, which for convenience we loosely subdivide into such elements as opinion, prejudice, conviction, prepossession, like and dislike, instinct and character. His inquiry into the nature of conscience follows along independent, and, in some respects, novel lines; but although much in this volume appears to me to be the re-statement of facts which to many of us to-day may seem truisms, it is becoming more and more plain every minute that this sort of re-statement of simple truths regarding the more profound problems of our being is most necessary at the present time. Words are used so loosely and are so seldom the signs of definite ideas which one can feel assured have their place in the speaker's mind, that it is impossible to over-estimate, at this stage in our history, the value of reiterating the simplest truisms. As Mr. Pitt Rivers says:—

> Men from the very indolence of their minds, love to set up symbols and to worship them, without verifying the truths they are supposed to represent, for symbols are easily acquired and easily perceived, and dispense with the arduous necessity of probing reality and the mental discipline without which truth cannot be reached. The power of words and symbols is entirely independent of their real meaning. As we have already shown, the most meaningless and the most obscure phrases are, as a rule, for that very reason the most potent. Such terms as liberty, equality, democracy, socialism, etc., whose meanings are so vague that whole libraries do not exhaust their possible interpretations, are solemnly uttered as though they were magic spells, at the very sound of which all problems disappear. Symbolism and mysticism form the fanatic's charter of licence (pp. 108-109).

This is all very true, and cannot be repeated too often, particularly in these days of irresponsible journalism, with catachresis as the mot d'ordre. But there are many points which the author takes for granted in regard to the fanatic, which it seems difficult to concede. Where to begin, however, in an examination of his treatment of this profound problem, is, perhaps, even more difficult.

Briefly, Mr. Pitt Rivers' thesis is as follows:—

The psychic life of human beings is conditioned by three factors:—(1) Heredity; (2) The net results of the habits and acquirements of the individual from the moment of conception to the end of existence; this with the first produces character; and (3) Environment.

The Environment referred to in Mr. Pitt Rivers' book, however, is something more than the concept we are led to form of it in the works of the evolutionists. It is not merely composed of ambient material conditions, it involves a psychic factor, to which the author would ascribe more than ordinary importance. To use his own terms, it includes "Cosmic suggestion"—that is, if we understand him correctly, an intangible force which, emanating from the conscience of the community, secretly operates upon and directs the conscience of the individual. In this connection there are some profoundly interesting remarks on the instinct of Imitation (see pp. 77 and 78). In order to understand the action and the potency of this force, we are given a description of the latest results of research in the science of hypnotism and of the influence of suggestion on the minds of the non-hypnotised.

Much of this can be granted without hesitation, and we arrive at the conclusion (based largely upon the observation of hypnotic phenomena) that "the communal conscience reacts upon the individual conscience in inverse ratio to the latter's emotional or intellectual capacity for resistance." Thus, the factors of conscience are: (1) emotional; (2) intellectual; (3) internal (hereditary and organic elements); and (4) external; and its validity, in ultimate analysis, can but rest in codes, which may be not only Conventional and Artificial, but also Rational or Intellectual, Social and Utilitarian.

When it is not merely the expression of an individual attitude, the validity of moral judgment "will therefore always depend upon the criterion of conduct previously adopted. In this way it is held that a moral judgment differs from a statement of fact, which is valid irrespective of the existence of any mind capable of apprehending that fact."

The code, or criterion of conduct recommended in this book is that supplied by the principle of "Utility." The corrective to a conscience, powerful but misguided,

* "Conscience and Fanaticism: An Essay on Moral Values." By George Pitt Rivers. (Heinemann. 6s. net.)

is "Reason." Fanaticism and emotional guidance go hand-in-hand, and are equally detestable to Mr. Pitt Rivers.

The chapters on Religion and Morality, and Values and Valuation, contain much that is new (at least to me), and exceedingly illuminating; the objections, however, that I raise to Mr. Pitt Rivers' whole thesis, depend more upon our difference of opinion as regards first principles.

There are too many assumptions in this book—assumptions which are actually dangerous.

For instance, the obvious questions raised by Mr. Pitt Rivers' confident acceptance of Utility as the principle in which the authority for a code of morals is to be sought, is clearly, whose utility?—what utility? The very conclusion arrived at under the guidance of Mill to the effect that proximate considerations take precedence of remote considerations (p. 24) plainly leads us into a controversy not concerning values, but concerning the ultimate gain society derives from the quality of hypermetropia in one type of man and that of myopia in the other.

Again, when we hear that "emotion never brings us nearer the truth" (p. 46), or that "no cosmic problem is solved, or even advanced by the cerebral function we call emotion" (p. 47), we are again inclined to ask —whose emotion? If emotion is, as the author admits, the outcome of hereditary influences, I can imagine a person, so thoroughly and correctly trained and organised through the generations of his family, as to be incapable of emotions that are not the surface perturbations of sound and reliable instinct. To pit the reason of a mere dialectician against the emotion of such a creature (the case to some extent of Socrates and his contemporaries) may be to prepare a dialectical victory for reason, but not necessarily a victory for desirability, or even truth, about which Mr. Pitt Rivers has much to say that is very useful.

And it is curious that in this attitude towards emotion Mr. Pitt Rivers has two opponents whom I should imagine he least expected to meet on this field—Herbert Spencer, and the frigid, deliberate author of the "Introduction to the History of Civilisation in England," Henry Thomas Buckle.

In the Preface to his Autobiography Spencer said: "In the genesis of a system of thought, the emotional nature is a large factor: perhaps as large a factor as the intellectual nature." What does this mean? I take it to mean that in the emotional nature, the investigator or philosopher finds the momentum and the direction (the whither) of his meditations and his broodings. In plain language, it is his emotion which maps out his course and gives him his goal. Nothing could be more important.

Similarly, Buckle, in a little pamphlet entitled "The Influence of Women on the Progress of Knowledge," maintains that "Our poetry will have to reinforce our logic, and we must feel as much as we must argue"; and, further: "Let us, then, hope that the imaginative and emotional minds of one sex will continue to accelerate the great progress, by acting upon and improving the colder and harder minds of the other sex." I am not prepared to support Buckle in his belief that women are more emotional than men, because, for deep emotion, I have never yet met any woman who equalled the truly emotional artist among men; but in the contention he so emphatically advances, that the divorce of emotionalism from science is a fatal step towards sterility, I entirely agree with him. Nor am I quite ready to condemn fanaticism as wholly and cavalierly as Mr. Pitt Rivers is inclined to do. Willy-nilly, the questions recur to one's mind: Whose emotion? Whose fanaticism? And these questions appear to receive no consideration in this book.

Profoundly interesting as some of Mr. Pitt Rivers' conclusions are, therefore, one is led to regret that there is not more perspective in his work—a more precise definition of that line of sight, beyond which generalisations about humanity, as a whole, are possible, but this side of which it is imperative to distinguish between the emotion of Mr. A. and the emotion of Mr. B., the fanaticism of Mr. C. and that of Mr. D., etc.

It is difficult, as everyone knows, to write nowadays without peering through the glasses of the Age. When, as Nietzsche has said, "incorrect feeling" has become as universal as it has to-day, it is also particularly hard to have any faith in feeling of what kind soever (see pp. 143, 141 of "Thoughts Out of Season," Part I); but, then, it should be borne in mind that reason, too, falls under the general condemnation of present-day phenomena, and to exalt it above the mixed, false, crude, and generally superficial emotions of modern men is to assume, I think, incorrectly, that it has enjoyed an immunity which the other spiritual factors of the human mind have for some reason or other failed to secure.

I do not pretend that I have done justice to Mr. Pitt Rivers' excellent essay. If I have called attention to certain points wherein I differ from him, it has been more with the intention of suggesting, by implication, how much there is of value and interest in his work.

Music.

By William Atheling.

The difficulties of transport prevented my hearing Moseiwitch, but I have not the least hesitation in assuring the reader that Moseiwitch's concert at the Queen's Hall on Saturday, September 27, was a well-deserved success, and that the pianist played with great skill. I do not believe that I should have been able to add a single line to what I have already written of this musician even if I had got to the hall.

Winifred Macbride (Wigmore, Sept. 30) presented Bach with blurrs and with a general suburbanity; the blurr was inside the smaller elements of the pattern, and did not obscure the elements just a size larger, and although there was no grasp of the main structure, the performance was not so distressing as might have been expected, and may possibly have given a good deal of pleasure to the not quite musical ear. We can imagine a really erudite musician like Czernikoff leaving the hall in fury at once, but the postprandial inertia of the critic retained him further into the programme.

A perfectly plausible and explicable dislike to Beethoven's "Appassionata" might lead a performer to play something else on the same notes; I do not know that there was any such dislike at the bottom of Miss Macbride's softly sentimental Debussyisms, of her sort of blunt, cotton-wool fireworks, of the blatancies of her treble; and it would not explain the lumpiness of the ensemble even if it did elucidate some of her detail. I sat in intellectual puzzlement, wondering whether I had gone a little—just a little—bit daft, or whether it *was* the pianist; or whether vacation had ultimately unfitted me for my job. Then gradually into my bewilderment as to *what*, just what, might be going on there crept the suspicion, the more and more clearly defined suspicion, that it should not.

The lady has intentions; so far so good. She has perhaps "something to express," though she herself is not perhaps quite sure just what it is. Out of the wuzz there came finally the standardised Beethoven "Stimmung." Yet from the blurr of this Beethovo-Bochian swarmishness I sighed for Lamond, I sighed

for the school of playing which recognises music as a structure. I am not crushing the glowworm on the wheel. Miss Macbride is at the beginning of her career, and she would do well to recognise that her method of playing falls flat, will go completely to pieces because it depends, apart from some digital ability, upon emotional energy, always a tricky possession, and not on sheer comprehension of music. It holds her audience *now*, but it is wholly undependable. The opening of the Brahms Capriccio was trite and intolerable; the method for the Debussy was perhaps more successful than a more frigid approach would have been, but the lady must use her head if she hopes for more than a third-rate public.

The real events of the week are the Gilbert and Sullivan Opera and possibly the Russian Ballet. The music of the "Gondoliers" ranges from thin Mozart to Floradora, *via* Messrs. Chappel and Co. It is adequate for what it sets out to do. It conveys no emotion and but a frail sort of sentimentality or spritely activity. The performance is well carried out, Mr. Toye conducts very well, the chorus behaves very well, the company acts very well along conventional lines, and Mr. Lytton acts with distinction. D'Oyly Carte scores over Beecham by the superior polish of the ensembles, staging, etc.; there is one good piece of duet writing; Sydney Granville and Helen Gilliland save the musical situation by the pure quality of their voices; there is no strain for effect, just very beautiful singing of the by no means unusual matter provided for them.

When Sullivan's music is bad, it is not so much that it is wrong as that it is "like good music with something left out." He is perhaps a tradesman giving just as much as the contract requires; just enough good music to carry the show, just enough harmony (in places) to keep the impoverishment of other choruses from getting on the nerves of the audience. If he had had anything better than Gilbert to set he would presumably have ruined it; as it is, the "When You Marry" song is bad Chappel ballad, other numbers are satisfactory but unoriginal; but contemporary song-setters would do well to observe how ably he seconds his librettist, how well Gilbert's point and points are enforced by the supple compliance of the music.

Not that there is anything *musically* memorable in the performance. The opera is carried by its libretto; the songs, such of them as are remembered, are remembered by reason of Gilbert's wit. This wit is in the "Punch" genre, and is the acme of the Victorian titter, the keynote being a sort of unserious compliance with what cannot be altered. Which things being so, the performance as a whole is acceptable to those who like opera. The opera has a main form; it, indeed, complies with the sensible specifications of operatic classical structure. And certainly the producers and performers get every scrap out of both music and libretto. The success of the season is assured, both by the efficiency of the company and by the solid affection of the public for this Simon-pure-British mode of entertainment. It is also certain that we shall never see Gilbert and Sullivan better done, and that the D'Oyly Carte season is "an opportunity," an opportunity emphasised by the presence of Mr. Lytton, Mr. Sydney Granville, and Helen Gilliland.

The Ivan Yorke-Yvonne Phillopowsky concert (September 29, Wigmore) was successful.

Rosing's season of recitals begins October 4 at the Æolian, and continues on alternate Saturdays (three o'clock) until December.

The London Symphony Concerts begin on Monday, October 27 (Queen's Hall); and Rosing appears in that of November 24.

Adrian Boult is conducting impeccably for the Russian Ballet, and "La Boutique Fantasque" is not to be missed.

Views and Reviews.

CATHOLICISM AND CLEANLINESS.

CONTROVERSY does sometimes take a surprising turn, and I must admit that I was not prepared to hear a Catholic, defending Catholicism against a charge of tolerating dirt, raise the cry of "Liberty." It is true that my first recollection of "G. K. C." dates back some sixteen years, when he opened a debate in support of the motion: "That the solution of the political problems of the future lies with the Liberal Party": and that, in most of his subsequent writings, he has maintained the thesis of that address, that liberty is an essential condition of existence, if not of progress. But, as I have urged so often in other connections, liberty is not a political principle; you could not found even a cricket-club on it; and apart from the other principles of the trinity, Equality and Fraternity, Liberty is simply an expression of anarchy. We find it only amongst primitive peoples, like the hill Veddahs of Ceylon; and even there, the practice of "secret barter" shows us the rudimentary beginnings of a social sense. To us, born into Society, the ideal of reality presents itself in a tri-une manifestation of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity; and each of these conditions the other. "G. K. C." admits that the miners, for example, have a right to have baths; he also asserts that they have a right not to have baths—but it is precisely at this point that the other principles of Equality and Fraternity become operative. St. Paul himself, while claiming the utmost liberty for the individual, declared: "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak": and any man, born into and living in a society, is under a natural obligation not to be offensive to his fellows. "Happy is he," continues St. Paul, "that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth"—and the miners do not "allow" dirt.

The only real hope of a healthy society, suggests "G. K. C.," lies in the recognition of individual liberty —in the admission, for example, of the miner's right not to have baths. But if we take the instances that "G. K. C." gives, we may well doubt whether it will be a healthy society. He is "all for giving pennies to beggars," for example; and begging, we know, has been identified with sanctity for centuries.

> King Bomba's lazzaroni foster yet
> The sacred flame, so Antonelli writes.

But the Neapolitan lazzaroni are the lice of society; and the odour of sanctity that exudes from them, however meritorious it may be, is distinctly unwholesome. Anyone who has ever seen a man suffering from trench fever, for example, may admit the sanctity of the lousy lazzaroni, and yet be quite sure that the society which tolerates them is neither healthy nor admirable—for dirt, with its concomitant vermin, is a most prolific source of disease. It is on the score of charity that "G. K. C." defends the giving of pennies to beggars; but wisdom is a virtue no less imperative than charity, and it is not wise to finance what is not only a positive danger to ourselves, but is, in the usual case, a positive vice in the beggar. The simple fact that most beggars are richer than their patrons suffices to show us that our charity only finances the multitude of their sins.

"G. K. C.," too, makes great play with his "dunghill," although it is surely the most curious symbol of liberty ever devised. He alleges: "Any free peasantry will be accused of dirt as the Irish are accused of dirt. If the peasant has a chicken in the pot, he will have a cock on the dunghill; and 'A. E. R.' will shudder as he passes the dunghill. For the dogma is that dung is dirt, and cannot be manure." Who formulated this dogma, I do not know; but it is a simple fact that not until it ceases to form a dunghill does dung become manure. It is also a simple fact

that a dunghill does not provide suitable seating accommodation for a human being; and it was for this reason that I objected to Mr. Maynard's prophecy of a protest against hygiene being made "in the person of some fierce and spotless St. Simon Stylites, raised high upon a pillar of filth as a sign before the world." That St. Simon Stylites was not spotless, but vermin-ridden, is also a simple fact; and my point is that he is an exemplar who would be repudiated not only by the high priests of hygiene, whoever they may be, but by the working classes themselves. To them, he would be simply a "dirty devil," and not a reformer.

Whether we approach the subject from the religious or the social point of view (in practice, they are identical), we come to the same conclusion—that no man has the right to be offensive, and positively dangerous, to his fellows. Not even "the magic of property," as expressed in the Distributive State advocated by "G. K. C.," can justify the positive injury to life that the acceptance of these noisome ideals would entail. It may be true, as Mr. Maynard declared in his essay, that "the mediæval man had a different standard of values"; but we are living in the twentieth century, and find nothing admirable in the instance that he gives. Let him tell a gathering of demobilised soldiers what he tells his readers, that "when St. Thomas of Canterbury was murdered and the monks found that beneath his costly robe his hair-shirt was full of lice, a great cry rang through the Cathedral, 'A saint! A saint!'" and he will certainly discover how different our standard of values is from the mediæval. When we remember that this is one of the facts behind the "Merrie England" ideal put forward by the Catholic school of writers, we may prefer a Utopia that does not harbour parasites. Our ideals, at least, need not be lousy.

The gravamen of the controversy lies in the original assertion to which I took exception—that the elementary duty of cleanliness is, in some unexplained sense, un-Christian. It was there that I drew the distinction between Catholicism and Christianity which Mr. Maynard, with the fervour of a devotee, described as "cant." There is nothing more certain than that Christianity, as revealed in the Gospels, is based upon health; the ministry of Jesus was primarily therapeutic, and the story is explicit on the point that He communicated His power to His disciples. The Catholic Church claims to have received "the Divine Deposit," and to have handed down in unbroken continuity the spiritual gifts of Jesus. Yet we find "G. K. C." admitting that "some of us do not happen to possess these powers," without seeing that the admission is fatal to the claim of Catholicism to be Christian. That miracles of healing have happened in the Catholic Church, I should be the last to deny; but they have not happened because of the Catholic teaching, but in spite of it. Jesus purified the body; the Catholics have preached the mortification of the body—and mortification is not a curative process. Jesus, we are told, went about doing good; the Catholics have gone about teaching self-torture—and what they inflicted on themselves "for the good of their souls," they were more than willing to inflict on others for the good of their souls. The change from the persecution of Christians to the persecution by Christians was effected by the Catholic Church—and in place of the simple baptism and love-feast that sufficed for the Christians of the first two centuries, we find a horde of what Browning called "ragamuffin saints" elaborating a ritual and a body of dogma, "making the Word of God of none effect through their tradition." That it should be possible for anyone to sneer at the command: "Be thou clean": and in the name of liberty to proclaim a man's right to be filthy, is an indication of the gross perversion of Christian teaching that the Catholic Church has made.

A. E. R.

Reviews.

The Prestons. By Mary Heaton Vorse. (Boni and Liveright. $1.75 net.)

The awkward age of adolescence is a difficult period to treat in a novel; but Miss Vorse evades most of the difficulties by observing the period from the point of view of an American mother. She offers us a series of episodes, mostly humorous, for Jimmie Preston is a real boy with all a boy's capacity for mischief; and the elder brother and sister are too active to be introspective. On the whole, it is a capably rendered picture of the family life of normal American people, with just the soupçon of sentiment, the pathos of the mother who is conscious of the contrary motion of the two arcs of life and observes her children growing away from her. The Irish servant is very voluble, but is apparently too harassed by her many duties and trials to devote much attention to literary composition; anyhow, she does not turn her phrases with the neatness that we have learned to expect from her compatriots; indeed, but for Miss Vorse's transcription in the "nu speling," her speeches would read like those of a human being. The book is about as amusing as the average magazine, and will serve the same purpose of beguiling the tedium of railway travelling.

The Swallow. By Ruth Dunbar. (Boni and Liveright. $1.50 net.)

The "virile" note of American fiction is best rendered by a woman, and Miss Dunbar writes like a man—or, at least, like an American. The first part of her story is really well done; the hero's adventures while working his passage over with a cargo of mules have the authentic touch. The publisher declares that the book is "based on the actual experiences of one of the few survivors of the original Lafayette Escadrille"; and if this trip on a mule-boat is one of those experiences, Miss Dunbar would have done well to have stuck to the facts. But she must have her love story, and show, as the publisher says, "the difference between the shallow flirt and the one who knows how to love"; and after the hero has finally forced his way into the French Army, he becomes a very shadowy figure as a fighter, and a not too entertaining lover. The touch of reality is manifest again in the story of his hospital experiences—but his true-loving nurse is there, and the love-affair is inextricably mixed with the details of antiseptic irrigation of infected wounds, and the marvels of American surgery.

Their Mutual Child. By Pelham Grenville Wodehouse. (Boni and Liveright. $1.60 net.)

Mr. Wodehouse has written a really amusing satire of an Eugenist, which broadens into a criticism of smart Society. If Mrs. Lora Delane Porter had been only an Eugenist, the results of her match-making, unconventional as it was, would have justified her application of her theory. But she swung from the insistence on heredity to the insistence on environment so soon as she could, and substituted the antiseptic theory for the theory of hereditary immunity from disease. Her first bugbear was a corrupt germ-plasm; her second was "The Germ"; instead of "sterilising the unfit" among the human race, she sterilised the fit, and the child was reared in the odour of antiseptics in a beautifully tiled nursery by a sterilised nurse. Any germ that inadvertently wandered near that nursery carefully lay down and died on the threshold; and the child was rapidly developing into a valetudinarian, more concerned with surgical cleanliness than with the activities common to his age, when the release came, and Lora Delane Porter was reduced to her original status of a publicist. The book has an array of characters that are vividly presented; the millionaire Bannister, his son Bailey,

Kirk Winfield, the artist, Steve the prize-fighter, and the three worlds of sport, art, and finance, are sketched in with a few sure touches. There are passages in the book, notably that describing Winfield's return from his unsuccessful prospecting for gold, which suggest that Mr. Wodehouse could, if he would, write of subjects of more universal interest than the fads of a few theorists; and the quality of suavity that creeps into his best satirical passages indicates that he is capable of developing an individual style. That he can use slang to extraordinarily humorous purpose the first dialogue between Steve and Mrs. Porter proves; but American humorists are common, and her serious writers seem to be afflicted with Parnassianism. Mr. Wodehouse has qualities that are not limited by American parochialism, and we should like to see him exercise them in work of more universal appeal than this.

The Groper. By Henry G. Aikman. (Boni and Liveright. $1.60 net.)

This is another study of a business man who feels "unrealised," and has an ache where his heart ought to be. Whenever, like Tennyson, he stretches lame hands of faith, and gropes, he always finds a woman in them; and, most wonderful of all, the last woman is also the first. All that lies between the first and last chapters amounts to a census of the more convivial portion of the female population of Detroit, with descriptive notes; enlivened (shall we say?) by descriptions of the hero's adventures as a real estate agent, as a window-dresser in, and subsequently advertisement writer for, a departmental store, the whole concluding with a magnificent tableau of the hero as financier of a motor company. His subsequent appearance in the bankruptcy court, and his reunion with his first-beloved, brings the entertainment to an appropriate close. American fiction seems to be re-acting against that other form of American fiction, the literature of Success; but we must admit a certain weariness of these studies of business men who wander about, with an unsatisfied look in their eyes, searching for their souls as though they were lost luggage.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Sir,—In your issue of August 21, Mr. S. Verdad, discussing the Irish question, says: "The desperately serious character of the problem is to be found in the fact that, while it remains unsolved, our relations with America, upon which not only we depend for peace, but the world depends for peace, are under constant and, perhaps, increasing embitterment."

I am surprised that a man like Mr. Verdad, who has actually lived in America, should be able to make himself believe that the Irish question, or any other question, has anything to do with the American dislike of the English. If Mr. Verdad will turn over the pages of "Martin Chuzzlewit," written when there was hardly an Irishman in America, he will find that the English were then regarded in America exactly as they are today. Canada is full of Orangemen, and has hardly any Irish Catholics; yet it has always been a debated question whether the sentiment against the English is stronger in Canada or in the States. The last discussion I had on this point was with an observant Yankee hotel-keeper settled in Canada. "The Englishman in the United States," he said, "no longer ventures to put on this god-damned proprietary air that he assumes in Canada; consequently he gets along better in the States." That man hit the bull's-eye. The Irish, the Americans, and the Canadians dislike the English for precisely the same reasons, and these reasons have nothing to do with William of Orange or George III. It is the average Englishman of 1919 that is disliked. "This god-damned proprietary air" sums the matter up. Not long ago a lady and I were on a street-car in Edmonton, Alberta, and just behind was an Anglican clergyman, who in a pontifical voice was finally disposing of many questions. When we got off we looked at each other, and then burst into a roar of laughter. We quite agreed that a few such voices would break up any empire.

The situation is made worse by every English attempt to make friends with America. All Americans believe that the English are incorrigible bullies, and they despise them for cringing to America while holding down Ireland and India. Every time a speech about Anglo-American friendship is made in England, thousands of Americans shout, like Rebecca in "Ivanhoe," "The giant totters—he falls—he falls!" If English orators could avoid all allusions to "our American cousins," and simply speak of America as they might of Italy, there would be an immense improvement in Anglo-American relations.

R. B. Kerr.

* * *

AN APPEAL TO REASON.

Sir,—At this crisis in our domestic history is there one of us whose feelings are not mixed? It would hurt something deep down and British in us if the N.U.R. feebly capitulated after the determined statements such a man as Mr. Thomas has made. Yet all of us are aware that the Government is equally unable to concede the points under dispute without permanently injuring its prestige. If we shudder at the thought that the N.U.R. might succeed, we must also shudder at the thought of attempting to run industry in the atmosphere of bitterness and sullen disappointment that will follow the failure of such a large and well-organised union.

I wish to suggest, Sir, that these two are not the only alternatives, and that, if changes in our social system are made that go deeper than the grounds of dispute to where we are all one in our human need of commodities, there is a possibility of settlement that is not compromise nor defeat for either side. It would be a free admission by both that the subject under dispute is far too trivial to warrant such suffering of the whole community, and a waiving of the issue because of a more fundamental agreement in the new change.

That I may give practical point to the suggestion I have made I will propose a change of the type that might suffice. We are aware that impotence is a most fruitful cause of bitterness and that economic impotence is largely at the root of unrest. We are aware that fear is the father of reckless action and that the workers go all their lives in the fear of that destitution which the Premier has himself tasted and condemned. We are aware also that vital as is production, if all are to be properly supplied with commodities, yet, despite a general improvement in wages during "good times" (an improvement which many challenge), there is no specific guarantee that greater production will be shared by all alike.

These three essentials are all provided for in the State bonus scheme, which is a proposal for the equal sharing among all of one-fifth of the national output measured by the equal distribution of one-fifth of the national income raised as a direct extra tax of 20 per cent. on every income. The amount would be distributed as a weekly allowance of, say, 7s. to 8s., although the removal of taxes due to the abolition of workhouses, unemployment doles, etc., would make an average benefit of, say, 9s. per week per head—a cash benefit to 87 per cent. of the population. Being continued during employment, there would be no premium, as now, on idleness; being given unconditionally, it would provide that economic independence essential to the striking of a fair bargain about wages; being given per head, it would permit children to stay longer at school and relieve some of the burden on families; being a fixed proportion of the national output, all—even the unemployed—would have an interest in greater production.

Some form of money rationing must soon accompany the rationing of food, if the strike continues to add daily to the ranks of the unemployed; is it not possible to institute this along lines that will form a permanent improvement to our social system, and by expressing the goodwill of the community towards every individual reinspire that confidence in the institution of government so essential to the future of our beloved country?

Dennis Milner.

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Pastiche.

THE REGIONAL.

XIII.

The salt of the earth is not localised or monopolised by any one district; a suitable modus of intercourse occurs, regardless of national borders—or, to avoid generality: the three men whose quotidian actions followed, while I knew them, what appeared to me the most moderate and rational course were respectively an American, who had been in different parts of America, but did not travel in Europe until after his formative period, let us say his forty-fifth year; an Englishman who had travelled in the West Indies; and a Frenchman.

I do not say that they held any religious or political or any other opinion in common; but the normal minutiæ of their acts, their receptivities, the considerations for their entourages, were, as nearly as I can make out, identical.

I suppose they all owned high hats, but this totem was not an ineluctable association. I have seen my own father wearing one, but my prevalent impression of the object is that it was, as a rule, purchased, that it then proceeded, in the maker's box, to the trunk-room, where it remained until, with the passage of years, the slight modifications in the form of other high hats made its emergence impossible; after which another "stove-pipe" was acquired and proceeded along similar lines into desuetude. At least, I can remember no period when there was not one of the circular cardboard boxes in the trunk-room.

The three fathers of families escaped, all of them, from that stiffness which, after ten years' effort to avoid the term, I must now apply to the normal English gentleman, bounder, clubman, knut, and male of attendant classifications. Subjects of the House of Windsor do, I admit, escape often from rigidity; as, for example, the "lady" of the travelling salesman class whom I, at the age of twelve, saw on the top of a 'bus with a beer-bottle, angle of 135 degrees, to her mouth, fluting, up scale, "Law-on-don's a niice place"; down scale, "Ye can dew as yew pleease."

But for some golden mean of des in voltura? For good manners, for, indeed, any sort of de- or comportment that does not exude and communicate an active oppression or discomfort, the search is long, and the treasures of discovery rare enough to be memorable. One has met the official (which may be spared for the moment) and admirably seignorial; and there once was an old English colonel who invited me to lunch at Junior Army and Navy Club, despite the fact that I was wearing a velvet coat and a rather disorderly (let us say a quite disorderly) collar—fortunately I was unable to accompany him, and the pillars of the "In and Out" still occupy their accustomed positions. He was a man, however, secure of his position, a man of impeccable record, and too old to fear greatly any calamity. He had read the eighteenth-century writers; he was annoyed that his contemporaries, who had once appeared to him intelligent, no longer read anything of importance.

He was a travelled exception, perhaps; but his demeanour was admirable. The normal British gentleman, some of whom is very amiable, and very interesting, and honest, etc., carries with him a sort of phantom policeman. He is there, he is manifestly there in the drawing-room, or the dining-room, or the reading-room of his club to keep you from doing something you shouldn't; moreover, he suspects you of the worst of worst possible intentions and of a capacity for instant execution.

EZRA POUND.

PRESS CUTTINGS.

It cannot be doubted that control of business enterprises, either directly or through fixing of prices, will form one of the major factors in politics and government from now on. In economic discussions public control assumes a larger part each year, and the "price system," with values fixed or determined by market forces, cannot long escape a critical analysis which may prove destructive of much that passes for economic theory. The "free play of economic forces" and "the law of supply and demand" upon close inspection appear to be the resultants of many individual efforts to control commodities and their prices, in order to obtain profits; there are apparently few "economic" forces susceptible of differentiation from natural forces, apart from these human efforts at control; the efforts of many individuals seeking control give the appearance of a force; and the concept of "enterprise," which seems to arise and function spontaneously, gives the appearance of freedom, all of which obscures the essential fact that the effort of enterprise means attempted control, partial or complete.

If economic "forces" are the aggregate of like efforts at control, and are in effect control, then necessarily the issue becomes one, not of economic freedom versus economic control, but of choosing which control society finds desirable or advantageous—individual or social.

Society has found it desirable and advantageous to restrict enterprise seeking to operate in the public utility field; in many States a certificate of necessity and convenience is required before a public utility may be started. Should the investigation of the possibilities of price fixing disclose that unrestricted enterprise makes for higher prices and social costs out of proportion to the gains involved, it is reasonable to assume that enterprise in productive lines will be controlled likewise. The fixing of prices generally will necessitate the restriction of enterprise to protect the existing producers working under those prices, as in the case of public utilities; and, as during the war, priority ratings will be required to discriminate between would-be purchasers who can no longer express their needs by bidding higher than others. The experience of the Government price-fixers during the war suggests ideas about the possible treatment of the inefficient or "marginal" producers, those fosterlings of unrestricted enterprise, which are enlightening for the future.

Undoubtedly the price system and free enterprise are to be subjected to much drubbing at the hands of politics and economics, while the efforts of Labour to obtain self-government in industry must bring about a modification of industrial organisations and processes. Whether the capitalistic system can survive the demise of the price system and free enterprise is an interesting speculation, but not relevant here. As enterprise is restricted and prices merge into rates, the form of industrial organisation and its operation will tend toward the public utility order of regulated, fixed-return, non-competitive institutions, with the employees largely in control.

Curiously enough, a modification of the profit-making technique may be effected through the accounting procedure. Some of the engineers who have been studying the problems of production and costs have made perhaps the most suggestive and far-reaching contribution to this economic complex in stating that, if the entrepreneur chooses to keep his plant idle because the market price for his product is not profitable, then the cost of that abstention from production (the accruing interest, depreciation, maintenance, and the like during the period of idleness) is not a part of the cost of production for the consumer to pay in the purchase price of the commodity, but rather is it a cost to be deducted from the profits of the enterprise for the sake of which it is incurred. In other words, the overhead expenses of the idle plant are to be taken out of the profits and not passed on to the consumer, as though they were part of the production costs; thereby the abstention from production is to be penalised. When the full implication of this doctrine put forth by reputable engineers is understood by economists and business men, the results will be worth observing. The line-up of the engineers with Labour in seeking fuller utilisation of the productive capacities of society emphasises the conflict of ideals and aims which the reconstruction programmes of the employers and the demands of Labour involve.
—LAWRENCE K. FRANK in the "Dial."

Published by the Proprietors, THE NEW AGE (A. R. ORAGE), 38, Cursitor Street, E.C.4, and printed for them by BONNER & CO., The Chancery Lane Press, 1, 2, and 3, Rolls Passage, E.C.4.