NOTES OF THE WEEK.

The reasons given by Mr. Smillie to the "Daily Herald" for opposing a strike are both surprising and pleasing. "Like the great general he is" (as the "Daily Herald" remarks), Mr. Smillie did not want to "put the miners into the false position of apparent hostility to the community... He wanted to see them fight with the community on their side... an all-round fight to reduce prices... a combined consumers' and producers' demand." Much more astonishing was Mr. Hodges' pronouncement made a day or two later to the same journal. "I am convinced," he said, "that the Labour movement must set itself the task of exploring every avenue by which the standard of living can be maintained and raised without recourse to the unprofitable and vicious system of trying to raise wages to meet prices... If the Trade Union movement is worth its salt, it must concentrate on this issue." These be brave oaths, but we are entitled to ask Mr. Hodges in particular whether they mean anything whatever. For we are only too well aware how little he has "explored every avenue" hitherto, or earned his salt in the manner he describes. Is Mr. Hodges taking cover in the generalisation that it is "the Labour movement" or "the Trade Union movement" that must "concentrate on this issue," and "explore every avenue" promising results? But a "movement" is incapable of concentration or exploration except in the person of its leaders. Unless the paid executive, the paid "brains" of the Labour or Trade Union movement, "concentrate" upon or "explore" the subject, the movement can do nothing. The "movement" depends upon officials like Mr. Hodges—or nobody.

There are two successive acts of concentration which are necessary. The first is concentration upon Prices, as the key-problem of the whole of our economic problem; and the second is upon Credit, which, in turn, is the key-problem of the whole problem of Prices. We have just seen that the most advanced minds in the Labour movement are slowly beginning to call for concentration upon Prices; it is now to be observed with equal pleasure that a similar movement is taking place in the direction of concentration upon Credit. The "Daily Herald" that used to be as ignorant of the financial problem as Sir Leo Money or Mr. Tawney would seem to wish, now desiderates some study of the meaning of Credit as a condition of solving the social problem. Reviewing a book (on Money!) by Mr. Philip Snowden, Mr. G. D. H. Cole writes in the "Daily Herald" that "the Labour movement badly needs sound constructive thinking on the credit problem." And that the leaven is really at work the following passage from the very depths of Socialist obscurantism is convincing evidence. "Any campaign," says the "New Statesman," designed to reduce prices will have to go very much deeper than the demands for further control and for the punishment of profiteers... The main causes we hope our readers are attending to this, and reminding themselves that it is from the "New Statesman," the organ of the slowest intelligences in the Socialist movement the main causes of high prices are to be found to-day in the operation of the financial system in relation to currency and credit... and no campaign which does not deal with these questions has any chance of lasting success."

We are not quite sure what the "New Statesman" means by a "campaign," any more than we are sure that in saying that the Labour movement needs sound constructive thinking on the credit problem Mr. Cole is not falling into the error of Mr. Hodges, that of putting all the responsibility upon everybody and nobody. If by a campaign the "New Statesman" means a public campaign in the sense of an educational crusade designed to instruct the man in the street in the mysteries of Credit, the time at our disposal is too limited in view of the pace of events. It might take only a couple of centuries to convince the "public" or the Labour "movement" that the main cause of high prices is to be found in Credit; and only another couple of centuries to convince them that a simple remedy for high prices already exists; but by four centuries, if not, indeed, by four months, the actual problem of the cost of living would cease to be of much practical interest. Fortunately no such campaign is really necessary. It may safely be presumed without reference that the "public" and the "movement" are in favour of reducing prices. If the leaders are ready to concentrate, explore, do some sound constructive thinking and initiate a campaign on, the problem—the public would willingly
accept the solution without asking how it was arrived at. This, however, is just the point; and we need not allude again to the "own experience of the willingness of the leaders to follow their own advice to the movement."

Fatalism is a well-known substitute for thought; and we see it being employed in the Labour movement as well as elsewhere. Mr. Robert Williams, for example, appears to have convinced himself that the "capitalist system" will one day, and before very long, break down of its own accord, like the "one-hoss Shay," all at once and nothing first. That, however, is not the way of things; and we see no reason why "the vicious circle should ultimately, at least, break the capitalist system," unless somebody with intelligence and resolution pulls the rope. The present "vicious circle" of rising prices, followed at a respectful distance by rising wages, may and indeed certainly will produce some painful results. It will infallibly reduce the purchasing-power of Labour and, hence, Labour's standard of living: before very long, it will create a vast amount of unemployment; in less than twenty years it will necessitate another great war. But, provided those consequences are patiently endured by the "public" and the "movement" provided that their approach does not stir Mr. Robert Williams and his colleagues to any unusual activity of thought—there is nothing necessarily revolutionary in these facts or fatal to the "capitalist system." In brief, if the "capitalist system" has survived the recent world-war and shows no signs of collapsing of its own accord, in view of the present lunatic distribution of wealth in this country, we see no reason why it should ever fall without a powerful push from outside. The capitalist system can dance the vicious circle quite as long as the "public" or the "movement." Nor is there anything to be wondered at if this is the case, since it is in accordance with the natural as well as political law that "the King's Government must be carried on." Bad as the capitalist system undoubtedly is, and terribly as it works, its success has not yet been recognised and duly anointed. Socialist thinkers, whatever they may think of themselves, are not yet superior in thought to capitalist thinkers: as an Opposition, they are not yet fit for world-government. But, as we were saying, in the world-as-a-whole, as in the political world, material success may not yet be slain by its successor. The capitalist system, in other words, will only "collapse" when it is superseded.

The shock might even necessitate a psycho-analysis.

Selling Treasury Bills at a high rate of discount is likely to have anything but ameliorative effects upon the general level of prices; but the only alternative to a degree of taxation which the "City" would veto is the employment of a system of Government borrowing upon what is known as "Ways and Means," the effect of which is the inflation of credit by five or six times the amount borrowed. The process is wonderfully simple, and is clearly described in the following extract from the memorandum recently submitted to the "War-Ways" Committee by Mr. B. P. Blackett, Controller of Treasury Finance.

The chief method pursued by the British Government was borrowing from the Bank of England on the security of Ways and Means. This meant that the Bank of England as each advance was made added £x million to the item "Government Deposits," and balanced this entry by adding £x million to the item "Government Securities," at this moment with the effect of "dear money" on the market, the Bank Rate was naturally simultaneously advanced and is now 7 per cent. In short, the "dear money" which the economists of the Stock Exchange, for instance—have long advocated is now an accomplished fact; and, once set going, it is not now likely to stop until it reaches the panic height of the early days of the war. We are not so much concerned at this moment with the effect of this on the community in general—though it is obvious that "your life will cost you more"—as with the effect upon the Treasury. Is the Treasury prepared to take "lying down" this action on the part of the City, this forcing up of the price of accommodation? It is well known that of the money upon the money market, which existed during the war partly in order to prevent the "City" from financing the enemy, were only withdrawn in consequence of City representations purporting to promise cheap money as a consequence of a "free market." Yet, here we are, with a "free market" and dear money; and dearer, in the first instance, to the Treasury itself. The Treasury, moreover, as the trustee of the national credit, has another ground of complaint. After all, as the "City" whined when the war was in progress, the credit of every individual, institution, and the national system in the country depends upon the national credit as a whole. Had the war been lost, had the Treasury failed, the "City" would now be bankrupt and without credit. Yet the very "City" that owes its whole credit to the Treasury (that is, to the nation whose financial officer is the Treasury) now lends that credit to the Treasury at an ever-increasing rate of interest. It is, perhaps, fortunate that the gentlemen of the "City" do not realise the incestuous and matricidal crime in which they are engaged. The shock might even necessitate a psycho-analysis.

It might have been anticipated that the rapacious "City" would not be satisfied with a five per cent. interest on its "loans" to the Government as soon as the war was over. During the war, and while there could be no demand elsewhere for money, the City was glad enough to lend the Government all the money at its disposal: in fact, a great deal more than it had; and to be pleased, rather than otherwise, to receive five per cent. upon it. We know, indeed, that the "City" opposed paying for the war out of taxation and deliberately created all the evils of inflated credit by means of a "free market." In order to bid up the price of "consumable" goods, their money market, which existed during the war partly in order to prevent the "City" from financing the enemy, were only withdrawn in consequence of City representations purporting to promise cheap money as a consequence of a "free market." Yet, here we are, with a "free market" and dear money; and dearer, in the first instance, to the Treasury itself. The Treasury, moreover, as the trustee of the national credit, has another ground of complaint. After all, as the "City" whined when the war was in progress, the credit of every individual, institution, and the national system in the country depends upon the national credit as a whole. Had the war been lost, had the Treasury failed, the "City" would now be bankrupt and without credit. Yet the very "City" that owes its whole credit to the Treasury (that is, to the nation whose financial officer is the Treasury) now lends that credit to the Treasury at an ever-increasing rate of interest. It is, perhaps, fortunate that the gentlemen of the "City" do not realise the incestuous and matricidal crime in which they are engaged. The shock might even necessitate a psycho-analysis.

The chief method pursued by the British Government was borrowing from the Bank of England on the security of Ways and Means. This meant that the Bank of England as each advance was made added £x million to the item "Government Deposits," and balanced this entry by adding £x million to the item "Government Securities." The Government then drew on its balance thus created at the Bank of England for the purpose of meeting its war expenditure. This meant, as a rule, first an increase in the size of the balance of some Government contractor with some other bank and then a demand by that contractor for currency to pay wages. But whether or not the amount of additional currency issues were exactly equal to Ways and Means Advances, the final result was necessarily that although no kind of additional credit had been made to the volume of purchasable things, and although the Government had invented a method of paying for a share of the purchasable things previously available, the public obtained control, in the form either of bank deposits or of circulating credit, of an additional amount of purchasing power equal to the Ways and Means Advance. Except in so far as the public re-lent this new purchasing power to the Government its natural result was to increase the demand for consumable goods and so put up their price. The effects of such creations of credit did not stop there, because a part of the new purchasing power re-liquidated with the banks as additional "cash," and was used by them to provide the basis for advances either to the Government

necessity the minimum in the market, the Bank Rate was naturally simultaneously advanced and is now 7 per cent. In short, the "dear money" which the economists of the Stock Exchange, for instance—have long advocated is now an accomplished fact; and, once set going, it is not now likely to stop until it reaches the panic height of the early days of the war. We are not so much concerned at this moment with the effect of this on the community in general—though it is obvious that "your life will cost you more"—as with the effect upon the Treasury. Is the Treasury prepared to take "lying down" this action on the part of the City, this forcing up of the price of accommodation? It is well known that of the money upon the money market, which existed during the war partly in order to prevent the "City" from financing the enemy, were only withdrawn in consequence of City representations purporting to promise cheap money as a consequence of a "free market." Yet, here we are, with a "free market" and dear money; and dearer, in the first instance, to the Treasury itself. The Treasury, moreover, as the trustee of the national credit, has another ground of complaint. After all, as the "City" whined when the war was in progress, the credit of every individual, institution, and the national system in the country depends upon the national credit as a whole. Had the war been lost, had the Treasury failed, the "City" would now be bankrupt and without credit. Yet the very "City" that owes its whole credit to the Treasury (that is, to the nation whose financial officer is the Treasury) now lends that credit to the Treasury at an ever-increasing rate of interest. It is, perhaps, fortunate that the gentlemen of the "City" do not realise the incestuous and matricidal crime in which they are engaged. The shock might even necessitate a psycho-analysis.

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or to the public several times as large as the amount added to their "cash," and these again became purchasing "money" in the hands of the consumer. Not much mystery ought to be left in the subject of the relation of Credit to Prices after this explanation. Even the "public" can now see, if it likes, just how "money" is made.

From the subsequent remarks of Mr. Blackett as well as from the speech in the Parliamentary debate on Thursday by Mr. Baldwin, the Financial Secretary of the Treasury, it would appear that the word has been passed round to concentrate attention upon the effect of Government credit and to say nothing upon the effect of ordinary commercial credit. But this will not do at all: capitalist finance must not be allowed to escape censure under the cloak of the Treasury; and more particularly, since the effect of commercial credit upon prices is, at least, five times that of Government credit and, moreover, is a constant and not an intermittent factor. We may remind our readers that Mr. Austen Chamberlain recently let the cat out of the bag when he complained that "as fast as the Government stopped creating credit, the financial community continued to create it"; furthermore, that he was "convinced" that much of this new credit did not result in increased production, but only in "increased competition for the limited supplies of labour and material which are held in bountiful store by the banks, and in fact, as we know from other sources, five or six times its amount. The importance of the distinction lies in the attempt obviously being made to attribute all the evils of high prices to the Government policy and thereby to effect, at one swoop, several advantages for the financial community. In the first place, the Government is estopped against further borrowing—that is to say, the financiers find a more profitable employment for their money; in the second place, what public discontent exists is directed against the war, or so the Government policy is said, as according to fancy, can be blamed for high prices; finally, the financial community can continue inflating credit and raising prices without let or hindrance while the public is worrying the Treasury or preparing, like the Labour movement, to explore every other avenue which, according to fancy, can be blamed for high prices; but is used by the banks as a basis for the creation of "several times" its amount; in fact, as we know from other sources, five or six times its amount. The practical meaning of Credit would entail.

The debate in the House of Commons on Monday that finally "authorised the advancement of 26 millions in credit and insurance in aid of overseas trade" has naturally not been much commented on in the ordinary Press. Lenin has arrived at the conclusion that "Western Governments are the tools of the Stock Exchange and the Banks," and it would follow a fortiori that the Press is not blind in bemoaning the obvious. This assertion we now have Mr. Blackett pointing out that the additional "cash" representative of Government loans is not only itself an inflation of spending-power, but is used by the banks as a basis for the creation of "several times" its amount; in fact, as we know from other sources, five or six times its amount. The statement above described was worth more attention than it received from a "public" Press if only by reason of its intensifying effect upon the worst of our current diseases, the disease of high prices. For what, in actual outcome, is the design and action of the proposed "advancement of credit" but the creation of 26 millions of immediate spending-power on account of commodities subsequently to be imported from overseas; and the consequent immediate increase in home-prices? It will be said, no doubt, that the loan of 26 millions is a good investment: that, as one of the speakers admitted, it was designed to enable British merchants to "capture the German market" in Roumania and elsewhere. But if that is the object, why, in the first place, should not the commercial community put up the money itself instead of coming to the State; and, in the second place, what provision is made that the nation (as distinct from the trading community) shall share in the advantage obtained by the utilization of the loan? It is clear that the immediate effect of the creation of this credit (that is, this 26 millions of new spending-power) will be to raise prices. A secondary effect, it is expected, will be the capture by British merchants of a profitable German trade. Yes—and will the said merchants then re-imburse the community for the present sacrifice by reducing prices? On the contrary, we shall find that the reward of the consumer for submitting to higher prices now will be still higher prices in the future. That will be the outcome of the debate in Parliament on Monday.

It is a pity that "Oxford" cannot exercise disciplinary control over its dreaming members to save them from repeating the opinions of the "Spectator" in their sleep. Such letters as the Rev. P. E. Roberts contributes to the "Times" from "Worcester College, Oxford," would be very incriminating documents in the presence of a Bolshevist Revolution; and we must add that, if anything could, they would make a Bolshevist Revolution attractive. Mr. Roberts complains, on imperfect information imperfectly appreciated, that "Labour demands that the whole burden of the war shall be entirely shifted on to the shoulders of the 'idle rich.'" The ignorant in less than apparent intuition of luxurious living among the wealthy classes. We will only say that the use of words, consecrated by the war, for the purposes of financial jiggery-pokery is intolerable. There is not the least reason in sense, in fact or in justice, why the ruin of the war should not be cleared up in a period no longer than the war itself. As we have said, may not now know, there is no mystery about the cause of high prices; nor is there anything to prevent us from reducing prices hundreds per cent. almost immediately. We know how to do it. There is a royal road to financial stability: in fact, there is no other road; and so far from the journey being necessarily "long, slow and painful," or the process one for "time, toil and tears," it might be both short and merry. The "public" and the Labour "movement," however, will probably prefer with Mr. Baldwin and his suffering friends in the City, the long way round—and round—and round; any way to the trifling amount of real thought which the grasp of the practical meaning of Credit would entail. As Walter Bagehot used to say—only unfortunately he admired the English for it—the English public would do anything but think. Even our readers—

The same Mr. Baldwin, by the way, was perfectly resigned to the prospect. In fact, it is with wonderful equanimity that our governing classes subject themselves to the inscrutable ways of Providence when the latter only affect nine-tenths of the population. "Our financial convalescence," Mr. Biddulph Baldwin cheerfully assures us, "is only as yet in its early stages... it is bound to be long, slow and painful. There is no royal road to financial stability [even in a monarchy]... but the ruin of the war must be made good with time and toil and tears." We will not ask what time, toil, and tears are to repair the ruin of the war. The national example is too apparent to be lost. The expansion of luxurious living among the wealthy classes. We will only say that the use of words, consecrated by the war, for the purposes of financial jiggery-pokery must...
shadows every individual life." Not only, however, is Labour unaware of this bitter truth; but it is, in fact, not a truth at all. That the results of the catastrophe will shadow every individual life and reduce the population to poverty is very likely: Mr. Hodges and his colleagues are only now prepared to "explore every avenue" to reduced prices—and there are many good red herrings guarding the path to our avenue. But one in ten of the population is in consequence of the war a little Crewe poor, and should know that it added 4,000 millions of wealth to their little store; and, in general, what is called the national wealth has been vastly increased. "It is time the people were told," said Mr. Chadwick in the House of Commons last week, "that England stands on a pinnacle of fame and financial prosperity which has never been known before." That is the fact; and it is time that the "public" knew it. From having been wealthy before the war, "England" [meaning the capitalist classes] is wealthier than ever; it is far and away the richest country in the world: its credit stands higher than ever; its resources are more ample and inexhaustible. It is characteristic of English "gentlemen" to pretend to be poor: and it is a noble trait when it arises from a desire for ostentation. But when, as now, it arises from a fear that the real poor may be able to share their "poverty," it is despicable in business men and worse in an Oxford divine. Perhaps somebody will inform Mr. Roberts that his stipend is quite safe; and advise him to keep his mouth as tightly shut as his mind.

The rota of Labour representatives from which the delegation to Russia will be selected has now been published; it includes the usual names of the tourists. Thomas, Stuart-Bunning, Thorne, and Mrs. Snowden. It is to be hoped, however, that for once the vanity of some of these people will be subordinated to discretion, for it is very certain that for several of them, if not for all of them, anything but a respectful reception will be the certain reaction of their mission upon the international relations of the two countries. Our war upon the Communist government, they have hitherto concealed their reason for. And the gleam of a second conflict with America would be as unreasonable for "America" as it is for England to make Mexico a ground of dispute as it would be for England to make Mexico a ground of dispute with America; and, whatever may be said to the contrary, international disputes never arise from merely political causes such as these. And, in the second place, even "A. G. G.," the little scout-master of Liberalism, should know that apart altogether from Ireland, from any political cause, the gravest obstacle to "happy relations between the British and American Commonwealths" is to be found in the economic competition to which the two nations are committed by their respective and identical "capitalist systems." It is a calculation into which political no less than sentimental considerations can scarcely be said to enter at all. Ireland, for instance, may be most happily settled; and "A. G. G." and his American counterparts may be falling upon one another's necks in an intoxication of cocoa—the competition of two increasing exports for a single diminishing market will necessitate war, as a mere condition of the maintenance of the respective Governments and nations. We are not preaching war or even extenuating war in advance of its certain outbreak in certain contingencies. We are no more preaching war than the accomplished Jugo-Slav economist, Mr. Slavko Secerov, whose recent work on "Economic Phenomena before and after War" (Routledge, 10s. 6d. net) almost enables anybody to be a prophet of war. All we are affirming is that the capitalist way of economic cause of war actually subsists at this moment between America and this country. Unless within a measurable period the capitalist system—either of America or England is completely transformed, war between the two Commonwealths is inevitable. We only exclude the possibility that the capitalists of the two countries may combine.

A Fragment.

The visions of my head upon my bed were these. I methought I swam heavily in a jobble of sea and many with me.

High was the wind, and the current likewise strong against us.

Seas roared against the black cliff ahead, which they called Fyana's Rock, and beyond this, they told me, lay those deadly quicksands, the Buroflats.

But from far away under the lowering clouds came a gleam as from the waters of the Golden Guild, and we took new heart to fight the salt and hostile waves.

And I looked at the shores, and beheld one on the shore who beckoned to us with a loud voice, saying: "Without my nostrum ye shall all assuredly perish!"

Hotly I denied him and battled against the mouth-filling sea. Yet was my soul discomforted within me; for this man seemed in some sort to have reason in him. And the gleam of gold was gone.

He passed, and beheld other two on the beach. And I saw in my dream that they were men of mind. And they spoke mildly across the water thus:

"Whether or no your Golden Guild be in all points as ye trow it, O poor struggling souls, never may ye thus by any chance attain unto it."

"The wind and current are contrary, the sea is high, the passage long and life short."

"There is a better way."

"Come ye ashore to the land of Hardsense, cross this little spit of beach, and float with the current down the great river Human Nature to that Golden City ye behold afar, and may God prosper you."

And some of us turned and followed these two. But the others reviled and cursed us, saying: "They worship not the Golden Guildage that Nebukodnezzar, the king, has set up, and the truth is not in them. Therefore shall they have herewith their other part nor lot with us, but shall be unto us as heathen men and as wine-bibbers."

And I awoke and lay on my bed for the space of seven days and seven nights, perceiving what things these should mean. Then, arising, with a loud voice I called upon An' Ulysses, the son of Sighklos. But there came none.
Credit-Power and Democracy.
By Major C. H. Douglas.

CHAPTER IX.

The conclusions to be derived from a consideration of the conditions observed to exist in the modern economic and industrial systems may therefore be tabulated somewhat after this fashion:-

(1) The outstanding feature of the Machine Age is the development of production obtainable through co-operation and the employment of real capital.

(2) The link which enables numbers of individuals to co-operate is Credit based on Capital—that is to say, a belief that, by making, with the aid of tools, certain articles which the maker does not himself want, he will obtain more easily and more exactly his desires in respect of goods and services which he does want, than by applying himself to their production directly. At the present time the real basis of credit is broader than ever before, but the psychological basis is failing, owing to the misuse of capital.

(3) The material of which this link is fashioned we call money, which, whatever form it may take, derives its value solely from the belief, the "credit," that it is an effective agent for the realisation of the proposition contained in (2).

(4) The mobilisation and issue of this money, for productive purposes, rests primarily with the banks, which are not concerned directly with the maintenance of this co-operative relation, but rather with the rapidity with which the credit units so mobilised and issued are restored to the financial system. This is not the fault of the banks, but of the public and of the system.

(5) From (4) it follows that, where money is the inducement, the control of the policy of production—that is to say, the decision both as to what articles shall be produced and their quantity and quality, rests, not with the administration of productive enterprises, but as to its initiation, with the banks and others who finance their production, and as to its maintenance and issue or withdrawal, with the price-makerswhose motive is in the very nature of things anti-public, since it aims at depriving with the maximum rapidity, the individuals who comprise the public, of the independence conferred upon them by the possession of purchasing power.

(6) The public, as individuals, can only acquire control of the policy of the economic and industrial system, by acquiring control of credit-issue and price-making. The organ of credit-issue is the bank, and the meaning of price-making is credit-withdrawal.

Now, there are probably very few serious, reasonably unbiased, and qualified students of these questions who would, after full consideration, be prepared to deny any of the foregoing propositions, but many such find it difficult to understand and agree with the contention advanced in the foregoing pages and in the previous volume. ("Economic Democracy," Chapter IX et seq.) that an essential postulate of a better state of things—i.e., public control of economic policy through public control of credit—is that ultimate-commodity prices should be less than costs; that an article used by an individual should be sold for less than the money it costs to produce. To anyone in this difficulty the following questions may be helpful:—If credit controls the policy of production, how can it be possible for the public to control credit and policy if all the credit necessary to induce production is restored to the banks from the public through the automatic agency of uncontrolled prices?

It is, of course, possible to control the initiation of any specified form of production by controlling credit-issue only, but, once started, there is nothing whatever to prevent an obsolete article from being produced and forced, by advertisement and monopoly, on a misguided public, long after a better, cheaper, and wholly superior article is available, so long as the credit necessary to induce production—in common terms, the cost of production—is taken from the public automatically through the agency of prices. If, however, the entrepreneur, while subject to all the desirable features of free competition between establishments, involved by effective cost-keeping, is obliged, in order to compete at all, to come to some publicly controlled credit-bank at short intervals for the means to make up the difference between a price regulated (not fixed) by a fractional multiplier applied to all costs of production of articles sold to the individuals composing the public (as explained in Chapter IX, "Economic Democracy"), then, and it seems probable only then, do we acquire a valid, flexible, active control, not only of the initiation but of the development and modification of production, by the public acting in their interest as individuals.

It will be understood that these considerations do not affect the validity or otherwise of the basis on which it is contended that this fractional multiplier should rest—that has already been dealt with at some length; it is merely intended to show here that, without some such arrangement which places the co-operative producer in the power of the consumer, instead of the exactly opposite condition which now obtains, effective democracy is pure moonshine, and all progress is stifled. Any practical business man will know of cases—probably of dozens of cases—where processes and discoveries of immense value have been wilfully stifled because it did not suit producers to modify their product. There are ugly rumours about at this moment of certain enormously valuable processes and discoveries of immense value have been wilfully stifled because it did not suit the oil interests—by no means the worst of the Trusts which enslave us. From every quarter come more or less authenticated stories of calculated waste and sabotage—Eastern-retumed travellers gossiping of mountains of rotting blankets lining the Suez Canal, Australians of the millions of bushels of rat-eaten and mouldering wheatumbering their stores.

We do not acquire, by these suggested methods, control by the public, as such, of the processes of production—the "how"

No peace will ever settle on the distracted earth until this matter has been fought to a finish, and it rests with the intelligence of those who are from time to time in a position to guide popular movements, whether a mere remnant of civilized society will at all see the Golden Age awaiting the settlement, or whether a decisive verdict is close at hand.

(To be continued.)
The Women's Labour Market.

By Frances H. Low.

I had intended to deal with the serious problem of the labour of girls (14 to 16 years). It is the most urgent of our days. In addition to the "lost childhood" that has been created by Government, where you have girls running about the streets as messengers, without discipline or training or knowledge that is of the smallest use to them, whatever their vocation in life, there are also masses of children straight from school pouring into factories, workshops and offices, doing the most mechanical types of labour, often standing all day in the most vitiated atmosphere, with nothing that expands heart, brain or mind, with no training in anything that is specific, and having none of the all-round training that work in the home develops. In fact, we are poisoning life at its source. But, as it happens, during the last fortnight the subject of Woman's work is being dealt with in the careless superficial way that characterises modern journalism, especially where technical or expert knowledge is needed. And this will have the result that, if the particular facet will be repeated and reiterated until it becomes "gospel truth," and is turned into practical politics. The most revolutionary legislation will then be rushed through Parliament, involving, like Woman Suffrage, a complete change in the constitution, and becoming laws without the country expressing any opinion in the matter.

As Mrs. Oliver Strachey's article in the "Daily Herald" has been effectively dealt with by Mr. Webb and other people, it is not perhaps necessary to traverse every single statement concerning "Skilled Industries," and to show the amazing inaccuracies characterising modern journalism, especially where revolutionary legislation will then be rushed through Parliament, involving, like Woman Suffrage, a complete change in the constitution, and becoming laws without the country expressing any opinion in the matter.

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Take, for instance, the statement about armature winders. So far are the men from keeping out the women, as Mrs. Strachey alleges, that there are already three thousand women belonging to this craft who are working in factories, workshops and offices, doing the most mechanical types of labour, often standing all day in the most vitiated atmosphere, with nothing that expands heart, brain or mind, with no training in anything that is specific, and having none of the all-round training that work in the home develops. In fact, we are poisoning life at its source. But, as it happens, during the last fortnight the subject of Woman's work is being dealt with in the careless superficial way that characterises modern journalism, especially where technical or expert knowledge is needed. And this will have the result that, if the particular facet will be repeated and reiterated until it becomes "gospel truth," and is turned into practical politics. The most revolutionary legislation will then be rushed through Parliament, involving, like Woman Suffrage, a complete change in the constitution, and becoming laws without the country expressing any opinion in the matter.

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chaos and confusion that exist in the country acting and reacting on the most important part of the race. This it is that necessarily has the most disastrous effect upon the present financial rings in both cities may not so greatly and racially differ. At any rate, certain advice which would have been beneficial to Austria-Hungary, if taken, may not be wholly irrelevant; and what was sound ethics for Austria in and before 1914 is, presumably, no less sound ethics for England in 1920 and after. If the fulfilment of a man's forebodings is any test of his mental ability or of his realism of foresight, Mr. Steed's predictions about Austria have earned him a right to considerable respect. In the course of his volume, wherein he advises Austria to attempt justice in dealing with her inner nationalities, I find more than one significant paragraph, and among them none more satisfying than the statement on page 137:

In most civilised countries the principle is now practically admitted that no form of private activity is tolerable which exposes the community at large to loss and detriment for the sake of assuring advantages to small minorities.

He continues:

In Austria-Hungary this principle has been applied not only to private trade and industry but also to private finance, and its application has been—from the Anglo-Saxon standpoint—all the healthier and less dangerous, because it proceeded not from any preconceived theory but from the practical necessity of remedying an actual and precluding a future evil.

The second half of this paragraph is not, perhaps, germane to my general intention of searching for solid positions in contemporary thought, but I have no desire to commit the author of it to views more radical than he held at the time of writing. Certain things he found good in Austria-Hungary, certain things evil; the same things would be good or evil in England to-day. I do not say that the evils would be or are as acute; that they cry as loudly for drastic and immediate remedy; that England is on anything like such ultimate or penultimate legs as was Austria in the period 1903-14. One case of small-pox is perhaps less serious than forty cases, but the disease is no less a disease.

The efforts of the police "to prevent the dissemination of dangerous knowledge," the tyranny of a Magyar minority, the oppression of Czechoslovaks, the flow of persons and information from the bureaucracy to the banks, the general obstructiveness of the bureau-

**Hapsburgiana.**

By Ezra Pound.

The late Austro-Hungarian monarchy stopped private bankers gambling on the fluctuations of the florin exchange. The activity of trusts and of all employers of labour was, in that ramshackle empire, limited by a "complicated industrial code" which "smacked at once of the Middle Ages and of the twenty-first century." I derive this information from Mr. H. Wickham Steed's extremely sagacious work on "The Hapsburg Monarchy," a book written with great lucidity and foresight.

While not wishing to over-emphasise the parallels between pre-war conditions in Austria and post-war conditions in England, I confess to having found a retrospective consideration of Austria rather stimulating. London is not Vienna, and the English temperament differs from the Austrian, even though the financial rings in both cities may not so greatly and racially differ. At any rate, certain advice which would have been beneficial to Austria-Hungary, if taken, may not be wholly irrelevant; and what was sound ethics for Austria in and before 1914 is, presumably, no less sound ethics for England in 1920 and after. If the fulfilment of a man's forebodings is any test of his mental ability or of his realism of foresight, Mr. Steed's predictions about Austria have earned him a right to considerable respect.

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cracy—all come under Mr. Steed's analysis, and all meet with a just and well-modernized censure.

There are in history few, if any, exact analogies; yet it might appear that the oppression of a subject race is as "wrong," as unhealthy, for one State as for another; it might appear that the oppression a class which happened to be locally and racially segregated may be not very different from the oppression of a class which is not racially and geographically segregated. It might appear that if it is an excellent thing to prevent financiers gambling on the foreign exchange—i.e., levying taxation without representation upon the community—it would be equally a good thing to prevent financiers levying such a tax via increased banking rates, via a machinery of holding companies, via "increases of company capital" (watering of stock, etc.).

In Austria a great deal of power inhere in an absolute irresponsible institution called an Emperor. (Masaryk's estimate of Franz Joseph appears to me more just than Mr. Steed's, but as Mr. Steed presumably intended his book for Austrian circulation, and as it was suppressed for else majesté, despite his mildness with regard to the Emperor, and as the main contentions would not have been strengthened by any more drastic personal attack on an unsympathetic figure, we need not pause for what is here an irrelevance.)

In England and America, a vast amount of power, uncontrolled and subject to no popular influence, resides in banking rings. As the Hapsburgs were interested in nothing so much as in maintaining Hapsburg prestige, so the present English, American, and other banking rings are interested in nothing so much as in keeping credit-control in their own hands, whereby they are perhaps as active in opposing the dissemination of dangerous knowledge as were ever the Austrian police under Collaredo (mutatis mutandis), but methods considerably more advanced, but possibly no more long-sighted.

Doubtless it would have disturbed the quiet of the English Foreign Office to have listened to Mr. Steed before 1914; doubtless, no less, it would worry the "Treasury" to attend to Major Douglas in 1920.

I have written and said and restated and repeated the opinion that most men will forgive any injury before they will forgive the torture inflicted upon them in trying to make them think.

Obviously the banking rings do not want England to get out of financial difficulties so long as they can maintain a government which will listen to Prof. Pigou's suggestion that the best remedy is methods considerably more advanced, but possibly no more long-sighted.

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In America personal liberty is at a lower ebb, at a level appallingly low for the moment; yet in England it is probably easier for a great financial combine if not to buy, at any rate to maintain and control the policy of the Cabinet, simply because of the higher degree of centralisation. It is the “executive” advantage of a metropolis. America's having a separate capital on the Potomac acts as a slight check, and has corresponding drawbacks. It is always a faint influence toward decentralisation.

Whereunto the mot of Cosimo di Medici, “With three yards of red cloth per capita I will make you as many honest citizens as you require.” In our time, but for the Cosimos being more modest, but for their being cautious Semites and Methodists or silent Levantines, but for their having professors to talk in public, “For three yards’ equivalent we will furnish as many representatives of the people as policy may require.” I see no reason for assisting them in this process. With the control of credit distributed, their power to produce representatives of the people ‘would diminish.

Sport, Dancing and Eurhythms

By Valerie Cooper.

We are accustomed to dwelling on the positive and beneficial qualities of athletic sport and seldom care to think or speak of possible negative aspects. And yet while fully recognising and appreciating the ideals of physical and mental efficiency inseparable from it—one cannot help feeling, if one looks at it from other standpoints, that—as one of the nation’s chief means of recreation—it has certain grave defects.

Since results—not immediate but persistent—are the one really safe ground for judgment, and since sport and its products we have always with us, we should, if we look round a little, be able to make a moderately just estimate of it and its tendencies. Take, for instance, that wildly popular form of sport—boxing. Does one admire the physique or the mentality—implied and proved—of the typical boxer? Surely the ideals which produce such a type are not those of beauty but, on the contrary, such as tend to debase the aesthetic standard of the masses.

And may not women regard sport with just suspicion when they see what effect it has on those members of their sex who become its devotees? The fact is that no one looks for beauty or grace in the attitudes or movements of sporting men or women. When, among the welter of ungainliness produced by some of our favourite games—hockey or football, for instance—we see a flash of either quality; or, as is possible in net-ball—the most graceful and least popular of our field-games—a slight effect of the corrugated arms, we are grateful as for a benefit unexpected and undeserved!

It is not cheering—this prospect—for, even if one forgets its strong professional and commercial elements, sport, on the whole, seems sadly in need of some complement or corrective.

In search of such a complement one turns naturally to that other great modern cult, “ball-room” dancing. Here, at any rate, professionalism does not count. “Everyone is doing it.” But what, exactly, are they doing? “Judging to music,” says a well-known authority on rhythm. That is a little unkind, for most of the movements are slow and of a certain grace, pleasant both to perform and watch. (Since the “Ayes” and “Noes” probably share pretty equally the correspondence columns of the daily papers.) What they seem really to be doing is moving to—not with—the metre of music, the melodic and harmonic elements of which—by their usual nature and by the attitude of the dancers towards them—lull to sleep the intellect and thus help the escape into that world of warm gently throbbing sensuousness which is so alluring in these distressful times.

The eagerness with which people snatch at the word “rhythm,” and—though seldom using it on its own account—force it to do duty both for “pulsation” and “metre” is curious and interesting. One wonders
its air of distinction and spirituality is so marked as to attract even the vulgar mind—at any rate, one often has the unhappy feeling that it is like Ariel in the hands of a Caliban.

People speak, with an offending familiarity, of the "rhythm," say, of a marching army—meaning "rhythm" of the seasons, tides, or our breathing—its air of distinction and spirituality is for pulse-regularity; dancing the perception, though not perhaps the sense, of metre; but it does teach—not so if for pulse—duration, phrasing, climax, but unless one has lived them—imaginatively or actually—one cannot make music of them; and music—which fuses together the most elemental and the most spiritual parts of our consciousness after the accident; he murmured to his tattoo-marks should have made him easy to be identified; for-as has been shown—"dancing" up to the present has meant for most of us nothing better than moving to the time of music. So far as the movement itself is concerned, the metrical beating of tom-toms would do as well as the best playing of the best music. But in Eurhythmics one moves with music, with the ebb and flow of its rhythm and with its spirit. Sport and "dancing" are conditioned entirely from without, Eurhythmics from within. To prove this, it continually turns the tables, as it were, on its students. After having given them musical experience it requires them to show their sense of metre, rhythm, proportion, and of beauty and fitness of line and movement, by inventing, carrying out and developing their own rhythm: plans and gestures. And this sense of rhythmic movement may also be used not merely as a means of "expressing" music physically, but as an independent art—to join it as an equal, or even predominant, partner.

The growing interest in Eurhythmics may surely be regarded as one of the very few cheering present-day tendencies—in so far, at least, as it succeeds in escaping adoption as "the fashion," or, even more, as a new Garden-city cult.

Drama.

By John Francis Hope.

If Miss M. E. M. Young's play, "The Higher Court," recently produced by the Pioneer Players, had been a first play, I could have found all sorts of things to say about it. But it is not; Miss Young, although absent from the London stage since Forbes-Robertson produced "On the Edge of the Storm," is a practised playwright, and the inevitable question: "What do you mean by it?" should be asked in a minatory manner. She has, in spite of her youth, the gift of writing dramatic dialogues; that scene in the second act (although the "Fred" joke is worked to death, burial, and resurrection) really grappled the attention by its unaffected sincerity in the revelation of character. It was superbly played by Miss Mary Jerrold and Mr. Randle Ayrton, but it was not only the subtle art of these two players that appealed; they had the very stuff of dramatic character to work with. But, apart from her dialogues, Miss Young has the crudest ideas, the most amateurish stage sense; the whole play is on the level of the penny novellette, and her attempts at dramatic effect made me smile.

Here is a family of middle-class people living in a flat in West Kensington Palace Park Place (I think that was the full address). The younger daughter is just off to Party City, and another another act (which the audience is happy to believe) of some obscure millonary is arrested on a charge of murdering himself. The police even did not take his photograph, and his "Fred" joke is worked to death, burial, and resurrection) really gripped the attention by its unaffected sincerity in the revelation of character. It was superbly played by Miss Mary Jerrold and Mr. Randle Ayrton, but it was not only the subtle art of these two players that appealed; they had the very stuff of dramatic character to work with. But, apart from her dialogues, Miss Young has the crudest ideas, the most amateurish stage sense; the whole play is on the level of the penny novellette, and her attempts at dramatic effect made me smile.

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(Mr. Blake is the most stupid detective that I have seen even on the stage); but with his identity proven, and the misunderstanding about Fred removed, the play begins at the end of the third act. Having received her proposal, she rushes off to the church where she has an appointment with her lover for the following day requires a fourth act.

The omens were favourable. The Blessed Sacrament said "Yes," the priest said "Yes," her heart said "Yes!"; but the penny catechism, which she called "God," said "No." This millionaire had been married before; his wife had been unfaithful, and he had divorced her; but "God" (price, one penny) declared: "What God therefore hath joined together, let not man put asunder," and she could not marry a married man. There was nothing to argue about; it just was so; and so: "Good-bye." If the Catholic contribution to the solution of the problems that cluster about marriage is a penny catechism that any convent-bred girl feels herself justified in interpreting literally we need not look to the Catholics for light and leading. For the very passage in the Gospels from which the text is wrested continues: "And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife for fornication; but the penny catechism apparently permitted no exceptions. When we remember how Catholics denounce "the right of private judgment" we must be surprised to see them, as in this case, deciding delicate problems of this kind without even consulting a priest. I do not pretend to know anything about Catholicism, but one reads of spiritual equivalents of the Acts of Indemnity that supply the needs of the penalty.

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"The upshot of it all is that the play has a penny novel-ette plot, which leads up to a demonstration of the heroine as an inarticulate fool. It ought to have been a tragic ending, but the perversity of it annoyed me; I was glad to see Mr. Randle Ayrton tear up the catechism—it was a symbolic action. But whatever we may think of the play, of the actors there can be no question. Miss Mary Jerrold played the heroine with such a natural charm that I wanted to shake her when she became mulishly pious; while Mr. Randle Ayrton has never, I feel sure, more subtly portrayed the emotional states that, in these days, are disguised in commonplace language. His modulations are so delicate, so intelligible, that one wonders whether he really has five hundred different ways of saying: "No." Mr. Felix Aylmer contributed an intelligent study of a stupid doctor; and the rest of the cast supported.

Maisie.

By Rowland Kenney.

The Cave is one of our most cosmopolitan institutions. Men of all nations frequent it, and, although lager beer is the premier beverage of the country, it is supplied. It is much illuminated. Two giants in gold-braided uniform guard the doors—though what they are supposed to guard the doors against no one has ever been known to explain. On the ground floor, to the right as you enter, is a drinking bar of the ordinary London type; but if you push through the crowd which continually throngs it, pass between the thick hanging curtains at the back and go down the stairs to the left, you will come to the basement. The basement is the Cave proper, the hotel itself has a quaint unconscious humour which saves his ribs from much violence. He attends to the table which she was called Maisie, her real name was Sophi Warnier, to her landlady she was Miss May, and her flat with two servants and was rapidly qualifying for Wapping Dock or the river.

Four waiters hover between the tables and the bar, three of them clean-looking models of Swiss propriety, the fourth is a nasty beast, but he answers to prepared questions. One is reminded of the icococinõ's remark about the Irish: "They really seem to believe in Catholicism!"; and to share the astonishment of this man who subsequently became a Pope. Twa, at least, all the assumptions made by the heroine are the very matter of debate. How does God join people together? Presumably, by the sacrament of marriage. What is the guarantee that the sacrament has been given? The fact that a regulation ceremony has been performed is no guarantee; the fact that the King, for example, declares a foundation-stone to be well and truly laid is not accepted by the builders as a guarantee that it is so laid. The proof that the spiritual union has been effected is to be sought in the subsequent facts; everything acts after its kind and the mariage that is made in Heaven are revealed on earth by the fact that the partners do cleave to each other. They do not make the best of a bad job, the job is so well done that it cannot be undone.

But what is the use of arguing the matter? The author has deliberately eliminated the drama from her play; there is no conflict between religion and impulses in this girl, the word "divorce" simply operates a "cut-out" mechanism, and, like Macduff, she "has no words." The probability that there was something wrong with her "soul" if it did not open her "heart" to the right man did not occur to her; a convent training does not encourage the inquiry into fundamentals. The upshot of it all is that the play has a penny novel-
Germans by giving them imitations of Cockney newsboy repartee.

Maudie was as pretty as apple blossom, and as full of fun and tricks as a kitten. Between her cherry lips she continually grips a cigarette. There is something distinctly chewing about her; she is able to get her mind away from her surroundings and talk of living things, of books and music and the wide laughing world of Mr. Plenty’s joy and winter’s mystery. She can so far forget the Cave as to rhapsodise over a sprawling, naked baby.

The Germans had a good time with Maudie until she saw me enter the room, then with a “Ta-ta, Sausages,” she flicked her fingers in their faces and distinctly cheering about her; she is able to get her sprawling, naked baby.

In the far corner against the wall, sat Maisie. Maude laid a pretty hand on her shoulder and spoke. “Now, now you baby-eyed, straw-haired fool, if the Boy doesn’t yank you out of this, sling you into a cab, take you home, spank you, give you a bottle of milk and put you to bed—may the Devil grill him for a week!” And Maude left us.

Maisie made a ghastly attempt to smile. She was very ill, too ill to drink. I tried to cheer her up a little; she falteringly but comprehensively cursed me. I sat down in and I helped her up the stairs. The intricacies of her tapes and buttons had been beyond me, and at every step I was afraid that some piece of feminine attire would be left in our wake.

When we left the hotel and emerged on to the Square I called a cab, but she would not enter it; she would walk on to Piccadilly Circus and go home by bus. I left her for a few minutes whilst I called at a chemist’s shop for a bottle of ammoniated tincture of quinine; when I came out she was leaning against the window, half delirious and moaning of many things—of a crowd. That was a fortunate move, for we had not gone far in the direction of Regent Street before she fainted. I carried her into a dark doorway until she came round again. She had a drink from the quinine bottle. Ammoniated tincture of quinine is never nice to take and Maisie limped after two hours of it. In two minutes Maisie appeared, dressed in a long diaphanous garment through which the flesh showed in graceful curves. She was inclined to be peevish and nasty, so I steadied her down on to the three-legged chair and enquired as to the nature of her illness.

“What does the doctor say, Maisie?”

“Say? He says it’s a bad attack of influenza and he says I’m to have eggs and milk and stay in bed; and he says I’m to be careful and get round; and he says I’m to wear warmer clothes; and he says the damndest most ridiculous things anybody can say—to a girl on the game. Isn’t it damned rot to tell me all that?”

I agreed and we talked of other things. A month’s reception was owing to Mr. Plenty. Maisie had threatened to turn her out if it was not paid in a few days. The only reason why I had been admitted to the sanctuary was that Maisie had promised her a few shillings which she knew I would bring.

She sat cursing creation for a few minutes; she anathematised doctors, bishops, upmarkers, policemen and politicians; but on politicians her curses were rather weak—she had only met one, and he was kind to her.

We then communed with the gorilla and the rusty fowl, and went over the catalogue of her aches and pains before she went to bed and I interviewed Mrs. Plenty.

Three days later I sat on the only chair in Maisie’s room and smoked hard, whilst the denizens of the neighbourhood discoursed in sulphurous tones beneath the window.

Maisie was very white and worn, her hair strayed over her sunken cheeks as if to hide the ravages of illness and time.

We talked of Belgium and London and compared them, greatly to London’s disadvantage. We told each other stories and I laboriously worked up a joke and a smile; but after two hours of incessant smoking I had to go.
Four days later I again visited Maisie. It was afternoon. The heat sizzled the asphalt on the pavement. Embankment loiterers hung limply over the parapet, languidly gazing into the sluggish water. The very river seemed to be slyly deriding whilst most of its population were lying a-sprawl on the motionless craft. Even the city’s ceaseless roar was muffled, swathed in an all-embracing sheet of sunshine. The atmosphere was a quivering haze.

When I turned into Upmark the footpaths were littered with the discarded dogs; all asleep. Half clad men and women snored in concert sitting on the steps at the entrance to the houses.

At the house of the gorilla maker there were signs of unusual activity; and two or three frightened children rushed out of the door as I entered. Mr. Plenty stood in the passage; he gazed helplessly into my face, his mouth and eyes wide open. But before I could speak Maisie’s door was flung open and Mrs. Plenty flustered out and hurled at us:

“And the she-devil died owing me nineteen bob, damn her!”

**Epistles to the Provincials.**

VI.

I have been asked several times since I began these letters, But who are the provincials, and what is provinciality? Of what service is it to fulminate against this obscure tribe without divulging who they are? Who is hurt and who is edified? One might as well write a history of the Press without giving a chapter to the “Daily Mail,” or a sex novel without putting an unhappy married woman into it. Come, let us have a definition. Then we shall know where we stand.

Alas! definition I have none. Like Plato I bow down, if scarcely in adoration, before the inscrutable, or at any rate the dense, mystery of provinciality; but then, like him, I rise again and affirm, And yet provincials are knowable! I can say it with confidence, for I have known them. While I cannot define a provincial I can recognise one when I see him, just as I know an Englishman when I see him.

There are degrees of provinciality. To be a Shavian, I should say, is to be provincial; to be a disciple of Mrs. Besant is to be a very provincial provincial; while to read William J. Locke is not even to be a provincial—indeed, in these letters I am not concerned with his readers. The Shavian is a provincial because he attributes to Shaw as a thinker an importance which is not art. It is when we come to current literary criticism, that we come to an all-embracing sheet of sunshine. The atmosphere is a quivering haze.

The preference of the less to the greater is, of course, the truest sign of provinciality. I selected Shaw as an example because Shaw is in some ways perhaps the most limited of writers. He is one of those men of original mind whose ideas are original because they are odd. Like Butler, his originality is that of the “character” rather than that of the thinker; his ideas are crochets and spring not from a greatness, but from a peculiarity of the mind. But the undivided worship of even the greatest minds is also provincial. The Browning Society, for example, I should say, is provincial; and so are the esthetes. The followers of Morris are charmingly provincial: the followers of Ibsen are revoltingly provincial. For the Nietzscheans I have a great regard, for they have done much to destroy provinciality, but, alas, themselves they cannot save; they, too, are provincial. Even the Shake-speareans—yes, “even their hide is covered with hair!” Wherever the less is preferred to the greater; wherever a writer or a culture is set up as a value in itself, obscuring the value of universal culture; wherever a preference is allowed to become an enthusiasm, or a truth declines into a conviction: there you get provinciality. The less is the enemy of the greater. What is the best antidote, however, to the evil of provinciality? Obviously it is “brilliant common sense,” the quality which T. H. Huxley has so justly drawn on us attention to. “Brilliant common sense” will preserve us from wrong enthusiasms and small convictions, and will tell us that a school is not the world and a fashion is not art.

So much for provinciality among readers. When it is present in writers it is an evil still greater, for then it actively propagates itself. To take my first example again, Shaw is a provincial when he is his own follower, when he looks up to himself as a philosopher instead of taking himself lightly as a wit. It is, of course, a natural failing: nothing is easier than to slip into provinciality; intellectual sins are even more facile than moral ones. And when Shaw in a moment of frivolity says something amusing about society it is natural that when he becomes serious again he should uphold it as a profound truth—but it makes him a provincial. Chesterton is, I think, provincial in his Catholicism, and he is just as enlightened as the Light will permit him to be. Yet he is not a complete provincial; he has always taken the by-paths when he could very well have taken the main road. He has now acquired an estate of his own and has given the public warning that trespassers will be prosecuted. Wells is provincial in his uncritical acceptance of the intellectual coin of his own age; and in spite of superficial signs to the contrary, his opinions are far less liberal than those of Chesterton. Take this passage from his “Outline of History.” “There is not much scope,” he says, “for the modification of a species in four or five hundred generations. Make men and women only sufficiently jealous or fearful or drunken or angry, and the hot red eyes of the cave man will glare out at us to-day. We have writing and teaching, science and power; we have tamed the beasts and schooled the lightning; but we are still only shambling towards the light. We have tamed and bred the beasts, but we have still to tame and breed ourselves.” How modern in the worst sense is that! It might have been written by any present-day journalist, style and all. It is so irrelevant in a history, which, after all, might be supposed to tell us something specific, something not merely a platitudinous or a shibboleth, about the destiny of man, as to be intellectually merely an impertinence. It is of Wells’ coinage, however. And is there any question that it is provincial?

It is when we come to current literary criticism, however, that we come to the very stronghold of provin-
sicality. What form does the monster take on in criticism? An ignorance either natural or deliberate of "the best that has been said and thought in the world," not published to-day are not judged as literature; it is an exception if a critic has in his mind any standard when he approaches his subject. Take the following example selected at random from a number of recent reviews. A well-known writer, Lascelles Abercrombie, is writing about a writer little known, Keith Gould, and the subject is a volume of poems by the latter, entitled "The Happy Tree." Abercrombie says "Mr. Gould's art . . . harmonises at its best into perfect unity a rich and profoundly impassioned substance. One might write like that about Keats, perhaps; but what standards, one asks, has Abercrombie, when he praises a perfectly mediocre writer little known, Gerald Gould, and the subject is a volume of poems by the latter, entitled "The Happy Tree." The judgment is provincial because Gould is compared, not with the great poets of England, but obviously with his contemporaries; and when I say contemporaries I mean those writers whose books happen to be published in the same publishing season as his. Compared even with Squire I do not suppose Gould is a poet; what he is compared with any authentic poet, therefore, I leave it to you to imagine. And talking of Squire, it seems to me that his work is a magnet round which it has attracted a mass of all the entire provinciality of the country. A study of the criticisms which have been passed upon him will tell one everything that need be known about provinciality; they are in themselves a standard of the provincial. There it is; provinciality is not a matter of taste but of position. For to possess taste one must have standards. The provincial critics, however, have none; they are safe; they cannot even err. HENFI.

**Views and Reviews.**

**NO BABIES WANTED!**

The Malthusians, it must be admitted, do not lack persistence; whatever happens, they exclaim: "There are too many of you." When the war began, we were bombarded with sermons on the test: "The cause of war is excessive population": now that the period of reconstruction has begun,* this ex-Poor Law Guardian and Borough Councillor declares in brief: "The difficulty of reconstruction is excessive population." So he proposes a national propaganda of the doctrine of Malthus, invocations from platform, pulpit, Press, and posters, to the effect that: "Babies must not be born until further orders." In justice to the author, it must be said that he is not a neo-Malthusian; he does not advocate the use of contraceptives, indeed, he denounces their use as contrary to the teaching of Malthus, and the dictates of morality. The purpose of his suggested propaganda is the development of moral restraint, in marriage as well as out of it; men must disregard the distinctively female functions until they have saved enough money to exercise them without causing expense, present or prospective, to anyone else. Just as Labour has to bear practically the whole cost of maintaining the "reservoir of labour" for the convenience of Capital, so each of the individual members of the population must bear the whole cost of his or her share of the replenishment or increase of the population, and power is to be regarded as the chief qualification for parenthood; and if an agricultural labourer with £8s. a week can bring up ten children, a man with £10,000 a year ought to populate a village—but the author's logical method has misled me. His argument is that the less money you have, the fewer children you ought to have; and the more money you have, the fewer children you want, or do have. As Tennyson might have said:

"Tis bread whereof our world is scant; O bread, not babies, for which we pant; More bread, and better, that is the rule.

I have tried again and again to show the simple fallacy of the Malthusian argument; but the simplicity of statement in this pamphlet inspires me to one more attempt. Malthus himself, in the last paragraph of Book III of his essay (7th ed.), declared: "The allowing of the produce of the earth to be absolutely unlimited, scarcely requires that weight of a hair from the argument, which depends entirely upon the differently increasing ratios of population and food; and all that the most enlightened governments and the most persevering and best guided efforts of industry can do is to make the necessary checks to population operate more equably, and in a direction to produce the least evil; but to remove them is a task absolutely hopeless."

Malthus' zeal for his remedy is here plainly in excess of his regard for facts, or even for his argument; for his argument was that because population increases in a geometrical ratio, and food in an arithmetical ratio, population was always pressing on the means of subsistence. But here he asserts that even if you had unlimited food (that is, if the arithmetical ratio of increase of food were not true), population would still increase up to the limit. But a geometrical ratio can never equal infinity; so that there would always be more food than people, and the necessity for checking the increase of population would not exist. Yet it is precisely in this case that Malthus declared that it would exist.

The fact is that Malthus forgot the first conditions of scientific precision, viz., the statement of the conditions in which his law was that population is at the mercy of his environment. In that state, curiously enough, he practises control of population almost habitually; abortion and infanticide are common practices among savage races, and even among some civilised races. But the production of the means of subsistence is as possibly under the control of man as the function of procreation; in other words, it is not necessary that the production of food should increase in an arithmetical ratio. The breeding of varieties of wheat, for example, that will ripen one day earlier makes it possible to extend the wheat-growing area fifty or sixty miles northwards (quoted in Prof. Arthur Thomson's "Secrets of Animal Life," p. 237). The grafting of the non-rusting quality on English wheat, and the increase of its yield, by Professor Biffen, is another instance of increase beyond calculation in its possibilities; for there is not only the positive increase in fertility, but the elimination of waste due to rust. Breed varieties of potatoes immune from rot (and this is being done), and without any increase of fertility, the world's food supply can be increased by the simple elimination of waste. "The recent achievements of agriculture and horticulture are not sufficiently well-known," wrote Kropotkin thirty years ago; "and while our gardeners defy climate and latitude, acclimatising sub-tropical plants, raise several crops a year instead of one, and themselves make the soil they want for each special culture, the economists nevertheless continue saying that the surface of the soil is limited, and still more its productive powers; they still maintain that a population which should double each thirty years would soon be confronted by a lack of the necessities of life."

The fact is that the production of the necessaries of life is as much under human control as is the increase....
of population. Then why should we concentrate our efforts on the restriction of population instead of on the production of necessities? This reason is quite simple; to maintain the present social system, and the unequal distribution of wealth. For this purpose, it is necessary to regard every individual as a consumer, and not as a producer, to regard supplies as limited, and wants as increasing with numbers. The author of this pamphlet says, for example: "So long as the supply of labour does not exceed the real demand for it, every man should be able not only to get employment, but directly, or indirectly, to produce sufficient to provide him with a share adequate for his status. But if the supply is excessive, and two men have to do one man's job, then, instead of there being enough for each an adequate share, and either the general standard of well-being will fall, or one of the two will have to drop into a much lower standard." The simple fact that producers, like everybody else, are paid out of production, seems to have escaped the attention of the author; and the last resort, determined by supply itself is a truism at least as old as "Fabian Essays." At the present moment, for example, there is a great demand for money, because there is a largely increased supply of it (and its equivalents) in circulation, the effects of its disparity with the actual quantity of goods being seen in the prices of them. But the author's assumption that only under certain favourable conditions can the labourer produce enough to entitle him to "a share adequate for his status" is a simple absurdity; when the labourer stops working, or refuses to part with his products, the community starves. Austria is a very good example to study at this present moment; there is a positive decrease of population, and also a decrease in the "general standard of well-being." Production has practically ceased, and the value of the krones is I know not what ridiculous minus quantity. The plight of Austria is not due to the fact that there are two men for every job, as the Malthusian would declare, but that there are not enough men for the necessary jobs at work. And the question for us is not: "Are there too many working men?" but: "Does our social and economic system permit of maximum production and equitable distribution?" A. E. R.

Reviews.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

ARMENIA.

Sir,—Mr. Pickthall complains that the only other Armenian (Mr. Arlen rather vaguely implies that he is one) whom he has to hirn in the past called a liar. I have seen no reason since then to withdraw that charge. What, after all, can one do with a man who states that "Reports...from Beyrout and Constantinople liar. I have seen no reason since then to withdraw that from Armenians in Marash itself, who say that they are Armenians, by weight of money, are trying to dictate in security, are regarded as fictitious?" Mr. Pickthall cannot, seemingly, go to the length of denying that there has been murder in Marash, but he goes as far as he can. He is like most propagandists, and the more dangerous he rigorously excludes. And in this case he wantonly and cruelly excludes those other telegrams from "Marash itself" which tell a different tale, of wholesale loot and blood-letting. But I am unable resigned about penetrating so biased a mind; for I am very certain that Mr. Pickthall, when he wrote that perversion about Tannu, the Prime Miniter of England can say have lately been made in that district than he or I could well count through an hour of a sleepless night! And I think your readers by now know that I, as an Armenian, do not generally give too generous a credence to Bryce reports of massacre.

Mr. Pickthall says, again, that alien Greeks and Armenians, by weight of money, are trying to dictate the policy of England. Surely, he can know nothing of human nature, of the kind that lives and dies for absurdities! Does he seriously think that the Armenians (we will ignore the "alien" Greeks) ever hope to reinstate their country in its proud position which only legend can claim for them? Does he really think that they, a people cursed with sophistication, are lured on by any hope of a quiet and peaceful Hayastan, free of the cruellest, and end of the indemnity of the European charity? I regret that they are made of more cynical stuff. And the keynote of their resistance and propaganda is simple: all the sentimentalists who have been smeared her, is—well, Mr. Pickthall, it's just revenge! I didn't know?... And that is why I quite agree with him that money may be spent furiously to prejudice the Turk in this country as long as the Armenian elbow, say I! Had money, I couldn't spend it more enjoyably. Sympathy must be seduced, if it can be got by no other means. The Armenians have paid with their lives, they will pay with their treasure, to ensnare more quickly with weeds that growth of anarchy and misgovernment which was once called the Turkish Empire.

But I do not see why Mr. Pickthall so consistently keeps his grievances against the Christian peoples of Asia Minor. They are really lost, finished, beaten, friendless. This war was the Armenians' last throw of the dice, their last furiously resolute. And, as for the years, so now—they have lost! The war has left them worse off than ever before. So badly off, indeed, that after fighting for England and themselves, after having stormed and carried Constantinople, after having held and only lost Baku because of the idiocy of a British general who thought that 1,500 men were enough to relieve them—after all this, the Prime Minister of England can say of them that, if they relied more on themselves, the Armenians would become a "more manly and virile people".

Since England was taught Imperialism by that brilliant and bedizened Jew, she has never "befriended a small nation more dangerously than she has Armenia. If England can but continue to "befriend" her, there will very likely be a new left-wing revolution between Mr. Pickthall and myself. For I am sure we could not disagree so heartily upon any other but that which he is pleased to call, incorrectly, "the scum of the Levant."

D. KOUVOUIRDIAN.

THE DEEP SEA.

Sir,—Mr. Ezra Pound has lately been using your columns to express his contempt for nations. It is curious that this question of nations has never been exhaustively discussed by anybody, and that each man's view depends on his temperament. Heartily and up-to-the-minute people like Mr. Chesterton and Mr. Bottomley are obstreperously patriotic, while those of a more fastidious temper, like Goethe and Mr. Pound, are apt to think nations vulgar. My argument I am not sure that either side would have much the best of it.

The strongest objection to cosmopolitanism is that it would be likely to produce countries such as Mr. Pound's native country. America is the melting-pot of the nations, and has managed to go topographically one hundred million people of all colours and tongues. Unhappily, they are all painfully alike. You start on the train from New York, and after travelling a whole day arrive at Chicago, which is another New York. Another half-day brings you to Minneapolis, which is identical with New York and Chicago. At the end of two and a half days more you again go on a train and arrive after fighting for England and themselves, after having worse off than ever before. So badly off, indeed, that, thousand and a hundred thousand, is alleged to have one, but I have never found it. Worse than all, there is intense resentment of outside criticism, especially if it takes the form of wit. The bell of every American or Canadian wish to hear his country laughed at. Mr. Wilson MacDonald has finely expressed this in "A Song to Canada":

"My land is a woman who loves
All whose word is a lie;
The limitless doves
That coo in the hour when her peril is nigh;
The poets who sing,
"Very fair is the bride of the North
As she now steppeth forth
To enter that council which girdles the world with its ring."

But this is my grief that no longer she cares
For the old wounded message of truth
That sounds on the lips of a poet, who dares
Look under the rouge of her youth."

The great argument for cosmopolitanism is that it is necessary to avoid war. Those who believe, however, that the chief cause of war is pressure of population will attach little value to such a remedy. The Goths and Vandals did not attack Rome because other poetic misunderstandings. War can be averted only by a universal low birth-rate and a fairly even distribution of population throughout the world. When the birth-rate of all countries differs little from the death-rate, and the population per square mile is about the same in Brazil and New South Wales is in China and India, then war will be no more. When such an equilibrium has been reached, national differences are more likely to be augmented than diminished. There will be little emigration, and less international trade than at present. Fewer people will be needed to learn between foreign languages. Possibly one of the existing languages may be chosen as a means of international communication; but such a language could never be more than a learned language, unknown to the majority of people. War will be rarer than at present. National differences will therefore be as well defined in the future as in the past, but there is every reason to hope that the feeling between nations will be akin to Chinese indifference rather than Prussian bitterness.

R. B. KERR.
Pastiche.

"RUS IN URBE."

If I could speed a silver stream Through dull unlovely Deptford Town, With meadow-sweet each bank adown, I think that Deptford Town might seem
The substance of a happy dream. Or could I charm a nightingale To sing in solemn Islington Just at the setting of the sun, The magic of it could not fail To be a nine-days’ wonder-tale! They’re hision of bird and flower In Kensington, and water too! And oft-times overhead the blue, With clouds as white as white can be! And yet I hear the weary sea
Of London breaking! Let me bring The great salt waves, with sheeted spray, To wash this waste of bricks away, And o’er where the white wave rings These seeds to waken with the Spring!

In Piccadilly foxgloves tall, And snowdrops where the grey Bank glooms, And what a sheen of bluebell blooms Would blaze where now the news-boys call Outside that weary was the day.

Great chestnuts down in Oxford Street, Where Strand now justles larchen trees, And poplars, quick with sun and breeze Would change Pall Mall, with swallows fleet Above a field of springing wheat! – L. M. PRIEST.

THE POINT OF VIEW.

"If you want a cocktail very much," said the lady behind the whisky bottles, with a hint of contempt for such a dilute taste in that serious pursuit of alcoh- olies to the satisfaction of which her energies were dedicated, "go up the stairs, through the curtain, and turn to the left, and you’ll find the American bar."

"Very much?" seemed a strong phrase for a very languid aspiration, but I followed her directions. And there, in that deserted "lounge," from the lips of its presiding genius (and I have no doubt that his skill entitled him to the description) I heard the sad story of the decline and fall of the "Empire."

At my very advent his lonely face lit up, as might that of a settler on some island in the South Seas when the rare arrival, ship brought him into touch for a moment with the civilisation he had once known so well.

What would I have? Bronx, Manhattan, Martini—he seemed to expect my confidence) and went back, pondering all these things in course on such occasions to resist. And heartsease "which may not be thine," quoth she; "Bate hath not sown thee by long and lingering round the desert of plush and refinements."

"So much for Bakst and Picasso. "A lot of cloths!" I abandoned the aesthetic ground as untenable in the circumstances. "They seem to be a great draw, anyway. Every seat is sold to-night, they tell me."

He turned a pitying smile on my ignorance of real values in the matter. That the mere seats should be occupied was a matter of sublime indifference to him. "Look at the money we used to take 'ere." He gazed reminiscently round the desert of plush and gold.

"Yes, in the great days you wouldn’t ‘ave been able to get near this bar at nine o’clock, not without waitin’ yer turn. But we’re respectable now," he winked a salacious eye. We call this the cloisters now. It wasn’t the seats in the ‘ousethat did the big business ‘ere. Stands to reason they can’t make much now with all that space runnin’ to waste. You remember it in the old days, sir?"

I told him I had seen some of the revues. "Revoos. Well, some of ’em went all right. But I didn’t much care for ‘em. Too clever by ‘arf they was. Give me the old bal—wot was really bal—, I mean.

Twenty years ago. They’ve benison of bird and tree
To sing in solemn Islington
Where Strand now justles larchen trees,
And poplars, quick with sun and breeze

To wash this waste of bricks away,
And o’er where the white wave rings
These seeds to waken with the Spring!

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SEA-HIERB.

Feste hath not sooth thee by long Letae stream That scarce gives back the light of lighten day, And with her slow wave laps the bitter clay The which with every wanhope herb doth teem; But where the calms and smiling suns are few; And with her slow wave laps the bitter clay
To wash this waste of bricks away,
And o’er where the white wave rings
These seeds to waken with the Spring!

Seventeen of cloths! That’s all."

But I

With the white spiced rose and honesty

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"They’re goin’ to pull it down," he said regretfully, "and put up a ‘uge place with cinnymars and restyrongs and I don’t know wot else. Seems a pity to me."

He spoke as if deploring that the theatre should not have a chance to redeem itself and recapture its first fine careless rapture " or the "cosmopolitan rendezvous of the world " (vide the programmes of the « old days »). "Well, people will ‘ave things different, I suppose."

He sighed as if the ways of progress " were something too mysterious to understand.

The orchestra was beginning again, and I thanked him for the cocktail (in which matter he had justified my confidence) and went back, pondering all these things in my heart, to the ballet that was not (it seems) a ballet, but only a work of beauty and delight.

I think it must have been after some such conversation that the Latin author judged down to this effect to the theory that it was of no use disputing about matters of taste. But now we may no longer go to the "Empire" let us remember that what to some of us has been the triumph of Art has been for certain bar-tender a very poignant tragedy. – MAURICE B. RICKERT.

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