NOTES OF THE WEEK.

To be sheep without a shepherd is pitiable, but to be sheep under deaf shepherds or under shepherds in partnership with the shearsers and the butchers is much worse; and it is to this state that the Labour movement has been apparently reduced. It is inconceivable that the rise in the cost of living should not have provoked considerable dissatisfaction. The most obsequious of the capitalist penmen would not maintain that the working classes are so well off that the rise in prices does not affect them. Yet, to judge by the speeches of Labour leaders, their official resolutions and meetings, and the Press which calls itself Labour, there would appear to be nothing unusually wrong in the situation. Russia, Turkey, African natives, the League of Nations—any of these topics of discussion and policy was, it appeared, something of a burning question among the rank and file of the proletariat; but, for all the world was allowed to know to the contrary, the cost of living was forgotten or ignored. Common sense, however, has been more or less confirmed during the past week in its conclusion that the reality was somewhat different from the cultivated appearance. There have slipped through the censorship several items of news indicative of the existence of precisely the kind if not the amount of discontent that might have been expected. Here and there groups of postmen and railwaymen have attempted to call the attention of their "leaders" to the trouble by means of special demonstrations; in one case by holding up work for half an hour in the middle of the day, in another by a day a week strike; and on Tuesday of last week, we are told, a deputation of South Wales miners' wives waited upon the Miners' Executive with bitter complaints of the high cost of living. These incidents, we may be sure, are symptomatic of a general state of feeling: it cannot, in fact, be otherwise. But the question is how long the Trade Union rank and file, however, is to know how to get rid of its officials, even when these have become glaringly unrepresentative and even anti-representative. Trade Union Executives have made the rules of their election and recall to suit themselves; and it is only by almost impossible exertions that the main body of a Union can change the personnel of its Executive. Under these circumstances, it is scarcely to be wondered at if a whole counter-organisation seems occasionally to be necessary as a means to securing the smallest change in Trade Union policy. This was the case, for example, with the Shop Steward movement—a movement whose ultimate motive was not, it now appears, the establishment of Soviets in this country, but merely the practical criticism of the Executive of the A.S.E. And it is the same case, it seems, with the "Vigilance" movement on the railways, which very nearly succeeded in bringing about a novel kind of strike during last week-end—a strike whose minor Labour leader. It is necessary, in short, to jeopardise his job; and we should suggest that the sooner this is done the sooner will the problem of prices be attended to. After all, it is not as if the problem of prices were insoluble. The solution is known. Nor is it a small matter beneath the notice of the exalted officials perched on the backs of the Labour movement: it is the problem of Labour, of civilisation, and of the world. In forcing its leaders to concentrate upon prices, the Labour movement of this country would be doing the world the greatest service within its power.

The recent "settlement" on the railways, which, if we remember rightly, was regarded by Mr. Thomas as marking another new and delectable era in Labour progress, has scarcely been accepted as such by the rank and file—in other words, by the half a million workers who know where the shoe pinches. The "sliding-scale" arrangement, under which wages are always to be regulated by food-prices, has in particular aroused the indignation, as we said it would, of the railwaymen; and, in addition to this, various other items of the great "settlement" appear to be anything but consonant with the demands of Mr. Thomas' employers. The difficulty with every Trade Union rank and file, however, is to know how to get rid of its officials, even when these have become glaringly unrepresentative and even anti-representative. Trade Union Executives have made the rules of their election and recall to suit themselves; and it is only by almost impossible exertions that the main body of a Union can change the personnel of its Executive. Under these circumstances, it is scarcely to be wondered at if a whole counter-organisation seems occasionally to be necessary as a means to securing the smallest change in Trade Union policy. This was the case, for example, with the Shop Steward movement—a movement whose ultimate motive was not, it now appears, the establishment of Soviets in this country, but merely the practical criticism of the Executive of the A.S.E. And it is the same case, it seems, with the "Vigilance" movement on the railways, which very nearly succeeded in bringing about a novel kind of strike during last week-end—a strike whose minor
aim only was to express discontent with the "system," but whose major aim was to demonstrate what the rank and file thinks of Mr. Thomas' "settlement." The disadvantage of such a ponderous method of criticism is that it cannot be long enough continued to affect its real object. The Executives know very well that the rank and file cannot maintain a permanent counter-organization, and they have only to sit tight to see it melt away. Mr. Thomas in particular is almost impervious to criticism from "his own side." The "Vigilants" will have to do something more than threaten a strike if they mean to "control" Mr. Thomas or the present Executive.

Some remarks by Mr. Clynes at York last week deserve to be quoted as evidence of the uneasiness of his "unconscious" self. Labour, he said, "was totally opposed to the present Government's notion of government . . . which was to do nothing except under compulsion, to resist anything until resistance was no longer possible, and to wait until there was such clamour and show of disturbance . . . that it was impossible to do anything at all . . . The Government's practice was to show no initiative and not to look ahead . . . No man could call himself a statesman when he did only what he was compelled to do, however well he might do it." The pertinence of these observations to the Labour leaders is at least as clear as the fact that the miners have been ready to resist anything and the fact that they were made by Mr. Clynes, who is himself one of the most responsible of the leaders of Labour, is psychological evidence that he is aware of it. But is the significance of the fact to end with the observation of it? Is the Labour movement also, is Mr. Clynes himself, willing to wait until they are kicked into a policy? There is not the slightest doubt what the demand of the country at the moment is: it is for a policy that will have the effect of reducing prices and thus of saving the nation the misery of choosing between strikes and semi-starvation. The responsibility, moreover, for the discovery of such a policy rests pre-eminently on the Labour movement, the popular Opposition, as it claims to be, both of Capitalism and of the Government. Unless, therefore, Mr. Clynes and his colleagues are content to answer to their own description of the Government, they must exercise their initiative while there is still time to make a merit of it.

Mr. Frank Hodges remains too busy to begin the exploration of "avenues of reduced prices"; but in the May issue of a magazine called "System" he expounds at length his views on the means to increased production in the mining industry. The rank and file, who have the satisfaction of employing Mr. Frank Hodges, will appreciate his zeal on their behalf, especially when they realise what his proposals involve. He would set up a "National Coal Corporation" "delegated with full powers on behalf of the State" . . . a geological survey of the coal areas should at once be undertaken "by experts" . . . "antiquated and localised plant" should be ruthlessly scrapped . . . and "coké residues" should do the work of the coal now consumed in or about the pits. "To effect such a change, Mr. Hodges adds, "there need be no violent revolutionary upheaval." We should think not, indeed—unless the resistance should come from the miners themselves; for what is the whole plan but the dream of the capitalist system, the ambition of every authoritarian? Observe that there are identical principles of American capitalism as imported into Russia under the cloak of Marx. There is the absolute centralisation of all control and initiative; the employment of "experts" under the central bureaucracy; the substitution of "wages" for men, without any provision for the distribution of the product among the superseded; and, of course, the elimination or utilisation of "waste." Nothing need be said, of course, of some of these changes technically considered; but their root in a rigid centralisation would inevitably result in the immediate establishment of "Trotsky's" labour. If Mr. Hodges would find it as impossible as Trotsky has found it to escape from compulsion—even if he wanted to. Compulsion is a necessity of centralisation, and cannot be separated from it. In a word, Mr. Hodges' notion of a Mining Utopia is a small edition of the Servile State.

There is no doubt that the Labour movement as a whole is falling into some serious self-contradictions, for want of enough thought on the part of its leaders. The most striking, perhaps, is the contradiction involved in the simultaneous assertion of the obligation to work and the right of the Trade Unions to restrict their membership—that is to say, to prevent a man from working. We are naturally not disposed to join Lord Methuen and others in a political attack upon the very constitution of Trade Unionism. Trade Unionism was never designed for the good of capitalist industry; it exists for the protection of its members, which may or may not require at one time or another a restriction of membership as well as of hours of labour. On the other hand, this perfectly legitimate and natural view of the right of the Trade Unions to dictate who shall not work with them is incompatible with the view, expressed by Mr. Will Thorne, Mr. Lansbury and too many others, that everybody should be obliged to work—in the Trade Union sense of the word "work." Even these Labour leaders, we should think, must be able to see the inconsistency in requiring everybody to work and, at the same time, refusing to allow anybody to work.

We are asked to admire a Government that so far floats its supporters as to suspend building operations in respect of mansions, cinemas, factories and the like, "in order to secure the speedier building of houses." Very good; but is the sequel of stopping "luxury" building of necessity the building of houses? It is true, of course, that the withdrawal from the market of a large demand for materials will tend to reduce prices; and that to this extent such houses as are built may be cheaper than they otherwise would have been. But the difference in cost, represented in the ultimate by the difference, between, let us say, five hundred and six hundred pounds, is so trifling in contrast with the income of the working classes that "cheap" house is quite as much out of their reach as the dearer. Without a considerable subsidy, the reduction of the cost of houses from six to five hundred pounds will not, in fact, enable any more houses to be built. But if this is the case, there appears to be sense in the objection that the stopping of "luxury" building, while it will not by itself greatly facilitate the building of houses, will certainly create a good deal of unemployment, especially in the more skilled ranks of the building trade; in short, that the Government measure we are asked to admire is likely to do more harm than good. But what, then, was a poor Government to do? Only, we may say, to recognise the fact that "trade follows the pocket" and to deal with it directly. If, as our system dictates, commodities are made only to order of those who can "pay" for them, it is absurd to refuse to allow "luxury" commodities to be made on the ground that necessary commodities should come first, unless the demand for necessary commodities is actually made "economic" by the appropriate distribution of purchasing power. Refusing to allow the rich to "spend" their money is not a way of enabling the poor to spend money they have not got. It simply suspends trade altogether. The right course for the Government—though it is useless to say so—is to distribute purchasing power or to see that it is distributed equitably. An equitable distribution would make unnecessary either the restriction of "luxury" building or the subsidisation of necessary building.
Those who doubt that our annual production greatly exceeds our annual consumption, even under the existing system, which almost demands sabotage as a condition of its life, are recommended to examine the figures relating to the shipbuilding of the United Kingdom. At the end of March, 1914, a total of one and a half million tons was in course of construction; at the end of March of this year, the amount was over two million tons, the actual number of steamships being 865. The world's present tonnage, it may be added, is four millions more than it was in the year preceding the war; and it is expected to be fifteen millions greater before the next two years are out. Much more, however, than the feeling of mere wonder ought to be inspired by such figures as these. It is significant that, in spite of the war, the world's tonnage has increased rather than diminished in the aggregate: it is amusing to discover, in view of the reports of our Press and ship owners, that our own production is at least half a million tons greater than our pre-war production. But it is far more important to remark that the "cost" of the 865 steamships now building is being collected from the public in the form of increased prices; and that under no probable circumstances will their "owners" reimburse the public for the loss. The reasoning involved in these propositions is simple; and it applies, we may say, to all capital expenditure. The building of these 865 steamships is made possible only by an equivalent issue of credit (or purchasing power), the effect of which is to inflate the total effective purchasing power by the amount of the credit issued, and to raise prices in general correspondingly. In other words, these ships are actually being built at the expense of the community measured precisely by the increase of prices resulting from the expansion of purchasing power by the sum of the issued credit. If it be urged, as it usually is, that the community will ultimately recover its loss in the form of lower prices consequent upon the employment of these ships, the reply is that no such compensation is inevitable or even probable. So long, in fact, as the issue of credit (involving the determination of price) remains in "capitalist" hands, so long will all capital expenditure result merely in adding to the "property" of the capitalist classes at the expense of the community. The greater the amount of credit issued the higher become prices, and the greater becomes at the same time the capital property of the credit-controlling class.

In comparison with the expansion of credit on account of trade, the inflation of credit on account of Government expenditure is almost negligible. Still, it exists, and the recent raising of the rate of discount on Treasury Bills does not seem to have put an end to its necessity. Last week over a millions pounds was issued on "Ways and Means," that is to say, as a Government overdraft at the Bank of England, or, in other words, by the medium of the printing-press. If the premium security of Treasury Bills returns, as it does now, an interest of 6½ per cent.; and if, moreover, even at this figure, an insufficient amount is taken up to prevent recourse to the printing-press— it may be gathered that, before very long, your "money" is going to cost you more. The appreciation of money as a commodity is certain, moreover, to have an even more direct and universal influence on prices than the rest of the causes of high prices; in short, we may expect almost immediately a further rise in the general level of prices as a whole. And the effect of the budget upon the situation will be, as we saw last week, to raise prices still higher. After a discreet resistance the British Federation of Industries has "accepted" the Excess Profits Duty in the certainty that the burden can be laid on the shoulders of those least able to bear it. The Trade Unions are getting ready for further wage demands; and the employers are preparing to grant them out of still high prices. Altogether, in fact, the "austerity" is about to be tried for his life and probably found guilty. Guilty, indeed, he is; for with a means to bring down prices within the reach of his "leaders," he prefers the primrose path of putting on a pleasant smile to making himself disagreeable even to the least responsible of his officials.

The Manchester Liberal Federation has passed a resolution substantially in accordance with a suggestion made in these columns a few weeks ago. It urges the National Liberal Federation—the chief assembly of the party—to "re-formulate the economic and industrial policy of the Liberal Party," in such terms as to provide an alternative to "communism" on the one hand and "the class-war" on the other. Moreover, Manchester undertakes, in the event of the resolution being carried at the National Federation, to set up a sub-committee of research, with Professor MacGregor of Manchester University as its expert member. It is an interesting suggestion; but what are the chances that a policy without a party will meet this party without a policy? To judge from other information received we are disposed to regard the matter as already a chosen juggle; in other words, what Manchester will think to-morrow she has already thought the day before yesterday. The "re-formulation" of policy, we are told, will include the encouragement of profit-sharing, the association of Labour with management, a limitation of profits, and other tremendously advanced items. We can only say that if Manchester is correctly reported to be about to arrive at this definition of a policy, the less time the Liberal Party wastes on it the better. It does not contain a grain of mustard-seed; nor will the fowls of the air ever come and vote under its branches.

Lord Grey's appeal on behalf of the League of Nations represents that body as virtually our only defence against war. It is the only means, we are assured, by which "the peoples" can win "permanent peace." If that were, indeed, the case, the duty would be laid upon every Government in the world to look to its defences; since the League, as the Manchester Liberal Federation has passed a resolution in its present or in any immediately prospective form is only a partition of lath and plaster between war and peace. It would not survive the smallest real international "misunderstanding." Lord Greys goes on to admit this fact, and indeed to base his appeal on it. The League is dependent, he says, on its "driving power," which in turn is the creation of "public opinion" and of the conviction that wars in the future must be prevented; public opinion, therefore, must assert itself; otherwise, Governments are powerless." We agree that Governments are powerless so long as they refuse to question the assumptions of the capitalist system (of which the necessity for premarriage for war is certainly one): but "public opinion" is no less powerless in the absence, not of conviction, but of disinterested leaders anxious to instruct it in the nature of the real causes of war. Lord Grey and his colleagues appear to be under the impression that war is occasioned by the mutual misunderstanding of the "public opinion" and of the conviction that wars in the future must be prevented; public opinion, therefore, must assert itself; otherwise, Governments are powerless." We agree that Governments are powerless so long as they refuse to question the assumptions of the capitalist system (of which the necessity for premarriage for war is certainly one): but "public opinion" is no less powerless in the absence, not of conviction, but of disinterested leaders anxious to instruct it in the nature of the real causes of war. Lord Grey and his colleagues appear to be under the impression that war is occasioned by the mutual misunderstanding of the "public opinion" and of the conviction that wars in the future must be prevented; public opinion, therefore, must assert itself; otherwise, Governments are powerless."
These Present Discontents.
By Major C. H. Douglas.

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I.

Whether or not the Great War has released the immense flood of criticism on every subject, which is the feature of the present epoch, it is probable, a position would in any case have been reached by this time in which a large majority of the world's population must have become profoundly dissatisfied with their lot, is no doubt arguable. But that such a position has arrived surely no one would deny. Even the hard-shelled Tory, if he be anything at all of a realist, must admit that, reasonably or otherwise, his opponents are making the working of that pre-war world to which his eyes turn back with longing, and to the restoration of which his energies are bent, an arduous and uncomfortable undertaking; whence, the audacious and confident promise is uniformly introduced to our attention by moral and political economists, that under Guildism, there will be no bureaucracy, no enslavement of mankind to it, rather than that he might be enabled to know what is amiss with civilisation, as the orthodox, or rather, Majority, Guild Socialists, for example, explain that the nationalisation which the miners want is something quite different from that which Mr. Sidney Webb and the Fabian Society want, and are concerned very largely to assure their followers that, under Guildism, there will be no bureaux confidently promised as the logical consequence of a victorious peace, seem united on one subject only—the determination to make the old one as uncomfortable as possible for everybody.

Viewed dispassionately, therefore, it seems fair to assume that we really are on the eve of great, even fundamental, changes; that, while change must come, it is childish to believe that any sort of change will do; and, in consequence, to grant that it is of vital importance to know what is amiss with civilisation, as a preliminary to prescribing for the malady.

There are already a number of popular remedies on the market—there is State Socialism, for instance. State Socialism, however, is a little under a cloud—and, in consequence, to grant that it is of vital importance to know what is amiss with civilisation, as a preliminary to prescribing for the malady, is no doubt arguable. But that such a policy which aims at the establishment of a complete sovereignty, whether it be of a Kaiser, a League, a State, a Trust, or a Trade Union, is a policy of Domination, irrespective of the fine words with which it may be accompanied; and any policy which makes it easier for the individual to benefit by association, without being constrained beyond the inherent necessities of the function involved in the association, is a policy of Freedom.

As between these two policies, there could be no greater mistake made than to assume that all would-be reformers are aiming at freedom, though many of them, no doubt, honestly think that the fanatical Labour theorist, who would deny the right to live to any person not engaged in orthodox toil, quite irrespective of the facts of wealth production; the Trust magnate who intrigues for Prohibition because it reduces his premium for Workman's Compensation Insurance, or corrupts an essential article under the pretext of efficient production, are, no less than the mediaval ecclesiastics who burned men's bodies that their souls might live, practical exponents of salvation by compulsion. It may be worth while, therefore, to see whether the industrial and social machine, as now constituted, may not be equally the instrument of either policy.

As to every-day, practical, individual freedom, it will no doubt be granted that any man or woman who, at the present time is in possession of a stable income of the "unnamed" description of, say, £1,000 per annum, is economically free, i.e., such a person is sure of a reasonably high standard of life, even though his opinions may be highly distasteful to a large number of people.

This statement is only true, however, so long as the general level of the prices of those articles which are actually used to make the standard of living, i.e., ultimate commodities, remains as at present. But let us imagine that the control of all housing came into the hands of one man, who bought each house at ten times the present market cost, obtaining the (no doubt fabulous) sum of money required by means of an overdraft at the banks, based on his ability, under the circumstances, to make the rents of houses ten times what they are now, then this statement would no longer be true. Our hypothetical freeman would once again have become a slave because his necessities would force him to obtain more "money" on any terms imposed by those in control of it. The essential thing which would have happened is that a Housing Trust would have come into possession of the whole of the credit-value attaching to the demand for houses, and would have been able to make any price for a house, so long as that price enabled the Trust to retain the bank-credit with which the house was bought.

We may observe that in this simple example, we have a complete instance of the embodiment of two diametrically opposite policies, the machinery permitting either of them to be made effective. The only essential to the complete ascendency of the hypothetical Trust (which might, and probably would be not only economic, but moral and
intellectual) is that it should centralise the credit, and retain the power of price-making. In order to make the analysis of any value, however, we have both to ascertain whether such a centralisation of credit is probable, whether the function of price-making is indissolubly attached to it, and whether, in the first place, our economic freeman had any “right” to be in possession of “unearned” income (and so may be the prototype of the New Citizen), or whether it was merely obtained at the expense of someone else, as the orthodox Socialist would have us believe.

Boots!

Scene: The 9.40 from Anywhere.

Jones (putting down The New Age): . . . By the way, Smith, I’ve just got a pair of boots from your place. Isn’t five pounds a bit thick, even for these days?

Smith: Ah, you literary men don’t understand these things. You think it’s just a bit of leather and the time of a few workmen that you ought to be paying for. But I can’t sell boots in the street, you know, and these new premises of mine have cost a mint of money.

J.: (giving him an opening): I see. I’m not merely paying for my boots; I’m also helping to pay your rent.

S.: Well, that’s fair enough, if you think of it. If it weren’t for your and other people’s boots, I shouldn’t be keeping up the shop at all, or the factory either; so my rent’s just as much a part of what the boots cost me to make as the men’s wages are.

J.: Yes, I admit that. But what about that new machinery you’re installing? It didn’t make my boots, you know, as it isn’t finished yet. Have I paid a bit on that too?

S.: Indirectly, I suppose you have. But it’s really on all fours with the rent. You know, I had to borrow money for the new plant, as the current profits wouldn’t altogether run to it; well, the interest on that money is equally a part of my working expenses. To leave it out of account in charging for the boots would land me in just the same deficit at the end of the year, as if I left out the cost of the leather.

J.: For all that, I still object to paying for it. Thinking of the community . . .

S.: I am thinking of the community. Isn’t it better for the community to have a larger supply of boots turned out at a quicker rate?

J.: And at a lower price?

S. (after a pause): Well, possibly; if the new process finally cheapens the cost of a great deal, as it well may: though that doesn’t altogether depend upon me, you know. I have to keep my eye on big people like Brown and the other fellows, and see what they are charging.

J.: (who has some idea what “keeping one’s eye of the public” means): At any rate, whether you happen to be feeling philanthropic or not, the community will someday have paid you outright for the machinery, won’t they, if you go on including all your current expenses on it in the price you charge them for the boots—even for the boots it actually makes?

S.: Ultimately, I suppose that’s true.

J.: Well, what will the community get out of the machinery they have paid for? The right to admire it if you show them round? It seems somehow to belong to them, doesn’t it?

S.: Don’t be absurd, Jones. What’s the good of machinery to them? They can’t use it; I can; and my use of it benefits them. In any case, I don’t put up machinery for the fun of giving it away. It’s part of my living; and you can’t expect me to be out of pocket on it, can you?

J.: What about the time that big contractor’s bill came in? Weren’t you rather near being “out of pocket” then?

S.: Well, I might have been, if I hadn’t obtained that loan from the bank, which I mentioned just now.

J.: Which put you “in pocket” again? Excuse my simplicity, but these metaphors from pockets always confound me. What did the bank do exactly? They didn’t actually fill your pockets with gold, did they?

S.: Of course not, my simple friend; they credited my account with a certain amount, on which I could draw a cheque for the contractor.

J.: You mean the whole thing was done by a clerk’s writing a few words in one or two big books?

S.: Yes, if you like to put it that way. But there’s no magic about that; he wouldn’t have done it if the bank hadn’t known I was good for the whole amount from what I could eventually produce with the new plant, not to speak of the plant itself.

J.: But you are not going to pay me back in boots! S.: No, but I shall pay back the loan (if they want it) with the extra money I shall take jolly good care to get for the boots; which comes to the same thing (Smith’s accompanying wink is however stopped in mid-career by his disengaged eye falling on Jones’ new boots).

J. (tactfully ignoring the last remark): Let’s go back to the big book a moment, Smith. After all, that bank clerk’s pen was a kind of magic wand. It gave you power to pay the contractor, it gave him power to pay his men, and it gave them power to buy their food and make ‘bus-conductors work for them—and all in view of something that’s going to be made and isn’t made, all for a few thousand pairs of phantom boots. And even when they have materialised, I suppose you’ll still have something in the bank, or perhaps have borrowed some more money?

S.: Quite probably.

J.: On the strength of more phantom boots! As fast as you lay one ghost, another one rises.

S.: I don’t mind ghosts in the future so long as I have the money for them in the present, in good fat cheques or solid Treasury Notes.

J.: They don’t look very solid to me, but I suppose you mean you can get solid things for them.

S.: I didn’t quite mean that, but it’s true enough.

J.: It seems somehow funny to me that money made, like that, out of nothing at all, by a mere stroke of the pen, should at once give you a power of buying goods and making people work for you. Don’t you feel there’s a catch somewhere?

S.: You only think it funny because you are not used to our modern system of banking. The whole structure’s quite firm, really. They give me real notes on a real security. They know my boots are coming along just as I know their Treasury Notes are genuine. They believe in me and I believe in them.

J.: But you would get the money and the goods whether you eventually made the boots or not, and even if you had no intention of making the boots at all, and preferred, say, the risk of going to jail instead. And further, suppose the notes weren’t genuine, and even that you didn’t get them from the bank at all, but from some obliging forger who didn’t expect you to turn out any boots; and suppose they were accepted as genuine. You would still be able to get goods for them. There’s more than one magician who can wave a wand. . . . And there’s another limit to the conjuring powers of your friend in the bank; he can create money, but he can’t create goods. I expect that is where the catch comes in. What’s the result of your getting your loan? Why, there is suddenly some more money in the world to divide among the same old goods. In other words, you’ll have to pay more for them; the prices will go up. And the more Smiths there are about the country getting loans, the higher they’ll go. They are going up now. The wonder would be if they ever went down.

S. (with a vague memory of something Mr. Chamberlain said about “dilution of the currency”): Even if the Government stopped printing so many notes?

J.: That wouldn’t make any difference. You would merely pay out a few more of your “fat cheques”; and
what does it matter if a bit of paper is written on or printed on, if it buys the same things?

S.: Well, I suppose that's true, and I've still got to extend my business somehow, and I can't do it without getting credit from somewhere; so there you are.

J.: And I take it that in spite of your debt you haven't done so badly on the whole?

S.: Well, I don't mind telling you in confidence that this is the best year I've ever had; and, unless I accept a very favourable offer I have had from Brown, I shall form a company at once. I've spent far more than before, but I've got it all back and a jolly sight more.

J.: One of the reasons being that my boots cost me a "jolly sight more" than they cost you.

S.: Once again, how do you expect me to live?

J. (after a pause): Look here, Smith, it seems a silly idea, but suppose yours were the only business in the country and everybody worked for you (except your banker, perhaps); suppose we all ate boots and lived in shoes, like the old woman; then, if you charged everybody more for their boots than they cost you, you couldn't sell anything like all you made, could you, because no one would have any money except what you paid out in wages (or dividends), and the wages would form only a small part of your total cost, and a still smaller part of the total price you would expect? What would you do with the extra boots?

S. (airily): Send them abroad, I suppose.

J.: And put the extra cash into more leather and machinery to make still more and more boots? Until the whole country was choked with boots that very few people would have money enough to buy, until they in turn were sent abroad?

S.: Don't be ridiculous, Jones.

J.: But is it ridiculous? It only seems so because I've over-simplified, in speaking only of boots. But for "Smith, bootmaker," substitute "Smith, universal provider," or if you like, "100,000 Smills, universal providers," with other Smills over the sub-departments; and you have the modern industrial world in broad outline. The goods that can't be bought at home will pile up in just the same way, unless they are sent abroad to people who after a time will find they don't want them, or are buying from other people, who would fight you if you undercut them; and equally will you have an army of people here who would like more of the goods, but can't afford them because the prices always keep ahead of manufacturing costs, and the costs ahead of their own wages. And if they do manage to get hold of some of the goods, they are at the same time paying their share for machinery they can't use, which will go on turning out other goods they will never be able to buy. In fact you would be starving them out merely because you can't get rid of the idea that though your customers (foreigners included) consume only a part of what you made, they have to pay for the whole; plus a bit over for you. And by "you" I mean you and your fellow-Smills.

S.: How do you mean "pay for the whole"? They only pay for what they have; and there's nothing that forces me to make any more boots than I can sell, in spite of your vision of an England choked up with boots.

J.: I thought you admitted that they paid also for the machinery, and the premises, and the banker's interest.

S.: Well, they pay for what they can usefully have; the rest is merely the means to get them that. They can't eat the machinery, or live on the premises, or... (he completes his sentence with a fit of coughing).

J.: There is great virtue in that "usefully." Anyhow, you admit they only consume a part—up to the value of perhaps a half, perhaps more—of the total product, which you could "pay for" or not, even if you count the wear and tear of the machinery in the part they consume. Then why should they justly pay more than a corresponding fraction of the whole cost?

S.: Very nice indeed—from their point of view; but where do I come in?

J.: Do you mean, where would your extra profit come in, or how would the difference between the price and the cost be made up to you?

S.: Both.

J.: The point of profit can be easily settled. Put yourself down for a salary; you'll do that anyhow, when you are a director, and you'll take so many shares, the dividends of which may go up when profits increase. Well, when I say cost, I include your salary and dividends and what not, whether increasing or not. You can call it your profit if you like; I won't quibble about words. Then as to the other point, the making up the difference between the lower price and your outlay. Well, what's wrong with Treasury Notes? You get dirty ones from your customers; why not also get clean ones from the Government press, or let your banker do it? You needn't take more of them than you want; your friend with the big book could make entries on your behalf for those you didn't want to draw, just as he does now.

S. (seizing on a debating point): Haven't you forgotten what we just said? If you flood the country with notes, up go the prices again.

J.: Except that this issue would be the result of falling prices, and not the cause rising ones. But anyhow there would be no more notes issued than at present, as they are there to cover your costs now—or could be if you chose to convert your credit into cash. The difference would not lie in the number of notes, but in the people who give them to you. As a fact, far less would be needed, as, owing to the cheapness of raw materials, your costs would be much less than before.

S.: But really, Jones, are you serious in proposing that the Government should subsidise all the industries in the country? Because that's what it would mean. Why, it would ruin them in a month, and the taxpayer, too.

J.: What on earth has the taxpayer to do with it? I'm talking about printing notes, not levying taxes. You're still thinking of Treasury Notes as "good solid things," like bits of gold, in spite of the conjuring tricks of your friend the banker. Thank goodness we are no longer living in the Age of Gold... And as to the Government's being ruined, why should it ruin them to pay you for work done? The fact that the nation's helping Robinson to pay for his boots won't ruin the nation.

S.: Now you have substituted "the nation" for the Government; so you have brought in the taxpayer this time.

J.: But not directly, as taxpayer. When I say that "the nation helps to pay," I merely mean that the ordinary Treasury Note will enable you to call on the nation to furnish you with food, or punch your bus tickets. You're still thinking of Treasury Notes as "good solid things," at present. It's just another kind of bus ticket itself which you believe will carry you to your destination—your destination being, say, half a ton of coals instead of the Marble Arch. It's your belief in its capacity to make people work for you that gives a worthless piece of paper any value in your eyes at all. The Government in this connection is merely the nation's masterprinter. That's another reason why the Government wouldn't be "ruined."

S.: Still, I don't see why the Government, or the nation, or whoever you like to call it, should help to pay for Robinson's boots, whether consciously or unconsciously. Robinson's buying a pair of boots doesn't benefit the community.

J.: Of course it does, Smith, if Robinson is doing work for the community, which he couldn't do without having boots—especially as he would be able to buy...
more of the other things which he can't afford at present, and generally live a better life all round. S.: It's easy enough for you theoretical people to make Utopias. But I'm a business man, and before I could be convinced that prices could ever be brought down below cost, I should have to see some practical schemes in black and white, instead of your airy vapourings.

J. (darkly): And who said there wasn't one already? . . . (The train steams into London.)

ADRIAN COLLINS.

Another War Book.

I THINK we might examine still another book*—Ameri- can this time—on the subject of war neuroses, written by Dr. MacCurdy. It is not a good book, but Dr. MacCurdy is a psychiatrist of some standing in America, and deserves notice. His clinical descriptions of cases, particularly of anxiety states, are accurate, and serve as useful introductions to a proper study of the subject, but when it comes to discussing the psychological interplay of emotions and desires, he keeps very much to surface aspects, and at times displays a most distressing Philistinism. This may, of course, be due to the fact that he is plainly filled with a desire to write in introductory style for the "laity," but I cannot help thinking there is more in it than that. And in any case the attitude taken by numerous medical men that professional matters should be imparted to the public in prescribed doses only is not really good, witness the flourishing state of patent medicines. Any matter should be either sifted to the best of one's capacity, irrespective of audience, or left alone, according to circumstance. There is much too condescending a preface to the book, too, composed by Dr. Rivers. We really should reflect that psychology is not quite the simple matter so many physicians seem to think it. Nor do we yet know one quarter enough to justify the wholesale attempts at classification that are perpetually made when some small-sized theory appears.

That is the chief fault of Dr. MacCurdy's book, superficiality. I know the immensity of the subject might be argued in defence; but he has written some hundred and thirty odd pages, and really might have put more into them. But he contents himself with the bare surface description of cases, with no more analytic or psychologic comments than might be made by the most casual examiner. He has the conceptions of failure in adaptation and resultant conflicts, but beyond that he does not go, has little to say about regressions, unconsciously formed associations, symbolic use of war experiences to express permanent psychological attitudes, and other such not unimportant manifestations of neurosis. It must be remembered that the cases he saw were fresh from their shock, so that their problems of adaptation and conflict were certainly uppermost in the clinical picture; but, even so, he might have gone a little further than contenting himself with remarking that such and such a case was highly strung, or always afraid of thunderstorms, or, beautiful phrase, " unusually normal." To do this is nearly equivalent to giving an extension of analysis, which is concerned with the whereabouts of present psychological attitudes and the clearing of paths for new attitudes, rather than with a not even graphic description of an objective view of these attitudes. In other words, to try and analyse the method of treatment, and not merely sit outside in criticism. And, again, it is soon after a shock that a man's psychological anomalies are most apparent, so there is not too much excuse for Dr. MacCurdy.

So much for the general aspects of this book. When we examine details, the most important thing we must remark is that in the matter of symbolism Dr. MacCurdy has practically nothing to say. It is difficult to discover what he really thinks of neuroses in general, beyond suggesting that they are sub-conscious instinct problems; but dreams he appears to regard as invariably wish-fulfilments. He states, for instance, that at a certain stage in waking, a symptom of anxiety conditions a wish for death appears, and that the victim then has nightmares of being shelled or bayoneted. These he takes as literal wishes for death, in spite of the terror that comes with them, and not as symbolic pictures of the patient's growing condition of introversion, with the cause of that introversion, war. And again with regard to dreams, he states that patients have dreams which are nothing but memory pictures of some actual fighting experience. I have no personal experience of war-shock cases straight from the front line; but of those that we meet to-day I do think it can be said that when they have battle dreams, then their battle experiences are employed symbolically. Where the dream is said to be a pure memory picture, it is not impossible that the dreamer's will or imagination cleverly traces the actual memory, which then obliterated the actual dream. I have myself only been told two dreams as memory pictures. It was exceedingly doubtful whether one was a dream at all, as the patient was not honest and no analysis was ever made of it. As for the more compelling one to "go slow." Other battle dreams that one is told to-day, at any rate, are as "mixed" as any other dreams; and battle memories come as associations to them, and are also to be taken as being symbolic. "It is now as it was then," is what such apparent memory dreams say. It cannot be said from his book that Dr. MacCurdy shows any signs of having grasped this. He seems content with the Freudian concept of the unconscious; only substitutes self-preservational for sexual instinct—nor is it likely that Freud would be flattered with his disciple. It is not impossible, however, that these instincts have nothing whatever to do with dream presentations. They appear in dreams, but that is not to say they create them. Still, we must have an hypothesis to work with, so I would suggest that the best thing we can say for the present is that there is something not our waking selves, that reflects us as in a plastic mirror when we are our dream selves. And on top of that there is the "collective unconscious."* And sometimes the two things would appear to be intertwined. But that is a matter beyond this present article, and having remarked upon it we may leave it over for the time being.

As regards treatment, Dr. MacCurdy is even more sketchy than in the matter of analytic diagnosis. This is not remarkable, as one cannot make bricks without straw, and superficial examination necessarily means superficial treatment. He says rightly enough that it is not easy to give an account of treatment, but he also speaks of "therapeutic conversations" in a manner that suggests classes for students. It is, of course, perfectly useless to give little descriptions of "shell-shock" to a psychasthenic, and leave it at that. What he actually needs is balm for his own individual soul— I am not speaking from mere egoism, but I am extra- vert in psychology—and not a laboratory lecture, nor even a bedside manner. Tranquillity, an even balance, harmony, these are his objectives so long as he remains capable of seeking objectives. And those who wish to treat him must regard it as their first duty to qualify themselves for clearing the snags from his path. Atmospheres of cure, suggestion, and such methods, that are now regarded as all that is necessary, are
no more than accessories, and, if applied alone, are only one step removed from drugs. There is no method now known that is so thorough as psycho-analysis, and that method must be mastered by any who wish to work with neurotics.

J. A. M. Alcock.

Drama.

By John Francis Hope.

I do not quite know what I expected to see, but Mr. Alexander Balshy's statement in "The Path of the Modern Russian Stage," that Gogol's "The Government Inspector" "may be regarded as the greatest play in the Russian language extant," certainly made me expect something. Mr. Fagan has treated the play like a classic, has had a new translation made and produced by Mr. T. Comisarjevsky, with Moscowitch to play lead at the Duke of York's Theatre. Something of my disappointment may be due to the translation; certainly, the classic tone is not preserved by translation into the most vulgar of English slang, and the Governor as "a big bug" has fallen out of the comic tradition. If this is the greatest Russian language, then give me French; if it is French, give me English—anything is better than the poverty of epithet that such lapses reveal. The whole manner of Moscowitch makes such phrases sound incongruous; they have to tread character and in this particular case the phrase shocks people into a laugh in the wrong place.

But the substance of the play is disappointing: the play not only dates, it ranks. Perhaps the surest test of an author's creative power is whether he tells you what he wants you to know, or whether he lets you perceive it in the natural revelation of his characters. In the latter case, there seems to be no author; the characters just express themselves. The classic author, in short, is one who assumes that he will be understood, and therefore does not visibly appeal to his audience; the craftsman, less concerned with his creation than with making the audience understand it, shows you his point, hammers it in, repeats it—and the craftsman, with the Governor; Gogol can do no more with it but repeat it, and multiplication does not produce cumulative effect in drama. The twin landowners, Bobtchinski and Dobtchinski, show Gogol's technical method; think of a person (or an idea), and multiply him, or it. That is a natural method of growth, we know, although even in nature there is a process of variation; but art selects, "there is but one art— to omit," said Stevenson, and Gogol had not learned it.

The bludgeon is always in his hands. If Klestakoff makes love to the daughter (and discovered by the mother), we know that he will (as he does) make love to the mother (and be discovered by the daughter). I can think of only one person who would become hysterical over such a joke, and that is Shamraeff in Tchekov's "Sea-Gull." If he is at all a typical Russian, Gogol's technique is intelligible; for he was convulsed with laughter over the flattest-footed jest, of which no one but himself could see the point. Indeed, when we think of it, few of the Russian writers exhibit any trace of the comic spirit at all; they can think of only one person who would become hysterical over such a joke, and that is Shamraeff; and multiplication does not produce any effect at all. He was too good an actor for the part; and played for the smite, not for the laughter. Miss Alcock was not so satisfactory as the Governor; Gogol can do no more with it but repeat it, and multiplication does not produce cumulative effect in drama. The twin landowners, Bobtchinski and Dobtchinski, show Gogol's technical method; think of a person (or an idea), and multiply him, or it. That is a natural method of growth, we know, although even in nature there is a process of variation; but art selects, "there is but one art— to omit," said Stevenson, and Gogol had not learned it.

So it is with Gogol. The Governor, in the opening scene, is not contented with confessing his own derections of duty, but he proceeds to enumerate those of his colleagues. The purpose is, of course, to inform the audience of the various forms of corruption practised in the local government of Russia; but the purpose is not effected in the terms of comedy. If the Governor knew of all these defalcations, so did the defaulter, and they knew that he knew; there was no need to tell them (and, through them, the audience), and a comedic artist would have sought for comic effect in the manner in which each revealed his delinquency. These men approved of what they did, although they knew that what they did would not, if it were known, be approved by others; they justified themselves to themselves; their problem was to find justification with others. The translation of the matter into language is the very art of drama; and Gogol has not succeeded in it. He has written a long speech for the "star," a speech which (in English, at least) is little more than an inventory. The whole comedic effect of surprise was thrown away; the "ridicule not extenuated;" and instead of a delightful scene of self-revelation, we had a defaulter's parade.

The third act repeats the fault ad nauseam. It is a joke that these defaulter's should confess themselves to an impostor, and purchase pardon by generous "loans." But the best of jokes will not stand repetition five or six times in succession; and the knowledge that each of these men will come trembling down stage, stand centre, manifesting all the symptoms of a culprit, and after the passage of money retreat joyfully, does not enhance the humour of the original situation. Certainly, one is fat and another lean; one has a squeaky voice and another blubberers, while a third is almost dumb with fright—but only the mentality of a village fair would appreciate these details in a crescendo of humour. The idea is exhausted (without having developed to its fullest extent) if the defaulter is discovered by the Governor; Gogol can do no more with it but repeat it, and multiplication does not produce cumulative effect in drama. The twin landowners, Bobtchinski and Dobtchinski, show Gogol's technical method; think of a person (or an idea), and multiply him, or it. That is a natural method of growth, we know, although even in nature there is a process of variation; but art selects, "there is but one art—to omit," said Stevenson, and Gogol had not learned it.

The production is noteworthy for the acting of Mr. Claude Rains as Klestakoff. His Casca showed that he had a sense of character, and Klestakoff gives him a chance to express it in more extreme fashion. For sheer acting, the drunken speech was the feature of the play; the crescendo of stupid bragadoocio, of increasing violence and decreasing meaning of gesture, of conversation rising to an hysterical hsyphodys of "great connection," until he probably made himself to be the Tsarevitch—all this was amazingly well done. It was the braggart let loose; and but for the assurance of the text, I should have thought that vodka, and not champagne, had inspired the passage. Moscowitch was not so satisfactory as the Governor; he played with the restrained natural characterisation of the comedian passages that had to be played in a farcical extreme to produce any effect at all. He was too good an actor for the part; and played for the smile of comedy, instead of the shriek of farce. A more tragic manner would produce a far different effect; but his Governor was almost human, instead of a butt for laughter. Miss Mary Grey is still elephantine, but not seriously so as in Portia or Lady Teazle; she does not play Jumbo but Jimbo in "The
Government Inspector," and really one is so surprised to see her move that, if one did not see her move, one might call her spiltly. But Miss Jane Amstel絨 flat tones of any actress known to me; she beats her lines into planes, and leaves the flat surface without any relief of meaning or feeling. Speech may be only silver, but she does not beat it into the golden silence; she simply knocks all the sense out of it, and, of course, one of the critics must say that "comedy is her real talent." Miss Jane Amstel, fresh from the Academy, promises to be worth watching as she develops.

Epistles to the Provincial.

VIII.

A short disquisition upon the second best.

The chief signs of the second best in London—leaving aside the pursuit of fads, which is not peculiar to the capital—are, I have heard, two. The first is an assumption of esoteric knowledge, the second is an assumption of irony. Esoteric knowledge and irony are the characteristic qualities of the best men in London, and they are also the qualities which distinguish them from the best men in the provinces. In the provinces, for example, the politicians but even literary men are taken, with a few allowances, at their newspaper value. Here the inner history of politics and literature is, in some quarters, suspected or even known, and little heed is paid to the newspapers. One does not read them. One reads only between the lines. Well, those who possess this inner knowledge—and it is a matter not merely of information but of judgment—I call the best. The second best, on the other hand, are those who, without possessing this knowledge, pretend to do so. To be exactly, they copy the air of omniscience of the best without copying the omniscience. This class is ubiquitous in intellectual London. An illustration may help to define them. Turgenyev had a hunting dog. "He used to point," he said, "he used to stop, he used to go through the whole performance of a hunting dog in a marvellous manner, only he had no sense of smell, and I was obliged to sell him." There you have an admirable image of the intellectual second best in London.

Take irony, again. Now indignation is the mark of the best men in the provinces, but it is irony that distinguishes the best men in London. And it is so because corruption is greater and more open in London than it is anywhere else in England. As corruption increases, indignation declines; and in declining it either dies out altogether or disguises itself as irony. In the provinces a man may, at moderate expenditure of force, feel angry with every great abuse that comes to his notice; but here simple indignation of itself would very quickly exhaust him. After the first hundred shocks or so he says to himself, "Come, this is too serious; indignation is not enough for this," and he becomes in spite of himself ironic. Irony is a more serious form of anger; and it is the only way in which a man here can conserve his forces. To be inquidant with facility in London betrays you as either immature or a provincial. You are regarded as one might regard the Irishman who assaulted the Jew after having heard the previous evening the story of the crucifixion. Men here, in other words, have become so accustomed to the abuses at which the newcomer waxes indignant that they find a little quaint the spectacle of his anger.

The second best, to return to my manuais sujet, betray themselves by carrying the irony too far and by indulging it so uncritically that it becomes mechanical and ridiculous. When a deed more than usually monstrous is done true irony by describing it in moderate terms shows up with all the more poignancy its monstrous nature. False irony, on the other hand, reduces it to the commonplace. This kind of vulgarity is almost universal among the second best in London. The best men can be shocked; the second best cannot. To be incapable of surprise, however—and shock is a moral surprise—is to be a figure of comedy. I am sure that if the Premier in a fit of cannibalism were to eat his entire Cabinet, the second best here would murmur, "Oh, we expected that!" Well, well. Imitation is the sincerest form of detraction. "He had no sense of smell," said Turgenyev, and I was obliged to sell him.

I find after all that I cannot leave the second best without a remark or two about the faddists. These are not unknown in the provinces, it is true; but in London they are different. Here they are so far away from the norm as almost to be ignorant of it. And being so, they are in the tradition of London. In London, if one is a functionary, one is a functionary a little more than anywhere else. The clerk here is intensely a clerk. The journalist is palpably a journalist, the faddist extravagantly a faddist. The human norm on doubt exists in London, but it is difficult to discover it, for the signs point all in different directions. In the provinces things are not nearly so bad. While I was in the provinces I remember having remarked from actual experience that the faddist is doubly a faddist to a person of the opposite sex. To one man another may appear just a little eccentric, but to a woman he will be a monster. And the reverse is—in the provinces—even more the case. A masculine faddist is there never so monstrous as a feminine faddist. Woman, I remember noting down, before, alas, I discovered London, was given to man to throw him off his balance once and to establish him upon it forever. Man, it is true, is the measure of things, but woman is the measure of man. These sayings are true, as you know, in the provinces. But however dangerous it is to make a generalisation in Edinburgh or Manchester I discovered when I came up here. For in London, I assure you, my generalisations are less than nothing. The faddists here are monstrous only to the provincial. Speaking in the language of the provinces, I suppose it is because London is so monstrous itself that in it one loses the sense of the monstrous. You will scarcely believe me when I say that there are here whole clubs of faddists of both sexes who have no difficulty in digesting one another. The Nietzscheans will no doubt exclaim, "The instincts!" But I prefer to make a more modest assumption. It seems to me that men and women become monsters so soon as the norm is obliterated, either subjectively, by a blindness in themselves, or objectively, by an external anarchy. Without the norm and the recognition of it, we should all soon be monsters, malgré our instincts. And in London—to tell the truth I have not the courage to complete the sentence.

Yes, the air of London is as kindly to idiosyncrasy as that of a small country town. In the country town the faddist is free; everybody knows him; he is cultivated like a rare flower; he even cultivates himself. And here the faddist is untrammelled because nobody pays attention to him, and if he is unusual, well, the unusual is so pervasive that it is unobjectionable. And in this respect London, I assure you, is the most monstrous of England. For in London, if one is a faddist one is a faddist. And the other way round. And the alternative here to faddism is fortunately not the beau monde but the indistinguishable average. Men of intellect who desire to retain their unity do not establish, except in very rare instances, a standard of refined behaviour, but become more and more "English," which I am afraid is another name for insular. If you wish to study provinciality—come to London.
Luck.

I was sitting with Ralph Ainsworth in his delightful Paris studio just off the Boulevard de Clichy, sipping tea and smoking questionable war-time cigarettes, when suddenly his younger brother Basil bounced into the room. He had got a few days' leave from the Front and had come straight to the studio before returning home. After an affectionate greeting with his brother he turned to me, and there was something almost apologetic in the way he took my hand. His handsome bronzed face said as much as possible:

"I know I look ridiculously well for a man who has been in the thick of it for close on two years; but I can't help it. It's my luck. I've done everything I could to ruin my health, from standing in melted snow up to my knees to sleeping in the open in soaking wet clothes. But it's no good. It seems even to do me good. Please overlook it."

I did my best to look as though I was quite prepared to do as he wished, and then the conversation turned on our mutual friends.

"What had become of Frank Henderson?"

"Dead—shot by my side as we stormed a redoubt."

"Poor fellow! And his brother Richard?"

"Dead too. I was just in time to see him before he passed away. He spoke of you."

There was silence for a time. Then I asked if he had had any news of Arthur Wainwright.

"Oh, yes!" he answered. "He's in hospital with a bullet through the neck. They say he'll get all right again. We had a rough time of it the night he was wounded. Thirty of us got separated in the dark and then surrounded. When luck help came there wasn't one man left standing—including, of course, myself. I, as you know, bear a charmed life. Pure luck. You see, the bullets just miss me and catch the fellow at my side. I can say with truth that 'The bells of Hell go ting-a-ling-a-ling for you, but not for me'."

"But I must be off now," he said, laughing in his gay, devil-may-care manner. "I've only just time to get to the station."

"Wonderfully lucky fellow, Basil!" said his brother. "Others we had settled down to our cigarettes again. It was always the same with him. Even at school his marvellous good fortune always stood him in stead. He behaved much better than he did, and I was always in trouble; he, never. Anatole France would pretend that it was his guardian angel that protected him, but, of course, it is merely luck—just luck."

"But you don't really believe in luck, do you?" I asked.

"Believe in it?" he answered. "Of course I do!"

"But the verdict of mankind is against you," I said, settling down to give him a much-needed lesson. "Philosophers, moralists, psychologists, financiers, and all successful men of the world say that there is no such thing as luck. There is cause and effect: that is all. What appears to be luck to the undiscerning is merely the conscious or unconscious obeying of certain laws. Often it may be a keen and highly developed instinct that warns a person of approaching danger. Some animals are known to possess this instinct, and I have little doubt in my own mind that your brother possesses it—quite unconsciously. Of course he developed this instinct in other ways, so that one man may be invariably successful on the Stock Exchange, another in Politics, another in Art, and so on. Another feels disturbance and trouble ahead like a human barometer and sells out to a man who does not possess this unerring faculty. The buyer curses his 'bad luck,' and calls the seller a 'lucky beggar.' As a matter of fact, luck has had nothing whatsoever to do with it. 'There is no luck in literature, no chance in results,' says Emerson."

"All successful men have agreed in one thing; they were reactionaries. They believed that things went not by luck but by law. A belief in causality, or strict connection between every pulse-beat and the principle of being—and, in consequence, belief in compensation, or that nothing is got for nothing—characterises all valuable minds, and must control every effort that is made by an industrious one. 'I could go on for hours like this,' I said airily, "but I don't want to rub it in too much. If I have succeeded in showing you that there is no such thing as luck I have done my duty. I am satisfied."

Ainsworth had listened to me with that respectful attention which my age, my reputation, and my greater experience of life entitles me to, when presently he got up and began pacing up and down the studio. Suddenly he stopped.

"Ever been to Monte?"

"To my cost, I have," I answered, "for my abominable..." I stopped, as I hoped, just in time.

"Luck, you were going to say," he broke in, with that utter lack of consideration for the feelings of others, combined with the intolerance which is so common to all the French, that some people love to adopt when they imagine they have scored a point in an argument. "You see," he continued, "we all hold pretty theories about cause and effect and all that sort of thing; but, au fond, we all know perfectly well that there is such a thing as luck. We need far more explanation for why everything one does prospers out of all reason as though the very gods themselves were working for him, whilst everything another does fails, than can be attributed to ability, instinct, or sensitivity to danger and change. Your error—and you are in error—"

"Oh, come!"

"Your error arises, as Poe would say, in the path of Reason through its propensity for seeking truth in detail. The Law of Chance or the Calculus of Probabilities may be just as applicable to a man's life as it is to pitch-and-toss or to the tables at Monte Carlo. A man may be born at a fortunate or unfortunate time (his Karmic decides this), just as a man may enter the Casino at a fortunate or unfortunate moment. For instance, one man is about to put a loulis on zero. A lady touches him on the arm: 'You here! He turns to greet her, when the croupier cries: 'Rien ne va plus!' He is too late. Then, to his huge disgust, he hears zero called out. Another man is about to do the same thing: 'You here!' He turns, and, whilst he is speaking to the friend, fifteen turns up. 'Lucky fellow!' He happened to speak to me just at that moment! I murmurs, then places his loulis on zero. Zero turns up. Nothing left to chance? Nonsense! Why, it's positively appalling to think that your whole life may be changed by a fly settling on your nose, or a speck of dust blowing into your eye! You turn to blow your nose, or look up at a clock, or stoop to pick up your stick, and you just miss seeing the very man whose information or advice would have prevented your taking a momentous and maybe irretrievable decision. A dear old gentleman of Sarajevo, full of kindness and consideration for others, stoops to pick up a bit of orange-peel from the path and throws it into the road. Presently Prinzip comes along and takes his stand on the roadside, waiting for Francis Ferdinand. Result: nil. But no. We were mistaken. The old gentleman of Sarajevo did not throw the orange-peel into the roadway, for just as he was approaching it, all unconscious of danger, he meets his victim: the buyer curses his 'bad luck,' and calls the seller a 'lucky beggar.' As a matter of fact, luck has had nothing whatsoever to do with it. 'There is no luck in literature, no chance in results,' says Emerson."
to slip on, Francis Ferdinand gets the bullet instead of the coachman. Result: the greatest war the world has ever seen."

"Have another cup of tea," I said, hoping to stop him. "It's just at its best now. Look," I added, as I poured out a brew that would have paralysed a navvy. But he would not look, continuing without a pause, "Let us examine the Calculus of Probabilities a little closer. Let us suppose, for instance, that sixteen has turned up. Has that sixteen any influence on the subsequent spin of the wheel?"

"I wonder you ask me such a ridiculous question," I replied, a little annoyed. "It is so very obvious that it can't! How is it possible that it should have? How could a spin, which now lies in the Past, have any influence on one which has not taken place—which, in face, lies in the Future?"

"Then let us suppose," he continued, quite undismayed by my pitiless logic, "let us suppose that sixteen has turned up three times in succession. Have any of these throws, all of which, as you say, now lie absolutely in the Past, any influence on the next?"

"Certainly not," I replied.

"So you would place a louis on sixteen after it had turned up three times running?"—There was an aggravating smile on his face now.

"Well—no," I answered, feeling a little hurt. "I should not. I suppose you think you have caught me?"

"Of course you would not!" he continued. "Instinctively you would feel that the chances were all against you. So you see, the first throw, although absolutely in the Past, has a direct—ay, and even a calculable—influence on future throws. In other words, the Law of Chance, or the Calculus of Probabilities, makes it exceedingly rare that the number sixteen should be thrown four times running. And you—or, rather, the tables—would be pretty safe in betting big odds against your winning on sixteen after sixteen had turned up three times in succession. If, however, you still have any doubts in your mind, you have but to imagine that sixteen has turned up four or, say, even five times running. It is now hundreds—probably thousands—to one against its turning up a sixth time.

"Good-bye," I said, taking up my hat and cane, for once Ainsworth got started in this manner the only possible thing to do was to leave him. "Good-bye. A most interesting afternoon. I'm off to the cinema now to see 'Lucky Ludlow.' He's one of those unfortunate beggars who draw all Life's prizes—in a word, who get everything they set their silly hearts on, including, of course, a huge fortune and the inevitable beautiful and fascinating heroine, and who consequently, surfeited and disillusioned, live to discover that they have been laying up treasure in a world where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. Good afternoon."

Morley Steynor.

Recent Verse.

M. Nightingale. Verses Wise and Otherwise.

Mr. Nightingale begins cheerfully:

Shame on you, slug-a-bed! Cheerly to the morrow, Lifteth a happy head, Banisheth sorrow.

He goes on:

High aloft, hear a lark His matins chanting, On the eaves, starting-clerk Routing and ranting; Not a bird has his song But is a-singing, Valleys and hills along Music is ringing.

Where have we heard all these sounds before? However, we protest, for we are in bed and the author is not a lark or a starting-clerk to lure us from it. He merely reminds us that other creatures sing when we expect him to sing himself. Not one of the lines, except the fourth, is even descriptive. And of what use is it to tell us that:

Valleys and hills along Music is ringing

after we have been told that:

Not a bird has his song

The remainder of the poem tempts us still less. "Shepherd boys wending" and "whistling," and "the fodder field crimsoning over," are, alas, phenomena which we have observed before. No, we will stay in bed! The author has one qualification for the writing of cheerful verse. He does not weary the reader with too many antitheses; he is not in itself sufficient to make the reader cheerful. Not only the rhythms but the images as well should be spirited. Mr. Nightingale, however, is merely garru-
lous, and as fast as the rhythm raises our spirits the wordlessness weighs them down again. We feel like bad sailors tossed on a choppy sea. The sentiment, which is one not of natural but of determined cheerfulness, aggravates our malaise; for, while it does not make us happy, it makes us feel that we should be. Nothing is so mimical to cheerfulness as to be good-naturedly hectored into it.

The more serious verses also are, alas, ruined by their garrulity. The sentiment which informs these is admirably sensible, moral, and humane, and their occasional grace is due almost entirely to it. There are always, however, a few words too many.

But chastisement
Is dead and spent
Ere it touches the heart of sweet content.

The observation is as admirable as the expression is vile. And even when the expression is felicitous it is spoiled by some barbarous pleonasm. Speaking of the twilight, the author says gracefully:

She gathers all the sea-birds to her breast
And then ruins this pretty-picture image by adding in the next line:

And folds them nesting in her soft heart's core.

What does it mean?

There is one line in the volume which approaches poetry by way of the oracle. It is from an elegy "On a Young Subaltern":

His sleep is wisdom and his wisdom joy.

There is not another.

L. AND R. Wine and Gall. (Blackwell. 1s. 6d. net.)

The authors would have been well advised not to mix their drinks. The wine is light and piquant, but the gall would not sell even in a prohibitionist country. "L." purveys the former and "R." the latter. The first named has obviously been influenced by Heine. Read the following poem and say whether it is not like a translation of that poet:

If you ask me why
I kiss your finger tips,
'Tis, not to meet your placid eye,
Your cold, impassive lips.
And if you ask me how
I dare to kiss your heart
I say 'tis from your cruel brow
Languidly set apart.

Your fingers well disguise,
To hide indifference;
Your heart will readily throb and tremble
Weaving a love pretence.

Your fingers cannot sneer,
Or speaking, prove unkind;
And the scorn that fills your heart, my dear,
I shall not ever find.

This is cleverly done, except for the dreadful clumsiness of the eleventh line. On first reading, the poem actually seems in the last two lines to copy the poignant of Heine. But it is an illusion. The poignancy here is verbal, not real; it has its ground not in life, as Heine's had, but in a purely literary play upon anatomical terms. For not only shall the author find "the scorn which fills your heart," but he has found it already. What is it all about? we ask in the end. In this poem the author deceives himself to undeceive himself again; and, worst of all, the reader sees him red-handed. This is one of the perils of mere cleverness, which has not its root in reality. Another danger of the assumed ironical attitude is given a fine illustration in another poem. Here is the last verse:

When I am tempted to despair
And burning sting and weep,
Just smile as when they wash your hair,
Shut eyes, and go to sleep.

No, no; one cannot be sympathetic and amused about it at the same time. Three lines have what appears to be an original image, hence an original feeling:

Your beauty on my heart of lead
As on a coin the conqueror's head;
Stamped with your image, lay me by.

Why the verses of "R" should appear in the volume is a mystery. One of his poems begins:

Next June it will be three whole years
Since last I saw your face.

And in another he says:

But after a while he (Time) wearies,
The best of wine goes flat.

Also the thinnest of gall, one may add: and that in spite of its being copiously mingled with blood! The following is "R." in the bloody mood:

Haply you will rejoice one day
To win me to your silken bed;
But dawn shall see me bear away
The crimson trophy of your head.

One need quote no further.

FREDREGOND SHOVE. Dreams and Journeys. (Blackwell. 2s. 6d. net.)

Mrs. Shove's good intentions have in these verses taken her in the immemorial direction. "Has my song been all in vain?" she asks. Ah! who can tell? The writing of these verses was no doubt good for the author; and the reading of them will do nobody any harm. Rather careless prose pretending to be verse, they are sentimentally moral and sentimentally mystical by turns. Where a line is good or very bad one feels it is the work of chance. The themes chosen are ambitious. "The World," "Man to his Creator," and "The Work of Ages" are a few of the titles. The treatment in every case is so inadequate as to appear an unconscious attempt at parody. "The Work of Ages" begins:

Lean Misery's a little child
With chillblains on his hands and feet;
Oddly enough, I think he smiled
As I went by him down the street:
Oh, what a devil I must be
If Misery can smile at me!

She proceeds:

Ten thousand million years ago
He smiled, and then I did not heed,
And at the end of the next verse she exclaims dramatically:
Oh little child! Oh Misery!
Oh centuries! Oh Monster—Me!

It is easy, of course, to see where this is leading.

"You are as bad as me," she informs the reader; and at the end she asks him to:

Slay the monsters in us all—
Under whose whips we creep and crawl.

The sense of responsibility revealed in the poem is no doubt an admirable possession; the expression, however, is such as to bring it into ridicule. Of so much importance, even morally, is just expression! But the author is always being carried away by her feelings—a misfortune fatal to poetry. "I wish," she says:

I wish this world and its green hills were mine,
But it is not.

Am I to cast away my spirit's vest?

She asks again. But her greatest sins are against just expression. Here are a few:

The wind has cast his winding sheet
(Which is the sky);
And to the winds that are in heaven hung
Like sheets for death—white symbols of the grave.

This is the very imagery of the laundry.

I feel the sweet, cold necks of flowers.

And, as I said, his spirit looked like a clean sword.
These sins of taste are surely just bad luck, as the few good lines in the book are simply good fortune. I quote them all:

And that pale calm through which the showers fall.

The celandine through dust is lit. They flew about on golden wings [of birds] And glittered like an angel's toys. Shake like thin lyrics, beautiful

Translating beads, and make the sound Of spirits talking underground.

These lines are passable; the other lines in the book are not.

E. M.

**Views and Reviews.**

A MECHANICIAN VIEW.

It is impossible to review twelve essays in one article; and I shall not make the attempt. Let it suffice that these* were delivered as lectures to the Summer School at Swanwick last year, that the lecturers included such well-known names as Mr. Charles Booth, who is indispensable to every symposium, Sir George Paish, Mr. W. L. Hichens, Mr. Fred Bramley, the Rev. A. J. Carlyle, and the Lord Bishop of Lichfield. "The New Spirit" appeared in five lectures on Industrial Relations, International Industrial Relations, Housing, Reform, and Education; while Sir George Paish dealt with the economic and financial consequences of the war (which seem to be summed up in two words, "debt" and "shortage"); the Rev. Mr. Carlyle spoke of "the actual industrial situation at the present time," and such odds and ends as "Unemployment," "Positive Freedom," "How Can the Churches Play Their Part?" also found advocates. The difficulty of the general reader, like myself, is to find the common denominator of these inter-denominational lectures; Miss Lucy Gardner, in her preface, says that "as we read them, we see a clearer vision of the Will of God for His world"—but I confess that no such illumination has happened to me. I find myself speculating on the validity of what seems to be the fundamental assumption of these speakers viz., the applicability of what they call "the spirit of Christ" to political affairs. I am aware that the controversy is at least as old as Christianity; I have a shrewd suspicion that it is incapable of resolution; but precisely because it is an everlasting controversy, it has an everlasting attraction. The particular point on which I join issue is Mr. H. G. Wood's lecture on "Humanising the State," in which Mr. Graham Wallas's plea for extending the family idea to State action is adopted. All the usual objections are made—that the State is impersonal; that it may be just, but is certainly not merciful; that it does not regard a man as a man, but as a unit; and the human touch, the brotherhood feeling, is demanded from it. But although these are objections commonly made, it does not follow that they are accurately stated, or that the inference is correctly drawn. Is it not rather the fact that the State is too personal, that "the family idea" has been applied to the detriment of the public welfare, that the State is merciful, but not just, and that what is most to be desired is that the State should do justice? Let us consider these propositions, although I cannot promise to quote much evidence.

The idea of justice that is most commonly held is, I think, an inevitable relation of consequence to action, which, because it is invariable, can be calculated upon with certainty. The objection commonly urged against monarchy and aristocracy, against all forms of government by one or by the few, is that they are personal, and that their actions are arbitrary—that is, conform to no rule; and in the specific activity of judgment which is called the administration of justice, it is precisely judgment in equity (personal judgment of individual cases) that is most commonly attacked. "When Savoy was united to the Kingdom of France, the first favour the Savoyards asked of the King of France was to be no longer judged in equity, but according to some law, no matter what," says Faguet. The incident is typical of the general trend of progress in these matters; apart from deliberate codification, legislation, with its repeal or alteration of previous law, tends in the same direction. The very ideal of justice is that there should be one law for the rich and the poor—a straight line, mercilessly extended, let it define whom it will; and it is a "corruption" of justice when its judgments are variable. This is quite as much in accord with "the spirit of Christ" as any procedure based upon the text, "Love one another," for "Your Father which is in heaven . . . maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." If the solar system has no anxiety about its reputation, as Emerson put it, neither does the father about the welfare of its inhabitants; if God is no respecter of persons, the Christian State must have a similar impersonality as its ideal. The "family idea" will not work, any more than absolute democracy will work; there must be delegation, transmission of power, and, as any engineer will tell you, every transmission entails a loss the original impetus. If we begin with the spirit of brotherhood, we ought to end with the fine impartiality of the solar system. The fact that we do not demonstrate that, far from the State being human, it is "human, all too human"; and the objection really made to the State is that it directs public policy to private ends.

The whole history of reform in politics supports the contention; the "redress of grievances," the "suppression of abuses," the everlasting demand for equality, imply the same desire for a calculable and invariable Absolute of justice. "Mercy" in State affairs is "favourism," "jobbery," and a whole host of abusive terms. The State as "father" is precisely what men have always objected to; they do not want to be loved, they do want to know the necessary conditions of their existence. Everywhere one hears the same demand for an invariable; the wounded soldier, for example, feels that he is entitled to a pension because he was wounded, and in proportion to the disability inflicted, and he knows that the pension is assessed on the degree of disability remaining after treatment. People want to know "just where they stand," as they say, what they can do and what they cannot do; and they look to the State to announce and enforce these minima of existence. "Daddy" would want to know too much, would never let "the boys" alone; and Mr. W. L. Hichens' plea in his lecture for private enterprise reflects this opinion. As Fra Lippo Lippi puts it: May they or mayn't they? all I want's the thing

Settled for ever one way : as it is

You tell too many lies, and hurt ye self.

Indeed, the task that the National Guilds movement has never, to my mind, satisfactorily performed, the separation of the political from the economic functions, has as its assumption, I believe, the general idea that politics should be a matter of principles, not of personalities. Philosophical, like political criticism of politics takes the same view, that the business of the State is to determine and enforce the minima of existence according to intelligible principles impartially applied; and people are simply bewildered by such practice as, let us say, the recognition of the revolutionary government of Germany, and the refusal to

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* "Some Christian Essentials of Re-Construction." Essays by Various Writers. (Bell. 5s. net.)
recognise the revolutionary government of Russia, by
the approval of the national demands of Jugo-Slavia
or the Armenians, and the disapproval of the national
demands of Ireland. There are reasons, of course,
for both parties, which are essential to my argu-
ment; the fact remains that it is the inviability of
natural law that is demanded from the State, and not
what seem to be the arbitrary judgments of individuals.
This everlasting trend of opinion issues in the con-
ception of politics as a science of government, which
demands the impersonality (or what Christians call
the selflessness) of a saint or a scientist.
I am aware that I am expressing what is disdain-
fully called a "mechanistic" view; but the mechanistic
view is the practical as well as the Christian view.
"Give us this day our daily bread," prayed Christ, as
though men were stomachs before they were spirits.
Men do not attempt to play tricks with machines;
if an engine burns oil, they do not give it water. They
devote themselves to finding out what it needs, and
giving it that and nothing else—in a word, they treat it
sensibly. If they treated their bodies in the same
way, they would keep them, like the machines, "in
subjection," and the "spirit," or whatever one likes
to call it, would find unobstructed expression. But the
"human" treatment denies the fact that man is a
machine, treats him as a "man" (which is a term of
romance), and results in "the rewarding as an illus-
trious inventor whosoever will contrive one imped-
iment more to interpose between the man and his
objects." In the general terms of politics, the object
is that we should conform to and control the processes
of Nature for the benefit of the human race; and there
is no obvious "family feeling" in that object.
A. E. R.

Reviews.

Rachel Fitz-patrick. By Lady Poore. (The Bodley
Head. 7s. net.)
We are assured that this is an attempt to interpret
the English and Irish to each other. Rachel comes to
London to finish her education at the invitation and
expense of an aunt who had married a naturalised
English Baronet—a German, of course, and a million-
naire. Rachel learns to behave herself, and makes Sir
Felix behave himself; but in Berlin, at the outbreak
of the war, he makes himself drunk enough to propose
to her, and she begins to walk home. Subsequently
she marries a naval man's second in command.
Character is only expressed in the correspondence of
the "dear little" men ! But Bridget, her literary power.

The Irish Labour Movement. From the 'Twenties
to Our Own Day. By W. P. Ryan. (The Talbot
Press, Dublin, and Fisher Unwin. 4s. 6d. net.)
As a piece of industrial history written in the his-
torical tradition Carlyle makes interesting reading.
The heroes of Irish revolt, these men who
combined to a striking degree a passion for their class
with one for their country, are here sketched vividly;
but little attempt, on the other hand, is made to trace
the growth of Labour in Ireland and to explain any
but the personal causes of it. The author has chosen
rather to write a book of the saints of Irish Labour.
Nothing, however, could show more eloquently the
difference between the sentiment which animates Irish
Labour and that which animates Labour in this coun-
try. In Ireland, the author says in effect, the Labour
movement has always been a Nationalist—that is, national.
And this intense nationalism has given to it, and rightly, an elevation of spirit which is lacking in English Labour.
This character of nobility is evidenced most clearly in the men whom Irish Labour has produced, or, perhaps
Mr. Ryan would say, who have created Irish Labour.
Connolly was certainly a man of great gifts, both in-
tellectual and moral; and the story of his life, as well as
of that of Larkin, is inspiring. The author's vocabulary is unusually sentimental, and it disfigures a book which is otherwise simple and unpretentious.

Clerical Incomes: An Inquiry into the Cost of Living
Among the Parochial Clergy. By Eleven Diocesan
 Contributors. Edited, with an Introduction, by
J. Howard B. Masterman, M.A., Rector of St. Mary-le-
Bow Church, Canon of Coventry. (Beal. 6s. net.)
The facts laid bare in this book are a credit neither
to the nation nor to the Church. In plain terms, the
average incumbent, it appears, can be made to earn a "living wage" in the service of the Church. A very large pro-
cportion of the clergy are at present in receipt of less
than £200 a year, and a number receive less than £130.
And this, most of the contributors agree, is not on
account of bad distribution of Church funds (although
these, it is agreed, might be better distributed), but
because the money coming in to the Church is not
great enough. It will, no doubt, be said, and with
truth, that the Church cannot expect anything better,
seeing that, for a century at least, it has not been doing
its work, and, except in form, has been dead. Yet it
is surely an injustice, at least of fortune, that the
present clergy should suffer for the sins of a century of
predecessors. As for the plea, frequently advanced,
evidently, by the laity (for a number of the contributors
have occasion to reflect upon it), that a "holy poverty"
among the clergy is salutary—surely this exceeds the
bounds even of religious hypocrisy. If the Anglican
clergy were celibate the argument might be valid; but
it is a notorious fact that they are not celibate; most
of them have families, and these must be provided for.
The present volume is badly planned, and is quite
unsuited for its purpose. A pamphlet, one-twentieth the
size, and sold for a few pence, would have appealed
more effectually to the public.

(Fisher Unwin. 7s. 6d. net.)
The author was in Paris during the Peace negotia-
tions; he picked up morsels of knowledge both of
public and of private interest; but his impressions,
unfortunately, have not been wrought into a picture in
itself striking. Whatever interest there is in the book
resides in the incidents and personalities treated and
not in the treatment of them. Mr. Huddleston is con-
tent to supply "copy." He retails private gossip and
information of international importance with imper-
iality. Turning aside from the discussions upon which
rested the fates of nations, he tells us that in his spare
moments Mr. Lloyd George played golf, and Mr.
Bonar Law chess; that President Wilson chose to go
to the theatre, while Mr. Barnes explored Paris to
procure knick-knacks for his grandson. The League of
Nations cuts a very small figure from the very begin-
ning. "Nobody seemed to care. There were two vital
points which, in the opinion of two different
countries, had been left out. Did these countries
trouble very much? No." A rather pathetic expres-
sion is left by President Wilson as he crosses these
countries. He appears to have come to Paris with
nothing but principles; with no faculty, for instance,
for negotiation. That, of course, was bound to be
calamitous.
of the general economic thesis which must everywhere have been talked after the Boer War, has talked about the argument in favour of control is that, since Joseph Chamberlain made the absolute thesis of Free Trade there can be no question without restricted births, we cannot maintain the present order of society; without wise and enlightened guidance we shall come smash. I think that the argument in favour of Protection, since Joseph Chamberlain made the absolute thesis of Free Trade there can be no question without restricted births, we cannot maintain the present order of society; without wise and enlightened guidance we shall come smash. I should have said free of official red tape and will have all the elasticity of efficient private enterprises.

Sverina.

F.P. CROSHAW.

Free Trade.

Sverina,—I was rather astonished to see in your review of Mr. Robertson's book on Free Trade the implication that the economic case for Protection was unsound. Your reviewer puts it as a contrast between the Free trader, who sees the economic problem as a whole, and the Protectionist, who only considers a detail of it, thereby getting wrong on the general problem. I should have said that it is insular, and the exponent of the economic argument for Protection who takes the general view.

Of course there are plenty of fools who exhibit their folly in the defence of Protection just as there are fools who exhibit their folly in defending the simplest mathematical truth. So far as I can remember, every professional politician at Westminster who has spoken in favour of Protection, since Joseph Chamberlain made everybody laugh after the Boer War, has talked nonsense: but that does not invalidate the absolute value of the general economic thesis which must everywhere and always maintain that Protection is the normal, and Free Trade the abnormal, policy of a modern State. But as between the absolute thesis of Protection and the absolute thesis of Free Trade there can be no question of which has the advantage. For the conception of Free Trade as an absolute (that of Mr. Keynes, of Cambridge, for instance, in his recent exceedingly insufficient book) is that the State, the Nation, the economic interests of any particular community, may neglect Protection, because freedom of exchange over any given area undoubtedly tends to create the maximum wealth within that area. Such men go on to argue that therefore any part of the area will necessarily benefit by the increased wealth of the whole! It is a strange example of lack of grasp in reasoning.

One has only to analyse the absurdity for its refutation to be self-evident. Complete freedom of exchange throughout any area will obviously make for a maximum of total wealth in that area. But that area will necessarily benefit any particular part of the area? Of course, if there be not nationalities, nor communities, nor any special divisions among men, but if the whole world is to be one State, Free Trade is the unavoidable policy for it. But if we are to care more for the economic advantage of our country than for the total economic advantage of the world, there follows as a necessary subsidiary formula the root formula of Protection, which in its briefest terms runs thus:—

“When, by untrammelled exchange across the frontiers, a section of the community obtains an increment of economic value less than the increment which would be produced by exchanges restricted to areas within those frontiers, then such restriction is of economic profit to the community.”

This is a truism, no doubt; it is what mathematicians call “an identity,” but it is a truism which the English Free Trader alone out of the whole modern world has failed to grasp.

A simple illustration will prove the case. A is a field of coal, B is a field of iron ore very distant from A, and C a field of iron ore very close to A. If A, B, and C are all in one community, it pays that community for A to exchange with C. A will get its iron ore from C close by, and will have to export back, by way of payment, not more than one-third of the smelted ore product. B will be neglected. If it hathiero enjoyed the export of coal, and that export stops, or, to put it in current terms, “if the price of coal falls so that the mines of B are unworkable,” B starves. Now, this does not matter to the community if all three are in one realm; for the good of the realm, as a whole, is increased. The greater wealth of C and A are more than a compensation for the losses of B. But what if A and B belong to the same community while C belongs to a foreign community? If, A and B being fellow-citizens, you compel A to seek coal from C, and the other way. It is the Free Trader who is insular, and the exponent of the economic argument for Protection who takes the general view.

Against so exceedingly simple an economic and mathematical proposition illustrated by so exceedingly simple and mathematical example, could one call “an identity,” but it is a truism which the English Free Trader alone out of the whole modern world has failed to grasp. As a political example take the case of Spezia.

In the shipping industry : the profit-motive will be replaced by the service-motive, for all the profits of the “Garibaldi” will go to increase its fleet, and it will not pay high salaries to a host of chairmen who have all the advantages of national administration without its defects; its profits will profit the nation, while its management will be free from official red tape and will have all the elasticity of efficient private enterprises.

I venture to think that the notion in favour of control is that, since Joseph Chamberlain made the absolute thesis of Free Trade there can be no question without restricted births, we cannot maintain the present order of society; without wise and enlightened guidance; and without wise and enlightened guidance we shall come smash. I should have said free of official red tape and will have all the elasticity of efficient private enterprises.

Mr. Robertson's book, for instance, in his recent exceedingly insufficient book (which sum represents their gains in a strike), has leased from the Italian Government five steamers of a total of 40,000 tons. The lease is conditioned by a few clauses, as, for instance, the obligation to use the steamers for the importation of primary necessities to Italy; that the steamers shall not be sold, and shall return to the possession of the State if the “Garibaldi” should go bankrupt or transform itself into a capitalist enterprise.

With this begins a new era in the shipping industry : the profit-motive will be replaced by the service-motive, for all the profits of the “Garibaldi” will go to increase its fleet, and it will not pay high salaries to a host of chairmen who have all the advantages of national administration without its defects; its profits will profit the nation, while its management will be free from official red tape and will have all the elasticity of efficient private enterprises.

Spezia.

ODON POR.

Free Trade.

Sir,—In the opening article of my recent series under the above title, I mentioned the Italian National Federation of Seamen and their Co-operative Society, the “Garibaldi,” which was founded for the purpose of buying or leasing and managing sea-going ships. Now, this Society, with about 30,000 members, who during the last year or so have paid into the funds of their society about 50 lire per month as instalments on their shares (which sum represents their gains in a strike), has leased from the Italian Government five steamers of a total of 40,000 tons. The lease is conditioned by a few clauses, as, for instance, the obligation to use the steamers for the importation of primary necessities to Italy; that the steamers shall not be sold, and shall return to the possession of the State if the “Garibaldi” should go bankrupt or transform itself into a capitalist enterprise.

With this begins a new era in the shipping industry : the profit-motive will be replaced by the service-motive, for all the profits of the “Garibaldi” will go to increase its fleet, and it will not pay high salaries to a host of chairmen who have all the advantages of national administration without its defects; its profits will profit the nation, while its management will be free from official red tape and will have all the elasticity of efficient private enterprises.

Spezia.

ODON POR.

Free Trade.

Sir,—With reference to the review, “No Babies Wanted,” in your issue of April 22, I venture to think that the notion in favour of control is that, since Joseph Chamberlain made the absolute thesis of Free Trade there can be no question without restricted births, we cannot maintain the present order of society; without the present order, we cannot expect wise and enlightened guidance; and without wise and enlightened guidance we shall come smash. I should have said free of official red tape and will have all the elasticity of efficient private enterprises.

F.P. CROSHAW.
Pastiche.

IN PRAISE.

O sing of all thy saints, friend Poesy, 
Thy company incomparable hymn forth, 
Mute in the mortal voice, but tuneful, 
Most tuneful, the where all else is death; 
Fluting in winds and praying in still airs, 
Missal'd in flowers and merry in green leaves. 

Sweetly shall I be shriven of weariness, 
And rest, rest, rest—and yet be large in life, 
If thou extend one fold of thine apparel 
For silken mail, bright harness marvellous. 

Send me not forth, for I am loth to go; 
I am Fidelity that still abideth 
Both poor and gentle in all righteousness 
And keeps the door, both for to hearken thee, 
And through the wicket call to wayfarers, 
Like throstle in cold harbourage of spring, 
Some notes of tune, with bright eye and still plume 
And passion'd throat, and never a thought but song. 

I will not count the dawns nor the moon's wanings, 
Nor see the errant tides dance up the strand, 
Unless it hap thou chant of the new day, 
Or of stars gathered in the golden sickle, 
Or the upleaping wild and fairy wave. 

Call War, I am a legion : stay at home, 
Sing lullaby to babes,—and so will I. 
Play with a blade of grass, 'tis beautiful; 
Or rive the forest like 

That Love would shelter her from all the strife 
Bowing her head before him. 

Grief filled her eyes, and down her weary cheek 
And shield the dreams that lightened her heart's 

That was her home. The scornful world that mocked 
At night returned. 

Away from her into the flare of life 
Where dreams that fled the world, around her flocked 
And keeps the door, both for to hearken thee, 
When that thou stayest, and the world is burned. 

TRUTH AND ERROR.

1. Out of an infinity of numerical values, the sum of 7 and 9 can be correctly expressed only as one value.

This shows that the ratio of truth to error is infinity to one.

2. The sum of 7 and 9 is 16, not 15.9.

This shows that even when the difference between truth and error is infinitesimal, it is also incalculable.

3. Though the sum of 7 and 9 will always be 16, it will always be possible to say that their sum is 15, or 17, or any other number.

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