NOTES OF THE WEEK.

No doubt the vote of 12 to 1 at the Labour Conference against the proposal to affiliate with the Third International—that is, to adopt the Bolshevist programme—will be regarded, and particularly by the "moderate" Labour leaders themselves, as conclusive evidence that the party is sane. So, indeed, it is in the negative sense that it is indisposed to adopt the more spectacularly imbecile proposals of some of its neighbours; at the same time we must point out that the Labour Party has a brand of moonshine of its own which is not a whit the less extreme, even in the Russian sense, merely because it contemplates the employment of constitutional methods only. What is there, for example, to choose ultimately between the Russian policy of setting up a "dictatorship of the proletariat" and the policy of English Labour that aims at the establishment of an all-Labour Government in this country, that is to say, a Government completely dominated by the "proletarian" element? There seems, of course, to people who consider only phrases and appearances, all the difference in the world between the two things, but the fact of the matter is that the establishment of an exclusively "Labour" Government in this country would presuppose and practically necessitate a "revolution" more or less after the style of the Russian revolution. To put it plainly, Mr. MacDonald and the rest are deceiving themselves if they think that their present demands are any more viable, without a revolution, than the demands of the Bolshevists. To propose the "abolition" (and not merely the social subordination) of Capitalism is to declare a purpose that can only be carried out at the cost of a "revolution" and, in the end, not all the constitutional phraseology of the movement will be able to conceal the fact. All appearances to the contrary, all intention to the contrary, the present demands of Labour, being, as they are most of them, contrary to the sense of society, quite as certainly involve a revolutionary conflict as the more openly revolutionary demands of Lenin. The only essential difference between the two movements, in fact, is in favour of Lenin. He, at least, had the logical clarity to foresee that his programme could only be obtained by force.

The eyes of the fool are on the ends of the earth, we are told; and it is confirmed by the insinuate attention paid by "Labour" to the details of foreign affairs. It must be admitted, of course, that "foreign affairs" are in a tragic confusion, and, moreover, that we are infallibly drifting into an era of world-wars. But there is not the least use in picking out one detail after another and complaining to the world of that, without a previous attempt to bottom the whole problem and to discover the fundamental cause of the hostile alignment of the Great Powers of the world. Why was Germany hostile to this country? Why is it that, no sooner has Germany been disposed of, than we find ourselves under the necessity of preparing against the next war in the mere elementary interests of our national self-preservation? The "Daily Herald," in a moment of distraction from boxing and betting, had a true perception when it asked what was the use of cavilling at the Army's demand for men and replied that "we must destroy for ever the policy that made the demand inevitable." But immediately, like all these parties that shirk fundamental thought, it offered the totally inadequate explanation that "Labour must challenge the ambitions of Mr. Churchill and Lord Curzon." "A. G. G." of the "Daily News" is under a similar delusion. "Only one thing," he says, "is needed to get us out of the present whirlpool . . . it is to get rid of the reckless pilots who have plunged us into it." But neither Mr. Churchill nor Lord Curzon nor Mr. Lloyd George is really any more the "author of our foreign policy than "A. G. G." himself or the members of the Labour Party. Our foreign policy is an extension of our social policy as that is a mere reflection of our economic system; and, given the continuance of our home-system of distribution, we defy any party, Liberal, Labour or Socialist, to change our foreign policy except in the most indifferent details. Heaven forbid that we should be assumed to be defending our foreign policy or regarding it as an enlightened policy fit to be pursued by a civilised Power. Our contention is that not only is the world the victim of it, but our Foreign Office and whatever Government may be in power are equally the victims of it. The practical task set by our domestic system to its foreign executive is the obtaining of raw materials from all parts of the world, on the one hand, and markets for the disposal of our finished goods, on the other hand. Exactly to the extent that our produc-
tion increases without a corresponding increase of distribution at home, the task set our foreign policy is intensified in difficulty; and exactly to the extent that other nations are under similar circumstances, the chances of foreign conflict multiply. Not to see that this is a fact, and the dominating fact of the situation, whatever may be the personnel or declared policy of the Government that happens to be in power, is the defect alike of the Labour and "advanced" Liberal Parties. Until they grasp it, both alike are condemned to superficiality.

Leaving aside the pious resolutions of the Labour Conference on the subject of Poland, Ireland, India and Egypt, etc., etc. (which might, by the way, be interpreted in a very sinister sense as maintaining the reputation of English policy for hypocrisy—for while they appear to promise relief to these countries, in fact they are inoperative)—the two most glaring examples of our recent foreign policy may be briefly considered. In the case of the island of Nauru, in the West Pacific, and in the case of Mesopotamia, England has assumed the "mandate," nominally at the instance of the Supreme Council, actually at her own, in virtual defiance of the strict provisions of the Covenant of the League of Nations. It is true, of course, that appearances to a certain extent are preserved by the promise of Mr. Lloyd George (whoever he may be!) to refer the mandate to the Council of the League for confirmation. But, as Lord Robert Cecil has pointed out, the powers and constitution of the League do not merely require to be called upon for a confirmation of the terms of any mandate, but they presume the right of the League to define the mandate. Why has no such right in these cases been allowed? Why, in short, has the Supreme Council jumped the claim of the League and anticipated its return by defining the terms of the mandate itself? The answer plainly is that the phosphates of Nauru and the oil of Mesopotamia are much too vital to the commercial policy of this country to risk being disposed of by a League of Nations in which this country may not be the decisive factor. How shocking, it may be said! Off with Mr. Lloyd George and the ambitions of Mr. Churchill and Lord Curzon . . .

We must get rid of the reckless pilots who have plunged us into this whirlpool! The fact, however, is that Nauru is one of the phosphate islands now included in the group called Gilbert and Ellice Islands whose resources were appropriated from the natives by a British company under a Liberal Government years ago and with the active connivance of Liberal administrators; and that the oil of Mesopotamia was long ago under similar inspiration "bespoke" by mainly British agents. "A. G. G.'s" demand for a change of personnel is obviously under these circumstances irrelevant and unfair. In fact, it can safely be said that a change of personnel would not entail the smallest essential change in the composition of the Labour or the "advanced" Liberal Parties. Until they grasp it, both alike are condemned to superficiality.

As was to be expected, notice of objection has already been given by the Miner M.P.s against the Government's proposal issuing either from the Government or from the coal-owners, it is their obligation to propose an arrangement which the "other side" can conceivably be expected to accept. There is nothing to be said, we agree, for the Government Bill as it now stands; it is dead before it is born. But, on the other hand, there is equally nothing to be said for the Miners' alternative, namely, nationalisation; for just as inevitably as the Miners' Federation finds itself compelled to veto the Government's proposals, the Government finds itself compelled to veto the proposal to nationalise the mines. The reasons for the one as for the other may appear in each case to the other party totally inadequate. There are people who "cannot see why" the Miners must object to the Government Bill just as there are people who cannot see why the Government should object to nationalisation. But the facts are not altered on that account; and the truth will finally be forced on the Miners that nationalisation is only possible under a Labour Government. Even a change in the existing Government, such as "A. G. G.'s" calls for, would not effect the policy of the Miners' Federation; since Mr. Asquith (or, rather, the interests that nominate Mr. Asquith) is as much opposed to nationalisation as the Government of Mr. Lloyd George. Only, we repeat, an all-Labour Government can possibly carry out the policy defined by the Miners' Federation; and the obvious question arises whether the re-organisation of the industry is to await that far-off and not divine event. We do not know why it is, but there appears to be a fatality about the demands of the Trade Unions. Faced by immediate difficulties of the most appalling kind, they suggest nothing but the most remote and conditional remedies. The reform is always going to be realised; it is never of a kind that can be realised here and now with the instruments at hand.

The demand for the nationalisation of the Mines was rendered all the more ridiculous by Mr. Snowden's courageous confession that his opinion of the value of nationalisation as regards drink had undergone "drastic" change in consequence of his experience. More than any man, he said, he had formerly written and spoken in favour of nationalising drink as a means to eliminating "profiteering" and other evils, but now he had to confess that nationalisation only aggravated the mischief of private enterprise. As much as formerly he was in favour of nationalisation, he was now opposed to it. Without assuming that the same experience would necessarily be met with in every example of nationalisation, there is clear evidence that as regards the mining industry Mr. Snowden's experience would infallibly be repeated. After only a year or two of trial, it is practically certain that the Miners themselves would be calling for the reversal of a policy that should impose upon them (not to mention the public) such disabilities as are involved in a highly centralised control exercised to the complete exclusion of local initiative. It is not often that a capitalist Government is more considerate of liberty than Labour itself. It is not ordinarily to be expected that a capitalist Government should save its victims from the worse fate they demand for themselves. But in the case of the nationalisation of the Mining industry it is asserted that the capitalist rather than Labour is the true protector of the rank and file; and that in this respect it represents Labour more efficiently than the Bourbons of the Labour Conference.
Something like concerted action seems to be taking place in the more intelligent capitalist circles; and we should advise the Miners, if they will not listen to us, at least to attend to the direction of thought in their own industry. The Chairman of the Ebbw Vale Steel and Coal Company at the recent general meeting of shareholders raised the question whether it was not possible for the workers to become the "capitalists"—the means of control, it said, that the Miners are seeking, and if it is not expedient merely to multiply the number of individual capitalists. The interest and importance of the proposal means of control. That direction, we assert, points to the practical task of assuming the control they now only demand for the millennium.

Perhaps when a consensus of "capitalist" opinion has become the ultimate means of authority; and since we are in a position to do so, we approve of the proposal to "buy out" the existing capitalists. The interest and importance of the proposal do not, in fact, lie in the details outlined by the Chairman of the Ebbw Vale Company, but in the indication of the direction in which Labour must "capitalize" the concern, being convinced, he said, that it is by that means alone that labour unrest can best be ended. At the cost of under £30 per head of the 34,000 workmen employed by the Company, it would be possible for Labour to obtain complete control of the concern. The Chairman pointed out that means of control. That direction, we assert, points to the practical task of assuming the control they now only demand for the millennium.

Despite all the announcements to the contrary, prices are still rising, the food-figure being now at its maximum of 155 per cent. above the pre-war level. And we are still a long way off the peak. The Food Controller's naive observation that "putting aside the value of money owing to inflation of currency and credits, an important factor is the continued withdrawal of Central and Eastern Europe from the category of food-exporting countries, is probably meant to distract attention (all too easily done) from the infinitely greater; for, in comparison with the effect of such a distraction of attention from the vital to the trivial is to be seen in the programme drawn up by the Triple Alliance for its proposed Inquiry into the causes of High Prices. It is true that "credit and currency" figure among the subjects of investigation, but it is likely to be well and truly overlaid by considerations of taxation, scarcity, transport, wages, industrial unrest, Government control, and all the rest of the Liberal formula. Furthermore, with a precision worthy of a Royal Commission intent upon discovering nothing, the Committee proposes to examine only the "recognised authorities" on each and all of these subjects, and to ensure that none other shall be heard. Mr. Arthur Greenwood, a late Government official (if late is an exact description), has been appointed the secretary of the Committee, being ignorant itself, is well advised to sit at the feet of Mr. Greenwood's profession, as are the credit of the industry as the ultimate means of authority; and since we are in a position to do so, we approve of the proposal to "buy out" the existing capitalists.

There was reported in the "Times" last week, however, a circumstance affecting prices in the highest degree, but emphatically not under Government control. "The half-year of banking," we are told, "has proved a very remunerative, if difficult, period for the banks.

It must be a very long time since the banks have experienced so overwhelming a demand for credit from industry"; and, with the bank rate at 7 or 8 per cent., it will be seen that the business must have been correspondingly remunerative. Mr. Austen Chamberlain is to be sacrificed for daring to point one of the morals of this remunerative episode. It will be remembered (more probably forgotten) that he recently complained that as fast as he stopped creating credit the financial community created credit—the effect of which was in part to "increase competition for the limited supplies of labour and material which are all that are available"; in other words, to inflate purchasing-power and to raise prices. That nothing that he could say, either by way of warning or exhortation, could have the slightest effect, save upon his personal position, is now obvious from the report of the half-year's banking business. The Government is urged in gutter-language to economise, in order, it appears, that the Banks may have more and more credit to issue; and Mr. Chamberlain, we repeat, is to be "punished" for daring to protest against it. Even he, however, has not conceived
the entirety of the procedure of the "financial community." Some of our readers, too, no doubt, are under the common impression, fostered by attacks upon usury and the like, that the worst effect of the banking system is to charge a high rate of interest upon what is, at bottom, social credit, that is, credit that inheres in the community as a whole but is made available to individuals. That, however, is a mere flea-bite; for the effect of an issue of credit by the banks is to add to the current purchasing-power the whole sum of credit issued, and thereby to raise prices for everybody before a penny of "interest" is paid. We have no means of knowing how much credit (or purchasing power) the banks have issued during the past six months. The only limit to the amount they send to market is their obligation to pay cash on demand. Provided that they can pay cash on demand (a relatively decreasing necessity in a state of confidence), there is no limit to the amount of credit the banks can issue.

The Cure for High Prices.

II.

The remedy follows from the diagnosis. Inflation being the evil to be cured, the credit machinery should be so adjusted that inflation will be counterbalanced by deflation; and this can only be done if the body that issues credit controls selling prices also.

If our financial system were sound credit would expand with production and contract with consumption, thus allowing money to act as an accurate measure of values, an attribute constantly desired for it but never hitherto attained.

The cause of inflation being the fact that the value of all goods consumed reproduces in selling prices, the remedy is to write down selling prices by the value of goods consumed. (This penalises nobody but the credit manufacturers, i.e., the banks.) In order to do this it would be necessary to establish credit clearing-houses up and down the country, and these clearing-houses would be responsible for the issue and control of credit within their particular areas. A detailed example of their method of working is set out in "Economic Democracy"; but a brief general description may help to make it clear.

Production and costing would go on as at present, except that the system of costing would have to be made open to inspection. Manufacturers and dealers would buy in the ordinary way. The clearing-house would advance credit on all purchase invoices submitted to it; and as the purchases of one firm are the sales of another the credits received by purchasers would be used to pay the accounts of sellers, and by the sellers, again, among other things, to repay the clearing-house the advances made for their own purchases. The work of the clearing-houses is thus largely the making and cancellation of book entries.

Goods in process of manufacture keep mounting up in cost until they reach the hands of the retailer; and the credit issue mounts up correspondingly. The additions to cost are wages, salaries, and profits, in some shape or form; and the portion of wages, salaries and profits spent reduces the stock of commodities for sale in the community and the stock of money standing to the credit of the individual members of the community, so it becomes necessary to write down cost prices by the amount that they have spent in order that the money still standing to their credit will be able to buy the stock of goods remaining for sale.

H. M. M.
An Example.

by Hilaire Belloc.

There happened on the afternoon of Friday, June 18, a little incident of high historical importance: not of high historical importance in the sense that in it you have any great historical effect, but of high historical importance in the sense that future historians may well turn to it as an illustration of our time. Neither the place where it happened nor the fashion of its happening was of importance, but it exhibited the character of the economic turning-point round which the economic influence of which we are passing to servile conditions and to the restricted hours of retail trade. I should not wonder if we were to have, for most retail trades, the hours of 10 to 1, the compulsory shutting up of the shop between 1 and 2, and then the hours of 2 to 7, or even 2 to 6: all this for some retail trades, which would be compelled to other hours. But the restricted hours I have just mentioned are the sort of scheme to which the great capitalists who are the authors of this policy are looking.

At the same time, like all legislation of servile tendency these innovations are popular with, and supported by, the mass of the proletariat concerned. That, as I pointed out in my book, "The Servile State," is the second great motive-power of servile legislation. The first is its advantage to the capitalists—but for which, of course, it would never have been heard of; the second is its advantage to the proletariat half of the capitalist machine. The disadvantage—the unmitigated disadvantage—of servile conditions are felt only by the dwindling numbers of free, small owners whom it is the obvious policy of great capitalists to crush and for whom the proletariat, having long given up all hope of property and freedom, care nothing. Citizens who have been long deprived of their property and who have ceased to feel the instinct for it with the accompanying acceptance of responsibility, tend to lose their citizenship. They are used to live on a wage or dole, they have been brought up all their lives under the discipline of capitalist masters, and their idea of well-being is not freedom, but security and sufficiency, including leisure. And what could be better for them than laws compelling the stupid capitalist, who do not yet see their advantage in the new methods, to restrict the hours during which their servants shall work?

You have, therefore, I said, behind this particular piece of legislation two overwhelming forces which bound to win, and to win quickly: first, the interest of the great capitalists who pay our professional politicians and run our legislation; second, the interest of the employed (as they are called), that is, of the proletariat. First comes the interest of the employed; second is its advantage to the capitalists—"but for which," as I pointed out in my book, "The Servile State," is the second great motive-power of servile legislation. As I pointed out in my book, "The Servile State," is the second great motive-power of servile legislation. The Amendment was carried! . . . .

A highly comic ephemeral incident worthy of careful preservation in a scrap-book: for of course no such exception will be allowed to stand for a moment when the real legislation begins: it would be fatal to the paymasters.

I hope the reader will allow me to digress and to laugh at the spectacles of the House of Commons—of all bodies—suddenly and unexpectedly supporting sound morals on a tiny little occasion, the circumstances of which will not be repeated. It reminds one of boys playing the fool in the temporary absence of the master. But to return to the "Early Closing" dodge.

This new step towards establishing servile conditions in retail trade is obviously to the interest of great capitalists. It helps them to extinguish the small, independent shops by multiplying restrictions, to cut down their own hours to just the point where you have maximum profit in a large concern, to save on their bill for lighting and for every other detail of upkeep; it is their obvious policy to enforce what suits them in every aspect of their interests. Therefore—since it is the interest of the capitalists to crush and, not the puppet politicians—it is inevitable that in the near future we shall have further legisla-

tion restricting the hours of retail trade. I should not wonder if we were to have, for most retail trades, the hours of 10 to 1, the compulsory shutting up of the shop between 1 and 2, and then the hours of 2 to 7, or even 2 to 6: all this for some retail trades, which would be compelled to other hours. But the restricted hours I have just mentioned are the sort of scheme to which the great capitalists who are the authors of this policy are looking.

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owner; two, himself regarded as a slave owned by himself. The free man was allowed to do with his own accumulation; only, if he owned a slave, he was not allowed to take away the slave's peculium.

But in our more chaotic society this monstrosity has appeared. A man is his own employer? Then he is two men, an employer and a poor employee, and behold, the two employees of himself must be protected? My friend Mr. Jones, the butcher, who kills his own meat and sells it, is divided, in the eye of our great reformers, into two people. He is Mr. Jones, the capitalist employer of Mr. Jones the wage-slave; and Mr. Jones the capitalist will be severely forbidden to employ Mr. Jones the wage-slave after 7 o'clock.

What hypocrites! As though the whole of their pretended solicitude for the wage-earner would not be met by simply enacting that all employed men and women, being no longer really free, should be protected by a legal restriction of their hours!

Sometimes argument is attempted by the humbugs and by the men who write to their orders in their great papers. I have seen it attempted in this form: "If the small man were allowed to remain open as long as he liked he would have an undue privilege in competition against the big man, or rather against the big company with the very big man in its background." It is a horrible thought, is it not, this giving of privilege in competition to the weak against the strong, to the unfortunate against the fortunate? Still, these injustices must occur, you know, in the application of a higher principle. You cannot have freedom without certain inconveniences—and that is one of them: that the little chandler's shop and the little draper shall go under in the struggle. If you allow a writer like Mr. Jones, the butcher, who kills his own meat and sells it, to be a free man and sell his meat, is divided, in the eye of our great reformers, into two people. He is Mr. Jones, the capitalist employer of Mr. Jones the wage-slave; and Mr. Jones the capitalist will be severely forbidden to employ Mr. Jones the wage-slave after 7 o'clock.

I have also seen this argument applied: "If the small man is allowed to remain open, competition between him and other small men will produce the most terribly long hours and the unfortunate fellow will, in spite of his better self, have to work himself to death"—an argument which applies, of course, to all free action whatsoever. If you allow a lawyer to work late at night, then the most active lawyers will work late at night and the other poor devils will be compelled also to work late at night, mugging up their briefs, or gauging in the struggle. If you allow a writer to sit up till two in the morning (as I often do earning money or, alternatively, writing fanaticism for nothing) then you are setting the pace for other writers—and it is a damn shame.

But I think we are agreed that these arguments are the lies of advocacy. The real motive in applying this new policy to the small shopkeeper is to eliminate him.

Meanwhile, we have had on this day, June 18, 1920, a pretty little example, and the day is something of an historic date. The House of Commons did actually vote to retain a small department of freedom!

Take the converse case, and consider how interesting it would be to come across in some chronicle of the twelfth century a converse point with regard to the treatment of the serf on the land, in the time when serfage was turning into freedom, the converse of our progress from freedom to servage.

Suppose we were to discover in an old record of a council the King and his wise men, particularly the Bishops, deciding that a lord of the manor might not in future compel his serfs to work off their tenant land during particular hours and his domain land. Let us suppose that we found in that council one bishop suggesting an amendment, to wit, that where the serf had no land the lord of the manor should have the right to use him during those hours, after the old fashion. Would not we regard such a debate as an extremely interesting example of an historical turning-point? Would we not say: "We have here a strong light thrown upon the transition from servitude to free labour. We would attempt to do what the King's Council to maintain the old servile conditions, and it is of great interest to note that the conservative feeling was still so strong that an amendment could still be carried in favour of the old and stricter slavery?"

That would be an exact converse parallel to what went on in the House of Commons upon the Friday afternoon, June 19, 1920. The attempt to keep the serf to his old servile labour was bound to be defeated because things were moving forward. But the exceptional point made in the debate would throw light upon the stage which the transition had reached. It was the moment when the memory of slavery still lingered and when the serf was not yet a peasant.

So does this little debate (in the House of Commons of all places!) throw light upon the stage which we have reached in our transition from free labour to servile labour. There is still a memory of full freedom and free exceptions struggling to survive in our industrial society as it slowly builds up the slave-conquered.

For, we must make no error, the whole story of our time in industrial civilisation is the story of a reversion. The gradual achievement of freedom, the work of the Catholic Church for centuries, is now, where its influence has declined, in process of reaction, and we are returning to the establishment of the Servile State.

I shall be interested, by the way, to see the comments of the chief capitalist interests on this comic interlude. I have already noted the howl of indignation in Cadbury's Press: the Amendment is denounced as "reactionary." A fierce indignation inspires the writers employed upon this brief. They feel it intolerable that a free man should buy and sell at his own hours. They are already calling out for the Government to intervene—which it will.

I have not yet seen the other official papers of capitalism. They will undoubtedly join the chorus, but I look forward with some pleasure to reading their comments.

A Reader's Notes.

CREATIVE REVOLUTION. By Eden and Cedar Paul. (Allen and Unwin. 8s. 6d. net.)

P. 11: The "little dogs under the coach" have, as I thought, higher ambitions. "In the sphere of practice, we hope to intensify and liberate the impulse towards a fresh creative effort." It is a noble aim, but it is not quite compatible with the role our authors assign to the "intellectuals."

P. 13: "Communist Ergatocracy," however exactly descriptive in the etymological sense, is not likely to liberate much impulse in the proletarian world. There is a pedantry about it that inhibits spontaneity. An "impulse" doesn't like to be named before birth.

P. 14: "A revolutionary mass psychology will alone render the change to Socialism possible." Messrs. Paul, it will be found, have a tolerably clear notion of what they expect to occur. First, in consequence of the pressure of capitalism in crisis, a revolutionary mass psychology will be induced; in other words, revolution will be "in the air"; as Carlyle said, society will be "growing electric." Secondly, in the meanwhile the proletarian intellectuals and class-conscious revolutionaries will have been preparing (a) to carry on society during and after the revolution and (b) to establish a "dictatorship" at the critical moment by means of which to safeguard the revolution against reaction. Thirdly, the "revolution" will "break" and the programme just sketched will be carried out.
P. 14: “Above all, in such a country as Britain . . . the transition will perhaps be marked by a period of exceptional hardship.” The authors write as if familiarity with the workers’ will on the existing system, and make a peaceful transition?

P. 15: “Ergatocracy will signify the administration of the workers, for the workers, by the workers.” Amurath an Amurath is apparently to succeed.

P. 18: The authors distinguish between “Socialism” and “Communism.” Socialism is “right-wing” Communism; Communism is “left-wing” Socialism. The criterion, it appears, is the proletarian element. Socialism is pink, semi-bourgeois; but Communism is red and all proletarian [save for a few privileged bourgeois, like Lenin and the Pauls].

P. 20: There are evidences throughout the volume that it has been at a great price that the authors have convinced themselves that a revolution à la Russkie is necessary. They have had to batter an originally humane and intelligent psychology into a dogmatic inhumanity; and the transformation is still not complete.

P. 21: Messrs. Paul have apparently not heard the latest—the doctrine that is even more recent than Bolshevism. They say that the essence of slavery is “ownership rule,” and that with the disappearance of ownership rule, class will disappear. But ownership does not rule. Money, not property, rules.

P. 24: We should greatly prefer to effect our revolution change by peaceful means.” Yes by sentiment, as becomes a modern; but the great preference does not run to the anxious trial of every possible alternative to violence. Have our authors read “Economic Democracy”? I doubt whether they have even taken the trouble to read The New Age. Their eyes have been glued on Lenin for the last few years.

P. 27: The cleavage to-day is between “the Soviets and the parliamentarians” . . . “Since November, 1917, the left-wing has had no use for anyone who wants to keep a foot in both camps . . . there is no room for a centre party.” Really, Maiden Lane is not the hub of the universe!

P. 34: The “papant writers” deny that they are “fanatical devotees” of the Marxian gospel; and indeed they are Marxians only with difficulty. Nevertheless, they do appear to be against their better judgment, the “fanatical devotion” (Heaven help the phrase), the essence of which is that “the nature of capitalist development leads to an increasing awareness of the class conflict, to an intensification of class-consciousness on both sides, culminating in a revolutionary explosion.” Nothing could be more neat—or erroneous. There is not a tittle of historical evidence for this theory. It is only a wish!

P. 37: “The drive . . . comes preponderantly from the urge of the unconscious will.” We see here exposed the psychological foundations of Messrs. Paul’s attitude both to “intellectualism” and to “revolution.” They are devotees of what they call the “unconscious will” (which, by the way, is a contradiction in terms, for “will” is necessarily conscious and even self-conscious). Damn reason, they say in effect, let’s leave everything to the instincts—in the hope that the instincts will prove to be as creative as they are certainly destructive. I prefer to call the attitude “the despair of the intellectual.”

P. 39: “The revolution will in no small measure be the outcome of the workers’ refusal to continue running the capitalist machine as a profit-making enterprise owned’ by the members of the dominant class.” That note again; it has a dying fall! Once again let me say that a “revolution” is not necessary. We can show the workers a better way. If they have not sense enough to dispense with a revolution they certainly have not sense enough to make a successful revolution.

P. 45: “The intellectual fallacy of believing man to be pre-eminently a rational animal.” No intellectual of my acquaintance was ever so silly. Our belief is that a man can only become a rational animal—not that he already is. In their disgust at finding that men are “less rational” than the rationalists of the nineteenth century led them to believe, the modern “anti-intellectualists” have lost both hope and patience. We shall never make men rational, they say; let’s give up the attempt and say that the grapes are sour; men never ought to be rational! Is it not just—despair?

P. 49: The authors, I observe, have no “fair” for personality. It is characteristic of them that they quote Messrs. Cole and Bertrand Russell as the authorities on “Guild Socialism.” I can only smile at their judgment of contemporary creative forces.

P. 56: The authors approve of the motto of the “Plebs League”: “I can promise to be candid but not impartial.” It is, they say, “a glorious embodiment of the vital impetus.” What reactionary or, rather, regressive, nonsense! For the really vital human impulse is precisely towardsUnity, not “anti-intellectualism”.

P. 57: “The theory of the class struggle: . . . is the supreme dread of the master class . . . . Class-war Socialism is the only sort of Socialism which they do dread.” With reason, for it is not merely a “dreadful” form of reform. But that is not to say that it is the most effective form of Socialism. On the contrary, it is by definition the form that arouses most opposition. Messrs. Paul’s contention appears to be that the revolutionary method must be the best, because it provokes the maximum resistance. Should we be wrong in concluding that what the revolutionaries really want is, not Socialism, but the struggle for it?

P. 65: “Industry, the mechanism of production, is the driving-force of contemporary social life.” It isn’t! Credit is.

P. 65: “The shop-steward movement and the establishment of workers’ Committees are the British counterpart of the Russian Soviet organisation.” “Capitalism is doomed”—but not, it appears, to an early death!

P. 70: “The shop stewards’ and workers’ committees’ movement is the means by which the proletariat will fulfil its historic role in the new society.” Yes, it is, and therein lies the key. And observe, moreover, the responsibility which our authors calmly thrust upon those committees: “Unless the workers’ committees, seizing control of industry, are fully prepared, not merely to maintain and more than maintain production, but further to...
assume and to discharge with enhanced efficiency and in the workers' interest the social, educative and political functions now discharged (however inefficiently from the workers' point of view) by the various organs of the capitalist State. The class struggle has necessarily produced these things and competent to do these things, chaos will ensue, or the capitalist State will remain in being, and the control of industry by the workers' committees will prove to have been nothing more than a breath on the face of the waters." I would have this sentence written over the door of every "revolutionary" committee—as a warning from on high. It is "some" job, as they say, that comrades Paul are allocating to the shop-committees for their spare hours—nothing less than the acquisition of all the wisdom, practical and political, of civilisation. If the crew of a modern liner (incidentally convertible at will into a battleship) were asked to construct in their spare time without material, unknown to their officers, yet without their consent—"the proletariat!" absurdity of the expectation they have formed of the Marxist classes: is turning them out by hundreds at a purposive creative revolution." This flummoxes me. Without material, unbeknown to their officers, yet nothing less than the acquisition of all the wisdom, property of the crew—the task would not be more ridiculous than that offered by our authors to the workers' committees. Surely Messrs. Paul can see the cruel absurdity of the expectation they have formed of the "creative ability" of the proletariat! P. 47: "A class movement is fashioning its own intellectuals in the Labour colleges and the Marxist classes: is turning them out by hundreds at a time." All indoctrinated with the fallacies of Marx! P. 85: "The war of 1914-18 is the close of the long agony of unconscious drift at the mercy of blind economic and social forces; the Russian Revolution of November, 1917, is the opening act in the great drama of purposive creative revolution." This flummoxes me. On p. 37 we were told to adore the "urge of the unconscious will"; now we are to cease to drift at its mercy. P. 90: "We do not expect the great change from capitalism to communism, from democracy to ergatocracy, to be carried through without a world convulsion." Read: We do not mean it to be! P. 103: "The pacifists to-day are not found among the communists of the left wing." I hope the C.O.'s who have never found THE NEW AGE its attitude towards pacifism will observe this remark of the leading ergatocrats. "Third International," beloved of the I.L.P., is not Tolstoyan! P. 108: "For us there is only one war, that of Labour against Capital." An obsolete phrase and phrase! For us there is only one war, that of Society against Finance. P. 118: Are they "proletarian by status merely" or "proletarian by revolutionary conviction?" "The distinction is vital." I should say it is! But what then becomes of the class struggle if, after all, it is only a matter of psychology, of conviction? The bourgeois of status may be proletarian by revolutionary conviction, and quite certainly proletarians by status may be bourgeois by aspiration! Our authors will be driven in the end to the view which I expressed before: that the emancipation of the workers must be the work, not necessarily of the workers themselves only, but of all those who can actually bring it about. P. 123: "Here in Britain there is considerable reason to suppose that the revolution will take place against a Labour Government which will have failed hopelessly, with its Fabian policy and its semi-bourgeois outlook, to cope with the disastrous heritage of capitalist imperialism." Interesting; but what if there ain't going to be no Labour Government? Or, again, what if the social problem is solved by other means. P. 132: Our authors distinguish fastidiously between a "dictatorship of the proletariat," and an ochlocracy, or mob-rule. But in that case, be it noted, the absolute rule thus established will have to be "a dictatorship over a large section of any proletariat," as well as over the bourgeoisie. Even so; the dictatorship is a tight little oligarchy—and I doubt whether its motive can be different from that of any other oligarchy, namely, to preserve its power. After all, why should the proletarian oligarchy, once in power, resign of its own accord? That the dictatorship is "awfully temporary" or is exercised by "class-conscious workers" may be theoretically true; but things look different from the saddle. Anyhow, Lenin and Trotsky do appear to stick. P. 135: "Slowly and somewhat reluctantly have the present writers come to accept the views here set forth"—namely, the dictatorship theory and so on. So it appears; and I may add that they show signs of wishing to think otherwise. Well, it is not only possible, it is necessary to think otherwise; for the dictatorship of the proletariat is impracticable everywhere and always. It is only a phrase. P. 141: I hope it is true that "the new working-class intelligentsia have made up their minds that Parliament is the instrument for obtaining social control of Credit exists? We have the Lewis gun; but the Marxists prefer the blow tube! P. 149: "The centralised, class-ruled State of the bourgeoisie must, for the time being, be replaced by the centralised class-ruled State of the proletariat. This is the core of Marxist theory, and the most conspicuous lesson of the Russian upheaval of 1917." P. 152: Messrs. Paul are uneasy. "What lies beyond" the dictatorship, they ask; for "were the ergatocratic system the rule of a privileged caste... beyond question it will not endure." Exactly, and away, therewith, goes the whole notion of the dictatorship—though Messrs. Paul do not now think so. "The whole conception of oligarchy," they say, will undergo such a modification in consequence of the social revolution that it will cease to be evil! This is faith, if you like! P. 156: "As the foundations of ownership rule are gradually undermined, the basis of political life passes from ownership to industry." All that I can say is that it don't! Meaning by "industry," the rank and file workers, is it a fact that they are progressing towards political control based on their economic power? Are they gaining power as the "owners" are losing it? Not a bit; power is retreating from classes ownership to finance; and when Labour arrives at ownership, it will find the cupboard bare. P. 175: "Whereas the inevitable and proved tendency of Parliamentary rule is towards the maximum of centralisation, the trend of Soviet rule will be largely in the direction of decentralisation." Interesting, but not according to fact. The Soviets centralise also! P. 179: The authors contend that Parliament is obsolete, and that only a fool would use Dyak blowtubes if he had a Lewis gun. Quite; and may I say that only the Marxists would employ Revolution when a scheme for obtaining social control of Credit exists? We have the Lewis gun; but the Marxists prefer the blow tube! P. 193: "An advance peculiar to our age is that social revolution is becoming self-conscious." Good. P. 198: "Brailsford is one of the few Socialists in this country who have any glimmering of the fact"—that psycho-analysis has any relation with social progress. Fancy that! P. 198: "The superstition that man is essentially a rational animal." "The degrading superstition that he ought not to be!
Drama,

By John Francis Hope.

The usual reproach to which the performances of the subscription societies are open cannot be levelled at the most recent production of the Stage Society. Madame Donnet put "S.S. Tenacity" on the stage with all the finish of a first-class West End production. The chief parts were extremely well cast, and when I went to the Lyric, Hammersmith, on the Monday afternoon, I heard nothing of the prompter—although Mr. Basil Sydney persisted in calling Ségard "Alfred" all through the first act. All that good production could do was done; the general mood of the piece was created and sustained, the crepuscular delicacy of a minor poet's philosophy dominated the whole performance, and the ruder, more violent, passions were "all toned down to yonder, sober, pleasant," reality. Whether one likes the mood or not, it is an artistic triumph to produce it so perfectly; and I am happy to be able to congratulate Madame Donnet (who has done some delightful, and some very queer, things in the last three years) on a performance that reveals her powers, and her limitations, so perfectly. Like most advocates of an art theatre, she is perfectly at ease with the minor poets; and so long as she leaves the classics alone, we are not likely to quarrel very seriously with her.

M. Charles Vildrac is not a classic, even according to Sainte-Beuve's elastic definition. "A true classic, as I should like to hear him defined, is an author who has enriched the human mind, who has really increased its treasure, who has carried it a step forward, who seized upon some eternal passion in that heart where as I should like to hear him defined, is an author who has spoken to Sainte-Beuve's elastic definition. "A true classic, because it leaves one with the feeling of being not forward, now backward, now whirling madly, now still, incessant revolution at the behest of his element; now streams, or weathercocks; in either case, they are helplessly ceased down their brutal indifference to a semblance of humanity; and the drunkard likens to the cork bobbing in the stream, lets a rail drop on his fingers. He takes advantage of his enforced idleness to sentimentalise with the waitress at the restaurant where they lodge; Mr. J. H. Roberts, looking less like a compositor than like one of the Oxford group of minor poets, touched her soft heart with his sweet memories of feeding in a refectory when he was young. She also had memories of feeding, and the idyll of the poet's love developed as she darned the stockings. It was all very tender (I quite loved Miss Nell Carter), and all very idiotic; most idiotic of all being his companion's hints that the minor poet needed a chaperon.

M. Vildrac illustrates his theme with a delicate simplicity that only the actors' art preserved from malicious irony. The whole mood of the play depends on the emphasis given to one set of facts: a satirist, like Disraeli, emphasising the other facts, would have played havoc with the crepuscular mood. Two demobilised officers (formerly compositors) are on their way to Canada, to freedom and farming and a new life. Europe is played out; the future lies in the West; and they are sailing at dawn in the "S.S. Tenacity." But the "Tenacity" bursts her boiler (presumably one of the disadvantages of purposeful activity: if she were to go with the stream, she would not need boilers), and the compositors are compelled to wait a fortnight. They get work at laying tramlines to keep themselves during his delay; and, of course, the minor poet, the one whom the drunkard likens to the cork bobbing in the stream, lets a rail drop on his fingers. He takes advantage of his enforced idleness to sentimentalise with the waitress at the restaurant where they lodge; Mr. J. H. Roberts, looking less like a compositor than like one of the Oxford group of minor poets, touched her soft heart with his sweet memories of feeding in a refectory when he was young. She also had memories of feeding, and the idyll of the poet's love developed as she darned the stockings. It was all very tender (I quite loved Miss Nell Carter), and all very idiotic; most idiotic of all being his companion's hints that the minor poet needed a chaperon.

His companion tried other methods: Thérèse was the sort of girl whom it would be insulting to leave without a love scene. She was a dear; so, at midnight, they two secretly drew a battle of wits. Each pledged each other, kissed each other—with the inevitable consequences. M. Vildrac, you see, will not permit even love to be imperative; the girl must be seduced by wine, not by Bastien's physical appeal—declension is M. Vildrac's only mode of movement by very literary standards. Fundamentally, I suppose, it is a question of faith; the classic assures us that we can trust something, even if it is only ourselves, but minor art of all kinds assures us that nothing is trustworthy, that life is just a being 'blown about the desert dust!' for no apparent reason, in no apparent direction.

M. Vildrac's philosophy is, appropriately enough, stated by a drunkard; and I may say that Mr. Franklin Dyall acted better than I have ever seen him act. Every muscle in his body sagged, there was the slight, ceaseless swaying of the body as he stood, even his occasional gestures senselessly obliterated a possible meaning from life. Men are either corks bobbing in streams, or weathercocks; in either case, they are helplessly at the mercy of the elements. Perhaps, when the stream forks, the cork may have a moment's choice which way he shall go; but the weathercock, who the stream hurries him on to no certain destination. The weathercock pays for his apparent stability only by incessant revolution at the behest of his element; now forward, now backward, now whirling madly, now still, all to no purpose, getting nowhere, meaning nothing. Yet many men are free so far as he is; they own themselves away from compulsion, purchasing his freedom by as little selling of himself to the necessity of earning a living as will suffice to keep him alive. Even Mr. Franklin Dyall's rather metallic voice was flexible as he enunciated this invertebrate philosophy: "Youth is a blunder, manhood a struggle, old age a regret," all the shades of sentimentalism settled upon us as Disraeli's literary pessimism found another exponent—and Mr. Dyall's acting made it wonderfully effective. We felt pity—indeed, the whole play appealed to pity; and pity, as Nietzsche, showed, is a demoralising emotion.

These artists of the "twilight-piece," these del Sartos, Tchekovs, Vildracs, Tchaikovskys, are so sad, so beautifully sad, they make melancholy engaging—but not classical. One needs Beethoven's Hymn to Joy to silence matters.

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Within six months, I have seen Miss Buckton play Cariola in "The Duchess of Malfi," Andromache, and now Madame Cordier (to mention three parts that I remember), and an actress with such a range is a pleasure to watch. I have said already what I think of Mr. Dyall; but of Miss Nell Carter I may add this—she has that supreme gift of personality that makes us identify her with her part, and love her for being lovely in it. One must say it—Thérèse was a darling, because Miss Carter played it.

The Actual and the Potential.

By Denis Saurat.

He gave man speech, and speech created thought, Which is the measure of the Universe.

**The Psychologist:** The first condition of the existence of thought is to be incomplete. From any object several ideas come together to the mind; feelings immediately mingle with them; and, simultaneously, numerous possibilities of action crowd into the soul. But, although we can at the same moment have many thoughts in our consciousness, we can only put one into words. We can only think with precision of one at a time. Thus, in any sentence shaped in our minds, each word stands for an infinite series of facts, which we cannot be at the trouble of imagining precisely. This succession of abstractions is only made possible through language. Did we proceed by direct vision, we should have to imagine exactly first one particular fact, in given circumstances, with all its manifold aspects, as is the way in the plastic arts. And for each step in the progress of the sentence we should have to add one more series of mind-pictures, and, our imagination failing to retain them all, thought would be lost in the chaos of facts. But we name one group of abstractions, then another. So we are no longer obliged to imagine, for each fact, the infinite series of its aspects. But we have names in complete series—mere possibilities of unrealised images: that alone enables us to stop somewhere; that alone enables us to think.

**The Metaphysician:** Language has created thought, abstracting it from feeling, sensation and desire. There are, therefore, in each thought, two parts; what is expressed we shall call the Actual, what remains unexpressed, the Potential.

**The Psychologist:** Words drive thinking out of the mind: it is impossible to think while one speaks. That is the absorbing power of the Actual: the condition of its creative power: it drives from its presence all that is not itself. The first intuition of anything comprehends the Potential; language only expresses the Actual, and drives down intuition. But language is always preceded by intuition. Thought is not, first and immediately, language, although it is only perceived as language. If we meditate upon a problem, sometimes, all at once, there is a sudden illumination: we have found the solution; then, instantaneously, it disappears. For one second we have been satisfied, the next we are disappointed: not in the solution, but because the solution, clearly revealed for one instant, has disappeared before being expressed, and thus is lost. We had the impression, we held it for one moment, and then it escaped. Now language is a recent thing in us, as compared with matter. Our material visions of our intuitions, our external perceptions, are therefore much more rapid than our translation of them into language. And yet hesitation seems to exist in matter also: we have seen something, and then again we have not.

**The Metaphysician:** What, then, is intuition? A modification of our desires, of our Potential?

**The Poet:** It is like water in a vase. If the vase is cracked, immediately the water escapes. And without the water we can have no water. Intuition escapes us; our language is a vase; our brain is a vase.

**The Psychologist:** Language is an obstacle to the simultaneity of facts in our consciousness. It expresses only one fact at a time. And that one, in sole possession of consciousness, becomes, at that moment, stronger than the others. That which is expressed is truer than before.

**The Metaphysician:** Expression influences reality, forces and changes it; that is the power of the Actual. A form, once created, creates its matter. Vague and indetermined being, which is the stuff of the world, comes and moulds itself in all existing forms. Ideas once expressed become true: little by little reality agglomerates round them.

**The Psychologist:** Sometimes.

**The Metaphysician:** Thus thought has created being. Language has created thought, by differentiating it from feeling.

**The Poet:** Thought has created man, by differentiating him from other beings.

**The Psychologist:** An unexpected question is put to us, about something we have known or seen. We begin our answer without knowing what we are going to say. For some sentences we proceed, in the dark, not knowing what we shall say next. Then, all at once, the idea comes, and the clear answer. For instance, in extempore speaking, a train of banal ideas awakes others in us, and sometimes original ones. And yet one cannot think clearly while speaking: while we say something our words absorb our thought. But beneath this state, of which we are conscious, we feel our mind moving about, searching in all directions, and all at once, without any possibility of reflection, the idea appears.

**The Metaphysician:** The Actual has appealed to the Potential. Form creates: words in motion have called upon ideas, which come. But the ideas must have been in the mind already or are such as the mind would have created, had it been able to reflect consciously. Reality is formed by a collaboration: by a convention. That which many accept is true: it has a power in the world, even over those who do not accept it. And there is no other kind of truth. Hence the function of the masses: they render true the ideas which men of genius conceive. Truth is thus in a process of construction. All beings, drawn from the same origin by similar desires, address themselves together to similar enterprises, and help one another in their expression of themselves.

**The Poet:** Even non-human beings have a share in that collaboration: the earth, the stars, the plants, the elements, and so on.

**The Poet (again):** An idea has power, even though it be not true, through the very fact of its being conceived. For it may be subtle, high and precious without being either true or even in use: then its sole presence will change universal opinion, which, sooner or later, will admit it into reality. Hence the usefulness of arguments and researches in the realm of the possible and even of the false: they may end in conquering for the human mind. Truth is the morality of ideas. The man of whom the majority approves is moral, the idea of which man approves is true. But there are worthless beings, at all stages of existence: eternally they remain, accepted and despised.

**The Metaphysician:** In the course of its own development a being is ever faced by the Potential it is perpetually rejecting. It feels, all round its narrow circle, the disquieting presence of all it has not expressed, has not drawn into consciousness. It cannot therefore shape itself purely logically, as its need of simplicity and clearness would have it do. But when
a being tries to figure the universe outside itself its need of logic and clearness is evident; it must picture other beings with fast and precise lines. Hence springs the fundamental error, spring of all others, which is to mistake the form for the whole, the expression for the being.

The Poet: This is the problem of the completion of the Actual. The non-expressed-never-present-influences the expressed. Will a state of equilibrium be reached? Will the Actual master the Potential?

The Psychologist: The first condition of thought is to be incomplete. Therefore, as thought becomes more and more precise, it leaves outside itself more and more of the Potential. Thinking develops problems, and does not solve them. A being trying to understand itself develops into a subject and an object: it demands in itself an observer that is watching it. The very conception of this second person, this observer, makes an object of it, which necessitates a third witness in the mind: the subject, trying to grasp its own existence, multiplies, and escapes its own grasp.

The Metaphysician: Every existence is infinite: therefore, all law is impossible. The Actual intensifies the Potential by casting out of itself unexpressed possibilities, which their very rejection exasperates. The Potential, ever greater and even more intense, is an infinite source of actuality, as it is ever tending towards expression. The non-expressed seeks to express itself; but all expression adds to the mass of the non-expressed all it rejects, and thus increases it. In this way the Actual and the Potential grow together, perpetually the one out of the other. And thus all perfection is impossible. Thus, also, there is absolute identity between perfect being and non-being. The idea of omnipotence is self-contradictory. One can only act upon what offers resistance. To the Omnipotent, nothing can offer resistance, he can act upon nothing. A perfect thought understands itself entirely; all diversity in it is absorbed into unique and perfectly monotonous light. Perfect being has nothing to think of: there is no problem left for it; it therefore no longer thinks. Nor does it desire any longer, having nothing left to desire. Why should perfection change? Why should the infinite become finite? That which is perfection falls into nothingness. Absolute existence annihilates itself.

The Poet: A progress towards perfection is a progress towards annihilation.

The Psychologist: The aim of all desire is to become conscious of itself, with a consciousness as clear and as intense as possible. In order to know itself, all desire has to concentrate itself: it can only intensify its own consciousness on one point at a time. In order to know itself, desire has to limit itself: to cast out of itself a number of its possibilities—and any rejected possibility is an open spring of new existences. Thus desire, expressing itself, subdivides itself. All being divides itself in its expression.

The Metaphysician: This, then, is the way in which desire divides itself into beings. The impossibility for Total Being to conceive itself as a whole is the spring of separate existences, for, if it could so conceive itself, being would be one only. But its first expression being necessarily incomplete; in its unexpressed parts other beings form themselves separate from the first. Each of those first existences is a universe. In each universe, thus created, numerous beings in their turn are formed, each crystallizing one tendency of the parent being, each rejecting a new Potential. Each of those beings in its turn is subdivided in an infinite process. Thus being is divided and subdivided, becoming more and more diverse, intense and limited. Thus into a world come men, and into a man come ideas.
Elsa Lorraine. Triptych. (Blackwell, Oxford. 3s. net.)

The poems in this volume are collected under three names, Diana, Teresa, and Yseult. Of these the last are the best and the second the worst. The occasional excellence of expression throughout is only less surprising than the frequent banality and the occasional absurdity. Here are a few examples of both:

Little throat and face like wavelets foamy.

I shall remember everywhere
That marvellous moment—not so you.

Is not one day in his courts indeed more dear
Than all here?

Upfolded lies the silken air,
Only I feel a cloud extending;
Wisdom wells over now with Care:
And Thou art here, and Thou art there,
And Thou art into hell descending.

they to Heaven grow,
Not toiling neither spinning.

Could banality go farther than in the second, third and fifth of these passages? And can the first and fourth be called anything but ridiculous, unless one applies to the latter as well the epithet banal? Yet there are in other poems lines as good as these:

Today is senseless sleep, to-morrow is death.

Ah, Love, what water and what wind
Shall cover them [the symbols of the beloved engraved upon the lover’s soul].

The language which Miss Lorraine speaks at her best is, it is clear, the language of passion. So long as the passion is authentic the expression is direct and impressive; but, on the other hand, as soon as it fails, the authoress cannot avoid sinking deep into banality. In the section dedicated to Teresa, which, as will be guessed, is religious, there is only one line which even appears to possess reality, and it is sentimental:

I want but one thing now and that for thee.

The book would be improved immeasurably by the omission of the first two sections. In the third there are half a dozen poems which express simply, passionately, and unconditionally an emotion which has no trace of meretriciousness.

Helen Granville-Barker. Songs in Cities and Gardens. (Chatto and Windus. 5s. net.)

Mrs. Granville-Barker has the sentimentality of the late Ella Wheeler Wilcox, without her force, and with a cultured accent which only serves, we fear, to make her numbers duller. Criticism is really unnecessary; a few quotations will be sufficient:

For the wisest of men is twin to the earthy clod.

I am held and hampered by conflicting forces.

The northern wind is now abroad; and roars,
One word—the finished line;
One sound—a perfect chord;
One touch—the tints combine.

This is the very end of love—good-bye.

I took my little Love from her place so still and warm,
And drugged her forth with me, just to keep her safe from harm.

There are one or two lines in the volume, however, which are not intolerable. Out of a volume containing over seventy poems, some of them of a fair length, the following lines possess some degree of merit:

Oh, fragrant world of land and sky and sea;
More near to me than man, be now more kind!

E. M. Indiscretions; or, Une Revue de Deux Mondes.

VI.

I have always been grateful to the Westovers for not taking passage on the “Mayflower”; they arrived decently upon the “Lion,” before the rush and about three years after the Celdens.

I don’t mean that they—the representative elder generation, Henry and Edward Westover, have referred to matter in my presence; Maria Easton did that. Maria was, as the reader has forgotten, a Westover, there being no lex Salica in these matters.

In fraternal contrast it may be said that Henry Westover is a gentleman, distinctly American; that is to say he behaves like a rational creature, as, for instance, I should myself, entering the drawing-room of his country house and finding the fire inadequate, Henry at once opened the porch-door, knowing where the logs were, had three of them on the fire in no time.

Edward, on the contrary, would have rung for a servant, or, if there had been no servant he would in any case have conveyed the impression of having rung for a servant, he would in any case have waited until something happened to cause an increased radiation of heat. There is, so far as I know, no symptom by which one can distinguish Edward from the impeccable worm accepted in England, save that possibly after long conversation one might notice a faint vowel modulation not very usual among the English. He would never have ventured the flat Eton collar.

Edward’s sons are gentleman in his wake. In the case of Henry’s offspring I think possibly the first impression would be: I am a little American business-man. One would discover on examination that he was, is, a gentleman. In the Edward family, both generations convey at first impact: Gentlemen; one continues the analysis from that point. Festus began his career with the determination to starve in New York, rather than be driven from the metropolis, and is a respected physician. Edward, from being a gentleman, has had great difficulty in discovering how to be anything else; he has somewhat drifted about the professions—in a charming manner; that must be insisted upon in the case of all of the Westovers.

Henry and Edward have been on the Exchange for so long that their seats are almost a patent of nobility. Further, to discriminate, it might be said that the talk at Henry’s table run to motor cars (when I knew it), the family seemed to require several each, and to supplementary motor-boats and to the Exchange, merits of still and unstill market. I forget the exact term for the unquiet antithesis—it may possibly have been “jumpy.”

Incidentally Henry had taken the Exchange seriously; he had “always said” his sons were not to follow him on to it, but they had seen to all that, and possibly to his old-fashioned modus of treating it. Henry had been solid, he was reputed to have “stood by” the family connections to such remote degree and so often that “one shouldn’t really appeal.” He even did me a turn once, who, being the grandson of a cousin, couldn’t decently have been supposed to be in the running.

Edward had taken the Exchange as a bore and an imposition; it has bored him for forty years; he has, I

ELSA LORRAINE.
Views and Reviews.

A LAYMAN'S THEOLOGY.

A BUSINESS career is not necessarily the best training for theological speculation. "Probability, as Bishop Butler told us, is the guide of life, and in business particularly men act without very rigid definition even of probabilities—they walk much more by faith than by sight. But theology is not action, it is explanation, of the relation of the universe to man, and, as such, it needs very rigid definition of terms. Put quite briefly, science reveals universal processes which theology attempts, not very successfully, to interpret in terms of personality; "man never knows how anthropomorphic he is," as Matthew Arnold always quoting from Goethe, and until man does know it, and allow for it, he can have no guarantee of having observed natural processes with the minimum of error. Mr. J. W. Newcombe has written this essay in the intervals of "a strenuous business career"; he has been impressed, as we have all been impressed, by the astronomical revelation of the infinity of the universe—and by the well-known device of assuming that correlated series of facts obey the same laws, and are subject to the same conditions, he makes an extension by inference of "natural law to the spiritual world," in Drummond's phrase.

He does this, of course, without definition of terms; indeed, he relies chiefly on assertion, as, for example, when he says that "the world is the creation of an Infinite Creator." As he professes allegiance to the doctrine of evolution, it is difficult to know what he means by creation; more particularly as he declares that "God is known to have a beneficent purpose in creating this world." What that purpose is, how it is known, we are not told; but the very words, "beneficent purpose," are the terms of a relative moral judgment, they have no obvious relevance to a universal process of creation. The assumption that process and person are identical is not one that we need to make; the conception of God as a magnified, non-natural man, which Mr. Newcombe quite plainly assumes, is not one which really helps us to understand the infinity of the universe revealed by astronomy. For we do know that "in psychological language, by 'person' we generally understand the individual as clearly conscious of itself, and acting accordingly," in Ribot's definition we have the term "subject matter." Mr. Newcombe has, indeed, fallen into the common error of attributing to external processes the purpose "of governors"—we discover, in short, that our intended interpretation of the universe in terms of personality cannot be made in those terms, or, in other words, theology has no subject matter.

Mr. Newcombe has, indeed, fallen into the common error of attributing to external processes the purpose that he detects in them. Because it is a fact that the world is inhabited, he assumes that it was created for habitation; and because astronomy has revealed the

* "From the Known to the Unknown." By J. W. Newcombe. (Clarke. 3s. net.)
existence of myriads of other worlds, he asserts that "it becomes reasonable to suppose that all the myriads of worlds are intended for habitation, for the purpose of His beneficence must be in relation to living beings." But as we have every scientific reason to believe that there was, and will be, a period when this world was, and will be uninhabited, the beneficence of God, like the consciousness of man, is an intermittent phenomenon—which does not agree with the assertion made on the same page that "God is everywhere in the fulness of His Deity." But the fact that man does live in this world (and what a life!) affords no real basis for the supposition that the world was created for habitation by man; indeed, what we know of his history on this planet suggests that it was not created for habitation by him. He has had to make, and to keep, the planet habitable by man; if he were to desist from his activities for a few years, the ever-encroaching desert, moor, and forest, would push him off the planet. As it is, he only lives by pushing other species, which are equally the creation of the Infinite Creator, out of existence; and if a similar process is going on in all the other "habitable" worlds, the prospect is alarming indeed. It is more in accordance with scientific knowledge to regard man, not as a tenant of a world created by God for habitation, but as a pioneer clearing a world for habitation, by Gods—that is to say, by beings as superior to himself as he is to the Pithecanthropus erectus.

Moreover, the conception of infinite process eternally working affords no support to the ideas of a future life. It is, in the nature of things, impossible for us to distinguish, even in thought, the vital process from the living organism. As Dr. Haldane puts it in his essays on "The New Physiologist": "If we attempt to take the organism to pieces, or separate it from its environment, either in thought or in deed, it simply disappears from our mental vision. A living organism made up of matter and energy is like matter and energy made, up of pure time and space: it conveys to us no meaning that we can use in interpreting the facts." As Mr. Newcombe uses the word, the "Soul" seems to mean the sense of personal identity which is derived from memory, and is, as Ribot showed, based on the general sensibility of the body. Even if the ether, as Mr. Newcombe suggests, is impressed with a record of our doings that he who runs may read, our memory of the relation of those doings to ourselves is, so far as we know, indissolubly associated with the existence of the organism. The "Soul," the "I" which remembers, cannot survive the dissolution of the organism; it may be immortal in its record on the ether, but not in its activity of remembering, and assuming responsibility for its past deeds.

But apart from this, the assertion that "God is everywhere in the fulness of His Deity" puts the idea of future rewards and punishments (an idea which makes necessary the belief in the immortality of the soul) out of court. For if we accept the idea of the supremacy of law in the universe (which is another way of saying that "God is everywhere in the fulness of His Deity"), we cannot believe that law acts inefficiently anywhere. The fact that "some sins do not seem to produce the same consequences as others," as Mr. Newcombe says, suggests very strongly that they are not sins; certainly, it is more reasonable to suppose this than to suppose that "punishment seems to work in equitably here." We are obliged to believe that there will never be any more perfect adjustment of cause and effect than here; the law of gravitation, to which Mr. Newcombe refers so often for his analogy of immutable law, operates more certainly on this planet than it does on the moon ("gravitation alone is incomparably the observed motion of the moon," says A. R. Hinks in his "Astronomy")

and if we accept the idea of universal justice, we must assume that it is done here as elsewhere, and does not depend on a personal judgment made post-mortem. Unsupported bodies fall to the ground the moment they are unsupported, fire burns, water wets, on contact; and if there is any analogy between the operation of moral law and physical law, there is no need for a last judgment, no need for an immortal soul to be judged. Mr. Newcombe knows too little about the known to be able to infer anything to the point about the unknown.

A. E. R.

Reviews.

A Kut Prisoner. By H. C. W. Bishop. (The Bodley Head. 6s. net.)

After Lieut. E. H. Jones' "The Road to En-Dor," this addition to the "On Active Service Series" falls very flat. It is a plain, unvarnished tale of the surrender at Kut, the march to and confinement in Kastamun; and the story of the subsequent escape, recapture, rescue, and final freedom, has none of the intellectual and literary interest of Lieut. Jones' narrative. Mr. Bishop and his companions were either very dull dogs, or Mr. Bishop has not learned how to write about them in a manner that would suit anybody but a commanding officer receiving a report. Any survivor of the siege of Kut has a good claim to the grateful attention of the public, but it depends largely on himself whether he develops or forfeits that claim. Bishop has chosen the pedestrian style when he might have ridden the high horse; he has flattened us out into boredom with a story that keeps us nodding, and murmuring: "Yes, yes! What about it?" After all, a story never means as much to the hearer as to the teller, and when the teller tells it in this "as-in-duty-bound" style, the hearer can only suppress his yawns and wait politely until the teller has finished.

Running Wild. By Bertram Smith. (Simpkin, Marshall. 6s. net.)

One of the chief advantages of being a member of a family in a house, instead of a worshipful Desiré in a flat, is a childhood that is lived and not imagined; when the house is not too near a town, when the family consists mainly of brothers, the possibilities of experience can hardly be exhausted. There are so many things to be done that should not be done that life, until school begins, is one evolving process of discovery; and Mr. Bertram Smith was more fortunate than many other people only in the fact that he retained so vivid a memory of the details of his childhood. It is difficult for an adult reading this book to think of anything that these boys should not have done that they did not do, except, perhaps, setting fire to the house—and when the teller tells it in this "as-in-duty-bound" style, the hearer can only suppress his yawns and wait politely until the teller has finished.
satisfy the lust for destruction and the desire for heroic attitudes, is only one instance of their power of extrac- ting the full emotional value from a quite ordinary situation. Mr. Smith remembers not only what they did, but what they thought of themselves; and as a study of the child's non-moral and immoral attitude towards adult civilisation, the book is as valuable as war -- but perhaps Dr. Johnson's definition of patriotism sits. Mr. Smith remembers not only what they attitudes, is only one instance of their power of re- bellious and immoral. They could not see, for example, that it was wrong for them to be hidden in a tree while callers were taking tea beneath; eaves-dropping meant nothing to them. Definite rebellion was begun deliberately, knowing and believing that the "bold, bad boy" was only a pose of which they wanted complete and final experience. They certainly exploited the in- finite variety of simple things to the full; and if anyone needs consolation in such a story, let him find it in the fact that they grew up.

Henry V. By R. B. Mowat, M.A. (Constable. 10s. 6d. net.)

Among the Kings and Queens of England, Henry V is chiefly memorable for his military prowess, which was mainly exercised in the prosecution of an illegiti- mate claim to France. Mr. Mowat declares that "Henry's most permanent gift to England is the sentiment of patriotism"; but it seems better to find another word to describe the lust for conquest than one which means love of country. It is true that the senti- ment of patriotism is usually associated with aggressive war—but perhaps Dr. Johnson's definition of patriot- ism was not adequate. Mr. Mowat has done his best to destroy any glamour that Shakespeare may have cast over the memory of Henry V; he is presented in this volume as a military machine of greater efficiency than any that could be brought against him. He could organise for war; the whole man worked only in military affairs; but if he pulled England together, it was only ad hoc, or his work did not endure. Even his conquests endured for not more than thirty years. He waged war efficiently— and such honours as that fact demands may be paid to his memory.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

COST AND PRICES.

SIR,—Mr. Dennis Milner and others are strangely puzzled by Major Douglas's contention that the sum total of wages, salaries and dividends is less than the sum total of prices. The point seems to me to be capable of convincing illustration; at any rate an illustration should enable the fallacy to be clearly indicated if fal- lacy there be.

I decide to build a house, let us say, for the purpose of selling it, and I know that I can build it for £1,000, including a profit of £50 for myself. I ask my banker to advance me £1,000 he doesn't put his hand in his pocket and pass me a "cool thou." in notes or gold. He doesn't say, "I'm a bit pushed myself, old son, and I'll have to cut down my own expenditure to this extent." He doesn't even look in his safe to see whether £1,000 actually lies there. (He must indeed keep enough small change to meet such increased demands for cash as my operations may entail, but a small fraction of the sum loaned suffices.) He simply permits me to draw cheques against a bank entry. Nobody else's spending power has been transferred to me. I buy bricks, and my demand for bricks competes with that of other buyers, and the price goes up. Inflation of credit raises prices.

Next, suppose that my completed house contains ten rooms, and that I retain five of them as workrooms in which to plan and prepare materials for the erection of other houses. Only half the house, therefore, is released for ultimate consumption. Nevertheless, if I follow the current commercial practice I shall charge the consumers £1,070 (the cost of the whole house plus bank interest), whereas they ought in equity to be charged only £500. This I take to be the meaning of Major Douglas's formula that price should bear the same relation to total cost as total consumption bears to total production.

A. E. BAKER.

Mr. Baker's explanation is substantially correct but does not go far enough. During the building of the hypothetical house, the persons (Group A) receiving the credit created by the banker for services rendered in helping to build the house spend the money in the "cost of living." Re- garding labour as a commodity, the "cost of living" is the overhead charge of this commodity, and is continually being paid out. When the house is sold to the public (Group A), the seller, i.e., the price-maker, collects all the payments previously made from Group A, and these include Group A's overhead charges, which have already been paid out. Clearly, therefore, Group A is not in a position to pay them out again.

Mr. Dennis Milner's difficulty is the result of an attack (not incurable, I feel sure) of Static Economies. He says, "I am quite convinced that the total price or turnover which goes into a factory every year is exactly equal to the total amount of wages, salaries and dividends coming out of that factory, and the factories which supply it with semi-manufacturers..." I say "the wages, salaries and dividends distributed in respect of the world's production is diminishingly able to purchase the production in respect of which it is distributed." Mr. Milner evidently thinks the two statements are mutually exclusive. I can assure him that they are not more so than is the statement that machinery at rest is not the same thing as machinery in motion.

C. H. D.

Pastiche.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL.

Now my fancy lacks a meal; Moods, long rusty, down at heel, Out at elbows, fidget, scratch, 'Neath my thatch.

Memory calls up my days, Reads the lengthy roll, arrays Cares and comforts, tears and pranks, In due ranks.

Harness your wit, Saddles and bit: Join the parading pimp, panther and chitt.

Row on row this "late lamented" Host (all lousy, all demented) File with scarecrow indiscretion In procession.

Blind and brutal, dormant, dumb, Sucking, fumbling, dazed and numb; Mouth and vent—a plasmic feeder— Jo, their leader!

Next this horror launched as man Follows close a greedy elan Reaching for the golden bun Of the sun.
Merrily, merrily, lad!
You've stolen such joys as you've had.

Here's a company of louts,
Stiff, vociferous roustabouts,
Climbing, squabbling, stoning, scorning,
Scrambling up the stairs of morning,
Picking pleasures under-ripe,
Clutching guts that grips,
Pitch-and-tossing,
Thieving, by the hedgerows dossing
Down with slack-limbed country doxies,
Red-avised and sharp-fanged foxes --
Nightlong wandering, day-long drowsing,
Garnering even while carousing
Princely lore with beggar's lice,
Earning once and paying thrice,
Pockets torn, discretion tattered,
Joys bespattered.

Youthful selves of me, I greet you:
To my crust and jug entreat you.
Pest! the vagabonds neglect me,
Make long noses, tap their brows,
Tip the wink, reject me,
Write me down a-well, who knows?

Since they smutch my good intentions
With libidinous inventions!

Carrion crows!

John, John, the Deacon's son,
Trips a wench and away he'll run.

Lonely walks the prudent gull,
Booked and tailored, clean and dull,
Crabbed by careful rectitude,
Butt and zany of the crude
Multitude.

Nee-haw,
Ladies he saw,
But could the lad win a kind mistress . . . ?

In his blood the poison works,
Trickling, crimson, runs the stream.
Hands and fingers, feet and toes,
Austere back and aching loins
Sense the restive pulses' urge.
Tautened muscles gird and tweak.
Clamorous he bays his dear.

Mary, Mary, quite contrary,
Gives him a stony "No!"

Deference grows rank and fawns:
Now he sidles,
Sniffs and whinnies at her skirts,
Pines and ponders on his hurts.
Next hebridles.
Then his heels are flying!

Hey, Noodle, Noodle,
Half mastiff, half poodle,
You hod in vain for the moon.
'Tis a fish-dead maid:
You'll rut unallayed
While a calf sucks the silver spoon.

Jostling, junketing, jingling,
Buxom bawds and skinny rooks,
Tatterdemalion quacks and crooks,
All a-mingling,
Singing, swearing
Never cariag
Make a dandy late-and-early
Hurly-burly.
Deeply sworn to fleer the stout
Pedestrian burgher, and to foul
Prude or querimomously gander,
Trounce the truckler, plague the pander,
Douché the starched

And quench the parched—
Busy they as bees in clover,
Kindly zealous,
Greedyly jealous:
Stay-at-home conjoins with rover,
Cormorants with doves are mating,
Lusts on fond affections sating.

Thus the days of twenty's leaving
Pass me by, their shoulders heaving,
Slim their hands that twitch for thieving—
Malaperts beyond believing!

Rallentando!
And the stridulous scherzando
Breaks abruptly.
Once again
From a trailing kirtle flies
Dust to blind the eager eyes.
Faults and figments swift forgotten,
Acid pleasures, dulcit pain,
Hard-won less and quick-spent gain,
Blend in tedium of romance.
Mark the gimcrack lout's advance!
Delerient, wits ejar,
Black of coat and kindly-spoken,
Black his shadow, every token
He commands staked on the sable
Of Life's dubious rouge et noir.

Red-coat Cain and broad-cloth Abel
Twit him, gird at him in turn.
Abel's factory smoke stands steady;
Cain's camp-blaze fumes rough-and-ready;
Cain's blithe, Abel's taciturn.
Cain's red head the red cap wears,
At his board the red wine cheers.

Much work and no lull
Makes Barbor uncommonly dull.

Dignified and said, he
Shuts his brain with duty's bolt.
Is a lady such a Lady?
Red blood will to red revolt!

In the tea-cup passion drowns,
And the small provincial towns
Scarce provide meet retinue
For Love's death-watch (Private View).

Mister Respectable
Thought it delectable
To devote him to business and wife;
But when the wind blew
In the chimney, he knew
That such was his portion for life.

To the neighbour's amaze
He snatches his stake from the baize.
To the roysterer's fun
He outwants the largesse of the sun.

Lax, lucky, and jousy,
Drab, drunken, and drowsy,
Scab-a-scratch
And vacant patch,
King-by-talk
And Cock-o'-the-wall,
Link arms and bawl
Their madrigal.

Whiggery? Priggery?
Not
For us: we've a ticket to pot!
The journey's not long
If you've learned the right song.

Higgledy-piggledy? . . Nay,
The straight is the crookedest way.
The clock will strike one,
Then out we'll all run,
Higgledy-piggledy, hey!

H. R. BARBOR.