NOTES OF THE WEEK.

In a letter to the Government, which is to be followed by an interview with Mr. Lloyd George, the Federation of British Industries declares that "to-day British industry is fighting for its life" and that "the next twelve months may be the most critical in the economic history of this country." The language, however apparently superlative, is not in our opinion in the least degree exaggerated; for it is, we believe, a fact that "British industry," in the ordinary sense of the word, is scarcely able to keep on its legs and may collapse at any moment; and it is another and a consequent fact that the next twelve months will see either the beginning of a new system or a cataclysm in which the present system will perish without leaving a successor. On the other hand, as correctly as the Manifesto of the British Federation of Industries describes the symptoms and forecasts the period of crisis, its authors are altogether at sea both in their diagnosis of the disease and in their prescriptions. If the most ignorant quack were to prescribe for a condition of disease which could not but be patent to any observer, his guesses at the cause and his proposals for a cure could not be worse in their way than the proclamations of the B.F.I. in relation to our present social affliction. Science, both old and new, reason, appeal, fact, experience, history—all these, it seems, are utterly thrown away on the governing minds of the F.B.I. We are not in the least surprised that its twenty-million capital organisation, with its highly paid Intelligence department, should still be ignorant of the analysis and synthesis which have been published in these columns during the last two years. The distance between minds in England can only be reckoned in light-years. But that the outstanding features of the existing situation should be completely missed or ignored is a reflection upon human intelligence which it is hard to swallow. We prefer, in fact, to believe that the F.B.I. is pursuing another policy than that of facing the truth. What is the case of the F.B.I.? It is, in the first place, that the high cost of materials, transport, and labour not only restricts production for the home-market, but makes it impossible for Great Britain to compete industrially with foreign countries that can produce more cheaply—Germany, of course, in excelsis (for it would not be wise to mention America!). In the second place, the F.B.I. complains of the high taxation in this country and pleads for Government economy. The capital requirements of industry, we are told, were allowed during the war to be neglected, leaving the country with vast arrears of construction and maintenance to be overtaken to-day. And if, therefore, the Government should pursue its present extravagant policy of taxing industry (that is to say, the costs and prices of industry), even for the laudable object of paying off the war-debt, industry will continue to stagnate for the want of capital. In the third place and finally, the cat is out of the bag in the expectation expressed that a reduction in costs, including taxation, "will encourage a flow into industry of the capital it so greatly needs."

So abundant is the material for a reply to the case of the F.B.I. that it is difficult to know where to begin and when to leave off; and we shall have to content ourselves with a few reminders and questions of fact. To begin with, is it or is it not the truth that the industrial plant of the country has been enormously increased since 1914, that is to say, during and since the war? We have been told on the unimpeachable authority of the industrialists themselves, reporting to the "Times' Commercial Supplement," that "after making allowance for all deterioration that has occurred, none of the firms reports that it has less plant than it had before the war, while four-fifths of them state that they have more, in some cases up to four times as much"; and Sir Edgar Crammond, summarising the results, concluded that "the productive capacity of Great Britain is now at least 50 per cent. above the pre-war standard." Does this bear out the complaint that there are arrears of construction and maintenance to be overtaken; and is it decent for the B.F.I. to rest its case on the pathos of the F.B.I.? That is it or is it not the fact that the outstanding feature of the situation is a defect of Productive capacity? Here again the evidence is supplied by the industrialists themselves as if the facts were not sufficiently patent. Idle factories by the hundred, unemployed workmen by the million, armies of advertisers, travellers and touts, commercial plans for exporting credit (or purchasing power); and a score and one similar phenomena, all testify to the existence of a productive capacity so much in excess of
effective Demand that more than half the world's energies are employed in trying to expedite Consumption. But if this is the true state of things, on evidence that cannot be denied, the practical recommendation with which the F.B.I. winds up its petition must be realised to be as absurd as we have already found it. How can an increased flow of capital into Production affect, except for the worse, a situation characterised by a defect of Consumption? How is pulling down our barns and build greater going to increase the distributed effective demand, the defect of which, and not the inadequacy of our present barns, is the obvious and predominant symptom of our present disease? We have compared the F.B.I. to an ignorant quack in medicine; but, in truth, if such quackery as theirs were to be practised on a dog, its agent would be sent to prison for it. Is the nation so contemptible, in its own opinion and that of the F.B.I., that diagnoses contrary to fact and prescriptions contrary to sense are to be not only tolerated, but admired and acted upon?

Assuming that nevertheless the case of the F.B.I. will appear to many to be plausible, will pass among the majority of the public as a fact, an explanation can be found in the superstition our generation owes to Malthus. Twenty-five years ago Kropotkine observed that economics was still permeated with the teaching of Malthus; and nearly all Socialists, he added--and his remark is true to-day--“admit the Malthusian postulate,” namely, that of “a limited and insufficient supply of the necessary of life.” In agricultural produce, Kropotkine continued, there was something plausible to be said for Malthus’ contention that productivity was naturally limited and could only with increasing labour provide an increasing population; but in agriculture, modern science had extended the limits of possible production beyond the needs of any imaginable increase of population. How much more absurd, therefore, was it to assume that manufactured products, the work of machinery and science and man, were limited in amount or could only be multiplied by disproportionate human exertion? Kropotkine’s criticism of the Malthusian superstition, though supported by science and confirmed by experience, has, however, so far completely failed to dissipate it. The intelligent editor of the “Times” Trade Supplement” adds a footnote to Mr. Kitson’s current article inviting Mr. Kitson to explain how we can export cotton-goods if we consume more cotton-goods at home, in manifest incomprehension or incredulity at Mr. Kitson’s statement in the same article that “even to-day the labour of less than 10 per cent. of the population would readily suffice to maintain the entire inhabitants of this country in a high state of efficiency,” leaving a liberal margin of leisure. The item of Wages, however, differs from the other items of Cost in being the only Cost that is distributed throughout the districts with which they are sever known their policy is to throw all the responsibility upon the rank and file. The present movement is their work. For the plight of millions of unemployed they are responsible. The despair that is slowly settling down on the rank and file is the work of their hands; and all the horrors that are still in front of us are only the by-products of the neglect, the stupidity and conceit of the “leaders” of Labour. Perhaps when the rank and file have suffered a little more, they may “respond” in a manner not expected by its present leaders. That, unfortunately, appears to be the only means left of arousing the leaders to a sense of their duty.

It is plain that the Labour leaders, industrial as well as political, have forfeited the last shred of their right to the name of leaders, since in the gravest circumstances ever known their policy is to throw all the responsibility upon the rank and file. At no time,” said Mr. Cramp of the N.U.R. last week, “has the need of trial of it, our national plight will be found to be still more desperate.

The general movement of wages downwards is not only the expected sequel of the enforced unemployment, but it is partly due to the “policy” of the F.B.I. of reducing costs at the expense of wages. Wages being, as everybody knows, a considerable item in the cost of production, a reduction of wages, it is natively assumed, would not only enable selling-prices to be reduced (which itself is rather more than doubtful in view of the extent and efficiency of Trusts and Combines), but by some miraculous means or other would create a more widespread and effective demand for consumable goods. The item of Wages, however, differs from the other items of Cost in being the only Cost that is distributed among individuals as purchasing-power, the other Costs being mainly transfers of blocks of Credit from one organisation to another. And it therefore follows, as a matter of simple arithmetic, that any reduction in Wages is a proportionate reduction of the effective demand or market for consumable or ultimate commodities. Considering that our factories are idle and trade in general is stagnant because of the falling-off in effective demand, it would be interesting to learn upon what grounds a further contraction of distributed demand is calculated to set industry in motion again. Who is going to buy the goods, even at the possibly reduced price, when the wage-earning classes have been still further impoverished? Is there any ground to assume that the ruling prices have been found to take the place of the market now being reduced by the decline in wages? To employ a cliché usually left to capitalist debaters, is not the reduction of wages equivalent to killing the goose that lays the golden eggs? Whatever be the reply, there can be no doubt about the facts of the case. Far from affording the slightest relief of our present discontent, the present movement of wage-reduction will intensify all the symptoms as well as the disease itself. After a few months of trial of it, our national plight will be found to be still more desperate.

Having every wish to be as fair as it is possible for
human minds to be, we are led to assume the existence of other motives in the policy of Labour leaders than the motives ordinarily attributed to them. People do not act irrationally without reason; and when, as in the case of the F.B.I., we find a body of intelligent men pursuing an irrational policy (that of stimulating Production when under-Consumption is admittedly the real trouble), and discover, on friendly analysis, that they are under the Malthusian obsession, the conclusion that our Labour leaders may be similarly suffering under some delusion or other is at least admissible. But what is the delusion that enables Labour leaders apparently to be so indignant of the mistakes of the rank and file as to refuse persistently even to consider a possible remedy? What is it that permits, say, Mr. Hodges and his colleagues, to sleep at nights after such apparent derisions of duty, not to say, common humanity, as the world witnesses? Our friendliest explanation, for what it is worth, is that the mass of the Labour leaders, even when they are not politically minded themselves, are under the political illusion; they fancy, in other words, that "Labour" is well on the way to political power; and hence, that not only the present industrial difficulties must be surmounted, but that they need not be, and ought not to be. "Industrial misery," they say in effect, "is the only lever of political action. When the working-classes are prosperous they cease to be "revolutionary." Furthermore, any effective scheme for reconciling the interest of Capital and Labour would, by robbing Labour of its platform, deprive Labour of its political future. In the interests, therefore, of the historic political claims of Labour, the recurrent industrial difficulties must not only be left to 'Capital' to smooth over, without any help from Labour, but any conceivably radical and effective solution, that does not imply and necessitate a Labour Government, must be boycotted and opposed."

We call this a "pathetic illusion" because, in the first place, it has the pathetic result of requiring and not merely of tolerating the continuance of the present industrial chaos; for even the contingency of an Anglo-American war has been known to provoke a smile of triumph among a meeting of the political Left of Labour; and, hence, that not only cannot bring Labour into power. And, in the second place, the illusion is pathetic because it so easily and obviously plays into the hands of the directorate of the real Capitalist-Financial opposition, who cannot but be gratified by any diversion or weakening of an immediate attack upon current problems in a practical spirit. Let it be remembered that the public credit of a political party is conditioned by its ability to deal with current problems; and, in the light of this reflection, it will be seen that the more pre-occupied Labour can be induced to become in its political future, the more improbable is not only its "interference" in present events, but that very political future itself. Finally, the illusion is pathetic because, in fact, there is not the least real ground for believing in it. Mr. Lloyd George and his astute friends pretend, for their own purposes, that "a Labour Government is in sight." By so doing they hope to rally the "non-political voters" to their side. But, in sober truth, a Labour Government is so far from being in sight that even the Capitalist opposition has refused to be alarmed by the prospect, feeling in its bones that neither our own nor any generation of this century will ever witness such a thing. It is a thousand pities that we cannot lay down and agree upon certain axioms regarding to the industrial situation; axioms that may not have been challenged after they have once been demonstrated and accepted. We should propose as the first axiom that No Labour Government is likely to be formed this century. Thereafter, the movement could devote its energies to pursuing something real.

World Affairs.

The most stubborn and lasting antithesis to progress and the cult of the Future, which is the real religion and the specific essence of Western civilisation and Western Man, is the humanity of India. India is a continent apart, an unapproachable island and an encircled land; an island immense and isolated from the history of humanity under the spell truly of the everlasting and unchangeable. This spell of the axioms, this profound dream of India, needs to be broken in the interest of the world-order and of the progress of both evolution and history. For the triumphant and satanic Western Man must account for his redemption of the world and give the frame of organisation and virile reason to the world. India, the eternal mother of Human Freedom, the eternal glory of the Aryan or Northern Man has come to be a land without a future and even without a past, being devoid of a present, of a reality corresponding to her eternal function in the Kingdom. The mission and function of India in the human kingdom is, we say, eternal, a lasting and imperishable mission; for India is a memento of the Infinite, of Deity itself in Man and in Himself. The revelation of the New Testament and of the Athanassian Creed is a gnosiss of the absolute dynamics of the Universal Man and of his body; which body is Cosmos itself, the world. Christian metaphysics reveals the meaning of the divine process, of the dynamics of Cosmos and Humanity; for the drama of the Sophia and the Logos, of the Fall and Redemption of Universal Man is the one and universal mystery play, the one and only drama of existence. But India has revealed to Man the gnosiss of the eternal statexs of things. There is an absolute mystery, a uniform mystery, an eternal mystery of Being; this absolute and unfathomable mystery India has revealed by making mankind aware of it, by proving its presence, but not by solving it. The gnosiss of Christ and of Sophia is the central and anthropocentric, human, pan-human gnosiss of the world. Vedanta Advaita, the sacred apophasis of India, is the end, the periphery of pan-human cognisance. Except the miracle and apophasis of the embodiment of Sophia herself, except the absolute apophasis of pan-human organisation itself, of the Pleroma of a greater and non-Aryan world-order, the revelation has never been given to Universal Man, to the Geon. Vedanta Advaita and the Athanassian Creed are gnosiss worthy of Universal Humanity, and both are equally worthy.

The Indian people, both the Aryan and Aryanised, but, above all, the non-Aryan (for India is one of the great and greatest melting-pots of the soma and of the psyche of all humanities), the Indian people, the immense block of its millions, is the heart of the Eastern hemisphere; that race of the One and the Universal; that organ of the Race, of the Species, of Man, by which Eternity and the Absolute are sensed. It is pertinent here to underline here that the Mongolian and Turanian Asias, somewhat incongruously as it may seem, are not the central and the greatest, or the most powerful antithesis of the West. China and Japan are not directly and entirely antithetic to Europe and to the West. China is the England of the Far East, the chief evolutionary block of Asia, normal, continuous, harmonious in her tendencies, being as she is common sense incarnate and a great wholesome humanity, the salt of the earth; China is neutral and is pan-humanly disposed. China can be Westernised, industrialised, without changing her childlike and wise spirit. The Middle Kingdom does not proselytise, does not crave to be proselytised; Japan, the extreme of humanity in the Father's hemisphere, and the greatest historic humanity of the East, does so. Japan is actively engaged in Japanising the West, is preaching the Far
Our Generation.

In carrying out weekly the analysis of common beliefs and tendencies which has appeared on this page for some time I have found myself driven to combat more and more, and at last in the conception and self-criticism which make men unhappy. Some of these are enshrined in our legal system, but most in our common life. But in whatever form they happen to be expressed, the thing which gives them vitality—a dreadful, inhibiting vitality—is an attitude, partly moral, partly intellectual. The best word to denote that attitude is superstition. Any of us who managed to do our sums at school must remember that the secret of doing them well—or doing them at all—was an unembarrassed and confident belief that there was nothing occult in them, and that the correct exercise of our minds would discover the correct answer. From beginning to end the whole thing seemed more rational and therefore more easy than we had expected—sometimes so easy that the perverse ghost of hocus-pocus would whisper to us, "This cannot be the right answer!" The dull boys, on the other hand, believed that arithmetic was a mystery; the result was not something as simple, or rather, more simple, than the problem; it was to be attained by magic, by an intellectual sleight of hand at which they could marvel, but which they could never learn and practise. Well, in almost all things except our daily work, and sometimes in that, too, most of us are in the position of the slow boys in the class, and for the same reason. Men are hanged still, not because there is a good cause for hanging, but because the public think there is an occult virtue in it. The inviolability of marriage is believed in with religious ardour by people whose marriage is a hell, and chiefly because they think that the most unspeakable iniquities are consummated in Heaven. The permanence of the miserable human estate in which we live is ensured by a superstition which we call "human nature." Brutalising labour, shameful destitution, "the struggle for existence," are justified, not by assessing their natural and obvious results—oh, no, but by attributing to them a profound, tragic, mystical virtue. It is astonishing! Whether the state of an emancipated humanity will be as happy as Rousseau, or as tragic as Nietzsche, conceived, it is quite impossible for us to determine yet; the whole problem is so thickly obscured by the cloud of bestial and self-torturing superstitions in which we live. Natural sufferings there are which man must bear; but the misery which man suffers from "Nature"—which, by the way, he has made a bogey—are small in comparison with what he suffers from the nightmares, the respectable, moral nightmares, which his ignorance and his fears have woven around her.

There has been recently published in America a book by Mr. Daniel Lindsay Thomas and Mrs. Lucy Blayney Thomas entitled "Kentucky Superstitions." Collected in it there are almost 4,000 different superstitions gathered in Kentucky alone, and mainly from the white population. The index tells us that the greatest number are about bad luck, and the second greatest about death. After that there are a score or so about good luck; but even these predispose to apprehension. For the truth is that every superstition either expresses fear or suggests it; and fear is the greatest enemy of happiness and of light, for the ills we fear we already suffer, and we cannot dare to study them. How much misery these 4,000 superstitions, covering almost every circumstance of existence, must have caused in Kentucky and—for they are not merely local—in the whole world, mankind itself will never be able to know. The old ones are dis
appearing, but as they vanish new ones are created; and they will continue to be created so long as men are ignorant and fearful—so long, that is, as they refuse to regard the world and everything in it as a problem which can be solved. The simple belief that the world is so half the solution; and it is this simple belief that men have still to acquire. People’s naive superstitions about black cats and umbrellas may appear trifling; and they are trilling compared with the superstitions about society, law, religion, literature, and “nature,” which fill our lives with such terrible aridity, such crushing helplessness. But what we must realize is that they are superstitions in the same sense; the popular beliefs about religion and politics are of the same nature as those about black cats and umbrellas. In other words, religion and politics are not things to be understood; people not merely fear to use their intellect on them; they consider it is the right thing to abrogate it. Against this sum of ignorance and misery it is absolutely necessary to bring into action the clarity and rationality of obvious truths. We shall not be combatting what Nietzsche called “salutary errors”; for these, thought and creation. The theory of the “salutary illusion,” especially in coming from Nietzsche, was that if it implied that popular errors arose half deliberately, whereas they arise almost entirely in the subconscious and out of fear of the object. Only one error in a hundred is salutary, and even it is not permanently salutary. For whatever is “believed in” is not known, and is therefore feared, and is therefore the source of prohibitions.

Yet men cling to superstition in spite of the fact that truth is easier, more obvious, more simple, “happier”—so simple and so cheerful that it astonishes us and fills us with incredulity. Superstition is at present actually more subtle than truth; compare Mr. G. K. Chesterton, a Voltaire on the wrong side, with the real Voltaire. Why should an animal so feebly intellectual as man cling, as Mr. Chesterton does, to superstitions which his intellect by a simple turn could easily destroy? Sometimes it may be an instance—because he exercises his mind simply for the pleasure of exercising it, and therefore the more difficult case is the more attractive. But in the mass of superstitious creatures who have still to be awakened, it is because the existence of superstition is continuous. Life is such and such, superstition tells them; therefore it becomes such and such, and has to be borne. Thence arises the imaginary necessity: “human nature being what it is—a piece of simple, vulgar fatalism; for human nature is not what it is,” but what we conceive it to be. Accepted, this fatalism, of course, can be made grand; all the aesthetic emotions can be gathered around it—but all that proves nothing, as the people in Russian novels are always saying. It has always been the saddest trick of that conjuror with a broken heart, man, to teach in song what he has not learnt in suffering, and to set the crown of beauty upon failure, disease, and blindness. Yet it is nothing more than a form of vulgar Satanism.

This, then, is the spiritual and human issue, the most immediate of our age, as it was in that of Voltaire, of Goethe, of Ibsen, of Nietzsche. Our task is the destruction of evil superstition; and both the means and the end is the emancipation of the mind, the free and conscientious exercise of the mind upon everything, human or not, which comes before it. For that the main thing that is needed is dauntless tenacity, a capacity for the problem: one cannot conceive the Trinity unless one understands arithmetic.

Edward Moore.

Towards National Guilds.

But that is not the end of Mr. Cole’s economic case. He is plainly concerned for the extinction of what he calls “interest,” this year, next year, or sometime, and the “amortisation” of the present ownership. Is it not Major Douglas, he asks, “conferring on the possessing class a vast mortgage on the productive power of the workers?” And will productivity run to it? Here, again, we cannot help wishing that Mr. Cole had read the Scheme with the attention he must have paid to Greece when the University of Oxford is his object. It is, he says, not the matter is that under the Scheme the distribution of purchasing power exactly keeps pace with the development of productivity or real Credit, and is great when that is great and small when that is small. By the ratio of Credit Consumption to Credit Production which regulates Prices under the Scheme, it is impossible for purchasing power to be either in excess or in defect of productivity. Price becomes simply a means of distributing whatever there is to distribute; and since it absolutely depends upon the existence and amount of the real credit available for distribution, it cannot either exceed the productivity of a given year or fall below it. Briefly and crudely, the Scheme distributes as many units of purchasing power as there are units of production available for distribution. We issue just as many tickets as we have or can provide seating accommodation for.

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We come, however, to the bonne bouche of Mr. Cole’s objections, and one he shares with everybody who is more concerned about “Socialist principles” (alias morality) than with the practical morality of saving the world from damnation. “The effect of the recognition of the right to interest on the part of the present holders of capital is,” he says, “to destroy the moral basis of the Socialist case.” So much the worse, we might reply, for the Socialist case; for if the “Socialist case” is found to rest on an inadmissible assumption or upon an assumption that cannot be practically validated, the professing Socialists may succeed in preserving their principles, but they will never get anything done by means of them. We observe, in fact, that Mr. Cole is prepared to waive his principles when the problem it hand is one that appeals to his prejudices. How, for instance, does the “right to maintenance” which he claims for the workers “as citizens of the community” differ from the “right to dividends” which he denies to the owners of capital? Are not owners of capital also citizens; and would Mr. Cole exclude them from the right to maintenance (that is, a dividend on the social credit) merely because they own the other factor of production—namely, plant? In asserting the right of Capital to dividends, we do not, as Mr. Cole does, deny the same right to the other factor. On the contrary, by means of the Miners’ Bank which is created to re-present the real credit inherent in the factor of Labour, we elevate Labour to the rank of the present owners of plant, and ensure for the Miners an equal share in the present privileges of Capital, including dividends. What is Mr. Cole’s zeal to revenge himself upon the existing capitalists that leads him to deny to Labour the extension of the right to dividends on the communal work merely because he cannot bear that the existing owners should also enjoy it? Not everybody, it is perfectly certain, can be employed productively on the social plant. It is time goes on; the number of workers (in Mr. Cole’s narrow sense) will infallibly diminish. As Mr. Tom Mann says, we may safely look forward to a time in the near future when “work” will be largely superfluous, and when, in consequence, the distribution of purchasing power in terms of wages or pay or whatever it is called will affect only a fraction of the community. Will Mr. Cole tell us how he means to provide for the “unemployed” when they number, as
they will, the majority of the population. Is their "income" to depend upon the goodwill or fancy of the minority that happens to control the communal productive inheritance? Or must their "right to maintenance" be guaranteed? But the only fair alternative to inheritance? Or must their "right to maintenance minority that happens to control the communal productive creation of the period for which it is paid. As has been said before, the recognition in the Scheme of the right to dividends is not the outcome of mere expediency, though Mr. Cole ought to know that no confiscatory proposal can be carried through without civil war; we absolutely swear it. Nor is it, we affirm, in violation of the true basis of Socialist morality that refuses to make fish of one factor in production merely because that factor has in the past made food of the other. The recognition of the right to dividends under the Scheme is, like all Socialism, not designed to effect a transition by peaceful means from the present class war and chaos to economic democracy; and since the Socialist substitute for the wage-system is the system of dividends, the sooner we begin to multiply the number of genuine dividends, the sooner we shall succeed in abolishing the wage-system. The Scheme looks forward and prepares for the time when every citizen, by virtue of his citizenship, shall be naturally entitled to a dividend on the year's communal work. Whether, or in addition, he shall draw a "safety" dividend will depend upon whether he is "fit" to be employed in the highly technical production of those happy but not far-off days.

Mr. Cole concludes his critique with a handful of obiter dicta, not one of which has any resemblance to the true, as we conceive it. "Major Douglas is in no sense a Guildsman," "he is simply a distributivist" (Mr. Belloc, please note!); "Economic Democracy, in the Douglas sense, is the direct opposite of the industrial democracy of Guild Socialism." Dear us, fancy that, now! And we, who ought to know something about Guild Socialism since Mr. Cole but The New Aesopian fathered it and mothered it after having brought it into the world, while Mr. Cole was still a Fabian undergraduate at Oxford—we, we say, admit Major Douglas as the complete Guildsman, deny that he is "simply a distributivist" (though that in itself would be no crime), and assert that his "economic democracy" is both the end and the means to all that we have ever conceived as "Guild Socialism." Let us, in conclusion, repeat what, we believe, the adoption of the Douglas Mining Scheme (as Mr. Cole would probably call it) will do, in the nature of an agreeable surprise. Miss Frank's voice is of a very pleasant, even quality, and is admirably suited to the nature of the material. Indeed Miss Frank is so intelligent that she should have known better than to put English translations of French songs on her programme, without printing the original poem. We English are a curious race, and Miss Frank can safely take it for granted that a great part of her London audiences can read and understand French quite as well as she can sing it.

Music.

BRITISH MUSIC SOCIETY. A concert was given by this society at the Morley Hall on March 9th for the purpose of performing unpublished works by contemporary composers. The programme included two works for string quartet—"five short variations on an English Folk-Tune," by William Albon, and two movements from a quartet by W. T. Walton—and a piano solo by Lawrence Collingwood. Mr. Albon's Variations (played by the Pennington String Quartet) are based on well-known and established lines. They please the ear without specially stimulating either interest or curiosity. The two movements from Mr. Walton's quartet come in another category. The first movement (which we understand is to be revised) does not altogether please the ear, but it certainly stimulates curiosity. One critic has dismissed Mr. Walton's work with the remark that he is "young, and probably means no harm." Music with such conviction of purpose running through it (and a purpose which, however strange, is obviously based on knowledge) cannot be dismissed with this easy flippancy. We think that in the first movement Mr. Walton has kept his instruments too far apart, and also that the music in itself is not essentially a music for strings, but might very probably sound better on wind instruments. In writing as he did, Mr. Walton assailed the particular attributes of stringed instruments, especially in the first violin part, and we do not think the result was an aesthetic gain. There is perhaps still much to be done in exploring the possibilities of wind instruments, but we doubt if alteration of the tonal attributes of strings will add to their beauty. Mr. Walton made an interesting experiment, and it is for gifted youth to make experiments, because it has time before it in which to prove or disprove or to replace them. Also the new values must be of sufficient beauty to justify the destruction or even the neglect of the old. The second movement of Mr. Walton's quartet does not only stimulate curiosity: it is music of a high and exquisite beauty, and is essentially for strings. If Mr. Walton had not written anything but the second movement of this one quartet, this one piece of music alone would entitle him to serious consideration.

MISS ETHEL FRANK, Queen's Hall, March 9. It was difficult for any mere human being to fulfill all the expectations roused by the advertisement of this young American singer, and her concert was therefore in the nature of an open door, a chance for the public to see her. Miss Frank's voice is of a very pleasant, even quality, and is admirably used, and her intelligence is more remarkable than her voice. There are many better voices, but such intelligence is rare. Indeed Miss Frank is so intelligent that she should have known better than to put English translations of French songs on her programme, without printing the original poem. We English are a nighted race, but French is not an unknown language even in darkest London, and Miss Frank can safely take it for granted that a great part of her London audiences can read and understand French quite as well as she can sing it.

H. R.

"AN EMPTY HOUSE." Our God has left His House, He dwells no more in Temples vast and dim, How shall His people worship at a shrine, Empty of Him?

The House, no more denied to child of Thine, Shall then house Thee.

AN EMPTY HOUSE.

E. M. WREDFORD-WARDINGTON.
Drama.

By John Francis Hope.

A Shaw triple bill is not the most agreeable form of entertainment. His one-act plays are either trivialities or tracts; he differs from most other people by the fact that he works best at the development of a theme, and has no real power of handling incidents dramatically. I do not omit from consideration his one-act play, "Getting Married," although it is really sui generis; on the contrary, it serves to illustrate my contention that his genius needs for its full expression a subject on which many points of view may be expressed, preferably one on which no conclusion can be reached except by action. So I went to see the triple bill at the Everyman with misgivings; "How He Lied to Her Husband," "The Dark Lady of the Sonnets," "The Show-Up of Blanco Posnet," are simply the waste products of a process of creation of which we have already enjoyed the fruits. If they had been produced at the beginning of his career, they might have had an evolutionary interest; but they are symptoms of his decline from divine comedy to humanity as it understands itself, and in "Blanco Posnet" he has descended to the mission-hall.

"Blanco Posnet" is as much an artistic failure as "Browning's "Culthan Upon Setebos." These theologizing savages fall very flat because they do not express themselves as the real savage does, in myth, song, dance, and ritual, but in the cruder forms of theological disputation. The only comment that need be made on that he works best at the development of a theme, and thereby products of a process of creation of which we have seen against excess in the opposite direction." The obvious disparity of size made the descent of man to the carpet. He played Blanco like a Shavian, instead of in the melodramatic tradition of the black sheep.

But the whole company, with the exception of Mr. Felix Aylmer as the Sherif, suffered in the same way. They were merely masquerading, and not playing; one could hear them thinking that, because Shaw is an "intellectual," he could not really mean to write melodrama. But his intellectual point, in this case, can only be dramatically revealed by the melodramatic tradition of violent contrast and excessive emotion. Take one fact; Blanco challenges the jury on the ground that "it's a rotten jury." Such an insult in such circumstances would have rendered him guilty of perjury. Quite probably some of the jurymen would have taken potshots at Blanco, but the scene went just as it reads. The whole atmosphere of violence, swelling and subsiding, was never realised; the crowd, both of men and women, was beneath contempt; I have seen more excitement in a Hyde Park crowd than these supposed pioneers of the woolly West exhibited. They were so horribly afraid of overdoing it that I suggest that they should be supplied with megaphones to enable them to be heard by the audience; if the crowd, like the Greek chorus, were supposed to express popular morality, it seems they should not speak in the still, small voice of conscience. The "people murmur" only under a tyranny; in freedom, they express themselves by "popular clamour." If the vox clamantis is properly used, the vox humana may be distinguished by contrast. I say nothing about the "accent" except that it was not American.

The best performance was that of "How He Lied to Her Husband," in spite of the fact that Miss Ine Cameron cannot express mental distress with conviction. But Mr. Harold Scott as the poet, and Mr. Felix Aylmer as the Jew husband, played very well, except in the fight. The Everyman people do not seem to come to grips; and why they should have fallen over in the fight. The Everyman people do not seem to come to grips; and why they should have fallen over was a mystery. For a man who had not neglected the culture of his body, the poet made a very poor show; there was a point on Mr. Aylmer's abdominal protuberance that asked to be hit, just once, for love; but Mr. Scott never descended to pugilism. Mr. Aylmer might at least box the poet's ears, or ruffle his hair, or disturb his bow, before sitting on the floor; Her Husband is really determined to teach the young puppy a lesson, even if he has no educational qualifications; and if it certainly looks better on the stage to reveal a proximate cause of the descent of man to the carpet.
Readers and Writers.

It is some months since I referred my readers to the "Quest" (quarterly, 2s. 6d.); but it continues to be, in my judgment, one of the very few vitally important journals published. If there is to be, as I am beginning to doubt, a divorce between the religious and civilised world; what my colleagues, "M. M. Mosol," call an epigenesis, a subsumption of the past containing the germ of a new future—if, I say, there is to be such an epigenesis of our generation and civilisation, it will be partly through the influence of such journals as the "Quest" that it is brought about. Unfortunately, the "Quest" does not deal in politics even sub specie aeternitatis; and, in a word, ecstasy, or a standing-out from the unaided intellect. The state of consciousness known in India as Samadhi, roughly corresponding to our "ecstasy," is the primary condition of spiritual realisation.

... ... ...

I hope I am not assisting the prevalent confusion of religion with spirituality. We are none of us religious in these days, I think; but to wish to be and to become a "spiritual" is the distinction of modern nobility. Even the "Bhagavad Gita" has it. And I rather think I drew attention to the same point, in letters to the "Times" and to "Bligh Bond," in which "Matter" was described as "static Mind." In "Arthur Avalon's" analysis of the "Bhagavad Gita," the conception characteristic, as I think, of the modern Western world—a striving of the vast Potential. Religion, on the other hand, is concerned with the Actual. From another point of view, spirituality is distinguished from systems based on sense-perceptions, by its attitude towards "Matter." Everybody knows the old joke: "What is Matter? Never Matter. What is Matter? Never Mind." But what few still realise is the fact that the joke has now quite lost its savor; for in the experience of spirituality not only is Matter not "Never Mind," but all Matter is nothing else but Mind. I have remarked before that Nietzsche in the highest moments of his philosophy saw the world as one great purely psychological activity—"energies moving amid energies," as the "Bhagavad Gita" has it. And I rather think I drew attention to the same point, in letters to the "Times" and to "Bligh Bond," in which "Matter" was described as "static Mind." In "Arthur Avalon's" analysis of the Vedanta we encounter the same fundamental conception—the conception characteristic, as I think, of the "spiritual" point of view: it is the formula "mentally and emotionally by the fruits of spirituality, not only is Matter..."view accepts. From the spiritual or psychological standpoint, however, the problem is not one of Matter or sense-perception, but of Mind; and the solution to be found in the discovery of the activities of Mind much more than in investigations of the laws of Matter.

... ... ...

Another current controversy concerns the nature of the ego; and it is historically interesting from the fact that our Aryan forefathers were discussing it several thousands of years ago. In Indian Buddhist literature may be found remarkable anticipations of the psychological discussions of today; and, in particular, the discussion of the doctrine of Ego or non-Ego. The conclusion, I believe, was a division of schools of thought, one affirming and the other denying the real existence of the ego; and in this respect, too, we are only repeating old arguments. I do not pretend to be able to decide on the ultimate merits of the dispute. I believe that it is insoluble by reason alone. But pragmatically, that is to say, with the addition of the knowledge due to experience, there appears to me to be much more in the favor of the reality than of the non-reality of the self. That self-consciousness, as we know it, is a precarious synthesis, subject to dissipation and dissolution, is a well-known fact of psychiatry. But the reference, it seems to me, is to the consciousness of the "self" which is its object. The real existence of a material object is not impugned by our occasional failure to be sensibly aware of it; and similarly, the reality of the Self does not seem to me to be called in question by the occasional failure of self-consciousness to perceive it. Consciousness, I am prepared to admit, is conditional upon organism (with the reservation.
of course, that organism itself may be only a mode of mind; but the Self of which, through the instrument of the organism, consciousness is aware in the familiar experience of self-consciousness, may be, and I think is, independent not only of organism, but of consciousness. In short, the Self exists whether we are aware of it or not.

R. H. C.

Auto-Suggestion.

This is the first book that propounds with a real lucidity the principles that underlie the practice of auto-suggestion. Professor Baudouin, who works at the Jean Jacques Rousseau Institute at Geneva, applies the methods originated by Coué, the founder of what has been called the New Nancy school. His book has been given the excellent translation it merits by Messrs. Eden and Cedar Paul, and its value to psycho-analysis is very considerable; it is, in fact, one of the first books to deal with some of the necessary preliminary steps in psycho-synthesis.

But as a possible criticism of suggestion is that it is dependent for its effective functioning upon a transference, in the sense of an infantile, fantastic attachment on the part of the patient to the physician. The aim of analytic treatment is, as is said, the individual of spiritual autonomy. In the vernacular the object a man should set himself is to be "all there." If any patient is clinging to his physician by virtue of having cast all his infantile complexes upon him, it is clear that the patient is not standing on his own feet, is not individualised. And that is exactly the position of a patient undergoing treatment by suggestion, and in the eyes of psycho-analysis he has simply exchanged a neurosis for a doctor. His physician becomes his neurosis, a situation that is not exactly compatible with his spiritual autonomy. Now, however, Baudouin contends that all suggestion is auto-suggestion. In saying this he is entirely correct, but he does not thereby invalidate our criticism. But when in continuation he describes the methods of the New Nancy school as being designed for the purpose of teaching auto-suggestion, he shows us that his ideal is in essence identical with the aim of the analysts. And when he adds that it is his wish to harmonise psycho-analysis, auto-suggestion and Bergsonian intuitionism, it becomes incumbent upon us to give him our best attention.

The essence of Professor Baudouin's conceptions is that auto-suggestion, or its effect, is the "subconscious realisation of an idea." When, he says, "the end has been suggested, the subconscious finds means for its realisation." To subscribe to such a statement as this necessitates taking a teleological view of the unconscious, as does Jung, and I think there is no analyst of the Zurich school who will not find himself here in agreement with Baudouin. In order to explain how the unconscious realises a given idea Baudouin has recourse to the hypothesis of an "ideo-reflex power" inherent in the individual. In analytical terminology this ideo-reflex power is none other than libido, which is in certain aspects desire, and in other aspects power, kundalini. That is what we become when we meditate is the sum of Professor Baudouin's contentions; and we attain this end by virtue of our ideo-reflex power, our libido, or drive of love towards the subject of meditation. We may remind ourselves of the saying to be found in the Vishnupurana that "objects attain their objectivity by their inherent force." There is only an apparent dichotomy between body and psyche; the one is really an expression of the other. What our libido is, that we are.

Baudouin's aim and the aim of analysis are identical. As we have seen, an individual spiritual autonomy is the objective of both these schools of thought. The analyst seeks to attain this end for his patient by enhancing his awareness of his position with reference to both microcosm and macrocosm. Baudouin, as I understand him, the individual seeks to convert the normal attribute of suggestibility into a definitely positive auto-suggestibility. Suggestibility in itself is a double-sided phenomenon; positively it is a sensitivity to, a receptivity for, ideas; negatively it is a flitting before every wind that blows. As an analyst I cannot see how this phenomenon of suggestibility is to be treated without the preliminary step of giving the patient an awareness of the contents of the background psyche. Baudouin himself agrees to this to the extent of admitting that where a patient is obviously labouring beneath a tophamer of clogging complexes, there analysis should be applied. And I think that no analyst will object to the statement that, from the purely therapeutic point of view, there are certain cases that need only exercises in auto-suggestion for ensuring their readjustment to life. In other words, psycho-analysis and auto-suggestion have a field of application wider than that of pure therapeutics. The question, for instance, of their employment in education is one that is crying for consideration. And, more important still for the present purpose, the employment of these methods to obtain a change of psychological attitude from the present so-called normal and most distressing outlook to one that is more in harmony with actuality. And here it seems to me that Baudouin would be putting the cart before the horse if he were to advocate auto-suggestion without analysis. Let us have auto-suggestion by all means, but let us have it definitely harnessed with analysis. Let us, in other words, have auto-suggestion as soon as we know what, in any given case, should be the requisite formula of suggestion to be employed.

Baudouin gives his patients a preliminary training in auto-suggestion, and then provides them with formula—psychological prescriptions—for their daily individual practice. Some of the results recorded in his book are most remarkable, being accounts, in some cases, of the production of definite organic changes. A patient came to him with certain neurotic symptoms, and also with varicose ulcers on the legs. As his neurosis was the first consideration, no mention was made of the physical disability; yet that was the first thing to disappear, leaving the patient's libido something better to do than speculate on varicose veins. In other words, it seems that his autistc attitude became re-oriented, exchanged for a larger outlook. And that is only one, and not the most striking, amongst the cases quoted by Baudouin.

We may conclude with an examination of the phenomena that occur during auto-suggestion, as observed by Baudouin. He makes an important addition to psychology by the formulation of what he calls the "law of reversed effort." It is useless to make voluntary suggestions. In the matter of showliness, for example, a voluntary effort to sleep only leaves the individual more wide awake than before he made it. Consequently Baudouin counsels first a relaxation of mental immobility, an intense awareness; and this he calls the preliminary step of a sudden mental immobility, an intense awareness; and this he wishes to call "contention." And finally comes the third stage, which he calls auto-hypnosis or true con-
centra

It is interesting to note the similarity between auto-
suggestion as practised by the New Nancy school and
Indian Yoga. Baudouin does indeed compare his states
of "reaction" and "auto-suggestion" to the hara and
dhara respectively, and comments upon this
similarity as "one of the curiosities of history, and
further as a lesson in humility." It would have been
better had he confined his comments to the latter remark,
for in actual fact the New Nancy school deals only with
what is known as preliminary Yoga. However, this
does not lessen the value of Professor Baudouin's book,
which is undoubtedly one of the most significant
psychological works of recent years.

J. A. M. Alocak.

Views and Reviews.

THE SPIRITUAL NATURE OF MAN.*

I leave Dr. Walter Kilner's fascinating researches into
the human aura frankly puzzled; the number of the
forces emanating from the human body seems to in-
crease with every new method of inquiry, and it is at
present impossible to synthesise them or relate them
in order of succession. But the fact that the auri
forces are intimately connected with and dependent
upon the activities of the central nervous system," as
Dr. Kilner says, adds one more proof to Dr. Hollander's
contention of the multiplicity of functions of nerve
centres. Whatever may be the final decision concerning
the localisations of the mental functions in the brain
(and Dr. Hollander's are supported by a wealth of clini-
cal evidence), the fact remains that the fundamental
thesis derived from Gall of the multiplicity of the func-
tions of the nervous system is proved to demonstration.
But precisely because of that multiplicity of functions
do I find it difficult, perhaps impossible, to understand
what Dr. Hollander means by "the spiritual nature of
man." I agree with the five propositions that he con-
siders are established by the evidence given in his book; they are:--

1. Although the evidence for brain localisation pro-
duced in medical work refers largely to the aural
phenomena, it is only the elements of our mental
qualities which have definite areas of the brain as their physical
basis.

2. These elements comprise not merely intellectual
powers, but all the emotions and propensities. In
fact, the latter have a directing and preponderating
influence over the intellect, and constitute the "character"
of man.

3. These elements of intellect and character are in-
born. They are alike in all men, and cliffer only in
inherent capacity of development.

4. On the basis of several hundred cases, it has been
shown that it is highly probable that the elements of the
intellectual capacities belong to one region of the brain,
the elements of the sentiments and affections to another,
and the primitive propensities to a third; and that cir-
sumcised lesions of the brain, whether due to injury or
disease, affect the mental quality connected with that
limited area.

5. It has also been shown that man can under con-
ditions manifest capacities above the normal, that by
taking thoughts or following definite aspirations, he can
control his inherited tendencies and acquired mental
habits, and that even has the power to initiate, arrest,
and change physiological functions.

* "In Search of the Soul, and the Mechanism of
Thought, Emotion, and Conduct," By Bernard Hol-
lander, M.D. (Kegan Paul. 2 vols. £2. 2s. net.)

So far I agree with Dr. Hollander; but he proceeds:

"From this fact the conclusion may be drawn that the
physical mechanism of the brain and body can be sub-
jected to spiritual influences under certain conditions
and by appropriate training." I find it impossible to
understand what is meant by "spiritual influences" in
this connection. Dr. Hollander, of all men, cannot
speak of an act of will as a type of spiritual influence,
for he has demonstrated that volition is not
a faculty but an attribute of all the faculties. A volition
is as much an expression of an organism as is a sensa-
tion or an emotion; and the fact that it may sometimes
control an impulse, or a reflex response to stimuli, does
not remove it from the category of biological activity.
A control switch, or a gas "governer," will exert the
same inhibitive or directive power over the mechanism
with which it is connected; and I am by no means cer-
tain that volition is not similarly an automatic response
to definite stimuli. Obviously, in such cases as those
considered by Dr. Hollander, no more, or no less, than
involuntary activity is innervated in every instance of volition; which centre
will determine action depends either on the initial
strength of innervation, or the ramifications of the
nervous processes from the centres. Only too often, the
spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak; or, in other
words, the intellectual centres have not thrown out
enough dendrites towards the affectional centres to
establish a nervous hegemony over their activity. I put
the matter crudely and diagrammatically; but if a
"spiritual influence" is a form of natural phenomena,
of the organism, it is impossible to understand how it
can operate on the organism. It is the old problem, in
another form, of the nature of Christ; if He was divine,
His example had no relevance for humanity; if He was
human, He had no power to redeem humanity.

The fact is that we badly need a definition of such
words as "spirit" and "soul" in the true meaning of what
they are, but of what the users mean by them. They
obviously imply the dual conception, the man and his
instrument, the soul and the body, spirit and matter;
a meaningless antithesis, I think, because all that we
know of man is an expression of an organism. It is
convenient, as a sort of shorthand, to use the antithesis;
sometimes it is necessary, to establish the autonomy
of a science, to make such an assumption. Dr. Haldane,
for instance, is obliged to make the assumption: "The
idea of life is just the idea of life. One cannot define
it in terms of anything simpler, just as one cannot define
mass or energy in terms of anything simpler. But this
one can say—that each phenomenon of life, whether
manifested in structure, or in environment, or in
activity, is a function of its relation to all the other
phenomena, the relation being more immediate to some,
and less so to others. Life is a whole that determines
its parts. They exist only as parts of the whole."

But why does Dr. Haldane have to make this
assumption of life as a sort of thing-in-itself? Simply
because he is concerned to establish the autonomy
of biology as a science, to release it from its vassalage
to physics and chemistry. Of the convenience of the
assumption for purposes of study there can be no
doubt; and even for purposes of description of vital
phenomena Dr. Haldane shows with some scornfulness
the superiority of biological to bio-chemical and
bio-physical description. He mentions, for example,
a cell theory of which he was a writer, and says:

"These were the facts, but what light can natural
science throw on them? It can tell us that the actions
of all concerned were bound up with endless physiological
processes occurring in their bodies. Auditory or
visual stimulus of different kinds started the train of
complicated movements which brought us together at
the pit-head and guided all the movements of those
concerned. It was again an auditory stimulus that
suddenly brought order and activity into the aimless
crowd. It was a constant supply of oxygen and oxidis-
able food-material properly directed by the action of lungs, heart, liver, nervous system, and various other organs, that made the movements possible. Had any one of these factors been absent, the result would have been different. If, for example, their supra-renal glands had failed to respond, the brave Yorkshiremen would probably have shrank back in terror before the smoke, heat, and poisonous air. At no one point can natural science discover a soul which directed all the bodily movements and processes; and in any case no psychological theory based on self-interest would explain the actual course taken by the men: for they clearly acted with very little regard to either their individual bodies or their individuals."

This is very amusing; and physics and chemistry perhaps feel properly abashed. But how would biology describe the incident, from whence would it derive the "soul" which natural science fails to discover? It is clear from Dr. Haldane's conclusion that if biology has to make the assumption of "the spiritual world—that world which our great religious teachers, great poets, and great artists, have constantly sought to reveal," it has no relevance to science at all. Caesar's "Veni, vidi, vici," is good literature and good biology; the style is the man; but it is obviously inadequate as an explanation of his activities. Even if he had added the word "spiritual" to it, it would still have been an incomplete description of the reality. I will return to the subject in another article.

A. E. R.

Reviews.


Dr. Frederick Poulsen, Keeper of the Classical Department of the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, enjoys an international reputation. His learned and profusely illustrated work, "Der Orient und die fruengeschicshische Kunst," was reviewed most favourably by the leading art critics of various countries. Nor is Poulsen a stranger here. During August and September, 1919, he made a round of visits to English country houses in order to study and photograph ancient portrait sculpture in private hands, and in the smoking-room at Holkham Hall he found a bust which he recognised as a new portrait of Plato.

Only thirty years ago our knowledge of the history of Delphi was limited to the documentary sources of antiquity. Now, thanks to the French archaeologists, the sanctuary speaks to us through its ruins, through buildings, sculptures and inscriptions. Dr. Poulsen gives us a careful and attractive survey of Delphi, with the site of which and all its secrets he has long been familiar. He writes well and sometimes with a true artist's fervour. The book is well illustrated. Perhaps in a second edition more comprehensive plans might be given and a few awkward expressions of the translator deleted. On page 110 the latter says, e.g., "his raised leg is very uglyly restored."

Delphi was the spiritual capital of the Greek "league of nations." Its international status was secured by the erection of a common Hellenic authority, the Amphilochian Council. Patriotism, however, has had a bad influence on art. The rivalry of cities and individuals adorning Delphi resulted in chaos. There is a curious parallel between Pythia's shrine and Westminster Abbey. We read in Poulsen's book, "Of artistic gain was there none in Hellas since the sanctuaries. The votive offerings were crowded together and robbed each other of space and effect." Considered individually, however, the works of art at Delphi are worth studying, and a few must have been of sufficient interest to remain. For example, the altars excavated, rank firstly, Agias, a statue by Lysippus; secondly, the bronze statue of a charioteer, the masterpiece of an unknown artist, a wonderful mixture of discreet naturalism and sure stylization; and, thirdly, the Column of the Dancing Women with a charm of its own and of facile, elegant workmanship.

The most interesting of all finds, perhaps, is the inscription on the column. The stone碑 to the deft of the Athenians. There are preserved two hymns sung at the Delphic festivals in 138 and 128 B.C., with the ancient notation between the lines of text. These two Delphic hymns are the first large Greek compositions discovered in the world. They give us the first satisfactory conception of Greek music. Some enterprising music publisher might successfully bring them out since it has been possible to transcribe them into modern notation.

Poulsen reproduces the notes and the Greek text of the shorter and best preserved composition, the Hymn to Apollo. Here are a few lines:

"The clear-sounding lotus flute sounds in alternating tune, and the golden harp with its gentle sound answers to the hymns.

And the whole swarm of the Attic guilds of artists praises thy honour, thou great son of Zeus, on these snow-crowned heights."

The book is a mine of information for all lovers of art.

The True Story of the Empress Eugénie. By the Count de Soissons. (The Bodley Head. 12s. 6d. net.)

The Empress Eugenie cut a considerable figure in journalism, but not even the Count de Soissons, who takes a rather cynical view of her, can reveal her historical importance. She seems to have had a talent for intrigue (which is very different from a sense of politics); she precipitated at least two wars, and ruined the dynasty of Bonaparte beyond all repair. She was the beautiful disaster of the French; and in spite of the fact that she enjoyed (we think that is the word) the affection of the late Queen Victoria, she does not seem to have been a particularly lovable person. Like most people incapable of thought, she had ideas, and acted on them; she was deliberately severe. The Count de Soissons tells us that once, while a woman who apparently knew nothing but her own mood of the moment, and whose moods were not particularly elevated. She modelled herself on Marie Antoinette, but the Count de Soissons is not her Burke.

That Girl March. By W. H. Rainsford. (Lane. 8s. 6d. net.)

The resemblance to Meredith in this story is as unmistakable as the resemblance of the Apprentices' Dance to the march of the Meistersingers. But Meredith sublimely tortured the English language into filigree patterns and he had the gift of fantasy as well as a subtle skill in psychology; while Mr. Rainsford collapses into a magazine short story after a preliminary invocation of epitaphs. The man who, in the second sentence, "gazed intently, pulled inquiringly his fair moustache, rubbed reflectively his shaven chin" at the end of the book marries the farmer's niece, and thus defeats the matrimonial plans of his aunt, Lady Delwyn. To reach this result, we have to wade through 366 pages of cryptic speech and almost incomprehensible action with nothing really more serious than a prolonged flirtation to keep us interested. That Girl March" is not "Diana of the Crossways;" although she does take an interest in the election of the hero, she reminds us only of Nietzsche's epigram: "We think a woman deep—why? because we never find any bottom to her. Woman is not even shallow"; or as Pope said still more precisely: "True no-meaning puzzles more than wit."

However, she is married—and that is the end of her.
PROPAGANDA.

Sir,—Readers of THE NEW AGE in the Manchester district who are interested in credit-reform are invited to communicate with me.

S. RIGBY.
64, Richmond Avenue, Sellyedge Park, Prestwich, Manchester.

Sir,—May I invite all readers of THE NEW AGE in the Edinburgh district who are interested in credit-reform to communicate with me.

LAWRENCE MACIWEN.
9, Douglas Crescent, Edinburgh.

Sir,—I beg to invite readers in the Leicester district who are interested in credit-reform to communicate with me.

W. BRAMWELL BRIDGES.
464, Market Place, Leicester.

PRESS CUTTINGS.

Every attempt to solve the problem of unemployment by increasing the efficiency of production is not only doomed to failure, but must actually tend to aggravate the disease unless accompanied by an improved system of distribution. The credit of a nation depends upon what its people can furnish in the way of goods or services, and is proportional to its productive facilities and efficiency. These, again, are dependent upon the mechanical and chemical discoveries and inventions, the commercial and financial methods employed, and even the moral qualities of the people themselves, all of which form a portion of the great national legacy handed down from the past. This great asset forms the basis of our national wealth, and is the chief means of enabling our industries to turn out goods at the present rate, but it is entirely monopolised by those who control financial credit. To what extent does the average citizen participate in the profits of this wonderful legacy?

It is evident to anyone who has given much thought to the subject that our present system of distribution, which makes the existence of the vast masses of the people of all countries entirely dependent upon the demand for their services in productive operations, must, sooner or later, be displaced by something far more rational, in order that the average citizen may share in the profits of his own work. The credit of a nation depends upon what its people can furnish in the way of goods or services, and is proportional to its productive facilities and efficiency. These, again, are dependent upon the mechanical and chemical discoveries and inventions, the commercial and financial methods employed, and even the moral qualities of the people themselves, all of which form a portion of the great national legacy handed down from the past. This great asset forms the basis of our national wealth, and is the chief means of enabling our industries to turn out goods at the present rate, but it is entirely monopolised by those who control financial credit. To what extent does the average citizen participate in the profits of this wonderful legacy?

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