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[The circulation of THE NEW AGE has fallen to within a few of the minimum required to cover the barest cost of production. If the fall continues, we shall have to cease publication.]

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THE torrent of "peace talk," that so soothingly drowns for us the ever-nearing thunders of the war into which it is itself so surely bearing us, continues to flow in undiminished volume. The "Times" has had an even more than usually futile article on the Washington Conference. It begins by declaring that the Conference simply must not be allowed to fail, "another war in our time means chaos." But it is prudent enough to follow this up instantly by hedging; "yet, warned by bitter experience, we dare not pitch our hopes too high." It carefully restricts its hopes to "a limitation of armaments." That can have just exactly no effect whatever on the prospects of another war. Its one and only result would be to enable the various nations to prepare for the next war on the cheap. The mental level of the article is that of a P.S.A. It reveals the point of view of the incurable moraliser; it slobbers over "the limited resources which human frailty possesses to overcome itself." From that point of departure one can never arrive within miles of the realities of the situation. Wars do not happen because men are savage or quarrelsome or predatory. Modern wars have a perfectly definite economic cause. The "Times" writer need not go far to hunt for this. His readers had just been scanning the news as to America's protest against the terms of the mandates over ex-German territories given to our Dominions; "the open door and equality of commercial opportunity" are her demands. Exactly; it is a question of fresh markets. Why this necessity for an insatiable quest of foreign markets to the ends of the earth? Why has America, with her vast natural resources and her almost unlimited potential market at home, six millions of unemployed? Let the "Times" find out that, and, if it has the courage to proclaim the truth, it may then do some service to the cause of peace.

The scientists seem to be no better guides than the journalists. The presidential address at the British Association meeting maundered over poison gas in the style of a pass-man curate addressing a mothers' meeting. It was all those wicked Germans, instigated by

their bestial imaginations to a wanton violation of sacred conventions which their civilised antagonists would have honourably observed for ever and ever. The truth is that Germany did us a remarkably good turn by taking on herself the odium of introducing a weapon which our authorities were longing to use. There can be no "playing the game" in a contest so desperate as war has become in our generation; one only "plays the game" when it is a game that one is playing. Sir Edward Thorpe, in fact, incidentally answered himself; "When nations are at grips, and they realise that their very existence is threatened, every agency that may tend to cripple the adversary is apt to be resorted to." Just so; then why drivel about the League of Nations "devising means" to rule out such weapons? Once it comes to war, obviously no rule any longer possesses any binding power; it can only be enforced by the delinquent's being beaten in the war. In other words, it can only be enforced at times when no question of its being broken can possibly arise. Yet the American Chemical Society has similarly been urging on the coming Conference "the most serious consideration of the question of chemical disarmament." If scientific associations on both sides of the Atlantic would devote themselves to the encouragement of real thinking in regard to economic science, particularly with a view to revealing the economic causes of war, they would be going to the root of matters. It is a vain imagination to dream of pruning the worst horrors of war, while leaving intact a world-system, which, with constantly increasing intensity, *requires* war. It does their heart credit, but not their intelligence.

It is regrettable that the bearings of science on public life were not more worthily handled by Sir Edward Thorpe in his presidential address, for the scientific matter of the address in itself is most suggestive in these respects. It expounded, in a particularly confident and authoritative manner, the view as to the ultimate constitution of matter which has been steadily winning ground for some years past. The atom is now split up into positive and negative particles of electricity; all the chemical "elements" are at bottom composed of the same substance. This opens out bewildering vistas of both hope and terror. If mankind, blind to the error of its economic ways, persists in treading the path of war, we would seem to be not far from Mr. Wells' atomic bombs. We can set no limits whatever to the possible destruction alike of material wealth and of human life. It is useless for the

scientists to protest against this abuse of their triumphs, if they will not help us out of the political impasse that compels such abuse. On the other hand, if we can set free the stored-up energy of the atoms, how easily and how richly could all man's material needs be supplied! But here again we are up against economics. When almost all "labour," as we know it, has become unnecessary, what is to become of the labourers? Thanks to the grip of financiers, the marvels of mechanical invention have hitherto worked much more for the desolation, than for the uplifting, of the masses. Some of the ablest men of science, such as Professor Soddy, have repeatedly protested against this, and urged a radical change in our financial methods. Indeed they have hinted that our present economic muddle is a serious discouragement to invention, and that the most thoughtful scientific experts will not devise labour-saving inventions, only to enrich financiers, and to destroy the people.

* * *

It would be far too flattering to the Trade Union Congress to describe its recent meeting as disappointing. But certainly the record of its proceedings is dismal reading. Labour is evidently not going to help us any more with regard to the international issues than do the Press and science. The resolution on peace and disarmament would have been heartily approved by many Radicals, and, with the exception of their insistence on the direct representation of Labour within the charmed circle of diplomacy, by all Liberals and Cecilian Tories. This intrusion of Labour into international councils would make no difference at all, unless it had something more original than this to say on the problems. Even on its own domestic problems, the Congress did no better. On the subject of prices there was plenty of denunciation of "profiteering"; but anyone can denounce that, and everyone does. It is not worth while to hold a Labour Congress, merely to say ditto to the "Daily Mail" and the "Daily Express." "Profiteering" is only an intensifying cause. The point is that the cost of living must be excessive, so long as prices are made to cover costs. The same wooden conventionality was displayed in the debate on unemployment. It is useless merely to call for maintenance of the unemployed, absolutely justified as the demand in itself is. The only constructive suggestion in the resolution was that the Government should introduce "schemes of work"; but that kind of thing is not going to take us anywhere. Mr. Poulton, in his presidential address, put forward on his own the amazing suggestion that hours should be shortened. The time for that is obviously when industry is running freely and supplying abundantly the goods the people need. To suggest the sharing out of the little work there is as a remedy for the glaring failure of industry to fulfil its function is madness. It would actually make things worse by raising costs.

* * *

The capitalist Press has a genius for ruining its own case. Mr. Poulton delivered himself into the enemy's hands by his wild-cat proposal, but in rushing to slay him his Press critics themselves plunged into the most obvious of booby-traps. In blissful unconsciousness, they committed themselves to the baldest Marxian Socialism. The cry was raised on every side, "No one can get more than he himself produces." If so, that disposes of the capitalist system. Labour will be quick to see where the greatest blocks of most evidently unearned income are to be found, and will apply the axiom in its own way, and not in that which happens to suit the "Times" and the "Westminster Gazette." Naturally we should not be sorry to see them hoist with their own petard. Nevertheless, believing that the truth is the only sound foundation for any hopeful reconstruction, we are constrained to point out that this Marxian-cum-plutocratic dogma is a patent fallacy. The worker even now, when he is in work, does nor-

mally get more than he himself produces, though he does not get nearly as much as he ought. Wealth is evidently produced by the standing machinery of production. If it is alleged that it must be produced by human labour of brain or hand, then we can only say that the labour that produces most of it is the still operating labour of deceased inventors. It is true that the continual putting of fresh labour into the machine is an indispensable condition of its producing at all. But this current labour, going into production, is merely a necessary lubricant; it bears little proportion to the amount of the possible output. Once this very simple fact is recognised it destroys the whole basis of the "not a penny more than you produce" philosophy. And unless this is frankly abandoned, how can we ever solve the social problem? The atoms, when their habits are fully understood by the scientists, will do most of our work for us, and the majority of us will be denied any right to live, because it is so easy to produce the goods we need that our work is not required for their production.

* * *

Amid the general outcry against "Pay for Idleness," General Booth has been very much to the fore. The Salvation Army can always be relied on to defend the economic views of the financial interests that support it so generously. But is there really anything ethically wrong in "something for nothing"? As we have pointed out, the bulk of the wealth produced is an unearned increment, not merely from the point of view of this individual or that, but from that of the whole living generation. It simply accrues to society as a whole; it is strictly a social inheritance. Every member of the community is therefore, as such, entitled to a dividend from it. But there is more than this to be said. No production can be carried on without the constant issuing of credits. Every issue of credit raises prices in some degree. Everyone has, therefore, in the aggregate, paid, in purchasing what he has actually consumed, a large surplus sum in aid of future production, in return for which he has not yet got anything. The unemployed have paid in the past for what they are now getting back in "doles." The principle of "nothing for nothing" is hopelessly untenable, unless the mere function of consuming—indispensable as is the part it plays in the creation of social credit—is, in itself, reckoned as a "something" within the meaning of the Act.

* * *

The unemployed having taken the bit between their teeth and gone in for "directly acting" in various and very determined ways, Mr. Clynes has come out, at the Trade Union Congress, with a resounding outburst on the necessity of demonstrating vigorously on the issue. He seemed to imply the need for somewhat forcible or at least distinctly menacing "demonstrations." But a few weeks ago he and all his like were straining every nerve to canalise the discontent solely into political action, and imploring the unemployed to vote obediently for the Labour Party, and above all things to be good boys. We are not surprised that the unemployed did not take this advice. We simply note, without regret and without approval, that there has been further rioting and looting in more than one industrial centre. If they do these things in the green tree of September, what will they do in the dry tree of December and January?

* * *

In an article in the "Daily News" Mr. Emil Davies has been taking up the question of German competition and the rate of exchange. He enumerates several courses, good and bad, which we might adopt in order to meet the situation. One of them is: "We can easily give our manufacturers the 'advantage' enjoyed by the German manufacturers, if we print paper money until the £ is worth 1s. 6d. in neutral markets. This will enrich a few manufacturers and impoverish the nation

as a whole, and should therefore commend itself to the present Government." We do not know if anyone is really proposing anything as wild as this. If some are, we fully agree as to the results. But Mr. Davies' words read just a little like a caricature of one side of our policy. We notice that he carefully abstains from mentioning the Douglas-NEW AGE scheme, though he is of course fully cognisant of it. It may be that he has some brilliant refutation of it up his sleeve. If so, it is a pity he does not produce it. But to tabulate ostensibly all the possible policies and studiously to ignore this one, would, in itself, be not playing the game. To insert a wild-cat scheme, so described that ill-informed people might easily suppose our scheme to be meant, is, to say the least of it, more ingenious than ingenious.

* * *

A large band of Liberals, especially Parliamentary candidates, are going into retreat at Grasmere at the end of this month, in the hope that out of their meditations and other devout exercises a revival will spring forth for their party. It is announced that the enterprise is an effort "to provide the party with a complete new economic outfit for exploitation on the platforms of the next General Election." If this statement emanates from the promoters of the gathering themselves, there is something engaging in its cynical frankness. At any rate, the move originates with the new Manchester Radical group. Their policy consists in treading in the steps of the Labour Party, but being very careful not to go too far. The Labour programme is bad enough in itself; but whatever attraction it may possess depends on its being carried out with rigour and vigour. Half-hearted Labourism means a combination of almost every form of political stupidity. We observe, too, that Professor Ramsay Muir is selected to give a lead to the Grasmere revivalists; we can only say that we were not impressed by his personal contribution to the Manchester programme. The whole affair reveals the desperate plight of the Liberal Party. We would merely remind them that we have a programme which—had it only a party to push it—would make a uniquely powerful appeal to an overwhelming majority of the electorate. It is still at the disposal of any party with enterprise and unconventionality enough to take it up.

* * *

Miss Eleanor Rathbone has won for herself a sinister notoriety by her persistent advocacy of a misbegotten scheme for shaving down the wages of Labour to the minimum by making the unmarried and childless pay for the wives and children of their mates. She has apparently made it her mission to experiment as to the limits of detestability that it is possible to reach in the field of social speculation. She has now discovered that it is a glorious thing to have a million or two more women than men. Perish the thought that it shall be open to every woman, if she desire it, to enjoy the happiness of having a home and children! That would be the road to economic ruin for the nation. And what is the wonderful argument that Miss Rathbone has unearthed to prove this? "A higher ratio of men to women would lead to a higher ratio of non-producers to producers." We gaze at this sentence in blank amazement. We cannot keep on repeating the same elementary propositions in economics; so we will not argue the point. We would merely point out once more that the real difficulty is not to find enough people to produce goods, but to provide enough people who can afford to buy the goods when they are produced. "Would not this," Miss Rathbone goes on, "lead to a higher cost of production, higher prices, and harder times for all?" Miss Rathbone concludes with shuddering references to "a crowded country like ours," "adding to the population." She should read the recent articles on Malthusianism in our columns. We hope the London School of Economics will confer a gold medal on her; the punishment would fit the crime.

On Foreign Affairs.

By Hilaire Belloc.

I.

THE country is in peril. It is not only in peril; to anyone with even a casual knowledge of history, and of contemporary Europe, the disaster has already begun.

In such circumstances it is the duty of every citizen to do what he can for the State. It is not sufficient to point out the peril, even if there were as yet no more than peril; still less is it difficult to deplore disaster when the beginnings of disaster are apparent; mere denunciation at such a late stage in the business is worse than useless.

We have to cast about us, each in his own sphere, to discover how each can help the National affair.

I do not say that such a determination can now be of much practical effect. Even if a hundred sincere and free men (I say *free men* because the employees of the great capitalists do not count, having no liberty of action) were, each in his own sphere, to begin doing all possible to avert or mitigate disaster they would now do little. Not even if they were organised, could they, I fear, retard appreciably what is about to strike us. The forces against us are too vast and too continuous. The directives, both conscious and unconscious, are on too great a scale, and have behind them too much momentum, by this time, for our tardy action to seem of much service. But you never can tell; I have noticed that, sometimes, in the immediate past, quite isolated personal action has had an astonishing effect. The Douglas scheme of credit, put forward by one man and his colleagues, is an example; at any rate, whatever the odds, it is our duty to try.

In the category of perils, and even in the category of actual incipient disaster, the most serious unit would at first sight seem to be the domestic. Nine educated men out of ten would, I think, argue to-day in England that the break up of Capitalism (whether it ends in an impoverished freedom or, as is more probable, in impoverished servile conditions) is the chief peril of the State. To our modern absorption in economics, the greatness and power of modern England seem wholly bound up with the Capitalist system, which system England first among the nations created and developed.

There is a minority which would give more weight to the political side. These would say that the disaster has begun because England, once an aristocratic State, had now lost its essence. They would say that, since England as a democracy is inconceivable (no aristocratic State has ever turned into a democracy, and England as we know her cannot even dream of democracy) there is nothing to replace the old aristocratic spirit which is now decayed beyond recovery; therefore (they would add) the principle of life in the English State has gone. The whole thing has become a drift—and we know what happens to societies that drift. Some of this minority might hope for a reconstruction, for some form of monarchy; but, at any rate, this minority would, like the majority of which I have just spoken, tell us that the chief peril was domestic.

It has been impressed upon me during a great number of voyages which I have undertaken during and since the war, that there is another factor at least equally important and more immediate than the domestic factor, and that is the factor of Foreign Policy.

I went up and down North Italy in the middle of the war to the Front and to Rome. A year after the Armistice I returned, not only reading what was printed, and talking to men who could direct, but also finding out what the mass of people were saying.

I have spent some little time in French and Spanish North Africa, talking there to men with a very good outlook, the clearer because it was detached.

I have seen a little of what was said and thought in Spain, a great deal of what was said and thought in France. I have seen the spirit and heard the profession of the Rhenish Germans in their most diverse characters; at Strasburg, for instance, and at Frankfort, as well as at Mayence; and though I have not gone farther East, since the war, than the Black Forest and the lower valley of the Main, yet I have had a fairly wide field for observation, and I have of course, within that western field, met many men who could talk to me of the conditions in the centre and east of Europe—particularly of the new Poland.

From such observation one cannot but conclude that the incoherent conduct of British foreign affairs by the uneducated and corrupt men now in power over Press, Cabinet and finance is the greatest immediate peril confronting this country. It has already produced its first clear disaster in the matter of Ireland.

The matter of Ireland is essentially a matter of foreign policy. The understanding that the Irish affair should be honourably settled—at the expense of which understanding we obtained leave from the Americans not to bring it forward in the Peace Council at Paris—was a department of foreign policy.*

The Sham Home Rule Bill was therefore almost entirely a piece of Foreign Policy—a step to gain time.

The subsequent attempt to crush the Irish nation by a system of terror organised by the Cabinet in England (and disavowed by them) was again essentially an example of that Cabinet's Foreign Policy—if it can be called a policy at all.

The panic and the wriggling, the amazing appointment of Greenwood, the puerile falsehoods and the final breakdown; all lie essentially in the region of Foreign Affairs. The panic was not mainly due to such power as the Irish themselves could exercise. It was due to the fear of foreign intervention. To the same cause one must put down the attempted repudiation of responsibility for the Terror, and, of course, the last sudden revolution, the recognition of the present *De Facto* Irish Government, and all the rest of it.

Even so domestic a matter as our production of coal has been essentially a part of our policy—or lack of policy—in Foreign Affairs. The politicians gambled on the continuance of conditions under which France and Italy were at our mercy for coal: they imposed fantastic prices on the foreigner, and maintained a high wage for miners at home on that basis. This manifestly short-sighted action had its natural consequence; our foreign market was captured by America, the French insisted upon the Germans contributing the full stipulated amount of coal,† our promising relations with the new Italy were deranged, and we came to the end of the business in a very few months at our wits' end for the re-establishment of those former conditions which are vital to the shipping trade and to import. For the moment, the politicians are trying to get out of the difficulty by attempting to sell coal abroad enormously under cost price, while they subsidise the operation by levying a very heavy tax on coal consumed at home. They do not call it a tax; they call it "a domestic price." They do not make it depend upon actual legislation, but on the absence of legislation. None the less, it is their policy, and it is essentially a piece of *foreign* policy.

But there is another and worse, a more immediately perilous piece of folly in our Foreign affairs. It is the surrender to International Finance.

With that I will deal in my next article.

(To be continued.)

* At the Secret Peace Council in Paris it was almost certainly pledged by Lloyd George that the Irish demand should be met, for he has himself denied the incident on his honour in the House of Commons.

† It is worth remarking that, in this crisis, the Germans, relying on our expressed policy, began to hold up the treaty supplies.

World Affairs.

THE real centre of gravity of the human Imperium is London; for as the nervous system of an organism is its awareness and freedom, its entelechy or inwardness, London and the government of the British Imperium, Westminster and the British throne, are the centre of the Geon and of humanity in this moment of history. If the technique and power-body of Sophia on the human planet is world-statesmanship and the organisation of the human kingdom, this statesmanship and this organisation must be revealed and incarnated in London and at Westminster, in London and in the cathedral of the prophet of Sophia. For Paul is the founder of Protestantism and of incarnational Christianity, of Christian ethics and of metaphorical or practical Christianity. Metaphorical Christianity, we call the religion of Paul, who was the real founder of practical and ethical Christianity. Metaphor and practice is Paul, individualism and freedom. His religion of social work and of human communism, of esoteric, psychological interpretation, of spiritual interpretation of the central event of the human destiny, became the specific Christianity of the North of Europe and of Aryandom. Not the Mediterranean race of Europe, nor her Alpine race, but her Nordic or most white humanity is the very being of the threefold Europa. In so far as the Christian Religion is not Sophia herself on the human plane, but one of the world's religions, one among others, though perhaps the supreme among them because the most pan-human—in so far the whole of threefold Christianity is represented in the world best by Protestantism, by the metaphorical, human, agnostic, workable and working religion of Paul. Protestantism is conquering the East and the coloured world in as far as it can be said that Christianity is conquering at all. The organised and intellectual Aryan European has complemented himself by the chaotic and pseudo-theology of the Semite Paul, of the Old Testament within the New Testament. The Logoc race has chosen the most Sophian of Christianities; while the Mediterranean or Africoid race of Europe has allowed itself to be organised and ruled by the iron and historic Christianity of Rome. Peter and mystic Christianity, anthropological and biological Christianity, are Rome. The Alpine race, the Slavs, and Asiatic Europe have adopted the Johannine or apocalyptic Christianity, the wholly dogmatic and cosmic reading of the Infinite Deed, of the self-revelation of God in the Universal Man. The Christianity of Rome is mystic and anthropological in character; that of Orthodoxy proper is anti-human, is wholly a revealed and secret doctrine; the bridge between the eternal religion of the Secret Doctrine itself and the pragmatic religion of Christendom.

Body, Soul, Spirit—the technique of the Sophian body, the action and the morality of Universal Humanity, and the presence of the Ineffable and Infinite in the spirit of divinised humanness—such is the threefold and functional division of the One Christendom. Catholicism, Protestantism, Orthodoxy—such is the indivisible and complete power-body of Sophia in the world. Each one of these functions of Christendom is an organic and providential instrument of the integrating and self-redeeming desire of humanity; and Europe, with her threefold Christendom, is the supreme treasure and the Holy of Holies of the human species. Christendom itself is the entelechy and the kernel of the pan-human organisation; and Europe, one although threefold, is the Geonic body, the telluric tool and instrument of Christendom. Upon the mystery of the Soul, between the infinite mystery of the Spirit, and the finite, perishable mystery of the Body, depends the conduct of the human being. The reality of man is in this uniting and middle principle. Soul is indefinite and free. Providence is Spirit. Destiny, fate, is Body. Freedom, humanness, is Soul. Logic and unconsciousness is body. Super-consciousness and the seraphic anti-humanness is spirit.

Consciousness, humanness, normalness is soul. Past is reason and matter. Future is super-consciousness and potentiality. Present is consciousness. The essential function of the Roman Church has been discharged, though the Past is living in the present. The essential function of the Orthodox ecstasy is yet to come, though the instincts of the future are the direction of the present. The world-function of the Protestant must be discharged in this very moment of the world's agony and prostration. Soul is the middle and the properly human principle of man; for to her belongs crisis and tension; indecision, omnipotentiality; dawn and twilight. Crisis and change and duration is Soul; and humanness proper is the present and the most real reality of the world. We have spoken enough of the transitional and transmitting, of the mediating and critical position of Britain and Albion in evolution. Once more we define the Sophian duty of England in the world. It is the duty of pan-human impartiality. Great Britain is the bridge between the world's past and the world's future. For this Aryan element is the mother and the womb of the fathomless empire of the American Man; and America, we repeat, is the birth of the supra-Aryan essence, the terrible mystery of the new physique of humanity. More than this, the Aryan empire of the British essence is itself an empire cosmopolitan and anti-Aryan, an empire that is as yet only international and anti-Sophian instead of being an Imperium working for Aryandom in the Universal Humanity.

Space demands condensation, although the immediacy of the realities that constitute our problem, the obscurity of things ultimate and spiritual with which we are dealing, demand elucidation. Results and motives, however, are more essential for our purpose than means and methods. Briefly, therefore, and without shrinking from dogma and deduction, let us clarify so much: Infinity is that which is indeterminate, immediate. The philosophy of Europe ended not in Bergson or in the pragmatism of America; neither did it end in the majestic synthesis of the Russian Solovyov. For Solovyov's is a pan-human philosophy, not Aryan and specifically European. And the Jew and genius Bergson is the inauguration, together with the unfettered William James, of a philosophy supra-Aryan rather than Logoic. The thought of Europa completed its sublime circle and serpentness in the world-important work of the last of the Germans, Eduard von Hartmann. The "Canon of Categories" and the "Philosophy of the Unconscious" are the end of the Promethean thought of Europe. Reason cannot go further. In the concept of the Unconscious of Hartmann's definition the revelation of the Christian creeds meets the eternal truth of the Vedanta and the most ancient gnosis of China.

M. M. COSMOI.

IN NUBIBUS

At night we fly
 In dreams say I
 To that familiar elf,
 That other one, my self,
 "If you have but the will
 Our wish we can fulfil."
 Straightway,
 Airy as fay,
 We make our flight
 Through the light night.

Not so by day.
 Awake I say
 To that same other,
 My grumous brother,
 "Come, let us soar together."
 But he'll not budge a feather.
 "Can we?"
 Says earthy he.
 When enters doubt
 Power creeps out.

H. H. MYRTON.

Our Generation.

THE condition of the unemployed is becoming worse and worse; and the withdrawal of the unemployment dole from thousands of human beings shows more clearly than most of us can endure how inadequate is our current amount of goodness and of intelligence to deal with tragedy. The recent decision of the Dundee Town Council to give no relief to able-bodied applicants illustrates this better, perhaps, than any other incident of which it is the type. The matter was taken to law, but although the judge was sympathetic, and openly regretted his inability to help the men who sought his verdict, he could do nothing; and the obvious and terrible injustice remained, unremedied and apparently irremediable. With need on the one side and good-will on the other, one would have thought that something might have been done; but the fact remains that there is need almost everywhere, good-will almost everywhere, and yet nothing can be done. And the root of the evil which oppresses us to-day—nothing surely is more clear—is incapacity, mediocrity, impotence, smallness. To-day it is not merely that the great are small, but that the small are smaller than they should be. It is not merely that we are mediocre in intelligence, but that we are mediocre in our virtues and in our emotions. Intelligence and goodness are not enough; we might possess them, we might possess them universally, and yet we might be damned. But what alone can save us, for it alone can awaken us, is greatness in intelligence, in virtue and in feeling; a greatness which would carry us to the living realisation of a truth; that man is a spirit, that every man is a spirit, and that the indignity of men is blasphemy against the spirit. That is needed in order that men should gain the capacity to deal with the terrible world we live in; and that is itself a living transcendence of mediocrity. But we are virtuous and damned. We have just enough goodness to commit evil inadvertently—and then to endure it when we have committed it. We sin against the spirit and having sinned we insult it. We are good, but all our actions, because they are too little, are evil; and this is because our goodness is not grounded on a recognition of truth, a perception of human greatness and of the significance of existence. We are evil, in spite of our virtues, because we see significance nowhere, even in ourselves; and because this is the most degraded, the most outcast, condition possible for creatures who are born as souls. Our tragedy is not great; it is tremendous in its lack of greatness, in its failure in realisation. The truth is not in us: that alone is our malady.

The present "economy" campaign, to which every fresh election gives fresh publicity, is less the sign of a coming financial liquidation than of a present intellectual bankruptcy. This is the depth beneath—if it is beneath—the surface to which the political mind of England can go. The first, the most obvious aspect; the beginning—or rather not even the beginning—of the problem, is all that the aspiring statesmen of our time can see. It is not thought that we demand from them; it is merely using their eyes, merely an acknowledgment of perspective, which the existence of the unemployed might have taught them; but even this is too much. Their very feelings are more intelligent than their minds; for they must feel—we all feel—that the "economy" campaign is a waste of time, that it is as unconvincing as any party cry, and that the people are

supporting it out of desperation and simply because there is nothing else before them to support. It is hopeless and useless, but when no other issue is permitted to be put before us, we must approve despairingly what is hopeless and useless. We must believe in nonsense, if there is nothing else; it keeps us at any rate from the acknowledgment that there is no remedy from our evils; and we cannot believe that, for it is against the spirit of humanity—the essential constitution of every one of us, even when we are unconscious of it—to do so. But the price we pay for hope is to be deceived again and again by the shallow who so easily deceive themselves.

The first human word upon the "surplus" of women in this country revealed by the census was uttered the other week by a Scotch minister, the Rev. W. Major Scott. "It is not a question of there being 108 women to 100 men," he said, "and wondering how they can all be married. Such a view is appalling. We are concerned about the sanctifying of marriage and the making of it a divine vocation." Such a view is appalling, and yet, under one disguise or another, it is the view of almost all the solemn gentlemen and ladies who have been writing (partly because they have nothing else to do and partly to show that they are experts) on the subject. The problem is plainly regarded as merely statistical, or as statistical and physiological, or as statistical, physiological and economic. Surely it should be unnecessary to say to people who are not professed cynics that this attitude is strikingly false, sub-human, anti-human; yet it is necessary, for the publicists who think in this way are "friends of humanity," Utopians, idealists, men who want to see humanity "better," and by no means cynics, or even aware that they are cynics. Such a radical misunderstanding of the human spirit as this, such a terrible partiality in apprehending the spiritual reality of one of the oldest and the commonest of human institutions, one would have thought would not have been widespread in any age. Yet in this age it is the rule among those who call themselves reformers, but who can more truly be called specialists. It is hard for a specialist to refrain from being a reformer; it is immediately expected of him; and public superstition has gone so far in this direction that statistics, in themselves mere numbers, are supposed to have some mysterious regenerative power upon men. This kind of "reform" has had many effects, perhaps some of them good, but one at least evil. The specialist, possessing one-tenth, or one-fourth, or a half, of the human truth upon some evil, immediately urges the reform of this fraction under the impression that he is dealing with the whole evil. In this way the spiritual reality of human relationships is innocently undermined. The worst is that the "reformers" have always some justification. There is most certainly a problem raised by the revealed disproportion between the male and the female population of the country; and it is, in part, a problem involving statistics, physiology and economics. But to regard it as involving only these is worse than not to regard it at all.

It is a pity that psychologists know so little about themselves that they cannot disagree without being disagreeable. The "Daily Express" the other week gave an interview with "a specialist" in "a mental hospital in the neighbourhood of London" which "really does cure its patients." This specialist affirms that "the psycho-analysis we employ must not be confused with some of the half-baked methods used by certain private practitioners who talk glibly of complexes and libidos, and sometimes do much harm by needlessly instilling ideas of sex-repression into the minds of their patients." The only reply that one, whether one is a psychologist or not, can make to a person who talks like this is that he has got his "libidos" wrong, and not merely grammatically. Psychologist, analyse thyself.

EDWARD MOORE.

Drama.

By John Francis Hope.

THE production of "Christopher Sly" (whom all the actresses, including the importation from the Old Vic, persist in calling Thly; why is it that young actresses always lithp their thibilanth?) has its own significance. This turning back and speculating on the minor characters of a creative artist is an indication that the stream of creative energy has run dry—a fact which may shake Mr. Shaw's faith in Creative Evolution, with a corresponding "spiritual crisis" which will afford his biographer matter for a couple of chapters. The Greek poets used to offer new versions of old myths; they did not, so far as I am aware, speculate on the possible history and destiny of Ulysses' swineherd, or Agamemnon's body-servant. One thinks of Disraeli's: "What a party, where the countess was absolutely driven to speculate on the possible destinies of a Lord Hull!": when confronted with these elaborations of unimportant persons. One might as well ignore *Dombey and Son*, and write a novel about Miss Tox, or ignore "Fanny's First Play," and develop the character of Mr. Cecil Savoyard, ignore the Hamlet problem, and give us a study of the gravedigger, as take Sly from his function and expand him into a personality. One has definitely dropped from the level of creative art to that of reproductive and imitative art; the choice of subject, as well as the method which it entails, betrays the minor poet. One knows that the treatment must be conventional and sentimental; the velleity of the spirit revealed in the choice is incapable of creation on the higher level of significance.

Thly at the New Theatre (I cannot help it: I mutht lithp) is not Shakespeare's tinker; he is Shakespeare's tinker as he would have been if Shakespeare had been a minor poet. The facts that the story of the "Induction" is of Oriental origin, has appeared in a great variety of forms in European literature, and had lost its romantic character by the time that it reached Shakespeare, serve to show us that Giovacchino Forzano, or his translator, Mr. H. B. Cotterill, is trying to reserve the verdict of evolution. Thly, at the New Theatre, ith a poet ath well ath a tinker; and Shakespeare's Sly, although "by birth a pedlar, by education a cardmaker, by transmutation a bear-herd, and by present profession a tinker" never mooded the Wuses as Thly doth. Thly is a poet, because unless one adds a soul to a sot, one cannot be sentimental about him. The soul of a poet is taken for granted (on the other hand, Hamlet only mentioned his "prophetic soul" when the veridicity of its prognostications was confirmed by supernatural evidence), and once the soul of a poet is postulated, and there is a woman in the offing, there is the possibility, nay, the certainty, that that soul will be saved—by Love, the only reality to a poet. Souls are not saved by beer and skittles, by hedonism and hilarity, not even by the stern virtues of morality—but by the fragrant flesh of a woman in white (always white; the wicked women wear red, and leopard skins) who loves. "It's your soul I want": is the motto of the heroine in white; curiously enough, it is the same demand as that made by the Devil in the magical myths. Senta-sentimentality, as Nietzsche called it, is the very Devil!

Tho we thee Thly at the New Theatre drunk, but not dithguthingly drunk, reciting his poem of the Bear and the Cat (Shakespeare's Sly was "by transmutation a bear-herd": is this poem, I may ask in the style of the Theosophists, a memory of a previous existence?), and suddenly revealing his soul in a few lines on Death. That is the full prescription of a poet: Love and Death (did not Watts paint a famous picture on this subject?): and what every woman knows is that there is something in a man who can stop jesting in the midst of a carouse, and like the chorus in a Bach cantata, begin to speculate: "Who knows how near my latter ending?" Sad, perhaps, but

serious, soulful; and those "demireps who love and save their souls in new French books," that Bishop Blougram described, respond to it. It is the Earl's mistress (absurdly called Dolly in the play; her proper name is Angelina) who begins to feel that fellow-feeling that makes us wondrous kind (as Titania felt when she kissed the donkey) when Thly talks of Death. The Earl never talked of Death; at most, he only decreed it; Thly, without any advantages of education or station, was better informed than the Earl. He not only knew that there was something called Death, but, being a poet, he fell in love with it; also being a poet, he did not make it his lawful wife, but his mistress. The morals of these personifications really deserve the attention of Comstock: Hamlet told us that Fortune is a strumpet, Mr. Shaw's Don Juan declared that Nature is a pandar, and now Thly maketh Death hith mith-treth.

But, one may ask, what is the interest of these reconstructions of the unconsidered trifles of a master? Shakespeare picked up a sot and played a joke upon him, as an excuse for a robust comedy that has more interest and significance in one scene than can be found in the three acts of "Christopher Sly." Mr. H. W. Nevinson, in "Original Sinners," was found speculating not on the character but on the subsequent history of Sly; and all that he could do with him was to marry him to a serving-wench—as gross a vandalism as it would be to marry Falstaff to Doll Tearsheet, or Mistress Quickly. These attempts to educate the sufficient persons of Shakespeare into the manners and conventions of another mode of life are, I find, very tedious; I would as soon send Hamlet to Oxford as Sly to Church, or equip Othello with flame-throwers and poison gas as give Sly the soul, and the conventions, of a minor poet. These "perfectly good cats" in the dustbin of drama should be left there; and these industrious minor poets, like the girl who fished the cat out of the dustbin, should be discouraged from trying to do something with them.

For what is the upshot of it all? The girls go to the New Theatre; and "O, Mr. Matheson Lang: Mr. Matheson Lang, O!" is all that they can say. One watches this one-man show with very mixed feelings, admiring the acting ability of Mr. Lang without being at all impressed by his interpretative ability. The recitation of the Bear and the Cat is a really remarkable exercise of illustrative gymnastics; the waking scene in the bedroom, too, was a cleverly elaborated bit of "business"; and he did not forget to limp about in the dungeon, sore and bruised from his beating. Give him something to do, and he gives you a well-observed and excellently executed piece of acting, as in his epileptic fits in "Othello"; give him something to interpret, particularly when it is merely conventional stuff like Sly's induction into the ranks of the minor poets, and women worship him—and serve him right! But his love-scenes, his soliloquy in the dungeon (tedious stuff!) are all toned down to the level of the Heartsease Library (if there is such a thing); "the passionate heart of the poet," loving the demirep, expresses itself as decorously as Lord Fauntleroy Fitzgerald in his proposal to the nursery governess. Back to Mendelssohn, and give Elijah a hair-cut!

AFTER ALL. . .

Move we in darkness or light,
Labour we free or in chains,
Yield we to love or to might,
This foundation remains—
That there are stars in the night, and a rainbow,
sometimes, when it rains.

If we destroy our world
(And it may be that we must)—
Two hemispheres sundered, and hurled
Into impact and cosmic dust—
No lock on Apollo's head is uncurled, nor does
Psyche forget her trust. K. R.

Readers and Writers.

A GOOD many Americans tell us that they despair of their native culture, but I begin to have a suspicion that the centre of academic learning (which I do not, however, confuse with culture) has in the past fifty years or so shifted from a representative university like Oxford to a representative university like Harvard. I take Oxford as representing this country because it is traditionally associated with the humanistic learning I have in mind: though the day has long since passed when Oxford expressed any native vigour. Harvard I take because, in European eyes, it seems the most organised and the farthest reaching. I not only refer to familiar reputations like those of Henry Adams, George Santayana and William James—who are far more human and significant than any of their kind that I can associate with Oxford—but more specially to the actual phenomena of the moment. I have already mentioned Professor Babbitt, the author of "Rousseau and Romanticism." He holds the chair of French Language at Harvard, but he addresses the world; his mind is universal. And, consequently, his writings are not merely dust for libraries, but living philosophies, breviaries for men of action. I have now come across another excellent book by another Harvard don. This is "French Classicism" by C. H. C. Wright, Professor of French Literature. An Oxford professor (if there is an Oxford professor of French Literature) would in approaching such a subject as this first dig himself into "the period"—excluding with encyclopædic battlements all knowledge, not only of other provinces, but of any developments within his own province subsequent to the period in question. But you will find Professor Wright on speaking terms with Maurras, Lasserre, Benda, Seillière and other significant authors of the modern French school, and though this is not necessarily in itself a proof of merit, it does make for interest. We feel that we are listening to a man whose field of vision is so comprehensive that the molehills are not likely to hide the mountains from view.

* * *

A revaluation of past classicisms grows very urgent because of the need for a present classicism. So many errors can be avoided, so many blind alleys can be safely passed, by the applied analysis of dead systems. Professor Wright is aware of the modern need, but no prejudice spoils his pages. He tempers Pascal with Descartes, and Racine with Rousseau. He is equally aware of the dead end that is formalism, and of the dead end that is Rousseauism. He perceives, in short, that the true classicism—the classicism that any harmonic age inevitably reverts to—is a balance that avoids emotional and rational excesses. He is prophetic, too, of the dangers to which, in the reaction against romanticism, we shall for the next generation be liable—dangers of extreme, unbalanced reversion. And in this connection it would be well to quote his definition of Alexandrinism:—

We give the name Alexandrinism to an intellectual temper apt to characterise certain non-creative or imitative literary ages. The name is derived from the Alexandria of the Ptolemies, the home of the great library and the resort for study. Modern Alexandrinism has the same general characteristics as the ancient one: an often painstaking erudition, a frequent tendency towards finicky prettiness in place of either the primitive and spontaneous or the majestic. Above all it imitates praiseworthy classical models in such a way as to emphasise the exotic quality of those models, though this does not hinder an Alexandrian age from thinking itself new and original. The modern poet, for instance, is likely to make mythological references, to strew his verses with quotations or allusive epithets, to see nature through books. His aim is to interest trained men of culture and he is at times aristocratically disdainful of

the common man. A literature of Alexandrinism is therefore likely to be learned, critical and well-bred. Its defects may be narrowness, pedantry, over-wrought triviality and inability to distinguish between the encyclopædic accumulation of facts and the true art of using them. An Alexandrian period is too consciously literary, an age of virtuosity, of artistry rather than of art.

Our best critics are already in danger of this disease. Even Mr. T. S. Eliot might muse on the premonitions wrapt in these phrases. But my belief is that Mr. Eliot, and the other critics I have not named, will find circumstances too much for them: there is a fullness of experience in our modern life that demands—if it does not enforce—a compensation in our thought. Our minds get unconsciously tempered and this may be the salvation of more than one Alexandrian.

* * *

It is rather futile to name a movement before it is born, but should it be admitted that the emotional trance of romanticism is dispersed from our common mind, no time should be lost in advancing an alternative "myth." Historically, I think we should continue the development of that New Humanism which had its brief life in the latter third of the eighteenth century: that humanism typified in the clear, harmonised intellect of Lessing. We might describe it as a classicism that looks to Athens rather than to Rome, and thereby distinguish it from the French Classicism that Professor Wright has studied. This new humanism should have found its complete exponent in Goethe, but the unlucky star of modern Europe had already risen in Rousseau, and Goethe fell a victim to its malignity. Goethe is a spoilt genius, a battered torso. It is not difficult to distinguish the good and the bad, the present and the missing, in his work. The conjunction of opposites is always there—in "Wilhelm Meister" no less than in "Faust," in his romantic classicism no less than in his classical romanticism. And all the same he does not fulfil Pascal's definition of a genius, which is to contain in oneself opposite extremes and to occupy all the space between them: as Pascal himself did. Goethe is nothing but extremes, and the volume of his work appears to me as no more than literary lumber among which the modern reader must proceed warily to discover the value that does undoubtedly exist there.

* * *

I do not think "the new humanism" is an ideal slogan for our renaissance: the metaphysicians have made a terrible hash of the connotation of the word "humanism" and it is difficult to maintain it as a proper counter for the true type of culture. But this was its original use, and then it implied the discipline of imagination to human needs. Discipline and imagination: we cannot, you see, escape two elements in the discussion of this problem: they correspond to the fundamental systole and diastole of life—the eternal see-saw of good and evil, of mind and matter, of reason and feeling. Classicism and romanticism, theory and imagination, are but other aspects of the contending forces, the plus and minus of experience. The only wisdom counsels the avoidance of excess. In the realm of literature excess in our day is chiefly sensual: that it may be otherwise the definition of Alexandrinism quoted above makes clear. But Alexandrinism is a fitful phenomenon, and the most necessary lesson to learn, before the present listlessness of the arts can be rectified, is the insufficiency of impulse. It is a lesson that goes counter to a good deal that is prevalent in so-called modernism—I need only mention, for instance, the "impulsive" philosophy of Mr. Bertrand Russell; but on the other hand, there is evidence of a good deal of somewhat mute support, and for an instance of this there is the philosophy of Mr. Santayana.

HERBERT READ.

Towards National Guilds.

THERE is something a little devilish in the satisfaction with which men announce that there is no "royal road" to improvement, no "short cut" to Utopia, no "panacea" for human ills, and so on. These prophets, it may be observed, are usually people who have fared very well themselves, but only after much exertion on their own part; and an acute observer may discover another common feature of the tribe, namely, envy of those who have acquired anything without exertion. How far back into history this envy of brawn of brain (for that is what it is) extends, we cannot tell; but it must have been at its worst when brain was just beginning to count as a factor in progress. Evolution by natural selection—that is to say, by suffering without exertion, by experience without intelligence, by reflection without foresight—was, we may assume, the convention of progress until the appearance of brain, whereupon evolution by epigenesis became possible, evolution, that is to say, by rational and intelligent selection, evolution by short cuts and royal roads. The first exhibition of this new power of man can be conceived as having cast a gloom over the older dispensation with results that, in those days, may easily have been sanguinary. "We'll teach these blasphemous upstarts to win God's favours without paying the Devil's price! . . . We'll show 'em that there's to be no escape from the treadmill of nature by hanky-panky with the mechanism!" Practically every epigenesis or leap forward in human progress has been made in the teeth of the brute in man.

There can be little doubt that we have arrived at a moment in human evolution when an act of epigenesis is again necessary. The state of the world is such that evolution by natural selection alone is doomed to result in reaction. There is a stile to be got over, an unusual exertion of intelligence to be made; and in default of a leap, a royal road, a short cut, mankind will not simply stay where it is, but die in millions in the last ditch. Such a critical moment is bound to intensify the ancient antagonism between minds of the conservative and minds of the progressive type; and the present almost universal clash of the intelligentsia with the bourgeoisie establishes its general character. For the bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia are not differentiated merely on class lines, as the Marxians superficially suppose, nor is their antagonism confined to the economic sphere. They are types of mind older than the hills, but brought to-day into sharper conflict than usual by the fact that a critical decision is due to be made. Whether an act of epigenesis is possible, in view of the strength of the conservative element and the lamentable weakness of the present intelligentsia, it is hard to say. The unchallenged currency of the phrases about there being no royal road, no short cut, is an evil sign; and when, in addition, a measure of scepticism is to be found in the minds of the epigenetic themselves, the outlook may be said to be unpromising.

Next to the conservatism of the bourgeoisie (who, but for epigenesis, would still be climbing trees and running on all fours) the most alarming phenomenon of this decisive age is the conservatism of the intelligentsia. It is exhibited, unfortunately, in the propaganda of Credit-reform with which, up to the present, the majority of our intelligentsia seem only to be toying. It is as if, to the majority of those who are "interested" in Credit-reform, the work before us had unlimited time at its disposal, and could afford to be deferred to the

leisure moments of a leisurely life. Correspondents, for example, have addressed questions to us on matters of the utmost triviality, but with as much earnestness as if a life-work of study were being undertaken in the course of which not the smallest fact could or needed to be overlooked; facts (or rather speculations) concerning the future of, let us say, the appointment of bank-clerks under a Douglas régime, or the methods of book-keeping by the various costing departments of the contemplated credit-areas. It is well, of course, to be thorough in all things, but there is a time and place for thoroughness in regard to this and that; and what we venture to urge at this moment is the need for thoroughness in regard to the Scheme as a whole. The essence of the present situation is time; and we can assure our readers that Credit-reform will be inaugurated, upon a lesser or greater scale, within the next two or three years, or, as far as our generation is concerned, never! The "other side," it may be taken for granted, is not idle; nor are its defenders troubling to sweep under every mat. We know that they are intensely busy; we know that, behind the scenes, they are fully employed in preparing and executing measures of defence; and we know that they are counting upon the help of the time we are allowing them. It is, therefore, necessary, as a first condition of a success which, in any event, will be hardly won, to stimulate our propaganda by a perpetual reminder of its urgency. This detail is important, that detail is important; but the most important thing is not any part, but the whole, and not propaganda to-morrow, but propaganda to-day. What difference have we made in the situation; how have we affected things; how much nearer have we brought the practical adoption of Credit-reform?—such are the test-questions we should continually be asking ourselves.

It is not within our province to exhort our readers to the heroic life. That is a call that must be made from higher quarters. But it is perfectly clear that, if indeed ours is an age that demands epigenesis, the epigenetic cannot too soon or too strenuously set about epigenesis. Assuming it to be true, as it is certainly well warranted, that the old age is dying and hence that all life lived in accordance with its conventions is little better than a death in life, no great sacrifice is entailed in the individual's abandonment of his share in it. He is not called to give up a priceless treasure that his heartstrings need be torn about it. And, on the other hand, as may be testified, the epigenetic life of devotion to the new age has more than compensations for the pleasures forgone; and is, besides, a growing life. The particular work to our hand has, moreover, this advantage over many similar epigenetic missions undertaken and fulfilled by men in the past, that its progress as well as its failure can be measured almost by the eye. We have not to inaugurate a movement requiring centuries to give results; nor need the oldest of us die in doubt of his success or failure. We repeat that the next few years will be decisive; and that we shall know, at latest by the date of the next American Presidential campaign, whether our generation has or has not been equal to the demand of the æon. Since men think nothing of devoting a few years of their lives to acquiring science, or art, or skill in some craft or other, it is surely not excessive to suggest a similar period of devotion to the task of epigenesis. The next few years spent by a few hundreds in the whole-hearted service of Credit-reform would certainly be well spent from an individual point of view; and from the larger point of view they might very well prove to be decisive. The personal experiment, in other words, might prove to have been the means of the social epigenesis. And, at the worst, the conscience of the devotees would be void of offence when it appeared that the dead had conquered again.

NATIONAL GUILDSMEN.

Views and Reviews.

GRAND GUIGNOL HISTORY—I.

It is unfortunate that this book* should have come to me for review about a fortnight after the "Times" had exposed "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion" as a forgery, probably made "by some member of the Russian Secret Police," as the "Times" declared in its leader of August 18. Mrs. Nesta Webster shows, by the familiar device of parallel columns, the practical identity of the teaching of the "Protocols" with that of the code of Weishaupt, who, we are told, founded the Bavarian Illuminati on May 1, 1776. The fact that the Protocols are a paraphrase of a pamphlet written by Maurice Joly against Napoleon III need not prevent us from being thrilled by Mrs. Nesta Webster's revelations. She declares that "the so-called 'Elders of Zion' were admittedly masons of the 33rd degree of the Grand Orient"; and the fact that the original of the Protocols was written by a French lawyer does not diminish the possibility that "the so-called 'Elders of Zion' were admittedly masons of the 33rd degree of the Grand Orient," which lodge, I understand, is situated in Paris. The fact that the pamphlet was written against Napoleon III, who at one time was a member of the Carbonari, which Mrs. Webster shows us in her chart to be directly descended from Illuminism, need not surprise us; it seems to be part of the conspiracy for the conspirators to attack one another.

The general theory of this book has been familiar to me for years; I think it was "Stanhope of Chester," who at one time wrote "Foreign Affairs" for THE NEW AGE, who tried to explain foreign politics as a conflict between the Grand Orient Lodge, of Paris, and the Vatican. Mrs. Webster's Catholic sympathies are apparent; and that there is a conflict between Catholicism and Masonry even a person like myself, who is neither a Catholic nor a Mason, is aware. I have blundered on it more than once in the course of conversation as well as of reading; and I have never been able to understand what it is about. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" seemed to be the basis of both harangues; and as I was not looking for a god at the moment, I confess that I was not interested. Mrs. Webster certainly offers an explanation; if Illuminised Masonry really does preach Revolution, and the Catholic Church really does stand for Law and Order, and both resort to secret societies as a means of propaganda and organisation, the conflict is intelligible. We used to scare ourselves with the Jesuit plot against civilisation; why should we not scare ourselves with the Masonic and Jewish plot against civilisation? By all means let us melodramatise life, and confront "the dark forces" and "the light forces" in an interminable conspiracy and counter-conspiracy.

Mrs. Webster has previously developed this thesis in a history of "The French Revolution," which, so far, I have not read. I do not know whether she includes THE NEW AGE when she says that "the Socialist Press was completely silent" about her book; I did not see the book, and as I see most of the books that come for review, I conclude that it was not sent. But when she says that "no one has attempted to bring forward any contrary evidence" to what she stated in that book, she is, I think, asking for the impossible. The onus of proof lies upon those who affirm, not upon those who deny; it is impossible to prove a negative, and all that any reviewer could be asked to do would be to declare whether Mrs. Webster's statement was convincing. To do more than that, one would have to make an historical enquiry as meticulous as Mrs. Webster's own, with perhaps an additional enquiry into the authenticity of the documents used; and as the thesis is that the secret societies are at the bottom of everything, and

* "World-Revolution: The Plot Against Civilisation." By Nesta H. Webster. (Constable. 18s. net.)

secret societies do not give information (I read Heckethorn when I was young), the task is really impossible. It has been stated again and again that even hypnotism has failed to make a Mason betray the secrets of his craft—and the historical student is not usually a hypnotic person. As she tells us that “the powers exercised by the modern Illuminati are occult powers, and range from hypnotism to black magic,” the historical student might find himself catalepted like Braid’s assistant when he tried to hypnotise some one. And Black Magic—ugh! It sounds worse than Black Justice.

But if I cannot rebut Mrs. Webster’s case, I can make certain criticisms which, I think, would occur to any reader of her book. She tells us that “the instructions for the degree of Regent” in the Illuminati contain this passage: “The great strength of our Order lies in its concealment; let it never appear in any place in its own name, but always covered by another name, and another occupation.” Every Illuminatus apparently swore to conceal the fact that he was Illuminating, or whatever it was called—and yet Mrs. Webster can tell us the name of every prominent person in the Order. One wonders how it is done, until one remembers that politics is the washpot, and politicians the washerwomen, of national life. To call a man an Illuminatus is no more a proof of it than to call an old woman a Witch proves that she is in league with the Devil. Political oratory is always rather fervid, and given to the use of picturesque phrase; a comparatively sober speaker like Mr. Asquith, for example, used the cliché: “We will never sheathe the sword”: when the sword was sheathed, and left behind at the depot; and in times of political excitement, the use of opprobrious names does not decrease. Was not Mr. Asquith, to use the same example, called a pro-German, was he not coupled with the best known in the land in the filthy accusation made by Mr. Pemberton-Billing? What reason have we for supposing that the appellation of Illuminatus has any more validity than Mr. Billing’s assurance that Mr. Asquith’s name was in the Black List? It has been in many a Blue Book, many a White Paper; and it might well be in a Black List, or a Red Magazine, or a Yellow Press, without proving any more than the fact that it was there.

Mrs. Webster cannot have it both ways. If the “whole success” of this secret order “depends on secrecy,” nothing but criminal negligence on the part of its members can explain the notoriety which they obtained. Secret societies are supposed to punish such treachery severely—and it is certainly a fact that many of them are dead, including the founder. But I incline to believe that Mrs. Webster is more concerned to convict of “conspiracy” than she is to evaluate the evidence of it; there are some notable hiati which she bridges with an inference, she works the “identity of teaching” method to death, apparently in ignorance of the fact that the six points of the Illuminati program are commonplaces of philosophy and history, and she is childish in her alarms for the present day. A. E. R.

Reviews.

The Dark Geraldine. By John Ferguson. (The Bodley Head. 8s. 6d. net.)

Those who like mystery stories, with secret societies, cryptograms, mysterious deaths, and so forth, will find Mr. John Ferguson’s bewildering story quite to their taste. We confess that we sat up late to finish it—which shows that Mr. Ferguson has the gift of gripping attention and holding it. The plot turns on a cipher concealed in a small picture which is traced to a Scotch village named Gart, and is there in the possession of the village lawyer. One of the points that remains obscure to us is: “Who hid the drawing in the lawyer’s office?” We will not spoil the reader’s interest

by stating where it was found; but as everybody in the story seems to be concerned with discovering it, and no one with hiding it, it is impossible to get a clue. Such a story depends for its effect upon the author’s power of creating suspicion and suspense—and Mr. Ferguson has the gift to perfection. We even suspected Macgregor for a time. But there is also some good characterisation, notably of the lawyer himself and the village constable; and emphatically it is a book to read.

Insanity and Mental Deficiency in Relation to Legal Responsibility. By William G. H. Cook, LL.D.(Lond.). (Routledge. 10s. 6d. net.)

This “thesis approved for the Degree of Doctor of Laws in the University of London” is a valuable study in psychological jurisprudence. The conflict between the legal and medical definitions of responsibility has usually been waged over criminal cases; but the question of civil responsibility is much more important, and the law on this point is by no means so clear as it ought to be. Dr. Cook has examined over 200 leading cases, and has also made a study of the laws of many foreign countries; the result is a clear and comprehensive statement of the law as now existing, with suggestions for amendment where necessary. The book abounds in definitions, as it should do; and Dr. Cook has done everything possible to make it an acceptable text-book on the subject. It is commended by Sir John Macdonell and Sir Robert Armstrong Jones in prefaces, and is of particular value not only to lawyers but to psychiatrists and graduates studying for the diploma in Psychological Medicine.

Stupendous Expose of Amazing Political Corruption. A Story of Frightful Persecution. The Party System of Rule “On Trial.” By H. W. A. Page. (544, Church Street, Toronto. 50 cents.)

This pamphlet reminds us of the blood-curdling posters outside the picture palaces. We see the motor just toppling over the bridge, and are expected to be so thrilled that we shall go inside to learn the issue. Mr. Page promises amazing revelations, but exposes nothing except his own hysteria. Whether there is any solid fact behind his capitals and italics—whether he has really been a victim of injustice under the libel laws (in which there is nothing inherently improbable)—it is impossible to gather from this effusion. On the whole we are inclined to take the persecution as little seriously as the “*Sane and Rational System of Rule*” which is to “achieve the redemption of humanity.”

The Resurrection of Shagpat.

By Denis Saurat.

I—THE MEETING OF NOORNA.

It was re-ordained that Shibli Bagarag, nephew to many illustrious ones, should arise again from among the blissful dead, and shave anew Shagpat, whom Queen Rabesqrat, Empress of the single-thoughted, had reinstalled among the peoples of the earth. And his name was more terrible than of yore in the East, for he was now enthroned, lolling in his superfluity of hair, among the nations of the West; and his name was awe inspiring, dreadful to hear, dreadful to hear of, even; and few were they among the magicians of the earth that could pronounce or interpret it aright. It can be spelt out in this tale only after the mastering of the new event, for else it would even wreck the tale and the teller. However, if the letter “I” that gives identity to men and words be left out, it may be written down once, though not pronounced. Whoso readeth this tale aloud to the congregated people around the blazing hearth, or whoso telleth of this to the folk on the market place, is warned by the Teller of the Tale not to woo his undoing in the attempt to say it aloud, for truly it is as a thunderbolt in its effects. And His Name—Allah preserve us this once—was Finance.

Now then, the world had changed, and the great faith of the people of yore existed only in scattered and inconsiderable fragments, as though some giant had kicked the blazing heap to dispersion, scattering here and there the glowing embers and the half-burnt sticks; and over each one of those dying firesticks were assembled and bent congregated magicians and women and philosophers; and they tried to blow it into a blaze again, remembering the glorious conflagration of gone days. But the breath of magicians and women and philosophers is too weak for that; the breath of the people is wanted thereto. Shibli Bagarag himself, in the course of his centuries of sleep, had learnt too many things; so that, having read, as all men, the history of his past adventures and of his glory, and how once already he had shaved Shagpat, yet he did not believe very mightily that he was verily that same Shibli Bagarag come back into the world. Wherein he erred, for he had greatly to suffer all through the Enterprise, owing to his lamentable lack of faith.

But he felt within his soul a great force as a hungering lion that seeketh his prey, and an irresistible desire to Master the Event. And if anyone feels likewise let him try; for the poet has said:

The worth of the pudding
Is in the beating,
And the proof of the pudding
Is in the eating.

And the tyro who tires not under the beating,
He may—or he may not—live till the eating.

Now it was after a great war and all the different nations of the earth were very mistrustful one of the other. And it befell that Shibli Bagarag was outside a certain great city and he dared not attempt to enter it, for he had not a passport, nor the wherewithal to fee the officials that give passports; and he was sorely afraid of the prison and of the judges, as all that are honest be.

And lo! as he was meditating on his plight, for his dangers were as great in retreating as in advancing or in standing still—since the officials in those days were as numerous as the sands of the seas perhaps—and certainly more numerous than the non-officials, and they covered the land like the locusts, many locusts to one single blade of grass—he saw a damsel at a distance, looking upon him, as he thought, with a favourable brow. So hope revived within his breast, and he returned her gaze boldly yet not over boldly as he walked towards her.

She was of a middle height, graceful as a young tree whose branches are not thick yet, but round and well shaped; and there was elasticity in the line of her bosom, and solidity in the line of her head, and her colour was as it should be, as though a still new heart were harmoniously pouring rivers and sheets of red under her white skin; and her teeth were small and hard; her eyes a little wider apart under a broader forehead than with most daughters of men, as though she could look upon a wider compass of the horizon and think over a bigger stretch of the earth. And her face was always somewhat mischievous. She spoke to him without waiting for his incipient salutation: "Let us not waste time over preliminaries, O youth of my soul," she said. "I see by the tackle at thy side, and thy garb of an ancient date, and the conceit which the dirt of the journey hides not on thy face; and also I feel by the feeling of my heart which has yet never felt such a feeling, that thou art none other than he, the predestined one, the Master of the Event, even Shibli Bagarag." And while he let drop the jaw of amazement, taking fair advantage of him, she added quickly:

"Know then that I in my turn am none other than Noorna bin Noorka, no less predestined than thou art."

So he thought within himself, wondering and hesitating as ever: "Noorna bin Noorka! She was called of old the Eclipser of Reason, but now verily she taketh

reason by storm. And yet who knows; it may be she has read the Tale—and who has not? And knowing me by the signs, she pretends to be Noorna, to have a share in the Event, to be carried on my back and in my hide as a flea to the Goal of Lives and utmost felicity. But lo. I will devise a test and test her!"

And he bowed to her even unto the ground, saying: "O Noorna bin Noorka, welcome is the sight of thy face, after the centuries of sleep and the years of waiting; and doubly welcome thou not to come again in the shape of the old woman, hard to fondle, difficult to cherish, impossible to recognise; and trebly welcome that thou comest after the event is already mastered, and so I have not been encumbered by the care and the consideration of thee. For rejoice, O Noorna bin Noorka, that the Event has been achieved unknown to the whole Earth, and I am coming now but to claim the glory and enter the Kingdom, with thee at my side, fairest of the innumerable fair. And it was appointed that thou shouldst be waiting for me outside the city, for to all that have achieved an event everything that happens is planned according to desire; and my desires are now fully content!"

But she laughed at him, clapping her hands, and cried:

"O thou youth of wit, thou youth of mistrust! But I shall punish thee for this; and think not that thou gettest the kiss of the Contract until such time as I think amends are made, O thou distruster of appearances. And yet it pleaseth me well to see thee wary; and may be I shall kiss thee for that—when thou sleepest and canst not return the kiss!"

So he was abashed at her penetration and he thought: "She be no common damsel; what if she be not Noorna? And am I verily Shibli Bagarag? Nay, she will do; and may be I will do, likewise." So he smiled upon her the smile of trust which is also the smile of deceit and he said to her:

"Forgive another of my foolishnesses, O Noorna, for the eyes of my soul knew thee from the first; and now the eyes of reason know thee also."

And the hot blood of youth rose in him as he looked upon her beauty and he began to pour forth impassioned verses to her, leaning towards her. But she laughed at him with mischief in her face and sobered him and said:

'Ware of the plucking
Of fruit not yet ripe;
That brings the thwacking
That nothing will wipe.

So he verily recognised Noorna, for even through the centuries of sleep and learning and the years of waiting, the sting of the thwackings of yore abode at the bottom of his soul and in the flat depths of his soles it revived again at the mention. So he looked upon her with the eye of tried affection and they were friends.

Then she took him by the hand and led him to the gate of the city. And she said to the official there, with a casual brow: "He is my brother from the first village outward, so he needeth no passport." Now the officials were very strict on all such as had passports and examined and cross-examined them lengthily; so they had neither time nor wit to spare for such as told simple lies. So they let the twain through.

And inside the gate of the city there was waiting for all and sundry who would use it a wondrous wagon painted with the gold of the stars and the blue of the heavens; and at the touch of the hand of a man it would shoot forth, rolling over two marvellous interminable ribbons of metal, and take whosoever had climbed into it wheresoever he wanted to go, with a greater rapidity than that of lightning. But one had to be careful at the climbing to climb into the right wagon; for each only went to one appointed place; and there were many such, coming one after another without end.

So Noorna carefully selected one and they sat at

ease in it and waited for their goal to come to them. And she turned to him affectionately, reminding him of days long past and said :

"Rememberest thou the genii Karaz, how he carried us to and fro according to desire? How happy I am to be rid of him! A rebellious break-neck slave was he, and he had whims. All his brotherhood of genii, an unreliable unpleasant race they were to deal with. How much better men manage their affairs now. They have suppressed the whole generation of genii by ceasing to believe in them, and now we go about our errands safe and comfortable, talking at ease, in these wagons, nor fearing that they change into stone and refuse to move farther, or into water and disappear under us, or that they declare their time of servitude is over and devour us!"

Thus she amused him with little talk to let his soul recover its balance. And the wondrous wagon deposited them where Noorna would and went on its wondrous way.

Thus, as Shibli Gagarag regained possession of his soul, he asked her that led: "Whither, O Noorna?" and she answered:

"Whom to shall I lead thee, O my betrothed, but to my father, the man of good counsel who can do naught himself, he that was the vizier of old, Feshnavat."

And he questioned wondering: "And what is he now, when there be no viziers, or no kings neither to be viziers to?"

So she said: "What indeed, but a man who writes in broad sheets of paper that people read or not as they list; and whether they read them or not, no matter, since there is nothing therein that can profit anyone, except it be incomprehensible. Feshnavat the Vizier of old is the head of one such broad sheet that giveth good counsel to millions that do not understand it, or indeed even read it. But what matters it what men do under the shadow of a coming event? It will be anyhow as nothing in the balance. So let them amuse their souls as they find good."

Thus saying, she led him out of the main street into a small lane that was called the lane of Chance, and by some Chancery, the lane where Chance laughs, but none knew the meaning of the name, for all names only acquire a meaning after the mastering of the Event. Then all men wonder that they saw and understood not.

And they went in at one door and then along many straight passages and winding staircases till they came to a door with a certain number thereon, and it opened under the hand of Noorna. A man well over the middle years of life and of good corpulence and with the face of a thinker, yet fat, and he was Feshnavat, he that had been the vizier of old, came to them extending the hand of civility and pointing to the seats of comfort. He gazed upon Shibli Bagarag with a benign and critical eye, and offered him to smoke the rolled leaf of the fragrant tree, but Shibli denied him, with excuses, for he smoked not.

So Feshnavat turned to his daughter, laughing: "He has no vices, this young man of thine, O Noorna, and they that announced his arrival unto us were right, for he smoketh not, neither does he drink; and yet he is not married. It will be hard for such as he to master the Event. For if he has no vices how shall he get thwackings? And if he has no thwackings, how shall he pay the price of experience, which men buy not for a song?"

But Shibli answered cunningly: "So many vices have I, O occult king of the broad sheets, O adviser to those that will not be advised, so many vices that I cannot afford to add to their numbers even such insignificant vices as I possess not."

And he thought in his heart: "He believeth not in my mastering the event, this adviser of the non advisable. Neither does he think that I am Shibli, nor that this other one that taketh reason by storm is Noorna. But I shall show him."

And verily, of the three, Noorna bin Noorka was the only one that believed; for Shibli only wanted to believe; and Feshnavat was even tired of wanting to believe, and therefore the weight of the universe was upon him heavier than upon the two young ones; and by reason of her belief Noorna was the leader of the three.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

DEAR LAND OF LIBERTY.

Sir,—I understand that according to the Alien Restriction (Amendment) Act, 1919, Section 10, 1, the Home Office is authorised to dismiss me from this country, a country in which I have resided with only one interruption since 1894. My wife, being also a German citizen, is likewise compelled to leave England, while our only child, a daughter of 12 years old, born and bred in Great Britain, is permitted to remain. The authorities assure me that my personal character has nothing to do with their decision to expel me.

On the eve of my enforced departure I should like to express my heartfelt gratitude to those faithful friends who have, though without success, intervened on my behalf at the Home Office. I should likewise feel honoured, if the numerous scholars and men of letters, here and in America, who have derived some pleasure, profit or enlightenment from my literary labours, will for the future hold me in kindly remembrance. As for my enemies, to whom apparently I owe my expulsion, I can only remind them that the last word on the subject of the Nietzschean philosophy has not by any means been spoken, and that even its final condemnation would not alter in the least the claim I make with honourable satisfaction to having been the first pioneer both in England and America of one of the most important manifestations of European thought.

As I am one of the oldest contributors to THE NEW AGE I trust that you will be good enough to publish this letter.

OSCAR LEVY.

Royal Societies Club, (Editor of the authorised
St. James's Street, S.W. English translation
of Nietzsche's works.)

* * *

OUR GENERATION.

Sir,—While being very grateful to you for dealing generously with the Modern Churchmen's Conference in your columns, it strikes one as unfortunate that you re-echo the conventional complaint that these "intellectuals" stand "not primarily for and in religion, but for reason and in reason." This is precisely the view of the "Church Times."

THE NEW AGE, if I understand it aright, stands for reason, as distinct from "sentiment," or emotional idealism, in the economic and political spheres, and it seems not altogether consistent thus to subordinate, and even vilify, reason in the religious sphere.

The Churchmen's Union believes that the non-religious materialism and the "religious" superstition of the present day (they indeed are correlatives of one another) are due to the failure of organised religion as a whole to approach the religious problem from the standpoint of reason. What we need is not *less* reason in this area, but *more*.

I have perhaps said sufficient, but should like to indicate to your contributor the type of remark which seems to me unsatisfactory: "Why should we not remain out of our depths, and even go out of them voluntarily—in order to become deeper?" This enigmatic sentence, modelled as it is on the aphorisms of Nietzsche, is far less profound than it seems. What it amounts to, or what it may be *made* to amount to, is: "Why not close our eyes to facts, and close them voluntarily, in order to become more deeply involved in superstition?"

J. C. HARDWICK.