NOTES OF THE WEEK.

The producers of the great peace drama at Washington are still struggling to thread the almost hopelessly tangled mazes of the world-situation. It is exceedingly doubtful how much will in the end come of Mr. Hughes' naval protocols. Japan seems to be going to insist on an increased percentage of strength for herself. The minor naval Powers, France and Italy, are also dissatisfied. In particular, they are demanding freedom of submarine construction for "defensive" purposes. Finally, the question is complicated by the issue as to land armaments. France refuses to make any engagement as to her army except on condition of a "guarantee" from England and America, which she is unlikely to get. It is accordingly not surprising that Lord Curzon should have been warning people not to expect too much, by the reminder of much trumpeted but abortive peace moves in the past. He insisted on the necessity that naval reductions should be accompanied by military reductions. He claimed, too, that "it is not for Great Britain to accept or submit to the sacrifices while others pass them by"; and that, if we are willing to reduce our naval protection, no other Power must be allowed "to build up any other engine of attack, either in the air or under the sea." After all this, he significantly reminded France of her complete dependence for security on "the Great Powers of Europe" and on America. The Pacific situation is equally uncertain. The one point that clearly emerges is that China's position at the Conference is a highly uncomfortable one. It may fairly be said that her "eucharistic body" is likely to play the part which a "holy eucharistic body" is likely to play, in the event of new civil wars. The Washington proposals have led to some illuminating correspondence in the "Times." An "Admiral" and Sir Cyprian Bridge rejoice over the "cuts," particularly over the idea of limiting the size of capital ships, as making for intensive efficiency in naval science. Their contentions fully confirm our surmise that it is only technically useless weapons that it is proposed to scrap. Sir George Prothero again made some sound points. He very sensibly pointed out that an all-round reduction does not "even lessen the danger of war." Mr. James Thursfield displays a curious inability to take in this obvious truth. He seems to think that some magic virtue resides in the ten years' holiday. During that happy period the Powers—"if they are wise," a rather serious qualification—will be spending the money saved on warships in "rebuilding the social and economic fabric." By the end of the time we shall be so delighted with the new regime that nobody will for a moment tolerate the thought of war. It is a pleasant little fairy tale, and we are sorry to have to shatter rudely about Mr. Thursfield's ears the walls of his intellectual nursery. But he has overlooked the unfortunate fact that the causes making for war will operate just the same, naval holiday or no naval holiday. It is a question of war, not at the end of ten years, but within the next five. Sir George Prothero was also perfectly right in pointing out that "we shall have to pay for the unemployment which the cessation of shipbuilding will cause." His critic thinks that his economy is sadly at fault." As he assumes that: "Surely it is agreed that the root cause of unemployment is the crushing taxation with which we are burdened," he is hardly the person to criticise anyone else's economics. There is a refreshing naiveté about his inference, "it seems to follow that as you reduce taxation, you will increase employment." But this sort of innocence, however attractive, is not of much assistance in guiding one through the pitfalls of econo-
Unemployment and the International Situation. In unemployment, puts the Government's responsibility distributed in some other way, then, association of ideas depends on industries.

European market were restored, things would be asking for, work or income? It must be acquainted discussing a resolution affirming this truth, it would be Joint Council has called an Emergency Conference on affairs on our home industry which are occasional. It gets hold itself, that is excellent; the two cannot be too closely of the stick by precisely the wrong end. It treats its oar. After all it is as much entitled to do work which should make one of their "victorious" retreats? Of course, M. Lenin has recently been answering the charge that the Soviet Government has, by its new economic policy, abandoned its fundamental principles. "This Government's conditions regarding relief works. He emphasised the fact that such work "is often of a casual and unfavourable nature. It is work which they would not otherwise undertake except for the alleviation of unemployment." That is the sufficient condemnation of the whole method. No work ought ever to be put in hand, in any circumstances, unless it is something which ought anyhow to be done for its own sake. And it ought always to be done with the best labour available paid at the standard rate. If everything is being done that ought then to be done, the remaining problem is purely one of maintenance. If you are going to "relieve" people, well, then, relieve them, and have done with it. Why make a silly pretence of "employing" them, by paying them a small sum, and have them fill them up again, or something equally useful and sensible? To such shifts our publicists are driven by the impossible dream of maintaining, by hook or by crook, the system (so evidently doomed) of distribution through payment only for work done for a period which劳工总会 and its Government. A civilised community cannot be content with anything short of full maintenance for all its members.

M. Lenin has recently been answering the charge that the Soviet Government has, by its new economic policy, abandoned its fundamental principles. "This apology reminds us strongly of the explanations given by the German authorities at the end of September, 1914, why their armies were behind the Aisne instead of all round Paris. One of the chief uses of victory, it seems, is to supply the "moral courage for making something to turn up. His most striking sentence is, "It is a most dangerous temptation for the true revolutionary to exaggerate revolutionism, forgetting all bounds and practical limits." It is a pity that he and his colleagues did not think of that before they made their first fatal plunge. He puts as the first task of the proletarian party, "the revolutionary ending of imperialism war . . . . and the cessation of butchering between two sets of capitalist bands"; and characteristically adds that this "requires revolution in several advanced countries." Evidently butchery is quite unobjectionable when it is practised on "capitalist bands" by a set of Communist bandits. The "Daily Herald" on this occasion carried out as obsequiously as usual its duties as the unofficial organ of the Soviet Government. It declares that many are the "urgent and important" problems of the moment, and that it should clear up its mind. We would suggest that the most effective of political cries would be, "Work and War, or Purchasing Power and Peace?"

The extraordinary confusion of mind with regard to these issues, prevailing in high quarters, is illustrated by a characteristic reply recently made by the Premier to local authorities who asked for a modification of the
On similar grounds Mr. Lloyd George might have argued that his Government was still a Liberal Government, when it was in the full swing of its reprisals policy in Ireland. This line, which is so popular in our Labour movement, is, on every score, regrettable. The greatest difficulty in getting people to be sensible about Russia,” in the classic phrase, is the attitude of the fervent advocates, in this country, of a sympathetic policy. They are too ready to rest their case on the plea that a noble working class Government is splendidly doing the business of Labour throughout the world, and must, at all costs, be saved. This is merely to play into the hands of the section of the Press which is opposing all aid to that crucified country. The real case, for her true friends, is that Russia is in a appalling muddle, and her own Government is incapable of getting her out of it; therefore common sense and humanity conspire to urge us to do anything that is practically possible to help her out.

The socially minded elements in the Churches have been demonstrating in Trafalgar Square on behalf of the unemployed. It is presumably the Church’s business to act as keeper of the nation’s conscience; if so, it certainly ought not to keep silence on such a scandal. In any case, we are glad of every additional voice that is raised on this paramount issue. But we have had occasion before to point out the tendency of “Christian Socialism” to a vague sentimentality and its apparent inability to give any practical lead. So it has proved once more. The most striking point about the resolution moved in Trafalgar Square was its inconclusiveness. It bore strong internal evidence of being a compromise arrived at by contending schools of thought. And in the speeches a great confusion of tongues was evident. Social Credit and the Just Price were mentioned; but several speakers plumped for crude Socialism. Our old friend, “If any will not work, neither shall he eat,” was also once more called up for service. Dr. Orchard again got rather at sea over the international issue. He urged that the Government should give credits, especially to Russia and Germany. In regard at least to the former we agree that our duty to the world calls for such action. But to lay any stress on this in connection with unemployment in this country is to side-track the whole discussion and unwittingly to play into the hands of the orthodox financial elements, who are principally responsible for the crisis. The supremely important matter is to endow our own country with sufficient purchasing power. If Dr. Orchard had demanded credits in aid of the home consumer, it would have been immeasurably more helpful. Perhaps the most satisfactory feature of the whole affair was the admirable inscription on one of the monuments: “The only Christian basis of distribution is need.” We always feel drawn towards any system of distributing income that has “no damned merit” about it.

THE SPRING FLOOD SHINETH.
The spring flood shineth under the sweet hills, And the new light shineth on the bleached shore. Would ye deny your ills? There is a spell lies hid in the heart’s core; Come then and run and dance and sing:— Sea:
Salt sand is sweeter than green lea. Sun:
Smile and how merrily we run! Air:
Breathe on the bright limb and the bosom bare. Wood:
That meditating many days hath stood, Wake to the rout, and laugh in green, While the wind scours the shield of heaven clean!

RUTH PITTER.
to see that the answer to this is purely quantitative: how much wheat are we to get for a given energy export?

Consider the present situation. It is true enough, as our super-industrialists and orthodox economists are always telling us, that imports are paid for by exports, but, on the whole, they are content to leave it at that. They do not explain, for instance, how a textile worker, paying 50s. for a hale of raw cotton worth, say, £20, into goods worth, say, £60, can benefit if in return for these manufactured goods two more bales of raw cotton at £40 are received—a condition common to Trade booms. Nor do they generally publish the fact that English machinery is often sold to export agents abroad at far lower prices than those at which the same machinery can be obtained at home, or that it is possible to buy, in the bazaars of Bombay, a shirt made in Lancashire for a quarter the price at which the same shirt can be bought retail in Manchester.

The simple facts are that, under existing arrangements, our principal pre-occupation is the provision of employment—the making of work. On this simple arrangement which would fulfil these desiderata are equilibrium inside the nation the individual must be a free, not a forced, seller, just as to restore social harmony there must be a competition, open to the common man, a competition, even as against the government, of the market. For where the government in the open market, there is a competition, open to the living— are more in need of prayer, even if it is only that of the Karamazovs that "the knowledge that they were vile was necessary to them," and this form of knowledge, held passively, will always, for good or evil, appear degrading to us, and probably to most other nations. But let us be sincerely though they are terribly weak, and knowing at the same time with almost incredible intellectual competence the nuances of their weakness, that Dostoyevsky's characters are— as he himself was—such formidable psychologists. They know by their combined weak and strong, in honesty towards themselves. There has been a disposition in recent years to regard Dostoyevsky rather as a philosopher than as an artist and psychologist; as if philosophy were in some way greater than art. But to us, and probably to the world also, Dostoyevsky is most significant, because most valuable, simply as a novelist, as a revealer of human mysteries. There will, of course, be an army of critics who will find in the novels of Dostoyevsky a host of ethical meanings; and no doubt the meanings are there. That, of course, is only one instance of contemporary suffering, and among sufferers, ex-service men are, it is obvious, only a section. The proper treatment of these men, which is not possible in the asylums; we want non-asylum curative treatment." That, of course, is only one instance of contemporary suffering, and among sufferers, ex-service men are, it is obvious, only a section. The proper treatment of these men, which is not possible in the asylums; we want non-asylum curative treatment." That, of course, is only one instance of contemporary suffering, and among sufferers, ex-service men are, it is obvious, only a section. The proper treatment of these men, which is not possible in the asylums; we want non-asylum curative treatment." That, of course, is only one instance of contemporary suffering, and among sufferers, ex-service men are, it is obvious, only a section.
the world (alas that there is only one world!), has been
favoured with crisp, brilliant, autumn weather, with
chrysanthemums and the maple in season.” So the
“Times,” the chief newspaper in England, informs us,
almost reassuringly. What if Lord Northcliffe be in
alien climes, for the clime of Japan must surely be
alien to him: for him the chrysanthemum and the maple
bloom, even if they are in season. He “had a busy
day.” “After a short stay at the Tokyo Club, Lord
Northcliffe visited the Imperial Theatre, witnessing a
feudal play [that, surely, considering the greatness of
the action and the personage, might have been more
grammatically expressed] and went behind the scenes
to speak with the leading actors.” The “Times” does
not state whether he shook hands with them, or,
whether, with his infallible tact, he followed the cus-
toms of their nation. It aggrandises our national
pride sufficiently meantime, however, to note that a tea
ceremonial in which his Lordship was “interested” is
indicated in the headline as “Famous Tea Ceremonial.”
All lovers of Lord Northcliffe, of England and of
comedy, should read the “Times” now that his Lord-
ship is out of the country. The style of the communi-
ques, even if it is not usual, is interesting.
EDWARD MOORE.

Current Economics.

In view of the importance of a brief comprehensive
definition of the aim of this present propaganda we beg
to be allowed to repeat a sentence from our previous
Notes. The aim is to substitute real Credit for Gold
as the basis of financial credit. To those to whom all
the terms of this proposition are familiar, there is
nothing new in it. They know, presumably, what is
meant by “real Credit.” The difference wrought by a
system of Credit for Gold or real Wealth for Wealth
tokens as either “palpably absurd” or inherently
impracticable, they may and can consider the proposal
practically and object to it on one or other of the
following grounds:

(a) that the present gold standard of Credit works
sufficiently well to justify its retention;
(b) that the proposed new basis would work worse;
(c) that even if the theoretical advantages of the
new basis could be demonstrated, the difficulties
of the “change-over” would make the change
undesirable on balance.

Regarding the first of these contentions, there can
be little, we imagine, to say for it. If anybody believes
that the present system is justified by its results, he
must be either very stupid, very callous or a convinced
disciple of the devil. As far back as intelligent history
carries us, the old standard of Credit has prevailed; and
as far back as history carries us, every story of
civilisation has ended disastrously. We are aware that
nothing in this world can be explained by merely one
circumstance; the Gold standard has not been the sole
cause of the decline and fall of every civilisation. It
is safe to say, however, that no civilisation has ever
fallen without the powerful aid of the Gold Standard
in pushing it down; and that, but for their financial
systems, several of the civilisations would have peace-
fully developed without need of a violent break in the
chain of continuity. “Justified” in the sense that
slavery was justified, superstition was justified, blood-
sacrifices were justified, the maintenance of the Gold
Standard may be. If mankind is too stupid or feeble
to get rid of it, its mere existence is its justification.
But “justified” in reason and by its results it can only be
to minds incapable of both human reason and human
judgment.

The second and third contentions, on the other hand,
if not reasonable are at any rate rational; but it will be
observed that they depend upon calculation, fore-
cast, imagination, rather than upon observation and
demonstration. And, again, they are further differen-
tiated, the one from the other, by the fact that the
second is, so to speak, a single moral act, while the third
is within it. No impracticable system, be it ever
so unanimously introduced, will work; nor will the
difference wrought by a bad system worked well better
the advantages wrought by a good system worked ill.
There is, we must admit, something in every system
that is independent of its personnel; and if it should
prove to be the case that the new system of Credit is
a bad system in itself, we shall agree that it will work
worse than the present system. To establish the com-
parison, however, is precisely what we cannot do with-
out experiment. All we can do, in fact, is to reason
about it until we have convinced each other that it is,
at least, worth trying; and this is what we are now
engaged in doing. We certainly are not able to give
the world an absolute assurance that the new system of
Credit will save mankind. Absolute assurance is for
omniscience alone; mankind must be content with
reasonable probabilities. In all human proba-
bility, however, we are as certain as we dare to be
of anything that the new system will work infinitely and
immeasurably better than any system of Credit hitherto
known upon earth, and we are prepared to state that
everything but absolute truth on the truth of this
affirmation Reason, imagination, study, argument,
all the intellectual powers of man, tell us that a system
based on real Credit is likely to prove a far more per-
fect instrument of human happiness than a system
based on gold. Let it be called the faith of the new
age.

The third contention, we say, rests finally on the will
of men, whether they are or are not prepared to make
or, at least, to refrain from opposing, an experiment
dictated by our present need of a new basis to support
in its formulation by the best reason and
imagination at our disposal. Without attributing to
men in general the qualities of the devil, it is not alto-
gether without foundation to affirm that the devil works in
and through men, and in some more than in
others. Lust of power without wisdom or love, for
instance, by its very excess of power and defect of wis-
dom and love, is material for the devil’s use; and there
can hardly be any doubt that the present control of
Credit is a perpetual temptation to the lust of power.
Ignorance and superstition, weakness and sentiment-
ality, each of them a defect or excess of qualities that
should be balanced, are, again, “surplus values” for
the devil to employ. And between these various lusts,
when they are all aggregated on the same side, the
devil’s party in defence of the Gold Standard can
oppose to real Credit can be depended on to put
up a considerable fight. We do not, in fact, contain
plate an easy victory, but, on the contrary, a victory
barely and difficultly won; and while we affirm that
there need be no difficulty, we should be false to our-
selves if we pretended that there will be none. The
question is, Are we enough in numbers and sufficiently
strong in fighting qualities to ensure a victory over the
odds or otherwise that are against us? Is this present
generation equal to one of the greatest tasks ever un-
dertaken by mankind? Once again, and like the ques-
tion itself, the answer must be speculative. We cannot
tell until we try. It is certain that our generation, and
particularly the younger end of it, has had spiritual
experiences on the grand scale of tragedy. A million
young men have died almost within sight of their
young contemporaries. Surely, after this, there is nothing left in life for the present generation to fear; it has seen and known the worst. It is certain, again, that within a very few years sordid tragedy upon the grand scale will once more be at our gates. Even at this moment preparations for the next world-war are being made. Encompassed behind and before with sordid tragedy, is the young generation incapable of noble tragedy, the tragedy (as it may be) even of an unsuccessful fight against the curse of Gold? We will not believe it. Of the millions of young men and women who survived the war their fathers made for them, some thousands, at least, have the character, the intelligence, the resolution to prevent another; and since, as God is our witness, we believe there is no other way than by the communal control of Credit, it is to the fight for the communal control of Credit that we invite them.

It remains to be said, very briefly, that never before, in a struggle of this magnitude, have the issues been so plainly or the means defined with such particularity. The substitution of real credit for Gold as the basis of Money has often enough in the past been advocated and even fought for. The Church of the Middle Ages in its attempt to establish the Just Price is a single illustration of this. But thanks to the Church, ally themselves to the great families, and even brewers' drays; where the children laugh and play and brewers' drays; where the children laugh and play and murmurs, the voice of the people--"Le Lion d'Arras!" In the numerous works (about forty novels) which have assured his reputation, Paul Adam has studied, followed up, and vividly portrayed the rise and evolution of a family of the Bourbons. A prolonged and bloody attempt to overthrow the conspiracy of kings, the "Sainte Alliance," and in its struggle the spoilers are subdued by the hardships of politicians. Only Greece still struggles for liberty, and it is there at Messolonghi that the exiled Anselme Hericourt meets Byron.

"La Ruse," the only weapon of the Bourgeoisie, is more successful. The king dares not attack the merchants who grow increasingly rich, patronise the Church, ally themselves to the great families, and even speak in the royal councils: it is the time of the
Gods." As administrator of the Banque Vogt and of a Cuban consortium, Los Dudos and the Dice, two mountains and the plain, on their feet, he breaks virgin soil, increases, and brings to prosperity, the agriculture, industry, and the trade, of the property. The Cubans impoverished and over-awed by their war with Spain, gain confidence and riches while working in the plantations.

The Promethean joy of a promoter, the rancour of a business man, the low greed of shareholders, all mingle like the flames from a brazier, unceasingly fed with more and more power. As affairs progress, the number of persons whom Paul Adam creates increase to Homeric profusion; the horizon broadens with startling swiftness, and it is the whole social system, including the Syndicalist movement, that the reader surveys. By the epic scale of his work, Paul Adam becomes allied to Balzac and Zola, but there are essential differences between their work and his. While Balzac dissects and judges society with the understanding, the spirit, even with the prejudices of a member of the aristocracy . . . . and while Zola criticises with the passion of a Republican, and a humanitarian, Paul Adam analyses his facts and builds up his observations with the impartiality of a philosopher and the exactitude of a scientist. His style, clearer than that of Balzac and more vivid than that of Zola, firmly outlines his characters, who, if they are often stiffer than the life-like creations of Balzac, have a greater reality than the symbols, dressed up in naturalistic fripperies, of Zola. It is a style most certainly his own: Cubist is the epithet that springs to my mind when I ponder on the rightness, on the archaic and epic strength, of his design. It seems as if he had balanced the vast scope of his subject by precision of plan and by the descriptive values of his prose. The style, which, in "Robes Rouge," "La Force" and "La Ruse" is a little awkward and unduly systematic, matures in "Le Lion d'Arras"; published last year, just after Paul Adam's death.

Personally I feel that the rapid march of our transitory epoch rebels against a simplification of style, and to me the great merit of Paul Adam lies in his ability to cast into aesthetic modern form, a conception extending over more than a century. The spirit of his work, its search after objective truth, and its historical and human value, give it higher rank than the ordinary novel.

I said that his work was immoral and here I must explain my meaning. Paul Adam never delivers any judgments of right and wrong which would not be justified by the religious and philosophic beliefs of the character expressing them . . . . but from the fact that these different moralities are opposed in their tendencies, and antagonistic in their results, do not they themselves illuminate each other sufficiently to give birth to an implicit conclusion in the mind of the reader? To say that these ethical principles take their right place in time and space is not to say enough; we watch their birth. . . . Republican doctrines of 1893, bourgeois prejudices, Jesuit catholicism of the Restoration, royalist sophisms, capitalist liberalism . . . . it is in the very souls of the characters in the novels that we see the slow crystallisation of a mental attitude which will govern their line of conduct. But there is more; Paul Adam is a healthy and robust poet, who knows how to exalt the soul, which he has created, to the high destiny which he has determined for it: and to describe the heightened emotions in his work among men and things has given birth to happiness and beauty. And in that way he has rediscovered the eternal source of beauty and goodness . . . . the sacred fire of the poet.

PIERRE ROBERT.
The performance of Beaumont and Fletcher’s “The Maid’s Tragedy” recently given by the Phoenix was chiefly remarkable for its acting. Verse is full of pitfalls to the actor if it is not easier, far more dangerous, than to catch the lyric mood of verse, particularly of vigorous poets like Beaumont and Fletcher, and to let it rip. But this external, first impression makes it impossible to act the part; one cannot read it, or, if one is very powerful, rant. Rant means “to rave in violent empty declamation”; and Mr. Ion Swinley, who played Aminor, and Mr. George Skillan, who played Melanitus, did not get beyond rant. The reason is quite simple; both are big parts, and it is all that can be expected of an actor in the time allowed for such a production that he should remember his lines and give what one may call a prima facie rendering. But behind the sound of verse is sense, behind the sense is character, and the play of character on this level of feeling produces tragic beauty. Until an actor is sufficiently familiar with his lines to cease to bother about remembering them, one cannot reasonably hope that his delivery of them will convey any sense, any character, any beauty. He can only rant what he does not understand and has not had time to feel constructively; and the result is like trying to play the Appassionata on a steam-whistle. Both Mr. Swinley and Mr. Skillan are powerful actors; Mr. Skillan even made himself sweat, but I hope that he will not delude himself, as Tree did, with the belief that his greatest performance was the one that made him sweat most. I like power; I should not object if Mr. Swinley and Mr. Skillan were even more powerful than they are, if they had the “forty-parson power” that Sydney Smith described, and Byron required of his actors. Power is simply a primary condition of performance, it is not, in itself, a substitute for it. Besides, the power expended in this case was physical, not poetic, power, vox et præterea nihil; it did not serve to make these men intelligible or credible, to say nothing of beautiful. Not one line was unwarrantable unless we are told what the standard is. I need hardly say that this is not the opinion of most of the critics. One discovered that Mr. Swinley was “very lovable” as Aminor and that Mr. George Skillan was “excellent as Melanitus.” Another discovered that both of them were “excellent,” another referred to “the good elocution and full-blooded style” of these actors, another discovered that “the entire cast of the play was excellent”—which somewhat disguises the word “excellent.” But to excel is to drive beyond, to surpass; and unless I know the standard, the judgment means nothing to me. Without mentioning continental actors, there are two old Bensonians on the London stage, Mr. Henry Ainley and Mr. Leon Quartermaine, who may fairly be taken as a standard in the delivery of verse. Both of them present a man and a meaning with the heightened reality of poetry; they make poetry seem natural and credible, a style in which men ought to speak and feel. If Mr. Swinley and Mr. Skillan did not go beyond these two actors, “excellent” is unwarrantable unless we are told what the standard is. I cannot accept the suggestion that I am unnaturally stupid by failing to derive any intelligible idea from the ranting of Mr. Swinley and Mr. Skillan when I have no difficulty at all, but rather an extreme delight, in listening to Mr. Ainley and Mr. Quartermaine.

Then there was Miss Sybil Thorndike, who played Evadne. One paper published her photograph under the caption “A Great Tragic Actress!”; one critic said that she “played the part with melodramatic strength,” another said that she “made a very effective Evadne”; while dear old Father “Times” remembers that “she is a born tragedy-queen.” Judging, however, by what I have seen of her performances since she came to the Court Theatre with Miss Horniman many years ago, I can only suppose that she has either forgotten her birth or is ashamed of it. True, she has spacious gestures of the arms, but the grand manner of tragedy demands a little more than that. I do not regard Miss Lillah McCarthy as “a born tragedy-queen,” but in deportment and walk she is certainly nearer to it than is Miss Sybil Thorndike. I will go further, and say that in the use of her voice she indicates, although she does not achieve, the supreme expression of grandeur that the “born tragedy-queen” must have. I have consistently refused to use the word “great” in connection with Miss McCarthy; but Miss Sybil Thorndike is not on the same level with her. She has never left Lancashire; as Hecuba, she nagged, nagged, nagged like any old Lancashire woman until I thought: “What’s Hecuba to me that I should weep for her?” As Evadne, she played the wedding-night scene with a petty, paltry derision that was further from tragedy than Doll Tressshead’s “I am meat for your master.” If ever the grand manner was necessary, it was in this scene; Evadne had to impress Amintor with the fact that she was his superior because she was a King’s mistress, she had to hold him in awe lest his fury should break bounds and kill her; she claimed the “divinity that doth hedge a king” as her protection—and she did it with the same intonations, the same gestures, as if she were offering a sacrifice on the altar (for the King was bound to his bed). She dripped over her lost virtue nearer the emotional level of “That’s” song: “I was a good little girl till I met you”; and prodded him in the belly with her dagger. She never approached greatness, apparently has no idea of what it means; she has to reduce everything to a domestic level, preferably to the kitchen, to understand it. When Masefield’s “Nan” is a tragedy, Miss Thorndike will be a tragedy-queen—but not till then.

The maid, Aspatia, played by Isabel Jeans, certainly made her “tragedy” intelligible; no woman ought to live who looked and talked like that. Presumably she was intended to be melancholy, to be dying of disappointment; and an actress who under these conditions could make it appear beautifully in its “dying fall.” “There’s more in these signs; these profound heavens; you must translate; ’tis fit we understand them.” So said Hamlet’s uncle to his mother; and the request may be passed on to Aspatia. I grant that it may be silly for a woman to die of disappointed love; it is not done nowadays, the fashion has changed; but an actress has to show us how it happened, and not how ridiculous she can make it look. No melancholy person, for example, was ever wide-eyed with astonishment as Miss Jeans was; no melancholy person ever used the peevish, prosaic tones that Miss Jeans used. “And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,” is the key to the character, although Ophelia said it; but the deject do not talk glibly, glibly, but with difficulty, heavily, in gloomy trailing tones, and brooding silence.

There was one performance, though, that was of different rank. Mr. Stanley Lathbury played Callianax as though he had found anything altogether, any feelingly characterised study of the stupid poltroon that made me marvel the more at the lack of characterisation in the rest of the cast. Here, at last, was a sense of reality, a thorough realisation of the poet’s intention—but I can only regret that it was a study of dotage.

On Monday, November 28, the Old Vic produces for a fortnight “All’s Well that Ends Well,” its thirteenth Shakespeare production since 1914.
Readers and Writers.

I offer no apology for drawing another fish or two from the broad stream of Monsieur Thibaudet’s contributions to criticism. As I have said before, he is one of the most enlightening and suggestive theorists of modern literature, and he is none the less attractive because one is impelled to disagree with him occasionally. On this occasion I am neither going to agree nor to disagree with him: I am merely going to draw attention to certain recent pronouncements of his which, while they do not solve, serve to intensify two problems that have engaged me previously in these columns—I mean the technique of the novel, and the distinction between prose and verse. The former subject is touched upon, “un peu au hasard,” in the current number of “La Nouvelle Revue Française.” Monsieur Thibaudet is reviewing “Le Roman Anglais de notre temps,” a short account of the English novel recently published in London by M. Abel Chevalley. I have not seen M. Chevalley’s book, and cannot say if it is the usual goggled-eyed view of English literature that most Frenchmen seem blessed with; and M. Thibaudet does not help me to a conclusion in this respect, for even he can refer, in such an imported fashion, to Messrs. Kipling and Wells as “les deux plus illustres romanticiens de l’avant-dernière génération”—and this the generation of Henry James and Mr. Conrad! But I no more require a Frenchman to appreciate Henry James (though I do not say the same of Conrad) than I expect a Frenchman to require me to appreciate Maurice Barrès. These growths are too indigenous. But I do, on the other hand, expect a guarded attitude towards the railway-carriage reputations sedulously fostered by some of our too commercial travellers. But this is by the way, and I now come to M. Thibaudet’s “question de technique.” M. Chevalley makes the broad statement in his book that English novelists “compose” badly. Our French friends need have no tenterhooks here; before James it would be quite accurate to say that our novelists did not “compose” at all. In fact, the word is even now but awkwardly appropriate in this connection. But far from censuring the English novel for that reason, M. Thibaudet ventures to question the whole Flaubertian tradition, and to throw doubt upon the plausibility of our fastidiously search for a perfect form. Let me render his argument briefly. He distinguishes between the meaning of the word “composition” (or, as I think we would say, “form”) when applied to the novel and to the drama. Dramatic form, with its “unities,” its “situations,” is a composition in space rather than in time. It is a geometrical symmetry rather than a rhythm. But the novel, “le roman-nature,” reflects immediacy; it is life itself in flux and duration. It is not “composed,” because composition only exists when there is concentration, or, in the extreme case, simultaneously in space. Or, as it might be said, a novel is not composed: it is disposed. It is not the result of an idea: it is itself a fund of ideas. In short, the most that can be said is that there may be evidence of a certain form after a novel has been written, but such form did not exist as a preconceived idea in the mind of the novelist before he put pen to paper.

There is something very attractive about this theory for the simple reason that it so beautifully fits certain facts. Now, I think the supreme examples of novels like “The Brothers Karamazov” or “Moby Dick.” Yet it is very difficult to discover in them any secret of technique that contributes materially to their effect. There is, in fact, nothing but their innate intensity. They just consist of a duration of interest, though the plot does, of course, work up to a climax. Then turn to “The Awkward Age,” with its carefully placed “lights,” its exacting objectivity, its general suggestion of an exactly contrived quincunx, of a pat-
tern balanced like the design of a Persian rug. One cannot resign that pleasure, that sense, of exquisite shape, of conscious fidelity to a discipline. Or to take a more obvious example of the same author’s work, examine the structure of “The Other House.” This novel was originally a play, but for perhaps very obvious reasons James did not succeed in a playwright. So he turned the play into a novel, and as a novel it gains obviously and enormously from its dramatic structure. Its unities, its situations, are composed “in space.” Its intensities are static compositions. Yet it is a novel, and a very good one indeed. I do not pretend to resolve the problem. It is, perhaps merely a statement of thesis and antithesis, the expression of mentalities diverse enough to be called positive and negative. Monsieur Thibaudet’s theory, it should be noted, has certain Bergsonian affinities, and Bergson is the latest philosopher of romanticism. The dramatic theory, on the other hand, is classical at every turn. It is even Aristotelian. One must, sooner or later, enrol under one of these banners—but not until it is necessary to light.

My second catch comes from M. Thibaudet’s recently published “La Vie de Maurice Barrès.” This work is one of a series of four books to appear under the general title of “Trente Ans de la Vie Française,” and the series will be simply indispensable to all lovers of sound criticism. The first volume dealt with Charles Maurras, the third will be entitled “Le Bergsonisme,” and the fourth will be a general survey called “Trente Ans, et Génération.” Of Monsieur Thibaudet’s apology for Maurice Barrès I wish to say little. It is extremely interesting in itself, as a piece of critical exposition; but as I find the subject of the essay of so little intrinsic interest, I leave the matter there, doing M. Thibaudet the small justice of quoting one or two of his discursive theories. It may be remembered that when discussing the “demarcation” of verse and prose some weeks ago, I came to the conclusion that it was impossible to legislate for two separate categories: that the categories, in fact, graduated insensibly from one extreme to the other. But M. Thibaudet makes the following distinction:

In prose each phrase creates for itself the law of its own rhythm, whilst in verse each phrase creates for itself a new annual reason for submitting to a law which already exists. This is a very subtle distinction, and to defend my previous conclusion I should be driven to denying the reality of what M. Thibaudet calls “vers.” French “vers” and English “poetry” agree to be different things—even Frenchmen would admit the fact. It is the difference between Racine and Shakespeare. But which of these two do you—does the world—elect in honest preference? Not the submissive Racine, great though his “verse” be; but rather he of whom it could be said that every phrase he ever penned “created for itself the law of its own rhythm.” Yet the world does not call these phrases “prose.”

I could make these notes a running commentary on M. Thibaudet’s, but I have no right to assume that my readers expect M. Thibaudet at second hand. But let me mention one distinction more. M. Thibaudet regards the nineteenth century as a tragic duel between a conception of culture and a conception of life. He sees on the one hand the classical tradition enforcing the primary concept of culture and a conception of life. He sees on the one hand the classical tradition enforcing the primary concept of culture and life—beauty, truth and justice restricting life to a divine order. On the other hand he sees a reversal of this conception: a conception of the primary concept of life—beauty, truth and justice breaking through the arbitrary forms of culture “comme un matin neuf sur une mer incounee, et pure, et crue, et libre.” Again we must choose our standard; and perhaps after all the fight is upon us, and there is no more delay.
There is published this week by Mr. John Watkins, (21, Cecil Court, Charing Cross Road), under the sufficiently comprehensive title, "Cosmic Anatomy and the Structure of the Ego" (6s. 6d. net), an expanded exposition of the ideas contained in the series of articles on "Theology" contributed to The New Age seven or eight years ago by "M. B. Oxon." The articles themselves stimulated and partially satisfied considerable interest and repeated reference has since been made to them. In their present much elaborated form "M. B. Oxon" has provided his readers with a large amount of fresh material bearing "not only on such speculations as those concerning Space, Time and Relativity, but also on the practical problems of Religion, Psychology and Politics." The most encouraging tendency in thought to-day is in the direction of the "approfondissement des choses"; and "M. B. Oxon" is too well known by our readers as one of its exponents to need any further introduction.

**Herbert Read.**

**Music.**

Mr. Anthony Bernard and the London Chamber Orchestra. There are few things more exhilarating than a big modern orchestra with its blaze of colour. But like most good things, a big modern orchestra with its blare of sound and its volume of sound produced by a modern orchestra. London is amply supplied with chamber music of the highest order, do find some cause for complaint in the fact that nearly every big orchestral concert. We hope that in the first essay-and although there have been made already, with varying success, to give chamber orchestral concerts in London, but a conductor and orchestra who can give us Bach and the finest music is at the mercy of industry, which is at the moment thinking of the authors of this book) are singularly lacking in any practical suggestions. They do demonstrate that women are appallingly ignorant of themselves, and of men; and that men, acting under the influence of ideals largely maintained, if not created, by women, have some very simple ideas of women. That both are influenced by taboos generated by the abysmal ignorance of savagery, and modified (but not improved) by religion and even modern education, cannot be denied; and that ignorance of vital matters is and always has been fatal to civilization is an obvious fact. The statement of the case for knowledge and intelligent treatment of the subject could not be better made; and the information given and indicated in this book should enable anyone to form a clear, if not necessarily a wise, opinion.

But they certainly leave people like myself in the dark concerning the probable and desirable social developments. Their main contention is granted theoretically by most people who are interested in public affairs; society organizes itself for war rather well, for industrial and financial purposes rather badly, for cultural purposes rather worse, and for the vital purpose of reproduction it is not really organised at all. The most important social institution in this connection is marriage (of the 692,438 children born in England and Wales in 1919 only 41,876 were illegitimate), and that ignorance of vital matters is and always has been fatal to civilization is an obvious fact.

The Queen's Hall is not an ideal place in which to hear any solo instrument, but M. Casals can rise above his surroundings and keep his instrument unaffected by adverse circumstances.

**H. Rootham.**

**Views and Reviews.**

**The New Humanism—III.**

The other essays in this book* by Dr. Iva Peters and Dr. Phyllis Blanchard contain a great deal of conveniently summarised information on "The Institutionalised Sex Taboo," and "The Sex Problem in The Light of Modern Psychology," and the book is well worth keeping as a reference book and bibliography. But the authors have the same obsession with the non-reproductive professional classes that Dr. Knight showed in the first essay—and although themselves members of one of those classes, are singularly lacking in any practical suggestions. They do demonstrate that women are appallingly ignorant of themselves, and of men; and that men, acting under the influence of ideals largely maintained, if not created, by women, have some very simple ideas of women. That both are influenced by taboos generated by the abysmal ignorance of savagery, and modified (but not improved) by religion and even modern education, cannot be denied; and that ignorance of vital matters is and always has been fatal to civilization is an obvious fact. The statement of the case for knowledge and intelligent treatment of the subject could not be better made; and the information given and indicated in this book should enable anyone to form a clear, if not necessarily a wise, opinion.

But they certainly leave people like myself in the dark concerning the probable and desirable social developments. Their main contention is granted theoretically by most people who are interested in public affairs; society organizes itself for war rather well, for industrial and financial purposes rather badly, for cultural purposes rather worse, and for the vital purpose of reproduction it is not really organised at all. The most important social institution in this connection is marriage (of the 692,438 children born in England and Wales in 1919 only 41,876 were illegitimate), and that ignorance of vital matters is and always has been fatal to civilization is an obvious fact. The statement of the case for knowledge and intelligent treatment of the subject could not be better made; and the information given and indicated in this book should enable anyone to form a clear, if not necessarily a wise, opinion.

* "Taboo and Genetics." By M. M. Knight, Ph.D., Iva Lookther Peters, Ph.D., and Phyllis Blanchard. (Kegan Paul. 1os. 6d. net.)
If monogamy does not maintain the population, society will have to find something that will; and the feminist insistence on marriage as a moral and social ideal will be disregarded simply because it is not fruitful. The simple fact is that, as Mr. Pell showed in his "The Law of Births and Deaths," reproduction is a specific function governed by its own laws; and if society willalienate State and motherhood, it is better to do as Mr. Shaw did, and disentangle domesticity and motherhood, and begin to think of motherhood as a separate function, and the only one with which society is vitally concerned. But the authors do not help us here.

A. E. R.

Reviews.

Problems of a New World. By J. A. Hobson. (George Allen and Unwin. 7s. 6d. net.)

All attempts to interpret world movements and problems in the light of the new psychology have their value, and Mr. Hobson, in his study of the conditions which led up to, and down from, the world war, presages hazy mind with its inseparable seductions and her epitaphs to the modern internationalism. "Blessed be ye poor. " The organisation of society for reproductive purposes entails primarily a better distribution of wealth; it will also entail, when we regard motherhood as a social function, a re-organisation of industry, for many of the tasks that women now perform in industry undo them physically for reproduction. This will entail a profound modification of the feminist claim that "women take all industry for their province"; "what woman wants" is no sound guide to what society should grant her. This will obviously have its effect on domestic arrangements; for the number of women who are capable of having children that ought to be born diminishes at every stage of selection, consequently the number of children that every fertile woman must have to maintain the population increases, and her specialisation in the biological function must become a necessity, whereas, up to the present, housekeeping on the small and fluctuating income of the average working-man is oppressive to a fertile woman, and increases the risk of unsatisfactory children being born. There obviously must be considerable domestic help given to a fertile woman, if the greatest domestic need is to be maintained, and the average working-man is likely to scratch his head, and wonder if he has any right to be in his own home. If the result should be a slump in marriage, society will be compelled to turn its attention to fruitful unions, whether regular or irregular. If it results, it will be obliged to regard, the illegitimate child as being as important from the social point of view as the legitimate, the case for marriage will lose its last support.
crease production is to "socialise industry." His conclusions, in fact, leave us exactly where we were.

The Prevention of Cancer. By Robert Bell, M.D., F.R.S. (G. Bell and Sons, Ltd. 38. 6d. net.)

The continual increase of cancer (the Registrar-General, in his 1919 report, says that "cancer forms the one great exception to the general tendency for mortality at most ages to decline") gives this essay from Dr. Bell an exceptional public importance. His twenty-eight years' experience of the treatment and cure of cancer has driven him, as he says in his preface, "to the conclusion that Cancer is a self-inflicted disease; and it has been my endeavour, in the following pages, to offer ample evidence in support of my contention. And because I feel convinced this is the true solution of the problem, I have no choice but to maintain that it is a preventable disease, nay, easily preventable."

The concurrence of his views with those of the late Forbes Ross, with those of Dr. A. White Robertson in "Studies In Electro-Pathology," and the tentative conclusions reached by Mr. Morley Roberts in his "Warfare In The Human Body," after a survey of the evidence offered by the experts in cancer research, coupled with Dr. Bell's successful practice, is sufficient justification for a hearty recommendation of this essay to the general public. The facts that cancer mortality "has increased relatively more for males than for females, though for several years prior to 1919 this increase had been apparently arrested for both sexes" (Registrar-General's report, 1919), and that for four years prior to 1919 a large proportion of the male population was subject to unusual conditions of life (particularly in the matter of diet) give additional importance to this essay. If cancer is, as Morley Roberts argued, a failure of developmental machinery, and the endocrine glands are the governors of the growth of the body, it is of supreme importance that those glands should be supplied by the blood stream with the materials necessary for healthy functioning. The increased consumption during the war of what Dr. White Robertson calls electrically dead foods, and the decreased consumption of the electrically "live" foods, have demonstrably deprived the endocrine glands of their necessary nutriment. Just as a diet of polished rice gave the Japanese beri-beri (McCarrison has shown that pigeons fed on an exclusive diet of polished rice suffer quickly from hyperplasia of the thyroid, atrophy of the thymus, and of the generative glands, with enlargement of the liver; and such pigeons "die in large numbers from invasion of the blood by certain micro-organisms of the colt group which may inhabit their own intestines"), so bulky-beef and tinned vegetables have something to answer for in the increase of male cancer.

Dr. Bell has kept his essay free from bewildering technicalities, which is, perhaps, a defect, for the layman is supremely impressed by what he does not understand, and tends to measure the importance of a theory or a regimen by the authority of its advocates. But if people will be impressed by what they do not understand, and tends to measure the importance of a theory or a regimen by the authority of its advocates. But if people will only act on the simple rules laid down by Dr. Bell, the cancer mortality, which is rapidly meeting the tuberculosis mortality, like scales in contrary motion, will soon begin to show a decrease, and this dread disease be banished. It is no part of man's destiny to grow fungi in the living body.

The Little Death. By Irene Forbes-Mosse. Translated by Mrs. Henry Head. (Allen and Unwin. 7s. 6d. net.)

The fact that the author is the grand-daughter of Gerbe's Bettina Brentano will, no doubt, interest many people in these short descriptive fantasies and memories. She writes of all sorts of things, of books, of people, of scenery, of a vaguely conceived lover who never appears, and conveys the impression that women like to imagine they convey. "Good gracious, the year is old already... This Christmas there will be no fir-trees for me thick with snow, no snowflakes like puff-balls for me to carry on my nose... thinking, if it does not melt before I reach my front door, something delightful is going to happen... Something delightful... Oh, you, my dear! Am I very proud or exceedingly humble?... etc. Neither; just egoistical, more concerned with one paltry whim or sensation of yours than with the world that surrounds you. When Bacco shot their last hen, "it was like a scene in 'Freischütz'... when a young soldier carried an old woman's basket: "I felt my heart contract: I drew two or three deep breaths—as at the most beautiful music." There are 216 pages of similar description of her sensations.

The Good Hope: A Play in Four Acts. By Herman Heijermans. An English version by Christopher St. John. (Hendersons. 28.)

"The Good Hope" has received considerable attention in England. We saw in seeing an excellent performance of it given by the Pioneer Players in 1912; it seems to have been first produced in this country by the Stage Society in 1903, and to have been played by Miss Ellen Terry during her suburban and provincial tour in 1904-5, and during her American tour in 1906-7. The performances in the various productions include some of the most famous stage names of this generation, and the last; and it is a play that is astonishingly effective on the stage. But it has very little interest in the study; its style is devoid of idiom, the language has neither emotional content nor intensity, nor are the characters apart from the personalities which interpreted them) of any interest. Even the argument of it is not convincing, for insurance companies do not usually insure smacks that are notoriously rotten, or pay out in response to a telephone call—and call with the money. They have been known to refuse payment, to bring action for fraudulent misrepresentation and so forth; Simon would have been a good witness for them. The capitalist is not in business for the benefit of other capitalists, as Heijermans seems to believe, but for profit; and there would be no profit in the insurance of rotten smacks. However, "The Good Hope" does present a crude picture of the dangers that fishermen endure, dangers that the small capitalist like Bos is not concerned to minimise. That is why he remains a small capitalist; a large one finds it cheaper to minimise the risks, even insurance is cheaper pro rata for an Art boat, and running costs and repairs are less. The sentiment of the play is rather over-loaded, with some of the women wanting the men back because they are married, and the others because they ought to be married; reading the third act makes us feel like Jo: "you go on with your damned stories... instead of trying to cheer us up a bit." Even a fisherman's life is not all drowning, whatever the brutality of the capitalist system; and there is apparently no hardship in the play that a little more money could not cure. But tragedy is born of insolvable problems.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

PROPA GANDA.

Sir,—Will all those interested in the Social Credit Movement resident in the Cambridge district kindly communicate with me.


All communications relative to The New Age should be addressed to The New Age, 38, Cursitor Street, E.C.4.