NOTES OF THE WEEK.

The Washington directors, and President Harding in particular, are to be highly congratulated on their stage management. They have brought off their coups with dramatic effect. The sudden production of the Four-Power Treaty, signed and complete, was a crowning stroke. In the application of the 5—5—3 ratio the original proposals had, it is true, to be seriously modified. Japan has insisted after all on retaining the Mutsu; and this will mean our building two new capital ships. Thus the economy which is the sole direct advantage (a very dubious one, as we have pointed out, under our existing social methods) of the limitations will be greatly diminished. Still, the reduction of armaments is part of an all-round arrangement, which will have the very important effect of postponing, perhaps for a decade, the outbreak of the next war. The Washington results, in short, are likely to prove almost the maximum that could have been obtained by purely political means; and within its necessarily limited scope—how narrowly limited we have been continually enforcing—the Conference must be pronounced a success. It becomes, therefore, all the more important that people should not exaggerate the success; and fortunately there are some, at any rate, in business circles, who are not only not deceived, but have the courage to try to undeceive others. Sir Edgar Speyer, in a recent interview, has declared that, “Most of us who are engaged in world business have no illusions as to the practical value of international conferences.” He seems unduly pessimistic, however, as to the possibility of a radical change of conditions. “So long as we are human,” he says, “we are going to continue to compete.” Well, there is competition and competition. There is no inevitability about the present cut-throat competition for the indispensable basis of life, whether between individuals, classes, or nations. It is quite possible so to adjust the conditions that industry and commerce shall be directed to serving the needs of all, and that the competitive ambition of individuals shall be canalised along socially serviceable lines. And if any nation were so to order its affairs, it would cease to be a destructively competitive unit in its economic relations to the rest of the world.

An encouraging feature of the Conference is that the ostensible outlook and spirit of its proceedings are definitely better than those of most of the diplomats and Elder Statesmen of the various countries. The Governments have, in fact, been forced to make a show—and the best show that existing conditions would allow—of putting world relations on a basis of pacific idealism. Their object is, of course, to preserve the existing economic system. But they have been made to feel that it cannot be saved, unless it can appear to guarantee peace. There is abroad a vast mass of deep-rooted horror of war and of the type of international relations which spells war. The episode is a proof that there is a great amount of goodwill among the peoples. It is, as we have constantly insisted, very much more intellectual enlightenment and a clear view of the issues that are needed, than a change of heart. But more—this goodwill is a real force in the world. It can, and does, compel the actual exercisers of power to do its bidding, just so far as it has clearly made up its mind on any definite thing that it wants. If it can secure—very much against the grain of a large proportion of the diplomats—peace. There is abroad a vast mass of deep-rooted horror of war and of the type of international relations which spells war. The episode is a proof that there is a great amount of goodwill among the peoples. It is, as we have constantly insisted, very much more intellectual enlightenment and a clear view of the issues that are needed, than a change of heart. But more—this goodwill is a real force in the world. It can, and does, compel the actual exercisers of power to do its bidding, just so far as it has clearly made up its mind on any definite thing that it wants. If it can secure—very much against the grain of a large proportion of the controlling elements—the palliatives of Washington (which are all it was asking for, and almost more than it had dared to hope), it could equally secure really radical concessions. The destiny of the people is in the hands of the people, and not ultimately in those of their rulers, political or financial. The people must learn the right things to ask for, and then insist on having them. Fortunately they are not being left without guidance. If America saves its soul, the world will be saved. And in America the new propaganda of Mr. Henry Ford is bound to exert considerable influence. Whatever may be the merits of his precise scheme, and whatever may prove the success or otherwise of his announced at-
The matter of a firm foundation for international peace is urgent. There simply must not be another war; but there will be, if the relation of production to distribution is not radically reformed. It is doubtful if civilisation could survive the next war at all, for the last was a picnic to what the next will be. Happily journals of all kinds, even of so crudely unthinking a type as "John Bull," are hammering home on the public mind a sense of the impending horrors. It seems to be pretty well agreed that there will be no distinction of combatant and non-combatant. Women and children being predominantly aerial, the major area of every belligerent country will be open to attack. It may easily happen, indeed, that the actual fighting forces will be the people who run the least risk; for while not more exposed to attack than civilians, they will naturally receive every scientific protection, such as it would hardly be possible to make available for the whole population. It is a serious possibility that we might find the least estimable type of "shirker" crowding into the bomb-proof dug-outs of the army, while the real heroes faced the horrors of the home front as munition workers or special constables.

The example of Ireland reinforces that of Washington in demonstrating the power of enlightened public opinion. The reversal of the situation, as compared with six months ago, is almost incredible. The voice of reason has, to an extent that seemed beyond hope, come to prevail on both sides. And, if that voice has as yet hardly made itself heard in Belfast, Ulsterdom is at least disconcerted by the revelation of its impotence when confronted by an unexpected solidarity of reasonable beings. It is to be hoped that the Irish, having attained their Free State, will make a more sensible use of it than enfranchised small nations have usually made. For every nation what matters most is the economic problem. The Irish have had such an extended fling in the heroics of political struggles as might well nurse the envy of the melodramatic actor that sleeps in the breast of every one of us. We hope they will now get to business. They are fortunate in possessing in "AE" a unique combination of the visionary idealist and the business-like reformer. His work, "The National Being," is not nearly as widely known as it should be; it might prove helpful by no means in Ireland alone. But at any rate for that country the hope evidently lies in the agricultural co-operative movement. Yet we would point out once more that this (like our own Guilds) can only prove an instrument of radical social transformation if it develops its own machinery of credit. Further it must tackle drastically the problem of prices, and the Just Price can only be put in force communally. It must therefore be at least endorsed by Government, though it need not necessarily be secured, to any large extent, by political action. So based and reinforced, voluntary co-operation might, by a natural and steady expansion, prove by far the best road to a co-operative commonwealth.

Only those who are interested in the red herring industry will be able to work up any excitement about the Labour Council's deputation to the Prime Minister on unemployment, following up the solemn mockery of its "Conference." Mr. Lloyd George had no difficulty in exposing the hollowness of a large part of their demands. We are glad to note that Mr. Dun can Carmichael drew attention to an article in the "Daily Herald," protesting energetically against these fictitious, and certainly ill with political sharpness. He does well to insist on the setting of our own house in order as the first matter, whatever may be the situation in other countries. He shows pointedly how things have been allowed to slip back since the war, wheat production, for example, falling off by millions than before. His special contention is perfectly sound; he is pushing for the right objective; but he does not seem to have any definite idea as to the method of obtaining this. So far as he does adumbrate a determinate policy, he would seem to rely on bureaucratic collectivism. He betrays the incurable tendency of the Labour-Socialist to think of the problem as, primarily and directly, one of the administration of the means of production. In spite of his predominant concern for the home consumer, he has evidently not fully realised the axiom that "Laws, after distribution, and production will look after itself."

The General Council of the Trade Union Congress has been adding to the acreage of Labour memoranda—this time on the subject of the attack on the wages and hours of the workers. Labour is possessed indeed of a Benedick-like loquacity; it will still be talking, oblivious to any long memory of what its protest against its present protest protest strikes the duly peremptory attitude and deals the customary resounding thump to the table, "Organised Labour will refuse to accept the theory," and so forth. It always sets out, "high-stomached and full of ire," as though it would out-roar any mere lion; but before it gets through one can always detect the roar breaking every now and then into a helpless bleat. The best portions of the manifesto are, we must admit, quite good. It contains one excellent statement of general principle: "Our industries are social necessities, created by social need, built up by generations of social effort, and should only be maintained so long as they meet the demand of those employed in them for a standard of life in accordance with the potentialities represented by the modern powers of wealth production." This being the first sentence in the memorandum, naturally one would have searched for it in vain in the "Daily Herald," though its immediate context was there quoted. But the memorialists have no positive suggestion to make as to how this eminently desirable social standard of life is to be realised. We should like to ask them to two questions. Do they admit that any of the recent reductions in wages have been justified? If not, what is their programme for obviating the necessity of wage-cuts? We have stated our alternative. If on the other hand they do accept a certain amount of reduction, what test do they propose for discriminating the legitimate from the illegitimate in the employers' demands? It is no good flourishing mere generalities about refusing to accept "a bare living for the worker." Any standard above the barest subsistence at an able-bodied pauper level is, in the nature of things, of something"s more "visionary" character. It is extensible or compressible almost indefinitely according to circumstances. It has none of the sharp definiteness which can present an absolutely unyielding dead wall of resistance to the tremendous pressure of "economic necessities." That, is, relatively to the existing system. It is quite beside the point to assume, as the manifesto does in places, that the demand for reductions is all due (though some of it undoubtedly is) to rapacity or arbitrary tyranny on the part of "profiteering" employers. Many manufacturers are genuinely at their wits' end how to carry on at all amidst all the difficulties of this time. Has the Trade Union Congress any plan for helping them out, and putting them in a position to
meet its (in themselves) most just and reasonable demands for a higher standard of life?

The very same issue of the "Times," in which the Trade Union Congress manifesto appeared, contained also, curiously enough, a column of epistolary wisdom from six industrial and financial magnates, including Sir Hugh Bell and Sir Walter Runciman. We have seen burlesque reports of speeches at imaginary conferences on unemployment; the difficulty of the parodist in this field is that it is so hard to be more extravagant than the real thing. The Big Six positively rollick in Gibbonian fun through sentence after sentence. "An article or a speech that will fit the present Naval Budget; the very comforting to the worker, the real value of whose reward for the same service is being arbitrarily juggled with, from week to week, through the instrument of irresponsible price control. "No power can force the buyer to buy as freely as the knowledge of a fair deal"; if so, the Six had better assist us to secure him a fair deal, in which he shall pay the true economic cost of what he gets, and that only. Meanwhile this is rather like saying that the element of hope in the Irish situation could, by the well-known process of goodwill, be restored to the Protestants and Catholics of Belfast. "Every inducement should therefore be given to save capital, which has already (teste Sir Raymond Dennis) made us so rich that we literally do not know how to dispose of our riches. We are ourselves advocates of the consumer, but (if we need trouble to treat this sort of stuff seriously) expected" (what in Heaven's name is expected? That the boys, in order to be educated, must be starved is enough to turn the most promising, and especially the most promising, boys into a habitual and resourceful criminal. Charges have been made against the officers of the Institution, but what can be expected of men who live for years in prison, and are virtually as much prisoners as the prisoners? As it is, these men have not been chosen for conspicuous saintliness: it is doubtful, even, as the "Daily News" says, "whether the Home Office authorities realise the need for men of peculiar gifts and training to carry out the very arduous responsibilities imposed on the administrators of 'Borstal' principles." In short, the whole thing is being conducted not intelligently, but merely incuriously, and the object of the 'Borstal' system is not to educate its boys but to reform them; to recreate them in the image of the penitent law-breaker, with a pronounced system of mere punishment, and therefore makes more possible, it matters little in what direction, from the old senselessly cruel system of mere punishment should not be permitted in any "reformatory"; a reformatory should be organised to appear as little like a prison as possible, and not, as at present, a small copy of a prison. These things should not need to be said in a civilised country; but we cannot forget that capital punishment is still permitted and still positively approved. But the very existence of capital lapse, and that so fast that no time is left for the lengthy processes of reformism. Hence a considerable number of intellectuals drift into revolution, and insist on resurrecting a largely obsolete "class-war," in order to furnish themselves with the means of making reformism exhaust the possibilities, they are right. It becomes therefore a question of the highest practical importance, is there any third way? We submit that there is—transformation. To repeat an illustration we have used before—the revolutionist would transport society bodily and instantaneously from Crewe to Derby, so to speak; the reformist expects a Crewe train to "evolve" gradually into a Derby train; the transformist proposes, at the first convenient junction, to switch the social train decisively on to the Derby instead of the Crewe line. Our Generation.

The questions recently raised about the conduct of the Borstal Institution trails a number of others in its wake. To the "Daily News" the point at issue is "whether Portland, with its grim associations, atmosphere, and traditions, is a suitable place in which to put the modern ideals of the Borstal system into practice." And that question may well be asked. If the Borstal system is in intention, as it seems to be, educative rather than punitive, then a prison is a strange place for its pupils. Even to visit a prison, as anyone who has done it must know, is a punishment; and to live in one, even if one's "food and comfort are as good as could be conceivably expected" (what in Heaven's name is expected? That the boys, in order to be educated, must be starved is enough to turn the most promising, and especially the most promising, boys into a habitual and resourceful criminal. Charges have been made against the officers of the Institution, but what can be expected of men who live for years in prison, and are virtually as much prisoners as the prisoners? As it is, these men have not been chosen for conspicuous saintliness: it is doubtful, even, as the "Daily News" says, "whether the Home Office authorities realise the need for men of peculiar gifts and training to carry out the very arduous responsibilities imposed on the administrators of 'Borstal' principles." In short, the whole thing is being conducted not intelligently, but merely incuriously, and the object of the 'Borstal' system is not to educate its boys but to reform them; to recreate them in the image of the penitent law-breaker, with a pronounced system of mere punishment, and therefore makes more possible, it matters little in what direction, from the old senselessly cruel system of mere punishment should not be permitted in any "reformatory"; a reformatory should be organised to appear as little like a prison as possible, and not, as at present, a small copy of a prison. These things should not need to be said in a civilised country; but we cannot forget that capital punishment is still permitted and still positively approved. But the very existence of capital
Nietzsche Revisited.
By Janko Lavrin.

IV.—NIETZSCHE AND RELIGION.

I.
A very curious and puzzling feature in Nietzsche is his attitude towards religion and religiosity. There are few thinkers who would have attacked everything that is connected with religion with such vehemence. But the very virulence of his attacks upon religion in general, and upon Christianity in particular, must appear rather suspicious to all those who can read between the lines, and especially to those who realise that the ferocity of Nietzsche's attacks was always proportionate to his conviction that he himself suffered from the very "disease" in question.

Why did he assail with such hysterical enmity God, Religion, Christianity? Surely because he was only too well aware that his own instincts, his own "Unconscious," were profoundly religious, religious even in a Christian sense. In other words, Nietzsche represents an interesting example of a man whose convictions have become irreligious while at the same time his instincts have remained intensely religious. Considering (intellecutally that is) religiosity as a sign of weakness and decadence, he naturally tries to repress it, and then the "press" it, and in this attempt he struggles against his own religious instinct as fiercely as he has struggled against his "decadence" and illness. In the same way as he valued Truth through Life, and not Life through one or another hypothetical "Truth" (as has been the way with most philosophers), he was bound to apply the same method to Religion, quite apart from the question whether he himself was religious or not. His whole dilemma was thus reduced not to the problem whether there is, or is not, an ultimate, an absolute truth in religion, but simply to the question whether religion and Christianity are positive or negative values in Life. As soon as the answer was given in the negative, it was the plain duty of his "intellectual honesty" to combat religion and to combat it all the more fiercely the more he was aware of his own personal tendency. It is true that he makes on one occasion, in his "Beyond Good and Evil," a subtle distinction between theism and religiosity, affirming that "though the religious instinct is in vigorous growth (in modern Europe)—it rejects the theistic satisfaction with profound distrust." But it is exactly this divergence between theism (which we reject by our intellect), and the religious instinct (which remains in us in spite of all our logic and reason), that leads to that paradoxical, double-faced attitude towards religion which Nietzsche himself suffered. For who can draw an exact line between theism and religion? Eliminate theism from religion and our religious instinct (provided we have really one) will either turn against itself, or it will wander hopelessly from one unsatisfactory substitute to the other—until it exhausts itself, or embraces at last some new, perhaps "scientific," dogma which may be even more questionable and fictitious than theism itself.

Nietzsche had in fact attempted to reject both religion and theism, and yet "temperamentally" he did not quite succeed in repudiating them, for new attacks on religion and theism reappear in various, often unexpected, disguises. His most fanatical attacks upon religion often are of a religious kind (in the manner of a Satanic God-struggler). Beside this the irrationality of his own Fate sometimes becomes too mysterious and too great for the conventional atheists to combat it. His "unknown God" the more defiantly he denies him, and the highest pitch of his defiance we find in his poem, "The Magician":

Edward Moore.
Pastor, and a friend who knew him in those days

Schopenhauer’s metaphysics which he embraced with

wished to adopt—that of the Church.” And, in fact,

writes that “from his earliest youth he (Nietzsche)

was called in his boyhood by his comrades “der kleine

boy seemed rather deserted, since his parents were

and form of our actual contemporary life could properly

in Philology and-Theology. His sister, Frau

in the unsuspecting, simple

have confined

Switzerland.—Thus do I lie,

The boy seemed rather deserted, since his parents were

of commentary. In other words, through the very

quality of his Antichristianity, Nietzsche displays his

modern “scientific” men who discard

Nietzsche actually made arrangements for placing the

expense. Immediately after his arrival in Bale

suitable to pronounce on the question whether Christianity is

Nietzsche actually made arrangements for placing the

Thou-hangman God:

presented a vivid and perfectly natural picture of the

I

It is well known that Nietzsche was the son of a

and that several generations of his ancestors

had followed the same profession. Nietzsche himself

was called in his boyhood by his comrades “der kleine

Pastor,“ and a friend who knew him in those days

writes that “from his earliest youth he (Nietzsche)

began preparing himself for the calling which he then

wished to adopt—that of the Church.” And, in fact,

when he entered the University in Bonn, he matriculated

in Phильноlogy and-Theology. His sister, Frau E.

Foerster Nietzsche, says that her brother “was a

very pious child; he pondered deeply over religious’

questions and always endeavoured to convert his

thoughts into deeds.” And among the poems the

young Nietzsche wrote in the winter 1863-64, while

still in the high-school at Schulpforta, we find a curious

composition under the title, “To the Unknown God,”

which shows us Nietzsche’s profound religiosity

(although even this poem already contains a hint of

“blasphemous” double-nature). It is quite possible

that later on his profound religious instinct gradually

turned against itself owing—partly at least—to the

reason that it was so strong that no external reality

and form of our actual contemporary life could properly

satisfy it—a process which is not so very rare in our
days.” From a remark of his sister, we gather in fact

that “perhaps the very reason why from youth onward

he drew further and further away from Christianity lay

in his deep religious sense, which could find no satisfaction

in the Christianity of our day. As he often

remarked, he had not undergone any struggles, but it

was extremely painful for him to have to give up his

faith in God.” His inner duality must have been

strengthened in the University where a profound

admiration for everything Hellenic was grafted upon his

religious Protestant-German trend. But even after

having given up Christianity and theism his religious

temperament found for a time a certain substitute in

Schopenhauer’s metaphysics which he embraced with

a truly religious fervour. And yet, from his first book

up to his “Antichrist” we may trace in him not so

much an “irreligious” philosopher as a typical inverted

Christian of the blood royal. He himself gives a most

valuable clue to this in his aphorism: “The Needful

Sacrifice” (“The Dawn of Day,” p. 61) when he says:

Those earnest, able, and just men of profound feelings,

who are still living at heart, owe it to themselves to

make one attempt to live for a certain space of time

without Christianity! They owe it to their faith that

they should thus for once take up their abode “in the

wilderness”—if for no other reason than that of being

able to pronounce on the question whether Christianity is

necessary. So far, however, they have confined them-

selves to their own narrow domain and insulted every-

one who happened to be outside it: yes, they even be-

come highly irritated when it is suggested to them that

beyond this little domain of theirs lies the great world,

and that Christianity is, after all, only a corner of it.

No; your evidence on the question will be valueless until

you have lived year after year without Christianity, and

with the inmost desire to continue to exist without it

until, indeed, you have withdrawn far, far away from it.

It is not when your nostalgia urges you back again, but

when your judgment, based on a strict comparison

drives you back, that your homecoming has any signi-

ficance! Men of coming generations will deal in this

manner with all the valuations of the past; they must

be voluntarily freed over again, together with their con-

traries, in order that such men may finally acquire the

right of shifting them.

A passage like this shows more clearly the psycho-

logical roots of Nietzsche’s “irreligiosity” than volumes

of commentary. In other words, through the very

quality of his Antichristianity, Nietzsche displays his

inherently Christian character. And, as he himself confesses: “I have on purpose lived through the

whole contrast of a religious character.” And

again, even more eloquently: “The Christianity of my

forebears reaches its logical conclusion in me: a stern

intellectual conscience, fostered and made by

Christianity itself, turns against Christianity: in me

Christianity raises itself and overcomes itself.”

III.

Nietzsche’s permanent double was in fact Christ,

especially in so far as his practical life and behaviour

are concerned. His sister relates that “the pious

women who made his acquaintance simply could not

understand how this noble thinker could fail to be a

good Christian, and at heart they deplored this

mistake. . . .” Or compare with Nietzsche’s gospel

of hardness and cruelty the following episode, also re-
corded by his sister: “On his walks my brother had

seen a little invalid boy sitting in front of a cottage.
The boy seemed rather deserted, since his parents were

occupied with the hay harvest. Nietzsche fell into the

habit of passing the child almost every day and giving

him sweets. He even took the child a little cloth, which

he moistened at a neighbouring spring, to wipe

the child’s face. The parents said that the boy was

happy all day in the anticipation that the ‘kind gentleman’

would come. My brother always reproached the

nature of his malady, and promised that, if the

child were taken to Bale, he should be curé at his

expense. Immediately after his arrival in Bale

Nietzsche actually made arrangements for placing the

boy in an infirmary. But even to his sorrow that the

poor little fellow had died in the interim, saying all the
time: ‘I shall soon go to the kind gentle-

man.’

There could be quoted many more illustrations of his

inherently Christian personality which was so strong

* Translations are taken mostly from “The Complete

Works,” edited by Dr. Oscar Levy (Pouils).
in him that it needed its greatest intellectual antithesis in order to be overcome at least theoretically. Only an incurable Christian could have been so violently Antichristian as Nietzsche was. His own Antichristianity was, so to speak, a kind of scientific atheism—upon Christ; and his anti-religious blasphemy was Antichristian as Nietzsche was, Christianity, philosophy and Wagner's music. Yet as soon as he became aware of their mystical (i.e., "decadent") philosophy and drowned his passion for support in pure science and deliberately trying to extirpate his own religious and metaphysical inclinations through an exaggerated cult of "positivism." Meanwhile, his repressed religious double was all the time waiting for an opportunity to reappear through the back-door, as it were, until he asserted himself in "Zarathustra" with such a vigour as never before. For "Zarathustra" could have been written only by a strongly religious temperament with a consciously "anti-religious" intellect. This explains the curious duality of the book: on the one side, a completely scientific trend with a decided Darwinian mark, and on the other, the verve and elan of a religious teacher. In some parts of this book Nietzsche at times reaches even a kind of mystic ecstasy and truly prophetic pathos, smuggling into his very "materialism" the quasi-mystical elements and pervading many pages with the mood of founders of religion. This duality we shall see also in Nietzsche's attitude towards morality.

The Nebular Origin of Life.

By Allen Upward.

"Life is a pure flame."—Sir Thomas Browne.

I.

Science is apt to frown on philosophic speculation, although the speculations of Kant in astronomy, and of Goethe and Monboddo in biology, have long been fulfilled. Yet the origin of life is a problem on which men of science themselves have set the example of indulging in speculations in which imagination has played a greater part than scientific method. A reason for this may be that the inquiry concerns at least four branches of natural science, physics, astronomy, chemistry and biology; and no man is a specialist in them all. The biologist might like to claim sole jurisdiction; but the authority of a science must needs be in proportion to its exactness; and therefore, where their fields overlap, the biologist is subject to the veto of the chemist. As soon as the specialist passes the bounds of his own province he ceases to speak with authority, and his speculations must be tested by reason, like those of the general philosopher.

These considerations may excuse one who is fully conscious that his scientific qualifications, outside the field of psychological anthropology, are those of Kant and Goethe rather than those of Laplace and Darwin, for submitting a tentative theory on the genesis of life to the consideration of those who may feel themselves qualified to judge of its probability; especially as it is one which may have an importation, and theories of spontaneous generation; the former coming from physicists and the latter from biologists.

(i) Kelvin's well-known suggestion, that life germs might have been brought to our planet by meteorites, has been improved on by Arrhenius, Director of the Physico-Chemical Nobel Institute, who thinks that such germs might have been carried hither across space by simple radiations, as of light. He calculates that radiation would be powerful enough to propel germs measuring 0.00016 mm. in diameter, and he claims that bacterial spores measuring only 0.0002 mm. in size have been revealed already by the microscope. ("Worlds in the Making," Eng. tr., p. 220.) Questions of size need not detain us, however, as there is nothing unscientific in postulating life germs of any degree of minuteness.

Neither of these astronomical speculations appears to be taken very seriously by other scientists. Pearson smiles at Kelvin's "etheral gondolas"; and Schäfer is not less amused by the time-table drawn up by Arrhenius for his celestial jelly-fish—20 days from Mars, and 6,000 years from the nearest fixed star! An objection that has been made to both theories is that such a life germ known to us could survive the cold of ethereal space. But that is only trifling. The true objection is that no importation theory answers the question—how did life begin? It merely shifts the theatre of observation out of reach of the senses. (ii) On their side the biologists have experimented and theorised in two directions; one school claiming to have created living organisms out of inorganic material, and the other aiming at the discovery of "living matter," or its synthesis in the laboratory.

The first school has impressed the newspaper reader more than the scientific thinker. Of one creator, who claimed to have generated living "radicles" in gelatine, it was rumoured that he had not been sufficiently careful.

influence on the mentality of the race, it may be no unimportant service to direct attention to an alternative theory for which there is at least equal evidence. Humanist considerations, of course, cannot be in favour of the acceptance of a scientific theory, but they may lawfully tell in favour of its claim to a fair hearing, however humble the quarter from which it comes.

It may clear the way for an unprejudiced consideration of what follows to begin by stating fairly the present position of the whole inquiry into the origin of life, and examining the main assumption on which the theories of some eminent biologists are based. Afterwards I propose to glance at the chief characteristics of living organisms, as a guide to true analogies in nature; and to give reasons for regarding the persistence of nebular energy in bodies of nebular origin.
in guarding his preparations, to which his sportive pupils had made benevolent contributions of living germs. To another similar claim Schafer opposes two criticisms, the first of which I had made some years before, in these homely words:

"When we look into the question, we find very naturally that it has really been, not whether dead hay can turn into live mites by itself, but whether the hay can be really made into live mites by itself, or whether the hay itself and its activity has the power of making live mites from itself.

I should not call the hay dead. I should not call the hay itself living if its power of performing spontaneous generation has really been established.

Schafer opposes two objections to my criticism. But the second objection is far more valuable than the first. Schafer opposes two objections to my criticism. But the second objection is far more valuable than the first.

Professor Schafer expresses himself thus:

The appearance of organisms in such flasks would not furnish to my mind proof that they were the result of spontaneous generation. Assuming no fault in manipulation or fallacy in observation, I should find it simpler to believe that the germs of such organisms have resisted the efforts of prolonged heat than that they became generated spontaneously. If spontaneous generation is possible, we cannot expect it to take the form of living beings which show so marked a degree of differentiation, both structural and functional, as the organisms which are described as having appeared in these experimental flasks." ("Life," p. 14.)

This second objection, so much more valuable than the first, raises the crucial question—what is the simplest conceivable form of life? For the school represented by Schafer it is not an energetic individual, such as is every form of life that has yet been discovered, but an energetic substance, sometimes described as "living matter," and sometimes as "undifferentiated protoplasm." It may be presumed from their language, or rather from their silence, that they conceive the original cell or life germ as a globule detached from this substance; however, I have come upon no distinct explanation of how the generation took place, of or what activities of the cell are supposed to be derived from the substance, and what are supposed to have been acquired since. They seem disposed to ignore this essential part of a sound theory, while they concentrate their speculative faculties on the evolution of their hypothetical substance from inorganic matter.

Thus Schafer urges his followers to "search Nature herself, under natural conditions, for evidence of the existence of the life germ in the present, or in transitional forms between living and non-living matter." ("Life," p. 17.) This is before Nature has been searched successfully for "living matter" itself. Professor Moore, at the British Association meeting in 1913, claimed to have demonstrated one step from inorganic to organic matter, as the result of experiments in the action of light on colloidal compounds.

The analogies with "living matter" presented by a colloid seem to consist in its being a gelatinous substance of a granular complexion which reacts readily to light.

Meanwhile neither Schafer's theory nor Moore's experiments have commanded any more respect from other scientists than the ones already passed in review. Thus Professor Hartog, speaking for the biologists, disposed of Moore's communication by saying that—

"There was a tremendous amount of what might be called scientific bluff in the assertion that there was a consensus of opinion among biologists that Life was only one form of physical and chemical actions which could be reduced ["produced"?] in the laboratory. The greatest men among biologists had, he thought, held aloof from that dogmatism, and to the latter they might give the message that the masters were divided." ("Times," September 17, 1913.)

The veto of chemistry was pronounced by Professor Armstrong in still stronger terms:

"As a chemist he was not for a moment prepared to accept Schafer's contention that it was possible or probable that we should arrive at the production of life. He put a simple aspect on the problem that was not justified from the chemist's point of view, and the chemist was the first person to pronounce an opinion. His [the speaker's] view was that in this problem they were not helped in the slightest by the introduction of the colloid. It was a blessed word among the physiologists at the present day, and, like so many blessed words, it was used for wrapping up ignorance."—Ibid.

Similar repudiations of the latest fashion in biological speculation might be quoted from other representative scientists, including Arrenius.

It is evident, therefore, that we are left without any answer to the question what is the origin of life, which can be said to hold the field. We are actually without any suggestion on the part of the experts which has not been condemned by other specialists of eminence as having no claim to serious consideration. If there is any room in the field of scientific discovery for the general philosopher, whose vision aims at taking in knowledge as a whole, rather than in detail, this ought to be his opportunity. No suggestion he can make can well be dismissed more peremptorily than the suggestions that have just been reviewed.

As it is the chemical theory of life, adopted by Schafer, which has received most attention in recent years, it will clear the way to a mechanical theory to examine the speculative foundation on which the biological chemist builds.

(To be continued.)

Readers and Writers.

Readers of The New Age are already familiar, to some extent, with Mr. Bernard Gilbert's "Old England," and they will be glad to see that it is now published in book form (Collins, 20s. net). This kind of physical unity is necessary for the full effectiveness of Mr. Gilbert's method, and those who only remember occasional fragments are in possession of a few insignificant mosaics which are part of a larger and more impressive design. This design is a "god's-eye" view of a village—a typical English village seen at one moment of time. Mr. Gilbert selects a moment during the war and thereby, to my mind, introduces a deus ex machina which, though it illuminates, tends to exaggerate the essential characteristics of his subject. But that is a minor criticism. The village is presented as a unity: the unity is resolved into all the multitudinous intrigues, ambitions, desires, disputes, interests, and all the social, political, financial, sexual and religious factors which thread the fabric so closely.

Leaving aside for a moment certain considerations suggested by the method employed by Mr. Gilbert, let me express at once my admiration for the thoroughness with which his aim is achieved. I share the suspicion of those correspondents of Mr. Gilbert who imagine that the village he is describing is their particular village. I know there is such a village as Fletton, and I am not prepared to deny that Fletton is typical. And though I have read "Old England" with great attention to detail, I can discover no fault of significant omission or of wayward inclusion. Fletton is complete, and the publisher's claim ("that Mr. Gilbert has done intensely for the English countryside what Balzac did for his nation on a great scale") is fairly justified. But in the kind of reality of which this book is a complete and solid re-arrangement introduced into literature by the de Goncourts, the reality that has earned the not very enviable title of "documentary," "Documentary" is, I suppose, a brickbat to be thrown at the head of Mr. Gilbert, but Mr. Gilbert, if he is wise, will accept the title without shame.

As masters Mr. Gilbert acknowledges Bunyan, Defoe and Landor—albeit somewhat incongruously. But one can see the inference to be drawn from the conjunction..."
of these three names. Bunyan justifies the resort to type, for though Mr. Gilbert’s characters rejoice in wholesome names like Aaron Tharp, Arthur Mogg, Jabez Wells, and so on, these are but the aliases of Mr. Facing-both-ways, Mr. Worldly Wiseman, and Mr. Moneylove. He has been, in fact, for the consistent realism of Mr. Gilbert’s method. But Landor? I confess I found it hard to find a direct association for this name. It lies, however, in the question-begging word “static”: “Landor’s ‘conversations’ are almost entirely static.” Mr. Gilbert confesses in his Preface that he was moved by Landor’s“unto his unit and exhibit it motionless.” And Landor is brought into court to justify this departure from the normal rules of literature. “The normal rules of literature” may, of course, be disputed; they may even be denied existence. There are plenty of people (perhaps I should say critics) ready to assert that art is above all laws. But such people are romanticists, people beyond logic, and one does not usefully argue with them. Mr. Gilbert, however, is not a romanticist, and I do not think he will be altogether surprised to find his “static” method challenged. There may be a static province somewhere in art (though even in plastic art, to which one may possibly ascribe the word, there must be vitality) and there may even be a static form of literature, like the essay. But in the representation of life a dynamic element is necessary to completeness; and this explains why the epic and the drama, which are the most dynamic of all forms of art, are the forms of expression to which all great writers resort. Mr. Gilbert sets out with the avowed intention of “presenting” an English village as a whole, and he notoriously selects the method first adopted six or seven years ago by Mr. Edgar Lee Masters in “The Spoon River Anthology”: namely, a series of detached soliloquies localised and unified by some common environment or condition of life. Incidentally, let me point out that while Mr. Gilbert owes a good deal to the suggestion of Mr. Masters, he carries that suggestion to actual achievements never attempted by the American author. But in selecting the Spoon River method of presenting an English village, Mr. Gilbert presumably rejected the more authentic methods of the epic, the drama and the novel. His excuse is that to show his unit in action “would take as many novels as there are characters.” But would it? Do not these characters of “Old England” distribute themselves in fairly shallow layers, and is it at all necessary that the “unanimist” method used with such effect by M. Jules Romains in his plays and novels? “Unanimism” is merely one way of overcoming the difficulty. Another way is surely the epic poem, but perhaps that is too much to expect in this age.

All this may seem rather in the nature of cavilling, but that a good reason lies beneath my demand for dynamic forms of literature I may show by reference to Lessing, who went very thoroughly into this question. “I maintain,” he writes in the “Laokoon”), that succession of time is the department of the poet, as space is that of the painter.” He comes to this conclusion after an analysis of various authors, in the course of which he shows, conclusively enough, that “verbal descriptions are entirely deficient in that illusion which is the principal end of poetry.” And that is exactly my complaint against the Spoon River method: it does not create that consecutive attention of the mind and the emotion which is the accompaniment of the perfect drama, and yet with all his ability and sincerity Mr. Gilbert sometimes lapses into a sort of literal imitation. It is not that he has the mind and taste of a poet, or even the more generic title of artist, for his purpose is documentary, and his province the enumeration of prose details.

Such is the danger of the method and Mr. Gilbert has not entirely avoided it. He is materially “saved,” however, by the completeness of his scheme. His book is so completely planned and neatly executed that it comes into the category of those works of science that in conception give evidence of a profound mind. Ibsen, for instance, he regards “Old England” as a work of science—of social science, of group-psychology. In this light it is an excellent performance: a document of great value and comprehensiveness. As an indictment it will, of course, be fiercely disputed. The Morning Post will find it intolerable. The rustic school of sentimentalists will be scandalised. And the professional critics will bring out their well-thumbed dossiers labelled “Contra Realism: ‘de Goncourt, Zola, etc.’”, and tediously they will expatiate. But “Old England” will survive these plaitiffs. In our own time it will stand as a diagnosis of the diseased heart of the country. In another age it will mean as much as, and even more than, Piers Plowman means to us. Herbert Read.

Drama.

By John Francis Hope.

Ibsen is not a writer for whom I profess or feel any admiration, as he is usually represented on the London stage. His “Emperor and Galilean” is in a class apart; and it is a source of unfeigned pleasure to me that I never have seen it performed, and am never likely to. His “Precieuses” played well, when Laurence Irving produced it at the Haymarket; but even with “Peer Gynt,” I prefer Grieg to Ibsen, and the method adopted in the performance of his domestic dramas does not endure them to me. There is a sort of prestige suggestion, I think, operating on the minds of producers, and perhaps of actors, in the case of Ibsen as well as of Shakespeare, and latterly of Mr. Shaw. Shakespeare has become “Art” to us, and so our Aggas approach him delicately, certain that he was writing for Gilbert’s “young lady of seventeen” whom it would be an artistic crime to make blush. Mr. Shaw seems to have become a cult instead of a comedian; and actors try to impress us with his serious meaning by a continual solemn emphasis that makes one sentence as dull as another—instead of letting us catch the quick spirit, and learn the man’s message from our joy in his wit. Ibsen is, I know not what; serious, symbolic, spiritual—and we celebrate his successes with due solemnity. We all wear black and snivel in our handkerchiefs as we follow the funeral procession to the grave. I expected something better from M. Theodore Komisarjevsky, and the very fine company that he has to work with in his production of “John Gabriel Borkman” at the Everyman Theatre, Hampstead. He made “Uncle Vanya” live for me; but like the rest, he has come to bury Ibsen, not to praise him.

But what is there to be so solemn about in “John Gabriel Borkman”? It is on the whole a very clear, definitely cut clash of characters. There was John Gabriel Borkman, a Titanic figure, full of the lust of power to make men work to tear the heart out of his Mother Earth. Like Napoleon on his Italian campaign, he offered men a country to sack—and he had great, Napoleonic schemes and visions such as dignify the prospectuses of every company promoter. He saw only the wealth that could be gained, not the “thief” that he and his like have made it accompany it; and for this dream of developing the mineral resources of Norway (with himself managing director of every syndicate), he sacrificed love, and apparently became confused (as sometimes men do who think in millions) concerning the question of ownership. Ibsen is not quite on the point, but I suppose I am not quite sure what audacious conversion to his own use of money and securities entrusted to him was really the charge of which he was convicted.
and sentenced. It would have been easier to sell a gold brick, and there would have been just as much scope for imagination.

Ibsen does not judge this man on any ground of national economy, does not even condemn him as the curse of civilization, the man who has littered the world with tin cans. The only judgment of him is expressed by his wife; she did not object to his dishonesty, but to his failure; he had brought disgrace upon his name, and his "mission" was to make her son retrieve the family honour in some unexplained way. To this end, she kept the house dark, and the young man (no provision was made with the normal recreation of company; until he wanted to "live, live, live," as he said (he might just as well have multiplied it by three, and been the equal of a cat), and bolted with a widow, rich and disreputable. He objected so violently to an Ibsen drama, and made such a daring dash for Italy, that I can only regard him as Ibsen's symbolic message to Youth: "Run away from my plays."

But this woman is judged by her twin sister; and the pair of them fight for the body of the boy like two bargain-hunters over a bésuce. The mother wanted him to redeem the family from disgrace; the aunt wanted him to console her last days on earth—for she was dying, by medical orders, of some unnamed disease produced by shock, presumably sixteen years before. Even the father came downstairs for the first time, and offered the boy the third task, alliance with his father and the carrying out of his schemes for the industrial development of Norway. Redeemer, Consoler, Swindler—there was no lack of life-work in this household; but a rich widow and Italy and a young girl for diversion, made too strong an appeal. That boy really wanted playing, and the young actor at the Everyman was not obviously an embodiment of the spirit of youth. We were glad when he went, so that we could get on with the real business of dying.

There is a fascination in mountain tops. Prophets have disappeared from them, Redeemers have been tempted on them, more recently, actors for the cinematograph have been photographed on them—and what is more to the point, the greatest company promoter (whose Chartered Company was declared in 1918, by a Board of Special Reference of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, to have no title in the land of Rhodesia), Cecil Rhodes, is buried on a mountain top. Perhaps Ibsen set the fashion in his "John Gabriel Borkman"; certainly, Borkman was never more eminent genius was indescribably moving. It was like a play; the scene wherein the two men shatter their dreams did not promise very hopefully for the future. But there were women, either miscast or badly needed, as Ella Rentheim, seemed to have no technique at all, but wandered vaguely about like a ghost. When Mrs. Borkman talked about a "fight," when Borkman called her "passionate," I nearly laughed; and it was such a chance for an actress to show a purpose born of love as inflexible as the other's purpose born of hatred, through the frail body of the failing woman. It could have been so moving, and it was so deadly dull; and then Miss Mary Worrall, as Mrs. Wilton, fitted the picture perfectly. Only Miss Margaret Carter, as the maid, got anywhere near a sense of reality; and unfortunately the drama did not turn on her. But Mr. Richard Bird, as Erhart Borkman, must be seen to be believed—and then one ought to be very credulous. I find it difficult to believe that Mr. Bird, having precluded anything but an attempt to play the right notes, and that consequently if what M. Stravinsky wanted was a lack of expression, he had got it. I heard M. Kussevitsky's performance, and should think it could be described as an accurate presentation of several incredibly tedious facts. A second mistake was made with the title, which offered to a trusting public a "Symphony for wind instruments." This is quite wrong. Mr. Edwin Evans tells us in his Analytical Notes that "Stravinsky uses the word symphony in the sense of 'a sounding together'; and this explains why the title is in the plural, and why it reads 'of' instead of 'for' wind instruments." He also tells us that Stravinsky "directs that all the instruments employed here shall be played in their natural mezzo-forte, without inflection, in order that nothing shall disturb the inter-play of actual sonorities. The sounds were a cold, acid blare of sound, with edges as jagged as a split iceberg, and a rhythm which is as comfortable and reassuring as the swaying of a polar bear. Indeed, Monday's performance rather resembled an attempt to brighten up the North Pole with a candle and a small gas fire. The event of the evening was Mr. Leon Goossen's playing of the oboe part in Bach's "Andante," as arranged by Sir Henry Wood. It would be difficult to imagine anything more beautiful than Mr. Leon Goossen's performance. As to the actual arrangement of the "Andante," that is another matter. These transcriptions and adaptations are always, I think, unsatisfactory, but a suggestion was made by a distinguished composer, which seems to go to the root of the trouble. It is a pity, he said, that adaptors do not try to reproduce the actual sounds which Bach used, instead of merely transposing the notes to other instruments, and he went on to suggest that although individual sounds cannot be reproduced on single instruments, yet that these individual sounds could be rendered approximately by a combination of instruments. This, although the written score might look strangely unlike Bach, the sound, which is after all the music, would more nearly resemble Bach's original work than any of the existing adaptations.

Mr. Roland Hayes. Wigmore Hall, Thursday, November 17. Mr. Hayes is one of those rare artists who conveys tragic emotion by a process of elimination, and not by emphasis, or stress of any kind. His intensity of concentration forces his emotion remorse-
lessly upon us, and we see tragedy as he himself sees it, without comment, and without personal rancour. He never permits himself an exaggeration, and deprives us of the beauty of his own voice. Mr. Hayes is such a fine artist that one regrets his choice of French and German songs. They are not by any means the best songs of the composers, and at least two of his selections were written for a woman’s voice.

**The Tudor Singers.** Eolian Hall, Friday, December 2. This small body of singers has taste and good will, and offered a very beautiful programme, but they need both individual and ensemble training before they can do justice to the music they sing. The London Chamber Orchestra (strings only) under Mr. Anthony Bernard, gave a fine performance of Mozart’s lovely "Serenade."

**H. Rootham.**

**Views and Reviews.**

**RELIGIO GRAMMATICI—II.**

If Professor Murray* disappoints us in his confession of faith, in his “Satanism and the World Order” he does restore vision. Perhaps, like so many of us, he cannot stand and deliver his faith in set phrases; he can only reveal it in his work, in his attitude towards reality, with his efforts about it. It is easy enough to show the folly of Satanism, so far as it is "the spirit of unmixed hatred towards the existing World Order,” but who ever was really and truly a Satanist? Professor Murray mentions Bakunin, whom he never saw, as a liar, a thief, and a murderer—the incarnation of Satanic power. So long Bakunin found them admirable: “although mistaken in his views, which suggests that he, too, felt the insufficiency of Satanism without the support of which it is necessary to the World Order—the virtues of constancy, of order, of faith that men accept for themselves. The spirit that I have called Satanism, the spirit of unmixed hatred towards the existing World Order, the spirit which rejoices in any widespread disaster which is also a disaster to the world’s rulers, is perhaps more rife today than it has been for a thousand years. It is felt to some extent against all ordered Governments, but chiefly against all imperial Governments; and it is directed more widely and more intensely against Great Britain than any other Power. I think we may add that, while everywhere dangerous, it is capable of more profound world-wreckage by its action against us than by any other form it is now taking.

Satanism condemns itself even when it masquerades as Law and Order; and it is a confusion of thought, I think, that makes Professor Murray say: “The spirit of a finer life when Prussianism was destroyed: and that vision endures. As Professor Murray says:

*Yet I am convinced that, though it has not yet prevailed in places of power, there is a real desire for a

exist. Opposition to the present order is at times right, provided that the opposition really aims at the attainment of a better order. But unless the opposition is willing to make this qualification, it seems to me, is unnecessary; it is not the aim, but the action, that matters, for the World Order does not justify bad actions by good intentions. It is the pathway to Hell that is paved with good intentions, and if God is the God of Good actions—and good actions, after all, are only conformities with natural law, which are the world order. A false man found a religion? [cited Carlyle.] Why, a false man cannot build a brick house. If he do not know and follow truly the properties of mortar, burnt clay and what else he would have it, it is not a house to him, but a rubbish-heap. It will not stand for twelve centuries, to lodge a hundred and eighty millions; it will fall straightway. A man must conform himself to Nature’s laws, be verily in communion with Nature and the truth of things, or Nature will answer him. No, not at all! So we may agree with Professor Murray:

I shall feel a little disappointed if every one of my readers does not agree with me in thinking that, on the whole, and allowing for the many cases when people try to do something, and pay attention, they come nearer to doing it than if they did not try at all. Normally, therefore, that systematic enforcement of bad things, under the name of order, we call a civilised society does on the whole succeed in being a good thing, just as the Roman Empire did. Doctors, on the whole, prolong human life rather than shorten it. Lawyers and judges, on the whole, hate and rail about more justice than injustice. Even in a department of life so very imperfectly civilised as economics, on the whole, if you know of a young man who is hard-working, intelligent, and honest, you do expect him to get on better than one who is lazy, stupid, and a thief. This lends us in the belief, which any minute study of social history corroborates in letters every day Government is better than no government, and almost any law better than no law. And I think we may safely go further. If we take any of those cases where a civilised society obviously shows itself evil, where it rewards vice and punishes virtue, produces misery and slays happiness; when it appoints unjust tribunals, when it bribes witnesses to tell lies, when it treats its own members or subjects as enemies and tries to injure them instead of serving them; when it does these things, it is not really carrying out its principles, but failing. It is not a machine meant for doing these bad things; it is a very imperfectly designed machine for doing just the opposite, at any rate inside its own boundaries.

As Professor Murray says: “The spirit that I have called Satanism, the spirit of unmixed hatred towards the existing World Order, the spirit which rejoices in any widespread disaster which is also a disaster to the world’s rulers, is perhaps more rife today than it has been for a thousand years. It is felt to some extent against all ordered Governments, but chiefly against all imperial Governments; and it is directed more widely and more intensely against Great Britain than any other Power. I think we may add that, while everywhere dangerous, it is capable of more profound world-wreckage by its action against us than by any other form it is now taking.

But that spirit of Satanism has been expressed by the ordered Governments; they rushed to the attack on Russia, on Hungary, they hated Germany and trod her face in the dust. Our record of oppression during the war, from the pillaging of the school rights, guaran- teed by the Treaty of Confederation of the French Canadians, to the despots of Ireland, from Ceylon to Amritsar, from the West African Crown Colonies to Rhodesia (which we have decided could not have been alienated by the Matabele, but which we refuse to return to them), this is the real Satanism, the hatred of the true World Order. Men fling to the victors of a finer life when Prussianism was destroyed: and that vision endures. As Professor Murray says:

Yet I am convinced that, though it has not yet prevailed in places of power, there is a real desire for a
change of heart in the minds of millions. This desire is an enthusiasm, and is exposed to all the dangers of misplaced passion and injustice. It is even exploited with the possibility of rebuilding more truly on the basis exposed them by taking cover under the Guild control of industry, an Economic Second Chamber, and self-government in industry from National State Socialists to escape the fire to which their own right to function was to be vested in the State, and their right to function was to be conferred by State Charter—surely a sufficient recognition of sovereignty. But because production concerns the whole life of the community, it does not follow that a civic organisation is the fittest to control it. Never since primitive times have the political unit and the productive unit been one, and Trust-controlled legislatures and Prussianised States serve as a warning against them. Mr. Macdonald's State, which sets up industrial guilds "by Act of Parliament and administrative order," and seeks to "encourage' family and municipal independence, the voluntary principle which is the essence of the Guild idea can find no place.

Spangles of Existence. By Robert Blatchford. (The Bodley Head. 6s. net.)
Mr. Blatchford can at least write anecdotes. The snap and vigour of his characterisation is sufficient for the two or three-page incidents of this volume; and it enables him to throw off successfully little sketches of all grades of life. Most of the incidents betray a family likeness in the instant decision and judgment of the characters concerned; the difference between the German householder as a bully and a human being, for example, is just the Jewish servant-girl's appreciation of Beethoven. But the style is sufficiently various to keep us momentarily interested in these quickly changing facts of observed life; only once is Mr. Blatchford frankly incredible, and that is in "The Siren." Passion at daybreak on the Downs, with a Sussex native as a Nature poet, and a Cockney volunteer farm-girl, "strong as a young pony, fresh as a daffodil, wide-eyed, deep-cheated, sweet-voiced, clean as the morning star," as "The Siren," is more than we can believe. Mr. Blatchford writes cliche when he romances, but his hearing is better than his imagination.

Some Pirates and Marmaduke. By E. A. Wyke Smith. (The Bodley Head. 6s. 6d. net.)
This is a delightful book for boys and old boys. It deals in all sorts of villainy, an island, a hidden treasure, two sets of pirates after the treasure, villainy in the fos'c'ule, villainy on the quarter-deck—and the ineffable Marmaduke coming through everything with his muscles strengthened, but his character not besmirched by his associations. We are impressed by the skill with which Mr. Wyke Smith suggests the villainy, while presenting us with the fair face of Beethoven. Mr. Blatchford writes cliche when he romances, but the mental depravity which follows too fond an addiction to "encourage" family and municipal independence, the voluntary principle which is the essence of the Guild idea can find no place.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

"AN INTERVIEW WITH CHICHERINE."
Sirs,—Mr. Chicherine has exercised his privilege as a diplomat and possibly displayed his acquaintance in the discipline of the Communist Party in issuing a dementi of portions of my August interview with him, published in The New Age on November 10. I have incorporated in my book "Through Starving Russia"; and his letter was not altogether unexpected by me. There have after all been other instances, nearer home, during the last few months of Ministers repudiating their own remarks after
reflection. I must, however, reply to some of the points raised by Mr. Chicherine.

First, he says that our talk was not intended to be an interview. Here are the facts. On August 25 the correspondent of the News Chronicle, Mr. J. E. Whittome, went to the Bolshevik Foreign Office to see me at midnight. (The same procedure was gone through for all other calls that were made by correspondents without announcement, was, in respect to other Bolshevik Ministers; we all regarded such "commands" as intended for publication; in some cases writing materials were pressed on us lest any Minister should be left out.) Mr. Chicherine was not at his office. He had left me an appointment for 9 a.m. the following morning. I went to call on him about 11 a.m. to find out what he would do. He was not there, and immediately I left his room I went into an ante-room and wrote down in my note-book the important parts of the interview and some of which I complained to him. Then I went back to my note-book a few minutes after he said it was this:—"I hope this is not the last time we shall meet here." There was no suggestion that we should discuss the same matters again, as he now thinks. Moreover, on my return from the Volga I asked for and was given another appointment with him; but after waiting two and a half hours at the Foreign Office in his ante-room, I decided that I might as well go home to bed, it being still about three in the morning. Now, as to some of the textual errors Mr. Chicherine claims to have discovered. Mr. Chicherine says he admitted the Red Terror and the food requisitions. But, he adds, "I did not excuse them, I explained their necessity." I am not aware of Mr. Chicherine's.omissions, but any reader of it will see that this is precisely the attitude that I attributed to Mr. Chicherine. He evidently attaches an especial meaning to the word "excuse" which I certainly did not intend it to bear. Exactly the same thing applies to his exposition of the difference between the Communist programme and that of the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary parliaments. I entirely fail to see how my account of his remarks has "completely disfigured" his arguments; once again I leave the reader to judge.

Of the "Manchester Guardian" and not all he said.

We were talking in English, of which he has an excellent knowledge; and at no time did we fail to comprehend the meaning of what he was saying, even if I adopted the obvious and invariable course of saying so.

More important is the matter of my accuracy. I have a good memory and have trained it, as every interviewer must, to retrace arguments and conversations with facility from start to finish. Also before meeting the interviewer I make a list of subjects and questions on which I want to base my account, and am thus able, without his necessarily being aware of it, to divide the ensuing conversation into several smaller watertight compartments, remembering at the same time any salient phrase on "talk" that had happened three months before.

Exactly the same thing applies to his exposition of the "Servile State." He is mistaken. He said the Communists were entering on a period of building up the Servile State." I regret that the reader to judge.

Moreover, on my return from the Volga I asked for and was given another appointment with him; but after waiting two and a half hours at the Foreign Office in his ante-room, I decided that I might as well go home to bed, it being then about three in the morning.

Now, as to some of the textual errors Mr. Chicherine claims to have discovered. Mr. Chicherine says he admitted the Red Terror and the food requisitions. But, he adds, "I did not excuse them, I explained their necessity." I am not aware of his omissions, but any reader of it will see that this is precisely the attitude that I attributed to Mr. Chicherine. He evidently attaches a special meaning to the word "excuse" which I certainly did not intend it to bear. Exactly the same thing applies to his exposition of the difference between the Communist programme and that of the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary parliaments. I entirely fail to see how my account of his remarks has "completely disfigured" his arguments; once again I leave the reader to judge.

His points about the opposition between (1) capitalist State Capitalism and proletarian State Capitalism, and between (2) the attitude of the Communists and that of the Guild Socialists, were such obvious deductions from my text that I did not feel it necessary to enter on a discussion of them. He denies that he admitted that Soviets with non-Communist majorities are dispersed by the Communist Party. I raised this point with him to prove my argument that his claim that the Communist regime was an adjustment of centralised and decentralised tendencies was impossible in practice. Mr. Chicherine's reply was, as I said in my article, that the anti-Communists in Russia simply did not appreciate the dangers of Parliamentary rule (in other words, what is called in Western Europe elective democracy). I took this to be a logical admission of my reference to the disappearance of non-Bolshevik Soviets; I am sorry if I mistook Mr. Chicherine in this, though I am amazed that he should now suggest that the dispersal of non-Bolshevik Soviets "is not so." Mr. Chicherine must be the only man left in Russia who thinks this. Similarly, when he asserts that the food requisitions were "of course not made by the Red Army, but by the Food Control," I am unable to argue with him. In our conversation at least he did not attempt to draw this remarkable and highly misleading line of demarcation. I do not now remember whether the subject of "White atrocities" came up in our talk. If it did, I presume that we did not discuss it at all, since I find no reference to it in my note-book. Certainly it had no place in the logical sequence of our argument.

Space forbids my going over Mr. Chicherine's letter in greater detail. It seems to me that he has read my account of his interview with unnecessary suspicion, attributing to me all kinds of motives and insinuations that are not apparent in the article or intended to be found there. As I said above, in many cases my description of his attitude, to which he objects, is essentially indistinguishable from his own account of it in his letter.

Should he wish to discuss the matters more fully with me, I am ready to return to Moscow the moment he likes to send me a visa.

C. E. BECHOFER.

MONEY AND PRICES.

Sir,—I was interested in Mr. Arthur Kitson's letter in your issue of December 8 as his book "Unemployment" (Cecil Palmer, 58), which I have just read, is such an outspoken vindication of the Douglas-New Age Social Credit proposals. Mr. Kitson made one statement, that the rise and fall in Prices proportionately and simultaneously with every additional issue and contraction of Credit proposals. Mr. Kitson made one statement, that the rise and fall in Prices proportionately and simultaneously with every additional issue and contraction of Currency is not a fact which is borne out by experience. This reminded me of a tabular statement published in "Public Welfare" for October making comparison for the years 1912 to 1919 between the variations in the Index Figure of the cost of living, and these are compared to a common datum of 100 then the upward and downward variations, "simultaneously" and "proportionately" the variations are only slight. They are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Bank deposits from a Cost of living Index</th>
<th>datum line of 100</th>
<th>from a datum of 100.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>Dec. 30</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
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<td>220</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>Jan. 30</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

J. E. Tuke.

PROPAGANDA.

Sir,—Any readers in Brighton and Hove and district interested in Credit Reform are invited to communicate with me.

J. E. WHITETONE.

Stanford House, Stanley Avenue, Brighton.

Sir,—Will those readers in York who are interested in Credit Reform kind enough to communicate with me at Elmfiled College, York.

W. M. SCRETS.