NOTES OF THE WEEK.

We have said before that a psychological moment in politics usually lasts about six months, but there are signs that its duration is lengthening. It is some months ago that the Genoa Conference, at which European affairs were to be finally settled, was first suggested, and ever since then it has been in a process of repeated postponement which culminated on Saturday in another postponement of a whole two months. That Ministers and their staffs may be indisposed to settle anything, provided that their own powers and privileges are unaffected, may be taken for granted; but where are the peoples of Europe, the vast masses in every country, and what are they doing to stimulate their presumed representatives and Executives? From all the evidence, peoples in the old democratic sense of the word scarcely exist; they are a passive background of indolent politicians; and though it is obvious that enormous suffering is entailed by the delay in coming to grips with the financial problem, only a few individuals here and there appear to have the smallest concern about it. The problem, however, will not settle itself without a considerable conscious effort on the part of considerable bodies of people; nor will time diminish its dimensions. It is the fashion at the moment to pretend that the trade boom is at last really beginning. The "Daily Express," for example, is publishing a rising barometer of prosperity every day in the belief that such a manipulation of the records might be publicly given to the querulous ghosts of the past, such as Mr. Asquith, who now gibber at the board of Commons, with Mr. Clynes as the leader of the largest group, would be the penultimate word in social disorganisation. No group would be capable of doing anything to better the present state of affairs. Without customers possessing effective demand it is obviously impossible for Supply to be increased and for trade to revive. Yet so far are we from the world from recognising this simple fact that all the political activity of the moment is directed to a further restriction of purchasing-power under the illusion that such a policy is Economy. Neither from Genoa nor from any other Conference, however, can any good be derived while "Economy" is the watchword. What is needed to restore the prosperity of the world is the multiplication of distributed purchasing-power. Would-be consumers must be converted into actual consumers. Effective demand must be equated with potential supply. And until this policy is put into effect by one means or another the world will continue to be unhappy and to discover itself slipping daily deeper into barbarism.

* * *

The postponement of the Genoa Conference may be expected to entail the postponement likewise of the General Election in this country. A General Election is now improbable before June at the earliest; and an early autumn Election is now rather clearly indicated. The interval would be well spent in considering seriously the common sense of the political situation, and particularly in regard to the restoration of the party politics of the two wings of the Coalition. It is disaster enough that such a Government as the Coalition should be possible during the world-crisis in which we are living today; but the disaster would become catastrophe if, owing to squabbles between the associated parties, the Labour Party were to find itself the strongest group in the new House of Commons. We should have definitely reached the Kerensky stage of the Western European Revolution, and our descent into the maelstrom would thereafter be rapid. Yet it appears that many of the older party leaders are even anxious to bring about this intermediate stage, since they lose no opportunity of quarrelling among themselves and at the same time of magnifying the prestige and importance of the wretched class-group that calls itself the Labour Party. Is it not possible, before it is too late, to call a National Conference of political parties at which their congé might be publicly given to the querulous ghosts of the past, such as Mr. Asquith, who now gibber at the board and play havoc with common sense? A "group" House of Commons, with Mr. Clynes as the leader of the largest group, would be the penultimate word in social disorganisation. No group would be capable of doing anything; and, in that event, we may be absolutely certain that the whole effective Executive government of the country would fall into the hands of the secret agents of finance, cosmopolitan even more than national. Such a conclusion simply could not be escaped by the jig-saw House of Commons which would result from the policy now being pursued. And if, in fact, the financiers were actually directing events to this end—the final enfeeblement of Parliament—they could not improve upon the tactics at present being employed.

* * *

"Geddes Retires" is a head-line to rejoice the heart of the "natural man" in many of us. But that kind unreflecting exultation over party and personal inci-
Many men of goodwill rejoice over the downfall of Prussia, till they found that "Prussia" (in the only sense that matters) is still strongly entrenched in Downing Street. There is, however, some reasonable hope that Sir Eric's disappearance does signify a slight and partial setback to the Geddessence which he personified. The "Times" indeed, for tactical reasons, assumes that his resignation means "that he is assured Geddes will take." On the other hand, it is more plausibly suggested in other quarters that his sudden decision is due to resentment at the Government's handling of his Report. The War Office has treated it far more respectfully than the Admiralty, but even its proposed Estimates appreciably exceed the Geddes figures. If every department is going similarly to nibble at these (especially as the Premier apparently sees the necessity for being very cautious about cuts under the crucial heading of education), Sir Eric's aspirations will, in the aggregate, be far less fulfilled. Whether his resignation may be taken as a symbol that "Economy" is by no means going to be practised with rigour and vigour. As sound economists must needs desire to see as little "Economy" as possible, they may, at any rate, be thankful for these small mercies. Men of goodwill rejoiced over the downfall of Prussia, but in short, it is far from dead. As to the actual personality of Sir Eric, that is too insignificant an entity to get excited about, one way or the other. He is a thoroughly ordinary business man. He may indeed be particularly efficient in his narrow technique, but his mentality is wholly that of the "commercial community," on whose recent pronouncements we have more than ever had occasion to comment. No more than his congener does he display any spark of originality, any suspicion of breadth of view, any ray of generosity of outlook. He is just the average business man; except that perhaps he is a little more than averagely so.

Socialist Labour is making a desperate attempt to capture the London County Council. We have no great admiration either for its programme or for the capacity of most of its candidates. Still, as a choice of evils, there is much to be said for a Labour majority on the Council. This party is making the only serious fight against the quasi-named "Municipal Reform" forces which now hold place and power in London. And the Municipal Reformers are quintuply Geddessential. Most anything that overthrew their supremacy would be to the good. Labour will at least insist on generous treatment for socially vital services such as Education. In general, too, it stands for large public expenditure. We hold that in the frequest spending, public or private, lies the best hope of our scraping along somehow under the present distress, in the absence of a fundamental change of policy. It is, on the whole, to the good that a Labour County Council should issue abundant Estimates appreciably exceed the Geddes figures. As sound economists must needs desire to see as little "Economy" as possible, they may, at any rate, be thankful for these small mercies. Men of goodwill rejoiced over the downfall of Prussia, but in short, it is far from dead. As to the actual personality of Sir Eric, that is too insignificant an entity to get excited about, one way or the other. He is a thoroughly ordinary business man. He may indeed be particularly efficient in his narrow technique, but his mentality is wholly that of the "commercial community," on whose recent pronouncements we have more than ever had occasion to comment. No more than his congener does he display any spark of originality, any suspicion of breadth of view, any ray of generosity of outlook. He is just the average business man; except that perhaps he is a little more than averagely so.

Mr. Grant Robertson, of Birmingham University, in a letter to the "Times," makes a novel and interesting point against the proposed education cuts. He draws attention to the probable effects on "economic efficiency, industrial peace, and social progress." He asks "What is the prospect? . . . if the children of the nation are to be in the hands of men and women re- cepted from the leavings of other nations and business, hopelessly overworked, underpaid, and conscious of a formidable grievance against their employer, the nation?" As he very reasonably adds, "The educational machine might be easily converted into an irresistible organ of revolution." This is a point for the conservatively minded bourgeois to weigh very seriously. They are throwing immense energy into the task of fighting Communism through a legion of organisations, and are always clamouring to the Government to take more active measures of repression. They had better consider whether the economic policy they are demanding might not manufacture revolutionaries much more rapidly than their defensive measures could cope with them. The machinery of repression might well, in the end, cost more than the sum "saved" on education. It may even be better to leave the burden of this (which seems to be, for many people, the ultimate test of political wisdom) to keep the teachers in a contained and constructive frame of mind.

Mr. J. Lort-Williams, M.P., writing in "Unity," has succeeded in bringing out very vividly the madness of our present economic methods. "It is becoming," he says, "more and more evident as time goes on that it is little use for a great industrial nation to have goods and gold and creditors unless she also has customers." As he truly points out, two years ago people would have been inclined to smile at this, and ask "how riches could possibly bring poverty in their train?" But now," he continues, "we see that they do." You cannot create employment if you have no customers," Mr. Lort-Williams seems to be left merely dazed by this discovery. He concludes, "There are times and situations which get beyond ordinary human control, and in such times logic seems to fail." In fact it is only the logic of the accepted financial orthodoxy which has failed. Unlike many of our social philosophers, however, Mr. Lort-Williams does recognise that after all there are possibilities of action at both ends. As he puts it, "the necessary "building" of America is not built that way. She is a producer of goods for world markets, just as we are. If these fail, "there is no employment for a large proportion of her workers." The trouble, in short, is that her industry is run with a view to export trade in order to provide her own people with employment, and not with the object of producing goods her people need." Mr. Lort-Williams seems rather to imply that, things being so, they are so; and that the necessary "building" of America in another way would be a very long and difficult process. But the war experience showed how easily and rapidly the bulk of a nation's industry can be switched over to a new line of production. All that is necessary in this case is the financial mobilising of the enormous real demand existing within the country. It may be alleged indeed that, though that may be all very well for a self-contained country like America, the problem is a much harder one for us. But it is easy to exaggerate the difference. It would mean as fundamental as alteration in our case as in America's if we switched over from export-production designed to "give employment" to the objective of producing,
whether directly or indirectly, the needs of our people’s life. If the home market had been put in the ground and this was satisfied so far as it could be from our home resources, there is no doubt at all that we could easily produce an enormous surplus of goods. Now there have been, in various parts of the world, great quantities of corn and of the other things we need going begging for customers during the last year or two. And greater quantities would be produced in no time if there were any economic demand for them. It is simply a question of our offering enough of our own produce in return; in other words, selling our goods cheaply enough in the world-market. Indeed, our industrial magnates are constantly declaring that there is plenty of foreign trade going, if we could only get our prices down low enough to secure it. Once more we insist that, under the conditions we have been postulating, there is no limit to which, if need be, we could not reduce the price asked for our surplus product.

The “New Statesman” at Large.

We owe an apology to Major Douglas for having drawn upon him what was intended for The New Age. As our readers know, we have for years been constantly pointing out the errors of the “New Statesman,” errors so great that only a Fabian journal could survive them—and as constantly the “New Statesman” has been pretending not to mind. But as it now appears, the “New Statesman” has not only minded, but minded very much, and has been suffering all this while from suppression of feeling. And now it has all come out upon the innocent head of Major Douglas in the form of a pretended review of “Economic Democracy” and “Credit Power and Democracy.”

With at least nine-tenths of the printed matter of the long harangue delivered to our colleague we have and nobody can have any real concern. Major Douglas’s style may be “involved” for spoiled readers who demand other people’s ideas in words of one and two syllables. The exposition, for those who have a prejudice against the conclusion, may be tiresome, slovenly, unintelligible, nearly insane and all the other adjectives petulant people throw at ideas they do not like. But the problem under discussion and the solution offered by Major Douglas are much too important and vital to be dismissed with the vitriolicisms of the Fabian nursery even the “considerable number” of “New Statesman” readers who, it seems, have been begging that journal not to shirk any longer the chief subject of practical discussion to-day must have been disappointed on receiving the answer to their prayers. From a strategical point of view, however, we ourselves feel nothing but the most complete satisfaction with the attitude taken up by the semi-official organ of the Parliamentary Labour Party. In the first place, it is a confession that the high priests of the party, recently appointed to inquire into the Douglas-New AGE Scheme, find themselves incompetent to arrive at a reasoned conclusion, and driven to conceal their retreat behind the smoke-screen of the “New Statesman’s” abuse of our attorney. And, in the second place, it records the final decision of the official Labour Party to stick to its formula of nationalisation in the face of a situation obviously demanding their complete revision. Nothing could suit us better, for while Credit Reform remained under the suspicion that it might conceivably be “adopted” by Mr. Henderson and Mr. Webb, no politically disinterested body of citizens could be expected to take it up. Credit Reform, from the nature of things, is not a party but a national concern. And now that the Labour Party has definitely declined to exchange its party-programme for a national mission, not only its own future is defined, but the future of Credit Reform is assured. We can now safely count upon the co-operation of the practical professional classes, engineers, technicians and so forth, the Church, the best kind of business men and the disillusioned among the dead reformist parties. The road is now clear.

Returning to the text of the alleged review of Major Douglas’s theories in the “New Statesman,” the writer’s bias is clearly shown in his determination to misunderstand everything that his consumer has put to the test. Claims are reconcilable. But his sneer should put the public on their guard. Class-warfare within industry is deplorable and quite unnecessary. But, until or unless prices are regulated, consumers may well dread any kind of agitation between masters and men. Under our present economic methods some section must suffer, and woe betide an isolated third party!
dit Power and Democracy." The Financial Editor of the "New Statesman," Mr. Emil Davies, when reviewing this work in the "DAILY HERALD," selected this exposition, in fact, for his exclusive approval. Yet the "New Statesman," whether from malice or stupidity, pretends to discover that "Real Credit," in Major Douglas' use of the word, is nowhere clearly defined. "He [Major Douglas] never vouchsafes any definitions of the oft-repeated and quite original meanings which he attaches to well-established [1] economic terms." And it proceeds to complain that such partial definitions of Real Credit as are actually to be found differ on different pages. "In one place Real Credit is said to be defined as "potential capacity," which it is nowhere; in another place it is defined as "the reserve of energy belonging to a community;" and in still another place, the "New Statesman" objects, it is defined (though it is not) as "consumable Goods plus Capital Goods." But why this silly game of hide-and-seek, with a definition though usually the trick is a little better disguised.

A little later, however, the "New Statesman" makes a remarkable if contradictory series of admissions and defences; and we will reproduce the whole passage for the sake of the light it throws on the mentality of the "brains" of the official Labour Party.

Taken as a whole, the analytical part of Major Douglas' work is a strange mixture of elementary truths and elementary fallacies. Underlying a part of it is a perfectly sound criticism of our present Banking system. Major Douglas exaggerates almost grotesquely the actual power of the banks and credit-issuing houses to control the operations of industry, and it is evident that he is not acquainted with the practical working of such in countries. The writer is obviously under the naive impression that banks are not yet powerful enough to call for the community must intervene, because the danger is real.

We hope our readers will give this passage much more attention than it deserves, for its implications are as endless as they are typical of the Fabian Labour mind. It will be observed that the writer, after allowing that Major Douglas' analysis of the existing Banking system is perfectly sound, first proceeds to whittle down its importance, then re-establishes it, afterwards re-states the actual situation in his own terms and thereupon alternately declares it to be unimportant and urgent. Major Douglas' analysis is correct but exaggerated; the banks have too much power; but it is potential only, i.e., they never exercise it: but they have seriously aggravated the present industrial depression: there are five great banks in this country, and as the process of amalgamation proceeds there is not the slightest doubt that the community will have to intervene, not to stop the process, but to control it in its present, the monopoly on credit-issue which is being created. Such a monopoly would not be likely to exercise the powers which in Major Douglas' imagination are already being exercised by the existing banks, but it would certainly possess most of them.

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The danger is real enough.
The Situation in India.

By Marmaduke Pickthall.

III.—NON-CO-OPERATION.

In my lifetime I have seen a wonderful change in the spirit of the Eastern peoples, of which it has written

of my happiness to be in friendly contact. When I first went East an Englishman was respected merely because he was an Englishman. There was a perfect

fashioned Oriental, till I realised that my prejudice

forebears, but under a complete illusion with regard to

students who had been to Europe returned home and
took time fully to realise, that European countries

met the flood of young men from the European

as Europeans. It is better for us to do things for

at it uncritically we have made ourselves inferior. We

to me a force of nature, not to be suppressed. The

our fathers (who were not judged "inferior" by

we have made ourselves inefficient) than to do things for the Europeans

of it engenders is pan-Asiatic, but anti-European only to the extent that any movement for self-preservation is against the things it would avoid, and the Non-Co-operators do not condemn European wholesale. It is only that they wish now to discriminate between the good and evil of the things which Europe has imposed on them, and in order to discriminate withdraw themselves. In some countries where the rulers have attacked the movement it has turned to violence. In India it has had superior guidance. The reader will perceive how easily this great revolt of human dignity, in present circumstances, can be adjusted to Mahatma Gandhi’s policy of overcoming evil in an adversary by improvement of oneself; especially when he remembers that it is the chief complaint against the imposed Euro-

our faculties. Far from making for our

by imagination, brought us to this, that we can

Our Generation

A FEW sensible words spoken the other day by Mr. Clarke Hall are given a certain emphasis by Sir Eric Geddes’ anticipated mutilation of education. Mr. Clarke Hall pointed out that all neglected and friendless children tended inevitably to drift towards crime.

THE MAIN causes of delinquency were bad housing conditions, bad companions, neglectful parents, want of proper recreation and games, and the neglectful educational system. The main cause was the teaching of a higher standard of honour. His rough estimate was that something like 90 per cent. of juvenile delinquents were either mentally defectives, or normal children who had become delinquent through the circumstances of their surroundings. Now the strange thing about facts like these is that they are known by everyone, but they are not believed. Pascal drew this distinction between belief and knowledge in the most poignant way. “I know I shall die,” he said, “but I do not believe it.” Well, Sir Eric Geddes and the governing class generally know that bad housing and bad education drive children, and not only children, to crime; but they do not believe it. Their actions, however, are consonant with their beliefs, or lack of belief; and not with their knowledge; so that with a good conscience they can damage education without admitting to themselves that their act will have any further consequences. Here their tradition of specialisation helps them incredibly. The effect of their habits of thought and work upon a specialist is broadly this: that he can see a certain thing as a mode of activity, an institution, a table of figures, or an event, as a complete unity, without taking into account its consequences. The habit of specialisation, and above all in practical and administrative affairs, has, untreated by imagination, brought us to this, that we can treat our various branch and interdependent national organisations as if they were quite dead and abstract, and as if, above all, they had nothing to do with the

the past few years, I saw that European education could produce the finest type of Oriental—in other words, that Asia had survived the ordeal. That is the stage of Non-Co-operation. To-day it has been reached in every Eastern land I know. The movement engenders is pan-Asiatic, but anti-European only to the extent that any movement for self-preservation is against the things it would avoid, and the Non-Co-operators do not condemn European wholesale. It is only that they wish now to discriminate between the good and evil of the things which Europe has imposed on them, and in order to discriminate withdraw themselves. In some countries where the rulers have attacked the movement it has turned to violence. In India it has had superior guidance. The reader will perceive how easily this great revolt of human dignity, in present circumstances, can be adjusted to Mahatma Gandhi’s policy of overcoming evil in an adversary by improvement of oneself; especially when he remembers that it is the chief complaint against the imposed European system that it prevents development of Oriental genius. That policy has been espoused to-day by almost everyone in Asia who abhors or sees the futility of violence, which is destructive, in connection with a great constructive movement. The constructive task of India is Non-Co-operation has been often overlooked. Yet many Englishmen in India have paid tribute to it, admitting that it has done, in a few months, work for Indian progress which everyone beforehand had imagined would take a hundred years. The movement seemed to me a force of nature, not to be suppressed. The men who cry for its suppression are no friends to Asia, or the welfare of the Empire or the welfare of the human race; for it means that Asia is preparing to resume her proper function in a world which of late has suffered sadly from the lack of Asia’s contribution.
novelist with an imagination microscopic enough to creep into the mind of a specialist or a committee man, and to see through his eyes what the economics and morals have in the last century and a half become so completely divorced that to seek a moral solution for an economic problem is simply not to touch the problem at all. If the present exploiters are wise they will dread much more the spread of economic education than the increase of moral indignation. Why is it that Mr. Chesterton, Mr. Penty and the other reformers who assault evils with no other weapon than a sensible morality should always give one the impression that they are defeating themselves, if it is not that they have realised the tendency of economic truth, and therefore do not use it as a weapon. They are still fighting with beautifully fashioned swords and lances, all the time refusing to acknowledge that gunpowder has been invented. Such men are not merely mediævalists; they are mediæval. The problem, however, is not mediæval.

The "Daily Telegraph" the other day took seriously the Communist joke at Poplar's expense; and began a leader with portentous wit by remarking: "When the question is asked in future, Is Labour fit to govern? the answer will consist of a word of six letters— Poplar."

Now what is to be done with a Press so puerile, so incapable of seeing what is important and what is not, so utterly without perspective, as this? If the demonstrators at Poplar "made a scene" is that any reason why the Poplar Council should blush and hide its head, or even why the demonstrators should do so? Have there been no scenes during the life of the present Government? Was not Mr. Lloyd George not so many years ago handled by the Glasgow "Communists" even more disrespectfully than Mr. Lansbury was handled the other day by the Poplar "Communists"? On that occasion the Press was compelled to hold its tongue: that was the only difference. And will the "Daily Telegraph" deny that a Labour Government would, if it were necessary, muzzle the Press as light-heartedly as any other? But the whole insistence on the scandal and public disgrace of the Poplar incident is too rustic, or rather suburban, for words. Bourgeois indignation, bourgeois shame! When there are six million people living, or rather slowly dying, on the unemployment "dole," and when some of these see that there is little prospect of their doing anything else for months and years; and when in addition to this they have to listen to lectures on economy, it is no wonder that they make scenes; the surprising thing is that they do not make whole tragedies. But to the "Daily Telegraph" the incapacity of the nation to deal with its problems, and to finish this wretched misery, is not shameful; no, the only thing that is shameful is poverty come to the end of its endurance and at last making itself heard. The newspaper which lives by making apologies for the blunders of the Government blusters to its very advertisements when it sees such an unsightliness. We blush, too, but for a different reason.

Edward Moore.

SWEET RUDS.

Sweet buds bedeck thee, and the snow
Far from thee go;
Kind winds attend thee merrily, and the deep
A great peace keep.
Nor ever wreak thee,
And if thou mournest, love, then swiftly Heaven mend thee.

No still frosts bind thee, and no road
Be naught but good,
No dire bolt strike thee sleeping, nor the hill
Make faint thy will,
Nor Phoebus blind thee,
And for adorning earth, may every flower be like thee.

Ruth Pitter.
Readers and Writers.

The other day someone took me to a cinema. The result—my reaction, as they say in America—was the usual one: I am not surprised that I would never go again to see a film. I do not think that the picture I saw was worse than most; my companions assured me that they had seen many better—which I well believe—but they admitted, with some hesitation, in face of my comments, that they too had also seen worse. My objection to this particular film was, of course, that its plot and the development of its characters were below the literary level of a bad novellette designed for cooks to read in their leisure. It was a stupid story of a girl—a beautiful, fair-haired girl, need I say—who had been reared by an eccentric parent on a South Sea island. Then a man is washed ashore—I think he was washed ashore, but there was a glimpse of a struggle in a ship beforehand—and the heroine (fair hair and bare legs) began to wonder if her father's misanthropy was justified. Then the hero—who was washed ashore—turned out to be a misogynist. We saw his gloomy past ruined by his face of my comments, that they had also seen worse.

My objection to this particular film was, of course, that it contained a disturbing lack of good taste. (Heroines on the screen are always fair, in order that the light may shine through them; or, of course, as a means of advertisement for distinguished actresses and others.)

Mr. J. C. Squire in the “Outlook” has, I think, rather misread some recent notes in these columns upon Mr. Shanks’s notices of James Branch Cabell’s “Jurgery.” Mr. Squire supposes that I am such an admirer of this better-than-most book that I attribute all hostile criticism of it to a conspiracy. This was not, of course, my meaning. I wished to suggest that Mr. Shanks’s impetuose abuse of the book was hardly to be explained, in view of Mr. Shanks’s critical and literary powers, as a piece of judgment. I could only wonder if there was not some “complex”—as the psycho-analysts say—which could explain why he should set out so fearfully to denigrate a writer with Mr. Cabell’s record, experience and merit. I said, and I repeat, that I like vigorous criticism, whether friendly or hostile; but I still think that several of Mr. Shanks’s remarks were indefensible in a critic in serious journals.

C. E. BECHHOEFER

Drama.

By John Francis Hope.

The Old Vic continues to interest and attract, and with the production of “Peer Gynt,” with Grieg’s music, on March 6 (Mr. Russell Thorndike as Peer), it will be the focus of critical attention. It is the first time that “Peer Gynt” has been done in London, and it will be played for a fortnight; most of us, I expect, are re-reading the play and putting our thinking caps on in preparation. Every Tuesday afternoon during Lent, and on Saturday afternoon in Passion Week, and the first three days in Holy Week, they are playing the old morality, “Everyman”; and with “King Lear,” “The Comedy of Errors,” “Hamlet” (played in its entirety at the matinée on April 29, and a production of “Timon of Athens” on May 1, the remainder of the season will have plenty of interest—although it means heavy work for the actors. However, Mr. Russell Thorndike remains in the cast to share the burden of the work, and to add, let us hope, a needed touch of distinction to the playing of the principal male characters.

It is appropriate that they should enter this interesting period with not only the best performance I have seen them give, but the best production I have ever seen of “Twelfth Night.” I do not mean that this thing was perfect in every detail, but that it maintained a consistently high level of general excellence, there were no abject failures, and the comedy scenes were the funniest that I have ever seen. Mr. Robert Atkins, the producer, played Sir Toby Belch; and it was curious to notice that although his presentation was as a wide, elaborate “business,” his own performance was full of it. He kept Sir Toby very quiet (perhaps he does not appreciate the significance of the remark: “Were we expression has high artistic possibilities and, like most other readers and writers, I have puzzled my brains to try to fancy what the true path of development for the cinema could be. Mr. H. G. Wells some time ago suggested that the future of the novel was a combination of the gramophone and the cinema. One was to be put on a record and open one’s portable cinema outfit and a story would be told and unfold simultaneously. I heard lately that such a machine has now been invented; but I have no particulars. Yet somehow I feel that Mr. Wells, perhaps without meaning it, showed here the true claim to literary significance that the cinema is likely to put out in our time—namely, an elaboration of that unsatisfactory thing, the book illustration.

In this I have, of course, taken no account of the cinema as a retailer of information—I do not mean propaganda—by photographs; or as a field for the developments with lay figures that Mr. Will Dyson is now experimenting upon; or, of course, as a means of advertisement for distinguished actresses and others.

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not born under Taurus"), and his sword-play would not have saved his skin; but in the elaboration of comic business he was more ingenious even than Mr. Arthur Whitby, indeed, he was excessively elaborate in the business of the Viola's nightshirt, and played it; and once an audience has laughed itself almost into hysteric, it is not critical of detail. The duel between Viola (played by Miss Florence Buckton) and Sir Andrew Aguecheek (played by Mr. Andrew Leigh) was another example of elaborated "business" that seemed strange after the bare recitals that we have so often had at the Old Vic; but it got the laugh it played for, even if it had no inherent credibility and did not spring naturally from character. For Miss Buckton's Viola was, on the whole, so competent and straightforward a character that it is not to be believed that she would have suffered such inconveniences with her sword which a touch of the hilt would have avoided; she put her hand on her hip, but never on the hilt, and sat on her sword, and knocked it on the furniture, and ignored it completely—although she had worn it for three months. And so capable a young woman would not, having drawn it, have continued to thrust blindly with it, without ever looking to see where her antagonist was; the "business" was super-imposed on the character, while Miss Buckton played so consistently that she did not, for a wonder, give us the poetical beauty of the sentimental passages. Just as Shaw changes from naturalism to rhetorical statement, so Shakespeare, in his construction of a character, frequently passes from the dramatic to the lyric vein; and Viola talks to Orsino of love like a poet. It may seem ungracious to insist upon such details in considering what was generally a very competent performance, indeed, perfect in its comic passages; but Miss Buckton has taught us to expect more than mere competence, and although she made Viola a very pleasing character, she did not appeal to the sense of poetical beauty as she could have done. The Sir Andrew Aguecheek of Mr. Andrew Leigh was the best thing I have seen him do; he was not a crotchetous idiot (as Mr. Granville Barker once complained of most Sir Andrews) but was just a little thick in the wits, and he made me think what was generally a very competent performance, indeed, perfect in its comic passages; but Miss Buckton has taught us to expect more than mere competence, and although she made Viola a very pleasing character, she did not appeal to the sense of poetical beauty as she could have done. The Sir Andrew Aguecheek of Mr. Andrew Leigh was the best thing I have seen him do; he was not a crotchetous idiot (as Mr. Granville Barker once complained of most Sir Andrews) but was just a little thick in the wits, and he made me think what a chance Shakespeare missed when he did not write a scene between Sir Andrew and Olivia as a companion picture to Malvolio's scene. It is possible that Sir Andrew was no more than a fop who had specialised in dancing, and masques and revels; his boast of his fencing, too, suggests that he would have made a better Malvolio than Mr. Reyner Barton justified his stratagem, he was evidently conceited that he would have a mind to the instrument, which is the ideal instrument for making gramophone records is the most satisfactory one from the point of view of the audience in a concert hall. For the purposes of the record and to accentuate as much as possible the "hammer" quality of the piano. But the reverse process should be applied to pianos which are for concert use, and it is a matter for regret that pianists have not the same advantages with respect to the instrument which is their medium as have practically all other instrumental artists. Imagine Mr. Casals or Mr. Kreisler faced with the "string" equivalent of some of the pianos
which are used in English concert halls! At the recital on February 18 Signor Busoni, with Mr. Egon Petri, gave a programme of works for two pianos. The whole programme consisted of Signor Busoni's own arrangement of Mozart and Bach. As a rule, I dislike hyphenated compositions, but there were such astounding results on February 18 that one could only bow one's head in gratitude. Nothing could be more stirring, or on more colossal lines, than the "Fantasia Contrappuntistica."

MADAME SUGGIA. Orchestral Concert. Queen 3 Hall, February 20. Conductor: Sir Henry J. Wood. Madame Suggia's art is so beautiful, and she is so well known, that it is difficult to account for the poverty of the programme at her concert on February 18. There are few 'cellists who combine such warmth of tone with such accuracy and suppleness of phrasing, and Madame Suggia's own delight in the music she plays transmits itself to the audience, which on February 20 made up in a very proper enthusiasm for what it lacked in numbers. Programmes with analytical notes have by now become the custom at orchestral concerts, and are usually sold at the price of one shilling. This is a big sum to pay for a programme, and such members of the audience as do pay it have a right to expect something for their money, but I wonder whether they would consider most of the "analytical notes" offered them as fair value for a pianos. The whole programme consisted of Signor Busoni's own arrangement of Mozart and Bach. As analytical notes have by now become the custom at concerts, the second of which distinguishes is its running character. This sort of stuff is not to have been written. Ah! Bohemia of the Quartier Latin! Thou who steals' our energy and our time, what pleasures do I owe thee—yet what pains!

Near the Sorbonne is the Ludo, where students are lost in games of billiards—the Pascal, where young fools and women lead a life, inane, artificial, burlesque—and yet I have envied them. There are bars where many hours are spent in drinking idly, without thirst, in laughter without cause—one's glance drawn by the girl, perched on a tall stool, who drinks while poising her silk-clad limbs. There is the Caveau du Rocher, where a group of schoolboys and students clap themselves on the back, to give themselves courage, ever without success. And there, too, the Closerie des Lilas where, in summer, drinking execrable coffee, one gazes with homesick longing after the trains leaving the Gare du Sceau, for Clarain and Robinson—and whence, one may see, right at the end of the paths in the Luxembourg—above the roof of the Palais Medicis the mournful dome of Sacre Coeur. Do you not know this absurd place, where infinite time is lost? Alas! such dreams of the eaters of hashich! Those dreams never come true. Yet this is indeed the life which inspires our bodies—in human veins this fever does truly burn—there are, truly, pulsing hearts which suffer from this divorce between joy and reality. Shall we never get ourselves out of the wretched grooves of existence to discover that wherein our aspirations are fulfilled and where at length we may live our fullest? Oh! more dismal and tragic than can be believed, the solitude of him who leaves these cafés, these brasseries, these places where one exists on alcohol, where one deadens oneself in noise to escape from the unceasing search for happiness.

Now I must tell why I have evoked this atmosphere, peculiar, to such a degree, to the Quartier Latin. It is because it creates the character of the heroes of Carco's work, and because, there, they do indeed exist and there I, myself, have watched develop many an adventure like to that of "Les Innocents." And also, it is because this book has brought to my mind that curious, mixed population, vulgar, yet at the same time select, who live in the vast triangle of houses crowded between the Boulevard Montparnasse, where are the painters, the Boulevard St. Michel, where are the "mitique," and the Jardin du Luxembourg, where all meet.

In that, I do but follow the advice of Walter Pater. I also think it impossible to seize the interest of a book,
If one does not conjure into one's vision that unique spot where so many famous men have been those who will always remain unknown—in an unceasing round. I have myself known these young folk, and I, like Francis Carco, could tell the story of those who have been forced into lawlessness by a violent desire for happiness, checked by want of money and irritated by the prospect of life spent for a deeper understanding of their worth and nature, unable otherwise to break free from them, he becomes—a thief. Such individuals exist, and I confess, perhaps to my shame, yet without remorse, that I have a sympathy with them. I cannot withhold my appreciation of the strength of their desire, the very human and primitive simplicity of their mentality, and the boldness with which they embark on a struggle, of the risks of which they are not ignorant.

In a café in Lyon we come upon the Milord of Carco. He is staying there to spend the product of his "affaires"—the theatre in the company of his friend, Ciboulette, and his brother, "N'a qu'un oil" (one-eyed). The milord is thus named, because he is robust, his face clear-cut, fresh-complexioned, called in France, the English type. He himself emphasizes this character by wearing a "sport's" outfit, with a khaki waterproof and an immense cap. Lacockian, master of himself, resolute, he thinks without remorse of his past exploits, aspiring to surpass them by still bolder strokes. His clear glance does not soften as he looks at the shapely, pretty girl whom his scornful, impassive manner has almost subdued. All he desires is to give her money, for which she thanks him, and to inform her simply that he will send more so that she may seek him out in Paris where they will set up house together. He leaves Lyon, after having rid his mistress of an unfortunate lover, and for this she admires him still more.

In Paris, less populous owing to the war, and more severely policed, the life of the underworld and of the thieves is made more difficult. He, whom he calls the patron, who was wont to direct him and his friends, has disappeared—he finds only the latter and endeavours to shake their fear, and to stir them up to bold attempts. Then is evident the difference in worth between this cold, resolute youth, accepting the risks of the path he has chosen towards fortune, and this gang of ruffians, who are thieves, only for the sake of idleness between coupés. Fidone?—as Cartouche would have said.

Reduced to relying on himself alone, he visits his mother and profits by obtaining money by plundering an old lady lodging in his mother's house. Then he rents a room near the Boulevard St. Michel and there thinks over the idea of the future—the greater part of his time is occupied by the Quartier Latin, so curious yet so different from what it is thought to be. He makes the acquaintance of an English thief, buys from him some clothes and—robs him of his English mistress.

Those of my readers who read "Les Innocents" will perhaps consider this lady caricatured, exaggerated, impossible.... What a mistake! This girl who earns her living by writing for an American journal, interested only in its unsavoury style, but keen on a Bohemian existence and adventure, is not unaccompanied by the distaste they exhibit for the customs of their own country—they say they detest its hypocrisy. These Anglo-Saxon women, often gifted with a clearness of understanding and with a will which many men might envy, come to Paris, after having assured their existence and enjoy in dilettante fashion, both the artistic charm of the famous city and the feverish and subtle vitality of its life.

This girl loves to the point of suffering this youth with the compelling glance, who, although a thief and almost without culture, has the chivalrous manners of a gentleman. But is she herself, for all her prettiness, better than a wanton? She observes him, making no effort to help him and takes a cynical pleasure in him while he is in reality very sane, and has left the path of order only because of an energy badly utilised by an absurd society.

The story of their love, at times bordering on hatred, ends with Milord's departure for the war. He is, as he is, tempted by fame, he dreams of becoming an airman. Wounded, a limb amputated, he returns to Paris, where again he finds his English friend, and there he confesses to her his love for Ciboulette. This extraordinary individual, in her own original fashion, immediately finds him dear to herself, wants to take him to her whom he loves. Here, again, one may not believe her impossible absurdity, yet it is but an observation of a peculiarity in the complicated character of these women. They are possessed by a romantic sentiment which compels them to self-sacrifice, though it is a sacrifice entirely intellectual, and by an insatiable curiosity which drives them to follow out to its end "un roman véu." This girl, moreover, is badly served for her instinct of generosity, or curiosity—which ever is preferred—for having gone beyond discretion towards her rival, Ciboulette. The latter, normal in all but in morals, struggles with her, and kills her. Milord arrives at this moment. Taking Ciboulette away with him, he escapes, and when N'a qu'un oil joins them at their hotel, it is to find his sister dead, and to hear the dying exclamation of Milord: "Do not do as we have done." Rather than live a brutalising and unhappy life of toil—the Innocents have killed themselves.

It might be thought from the title of this book and my review that the novel was written to support an argument. But this is far from the case. It but illustrates, the book is altogether dramatic and descriptive without ever being didactic. I have fulfilled my role of critic in bringing into clearness the character of Milord, but nothing like the abstract study I have made exists in Francis Carco's book. He has brought into action well-observed and coherent facts and has left it to the reader to appreciate and understand. A novelist is not a professor of psychology.

As was said by Claude Tarrère, in a recent interview: "I think that a novel, under pain of being called a bad novel, ought to be both psychological and full of adventure. That which is one or other is condemned in advance: it is, in any case, an incomplete novel. Action is indispensable, for it brings proof to the reader of what is advanced by the novelist. You will, in vain, repeat to me fifty times that your hero is a man of energy; I, the reader, will not believe you, unless an action (invented) allows your character to manifest his energy, by his acts, his life, his words."

And it is in accordance with this principle that Francis Carco, in a style, clear, simple with a happy rhythm, has written this amusing yet profound story, "Les Innocents."
Views and Reviews.

ON SOVEREIGNTY.

Mr. Laski is one of the most leagued and brilliant of that younger school of political theorists who are aiming at a reconstruction not only of our ideas of the State, but of the State itself; and in the essay which gives the title to this volume* he is chiefly concerned to indicate the historical environment which determined the development of our institutions. That "the State is the offspring of a special set of historic circumstances" cannot be gainsaid; "sovereignty, in the sense of an ultimate territorial organ which knows no superior, was to the Middle Ages an unthinkable thing," he tells us. But the special set of historic circumstances to which he refers compelled men not only to think but to create "the unthinkable thing"; the sovereignty of the Church—"itself a legacy from the sovereignty of the Roman Empire—broke down in practice, as all widespread extensions of sovereignty break down. "Who are you," asked Burke, "that should fret and rage, and bite the chains of nature? Nothing worse happens to you than does to all nations who have extensive empire; and it happens in all the forms into which empire can be thrown. In large bodies, the circulation of power must be less vigorous at the extremities. Nature has said it. The Turk cannot govern Egypt, and Arabia, and Cerdistan as he governs Thrace; nor has he the same dominion in the Crimea and in Algiers which he has at Brusa and Smyrna. Despotism itself is obliged to truck and huckster. The Sultan gets such obedience as he can. He governs with a loose rein, that he may govern at all; and the whole of the force and vigour of his authority in the centre is derived from a placid relaxation in all his horders. Spain, in her provinces, is perhaps not so well obeyed as you are in yours. She complies too; she submits; she watches times. This is the immutable condition, the eternal law, of extensive and detached empire."

From this point of view, the struggle of the empire with the Papacy, and the growth of nationalism, may be interpreted as the thinking of the unthinkable thing. "God is too high, and the Czar too far" for effective government; as another Russian proverb says: "My skin is nearer than my shirt," and local interests are certainly more intense than universal ones. But the localism of the Middle Ages was too restricted to be effective; the units were too small, too diverse, even for self-preservation, to say nothing of development. The struggle for liberty from the universal sovereignty of the Church was really a struggle to make sovereignty real; "liberty," in Hobbes' definition, "is political power divided into small fragments," and the only practicable unit of political liberty was the sovereign State. The paradox of the Reformation, which, as Mr. Laski says, "sought ecclesiastical purification through the medium of the individual conscience," but yet "resulted in a greater measure of State-power," should warn us to regard very critically the attempts made by Mr. Laski and others to found a State on a theory of liberty. The desire for liberty always issues politically in rebellion, and rebellion is never an attempt to abolish sovereignty, but to establish it in a new sphere or in fresh hands. "All crises are unfavourable to liberty," says Mr. Laski; and it is really in crises that the question of sovereignty arises.

It is here, I think, that the difference between the authoritarian and libertarian schools of thought is to be sought. Paradoxically, the sovereign, whoever he may be, is the only free man, accepting with Mr. Laski the definition of liberty as "capacity of continuous initiative"; but the authoritarian admits and looks for only one sovereign, who claims the sovereignty for every one, really obtains it for no one. For the "capacity of continuous initiative," if exercised, results in anarchy, which prevents the exercise of continuous initiative, and becomes so intolerable that people welcome the Dictator who denies and prohibits it. The first condition of the successful exercise of continuous initiative is security, and no man is secure when all are exercising continuous initiative. "Liberties, yes; liberty, never," said Balzac; I think he also said that "liberty is never given, it is always taken," but in either case it implies a sovereign power, actual and prospective.

But the fact that Mr. Laski does not himself determine "the foundations of sovereignty," but only offers some cogent criticisms of the legal theory of sovereignty as "part of a scaffolding from which there is, I hope, eventually to emerge a general notion of a popular State," only convinces me that he is himself aware of the impossibility of founding a new political form on the theory of liberty. The pluralistic State that he advocates, the federal form to which, he thinks, all government must necessarily tend, in fact, to work the reverse way. Both the American and Swiss federations reveal what Sir Henry Maine thought was the natural tendency of political power and institutions towards unity; as I write, I have before me a copy of Dr. William MacDonald's "A New Constitution for a New America," the chief argument of it being the same as Mr. Laski's about unitary States, that the Government is irresponsible; and Dr. MacDonald attempts to make it responsible by adapting English practice. If, as Mr. Laski says, "the main thing is to avoid a system in which supreme power is concentrated at a single point in the body public," the federal form will no more do it than universal suffrage will establish democracy; for as Sir Henry Maine showed, the tendency of power is always towards unity, and the political power of the voters is co-ordinated in their representatives, who are governed by the caucus. So with the federal form, the central Government is compelled, even by events, to aggrandise itself at the expense of its constituent members; and the devolution of power, which is all that is possible to a unitary State, only serves to make the central Government more and more apparent. If God could create a being so powerful that He could not afterwards destroy him, omnipotence would not be abolished, but transferred; similarly, if the sovereign State created a plurality of powers, it would not abolish sovereignty. Either it would retain it for itself, or one of the powers created by it would seize and exercise sovereignty, just as the Supreme Court of America is really the sovereign power conjointly with the President. The divided allegiance of the pluralistic State does not, as a matter of fact, issue in "an active consent on the part of citizens" but in simple bewilderment and apathy. A man who gives his allegiance to a Church, or a Trade Union, or any functional organisation, or even to a constituent State, must finally issue in rebellion, which is a transfer and not an abolition of sovereignty. If political life is itself based on a series of dilemmas, sovereignty alone can settle them; but a sovereignty dispersed would lack the authority, and could only obtain it by civil war, and the restitution of the complete legal theory of sovereignty. If the experience of Russia has any meaning, it is that a State cannot be founded on a theory of liberty; somewhere, somehow, "supreme power is concentrated at a single point in the body public," and the attempt to avoid this is really a waste of time.

A. E. R.
Reviews.

Ruskin the Prophet; and Other Centenary Studies. By Various Authors. Edited by J. Howard Whitehouse. (Allen and Unwin. 8s. 6d. net.)

Ruskin was so many-sided a man that his value has to be assessed by many specialists; but in this series, only one assessment, that of "Ruskin As Political Economist," is attempted. Mr. J. A. Hobson shows that "his great work as political economist was to turn the political interests of his countrymen into a quantitive to a qualitative economy, or in other words to substitute the vital for the pecuniary standard of value." Our familiarity with this standard does not diminish, on the contrary, it enhances, the importance of Ruskin's work in this connection; Ruskin has probably converted more readers to "vitalistic" economics than even Nietzsche has done. It is not unlikely that this will be finally his chief value to mankind; the fact that he developed from an art critic into a critic of the life expressed in art, indicates the secondary importance of his artistic activities. "Give us this day our daily bread," and "don't adulterate it," is a sound axiom for a sound civilisation; and that all manners, morals, style, and beauty should find complete expression in the getting and giving of bread (and its connotations) is, after all, the religion of humanity. The other essays, "Ruskin and Plato," by Professor A. J. Dale, "Ruskin and Shakespeare," by Professor A. J. Dale, "Ruskin and London," for he was a Cockney, by J. W. Whitehouse, "Ruskin the Prophet," by the Right Hon. C. F. G. Masterman, and simply "Ruskin," by John Masefield, have interest chiefly for those not well acquainted with the facts of Ruskin's life. The essays are written mainly in the laudatory vein, and have all the defects of worship; the only satisfactory homage to Ruskin is to develop in the same direction but to avoid his practical errors. It is not the ideas of Ruskin, but his values, that are of real interest and import to us; he, also, came that we might have life, and that we might have it more abundantly—and his discussion of money in "Time and Tide" is of more importance in this connection, dealing as it does with one of the chief means of life in civilised society, than all his philosophical or theological lucubrations. We like of all great men his works need sifting; it is his essence, his attitude, his direction that alone are communicable, or should be, if we are not to waste our life in worship of dead ideas (such as the benevolent despotism of our aristocracy) instead of in work for live ideas.

Adam and Eve and Pinch Me. By A. E. Coppard. (Birrell and Garnett.)

This is the first book printed at The Golden Cockerel Press, Waltham Saint Lawrence, Berkshire; and the copy sent to us reflects no credit on the binders. The printing is intelligible, but we expected something more from a Golden Cockerel. The short stories contained in this curiously named volume are readable; they have a savour of the style of the Irish school, and spin the common stuff of life into fairy-gold. The oddity of it is called "Adam and Eve and Pinch Me" handles very neatly the idea of what the Theosophists call "astral travelling"; but Mr. Coppard more frequently writes fairy tales than psychological or realistic studies. He has the naivete of a bewitched child, who is permitted to see and describe real things with no more than an imaginative reaction to them. As a view of life, it is lunacy, but very amiable lunacy; it can only be made to seem real in verse. It is really minstrelsy, and has no place on the public highway of prose. We advise him to try his hand at verse; "The Land of Heart's Desire" is not reality.

Prisoners of Status. By E. Shaw-Cowley. (The Bodley Head. 7s. 6d. net.)

This is a story that has no other purpose than to illustrate the necessity of a reform in the divorce laws of this country. The author's determination not to be sensational prevents the story from rising above mediocrity. The points on which the author seems to insist on reform are: that divorce should be granted when one of the partners refuses to perform the implied terms of the contract, in this case, motherhood. Also, that a decree absolute should follow a decree nisi after a fixed period of time, or alternatively, that subsequent marriage should legitimise children. To establish these contentions, the author writes at considerable length and in unnecessary detail the story of some very ordinary people who want to love lawfully, and are ashamed of having done something of which they are not ashamed. The author seems to hold both the sacramental and contractual views of marriage—and we find it difficult to maintain interest in a story that has all the conventional values and cliches, and no other purpose than to make those conventions a little easier to manipulate.

The Mystery of Space. By Robert T. Browne. (Kegan Paul. 15s. net.)

A study of the hyper-space movement which ignores Minkowsky and Einstein, and still talks of the "fourth dimension" as though it required other psychic faculties than those we now possess for its experience, is of not much interest. The "relativity" school has at least brought us back to sanity by its insistence on the fact that we know nothing about space, but know only of measurements of matter, the famous fourth dimension being nothing else but a time variable. Mr. Browne complicates matters by the invention of a new vocabulary, when what is really needed is precise definition of words already in use. What is "mathesis," or "metageometry," or "thinginess," or "changogeny," or "chaomorphogeny," or even "Kathocol?"? His use of "Kosmic symbolism" as "a standard of reference" results in such assertions as this: "The genesis of space is here shown symbolised by the Kosmic Egg. The seven stages of involution are referred to as the monopyknotic, duopyknotic, tripyknotic, quintopyknotic; while the corresponding stages of evolution are referred to as the physical, the sentient, mental, causative, or spiritual, the triadic, duadic and monadic, indicating that the principle of physicality is succeeded by the principles of sentience, mentality, spirituality, the three forms of kathetic being. This symbolism, it should be stated, is designed with respect to the universe and man, and has no reference to other possible evolutions than the human and contemporaneous animal, plant and mineral evolutions." We are glad of that, because as Mr. Browne, quite obviously, has not perceived, but conceived, this "genesis of space," we are still at liberty to turn to mathematicians for other concepts. When Prof. Eddington says: "There is no means of determining the properties of our space by a priori reasoning, because there are many possible kinds of space to choose from, no one of which can be considered more likely than any other": he puts Mr. Browne and his unintelligible lucubrations out of court. Space was not generated by a Kosmic Egg, but by geometricians, who are not even symbolised by Kosmic Eggs.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

PROPAGANDA.

Sir,—On behalf of the Bristol Credit Group, may I ask all readers in the district to note that Major Douglas will address a public meeting in the Kingsley Hall, Old Market, Bristol, on Sunday evening, March 5, at 6.30 p.m. Title: Finance and Freedom.

W. A. EVERS.

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