LIBERTY, LAW, AND DEMOCRACY.

The concepts with which one age will preoccupy itself, and in which it will invest its surplus emotional heat have shown themselves to be so essentially casual as to be now a matter for mirth rather than wonder with its successors. The subject of an age's Master Passion round which its interest rages will be anything accidental and contingent which will serve; stand the heat, that is, and last out until enthusiasm tires. The amount of genuine enthusiasm which Athanasius, Arius and their followers were able to cull from the numerical problems in the concept of the Trinity was—incredible though it may seem—equal to that which this age culls from the figures of the football scores. The Crusaders who were so concerned about the possession of the Tomb of Christ looked forward to finding as much diversion and profit as a Home Ruler expects to get from the possession of a Parliament on Dublin Green. It is only from a distance that these dead dogs look so determinedly dead. Nearer to, one would swear the body had stirred; and we who are so near to an age when the mere mention of "Universal Law" would produce lyrical intoxication, "All's love, All's law," a very swoon of security, do not purpose here to break in upon the belated obsessions of that dead or dying concept. As the sport of the ribald and the mockers "Universal Law" would produce lyrical intoxication, "Laws and ordinances fall like hail on the poor populace. After a while the political soil will be covered with a layer of paper, and all the geologists will have to do will be to list it, under the name of papyraceous formation, among the epochs of the earth's history. The Convention, in three years one month and four days, issued eleven thousand six hundred laws and decrees; the Constituent and Legislative Assemblies had produced hardly less; the empire and the later governments have wrought as industriously. At present the 'Bulletin des Lois' contains, they say, more than fifty thousand; if our representatives did their duty this enormous figure would soon be doubled. Do you believe that the populace, or the government itself, can keep its sanity in this labyrinth?"

And yet, while no one would care to dispute these facts or deny they had significance, it is the libertarian interpretation of them which provides the clue
to the mystery why the gospel of liberty carries with it so little conviction. The Libertarian creed has no "holy commandments," and the "angel" is mortal and ineffectual angel. In its devouter moments common speech will accept the gospel, but common sense invariably slips past it. While not wishing to hurt its feelings, so to speak, it refuses to have any serious dealings with it. Now common sense is quite prepared to be serious about statutory law, even where it is suspicious of it. It is willing to hear law described as a "threatening power" and will think out ways and means of cutting its claws: but "liberty" it does not discuss. The discussion for and against the "principle of liberty" appears similar to a discussion on the ultimate and eternal implications involved in the "principle," in which one wins or loses a game of patience: or the principle of that popular child's game where one "arranges" either to tread on every chink in the pavement or to avoid treading on every chink. "You do, if you do, and don't if you don't."

It is however only when one gets at the temper behind law and realises its permanent nature that it becomes apparent why discussions concerning liberty are more or less fanciful diversions, and nothing makes law more clear than considering it under that form of "government" which has promoted its luxuriant growth—democracy.

A law means that "state" support is guaranteed on behalf of an interest which has obviously already sufficiently "sacrificed" self-interest. The law has its reverse side to it which implies a "state" guarantee to repress another interest or interests, too weak to command its support. Democracy, putting aside its alliterative and rhetorical jargon, means just the quickening of the pace at which these alliances of the State with owners of "interests" are put through. Representation of people is an impossibility. It is intended for platform purposes only, but representation of interests is a very real thing, one which can be judged with precision as to its efficacy or no. An "interest" is the particularised line of fulfilment which the accomplishment of a willed purpose takes. At points it breaks into and clashes with other interests: and at these points it becomes necessary for their owners to fight the situation out.

These are the precise points where rhetoricians and moralists try to work in their spoof. The people have not protection of their "interests" and owners of "interests" should "respect" each other's interests. The "liberty" of each and all "should" be "respected." One "should" repress one's interest when likely to interfere with another's. The fact to be borne in mind is that whether one "should" or "should not," the strong nature never do. The powerful allow "respect for others' interests" to remain the exclusive foible of the weak. The tolerance they have for others' "interests" is not respect but indifference. The importance of furthering one's own interests does not leave sufficient energy really to accord much attention to those of others. It is only when others' interests thrust themselves obtrudingly across one's own that indifference vanishes: because they have become possible allies or obstacles. If the latter, the fundamental lack of respect swiftly defines itself. In face of opposition to a genuine interest, its owner respects neither "his neighbour's ox, his ass, his wife, his manservant, his maidservant, nor anything that is his." Not even his opinions. One has only to think what jolly old proselytisers the world's "great" men have been to realise what "respect" they have for their neighbour's interests. What each man will do for his own and for that he has worked upon any soul or body upon which his whim or purpose has seen fit to direct it. Their success has been proportional to the unformedness of the characters with which they have had immediately to deal.

If it is borne in mind that genuine "interests" are things which are never abandoned: that smaller interests are sacrificed ("sacrifice" being a word which has no meaning apart from an audience: it means an advantage or disinterest: e.g. sacrifice of applause of an audience, for an act which did no audience look on we should do as a matter of course) for a bigger interest as we should "sacrifice" small change of, say, eight half-crowns for a guinea, we can clear "democracy" of its bluff and remove the complexity which the multiplicity of statutory laws creates. They are seen to be the two names for one phenomenon. The "principle" of liberty is government, i.e. persuasion by compulsion exercised from a largely increased number of centres. Multiplicity of laws indicates the detailed channels through which it is effected. It is too vague to say that democracy represents the liberty of the people: rather one would say democracy represented the case in which the people of those who are prepared to take liberties (i.e. persuaded by personal violence), with the people who refuse assistance in the furthering of the audacious ones' interests. It is the increase in the number of those who have the courage and ingenuity to become in an open and unequivocal fashion the tyrants we all are. Nothing but nothing makes law more clear than considering it under that form of "government" which has promoted its luxuriant growth—democracy.
The State is the National Repository for Firearms and Batons Company Ltd. It is directed and exploited by State's men whose main qualification is to preserve the State's charter granted to it by the people, the chief terms of which are: The State cannot be dissolved; it can do no injury sufficiently serious to justify retaliation or attack; it can get as much money as it thinks safe out of the people; and use it to defend such "interests" as it seems "good" to the State to make an alliance with. The charter was no doubt granted when the "people" were being put by dexterous directors of the State under the hypnotic influence of "law and order" and in this state of trance they have been lying—perhaps for ever. Occasionally there seems to have been a hint that common intelligence might return to the State's men to make an alliance with interests already people when they will waken up: whereupon a "great" statesman will arise and with a few skilful passes of the hand bring them back under the influence of "law and order"—other people's law and order: he will pacify the unrest.

The existence of this chartered state which makes "democracy" into a bludgeoning menace. It is the existence of the State which makes the rapid increase of "democratic" law a danger where French leave would be a sport. The difference between the two is the difference between the lists in a tournament and a slaughter-house. To empower a state after the fashion of a modern "civilised" state, and then leave it free to ally itself with interests already powerful is not merely for the lamb to lift its neck to the blade: it is to fashion the knife and drop it ostentatiously at the butcher's feet. A modern "poor" citizen appears so unmitigatedly a fool in his attitude towards the state that he suggests he is not merely a fool but is a knave in addition. One of an awestruck crowd of toilers, who when they are not licking their wounds in gauz for not minding their manners, are performing forced labour to feed and fatten—their governors, he fashions elaborated weapons of offence in quantities and allows them to be handed over—to those who dare govern: use them, to wit. They dream of heaven, toil, and St. Vitus' dance. Without any organic living force in itself it is at the mercy of every interest which cares to wreck at it. It is part of the jargon of "democracy" that the "state" is run in the interests of all: that before it, all interests are equal, and though obviously they are not, every "interest" tries with its best to keep itself on the stage. The growth of an interest in government has come out to deal with an abstraction which Mr. Asquith would fall out to be the kind which would exist between Mrs. Webb and St. Vitus' dance. His elaborate, methodically careful arguments—"notably cautious" as his opponents call them—of babes—and proceeds something like this: One would just as lief have Sidney Webb or Herbert Samuel, or Mr. Asquith. For choice, it would fall out to be the kind which would exist between Mrs. Webb sending a blue paper ordering us to take our food in lozenge form and demanding statistics how many times a day we washed: and Mr. Chesterton hesitating before granting us a dog-licence uncertain what unsportiveness to reintroduce confusion as clean government! A mystery-play where life offers its ephemeral attendants, "Liberty" and the "State," Liberty is feeble and stark for what it is. It is the plain-visaged female to take off her mask. They have a lesson to teach, the meek at any rate have not learned it.

However, the "flux of things" is in no way concerned to "teach." It defines itself more often than not before our intelligence can claim to have deserved it, and the modern democratic state is making its nature very clear indeed. Already it begins to look like the effigy of a stout and stupid old lady, twitching and lurching as though hardly breathing and St. Vitus' dance. Without any organic living principle in itself it is at the mercy of every interest which cares to wreck at it. It is part of the jargon of "democracy" that the "state" is run in the interests of all: that before it, all interests are equal, and though obviously they are not, every "interest" tries with its best to keep itself on the stage. The growth of an interest in government has come out to deal with an abstraction which Mr. Asquith would fall out to be the kind which would exist between Mrs. Webb sending a blue paper ordering us to take our food in lozenge form and demanding statistics how many times a day we washed: and Mr. Chesterton hesitating before granting us a dog-licence uncertain what unsportiveness to reintroduce confusion as clean government! A mystery-play where life offers high drama!

**VIEWS AND COMMENTS.**

There is a game children formerly used to play which was a sort of Black Magic adapted for the nursery. The juvenile mystifier gathers his audience—of babes—and proceeds something like this: "Think of a number, double it, halve it, add—say—nine. Take a lucky five, take away the number first thought of" and the mystifier proudly announces the accurate result—four. It was Mr. Steven Byington's* way of treating the relationship of men to things which dug from our memory this

* See Correspondence: The New Freewoman, December 15th.
The solemn disputations concerning interest, labour and capital could not exist were not their existence protected by this sort of unconscious verbal trick: the practice of which is not limited to Mr. Byington but is in quite general use. On the face of it, it is left to be presumed that the discussion is on human and capital matters, or the contrary, as is cut out of all things human. The incalculable human temperament is accepted as given—a stable quantity. The fact that it varies, grows, and springs up apparently out of nothing on impulse: all that is ignored. It is indicated by a fixed number or a definite quantity: and it is neither, and an elaborate pile of arugment is indicated by a fixed number or a definite quantity: and it is neither, and an elaborate pile of argument is made possible. So the "problem" for the discussionists "revise their estimates"—there has been a "slight inaccuracy:" then results will be "valuable" when they get the "given quantities" more precisely! It is a process calculated to make one feel very tired.

It is mainly due to those persons of splendid loquacity but of small sense, the political economists, that we have these absurd static concepts to which has been accorded the absolute quality of real entities—Labour, Capital, Interest, with their initial capitals and fictitious problems. Relative in themselves, their "so-called problems are the old human problems which can be judged as Mr. Byington says of calculation "like any other mathematical problem." If the "worker" forgets the role assigned to him and behaves like a human being instead of a mathematical quantity and hits someone or goes on strike, the discussionists "revise their estimates"—there has been a "slight inaccuracy:" then results will be "valuable" when they get the "given quantities" more precisely! It is a process calculated to make one feel very tired.

One carpenter, James, at the expense of ten days' labour, makes himself a plane, which will last in use for 290 of the 300 working days of the year. William, another carpenter, proposes to borrow the plane for a year, offering to give back at the end of that time, when the plane will be worn out, a new plane equally as good. James objects to lending the plane on these terms, hoping that if he merely gets back a plane he will have nothing to compensate him for the loss of the advantage which the use of the plane during the year would give him. William, admitting this, agrees not merely to return a plane, but, in addition, to give James a new plane. The agreement is carried out to mutual satisfaction. The plane is used up during the year, but at the end of the year, James receives as good a one, and a plank in addition. He lends the new plane again and again, until finally it passes into the hands of his son, who still continues to lend it, receiving a plank of wood until finally it passes into the hands of his son, who still continues to lend it, receiving a plank of wood until finally it passes into the hands of his son, who still continues to lend it, receiving a plank of wood. It will be enough to quote their more salient points:

"One carpenter, James, at the expense of ten days' labour, makes himself a plane, which will last in use for 290 of the 300 working days of the year. William, another carpenter, proposes to borrow the plane for a year, offering to give back at the end of that time, when the plane will be worn out, a new plane equally as good. James objects to lending the plane on these terms, hoping that if he merely gets back a plane he will have nothing to compensate him for the loss of the advantage which the use of the plane during the year would give him. William, admitting this, agrees not merely to return a plane, but, in addition, to give James a new plane. The agreement is carried out to mutual satisfaction. The plane is used up during the year, but at the end of the year, James receives as good a one, and a plank in addition. He lends the new plane again and again, until finally it passes into the hands of his son, who still continues to lend it, receiving a plank of wood until finally it passes into the hands of his son, who still continues to lend it, receiving a plank of wood until finally it passes into the hands of his son, who still continues to lend it, receiving a plank of wood.

Oh weary William! Bastiat thinks the "rightfulness" of his action needs explaining and he explains it in the grand manner. We think William best explains himself! Not so Henry George. He works up William's propensity for borrowing planes and giving planks exceedingly well, and finds that irresistible planking giving arises not from "the power which exists in the tool to increase the productiveness of labour," and is no worse off than he would have been had he not borrowed the plane; while James obtains no more than he would have had if he had retained and used the plane instead of lending it."
she yields me morning and evening is not merely the reward of the labour then exerted; but interest upon the capital which my labour, expended in raising her, has accumulated in the cow."

Accumulated in the cow! Milk! Misdirected nourishment of offspring the "interest"-taker has probably already come to the conclusion it is "right" to assimilate as veal. How naturally the constant repetition of a trick played on a slow-tempered beast has established itself! It is illustrative of a "law of the universe"—therefore just. This really has established itself! It is illustrative of a "law of the universe" even—therefore just. This really has established itself! It is illustrative of a "law of the universe"—therefore just.

The recent strikes show signs of breaking up—failures rather more than less. And failures, we ask Mr. Byington to allow, because the "Strike" has been erected into an idea instead of being kept in its proper place as the name of a simple action of a negative kind. A "strike" connotes nothing beyond stopping work. Workmen do it regularly every night, or rather, not being lured away from common pursuits by the sense by conceptual high-falutin-ness, they call it unceremoniously "knocking-off." They do not speak of that, in awed tones or debate its "rightness" and "wrongness," or talk of "conducting" it in a manner which is "mature" and representative of the "surviving flock". It is the idealisation of a simple act which in the "strike" makes men talk and act as though they were bewitched. "To conduct a strike"! One might as well "conduct" a sleep or a pause. It is not the "strike" which the strikers' opponents are at all likely to fear. It is its termination by definite action. It is inaction which has killed the recent "strike" efforts. What form the requisite definite action should take the strikers must judge for themselves. They know best what they stand in need of to make their defiance effectual.

The suggestion that the present Government imprisoned Larkin and then released him because they were afraid of him, while they allowed Sir Edward Carson to remain at large because they were totally unconcerned regarding him, is too grotesque to warrant any comment beyond the mere statement that the correct interpretation is precisely the opposite. It is deplorable in this time of Europe, to refer to the phrase "a seeker of work searching for the hand that will drain away the stimulated working energy."

It is depressing to think that sensible people give so acquiescent an ear to interpretations of news issued by a commercialised press. Its news may be tolerably accurate, but its opinions are discredited in advance. In connection, however, Mr. Byington might note an item of news: although for months arms have been imported into Ulster to such an extent that now the gentlemanly "rebels" are amply supplied, the proclamation prohibiting the importation of firearms into Ireland was not issued until the "Citizen Army" in Dublin took to daily dril ling. It shows at least that the Government understands that the Dublin ragamuffins might be dangerous under certain conditions. "Government" is as sensitive as a barometer to the sort of pressure which is capable of affecting itself. Mr. Byington on "ideas" we regretfully leave until a later issue, as also our hoary wrangle with Mr. Tucker concerning Proudhon's "style."

At a meeting of shareholders of THE NEW FRIE WOMAN LTD. called to discuss the advisability of changing the title of "The New Freewoman" to "The Egoist," held at Oakley House, Bloomsbury Street, London, W.C., on Dec. 23rd, a unanimous vote was given in favour of the change. From this issue on, "The New Freewoman" will be referred to as THE EGOIST.
France To-Day:
A Group of Thinkers.

WHEN a new star appears in the celestial firmament its brilliance arrives unheralded. Though the Lords of Light have spent upon its being a million years of preparation, though the universe has laboured to the end of flashing its starriness upon our eyes, and the moment fixed of these preparations, of this gigantic focus, we can have no prevision. But when human minds are straining the universal currents for particles of thought and are labouring agglomeratively to forge a master idea, all the flames of their forge-fires cannot be hidden. Those whose vision is most ranging will have been attracted by a spark; will have perceived mistily the toiling figures and have recognized them even across great spaces of the mental universe. When the new sun appears it will thus have been not inaccurately foreseen. So it is now. For behold, there is a new star in the constellation France, and its clearest rays are passing everywhere in the form of a book.

For two decades or more La France, cynical and scintillant by tradition, has been restless of her cynicism and disgusted with her brilliance. The ebb of belief has been reached and the flood tide of idealism runs swiftly and noiselessly. A "bas le matérialisme" has been heard everywhere, a "me, myself, and I" cry. Though this resurgent longing be not confined to France, it is France that has suffered most from two generations of "scientists," of scoffers and of Zolas. "To-day France is mayhap the country of the world where preoccupation with the spiritual life is disturbing individual consciences most profoundly." Conflicting politics—monarchical reaction, nationalism, syndicalism, socialism—make of journalistic bullets a chaos. The old science of Huxley, Renan, Edgar Quinet and Haeckel is an object of quiet mirth to lads of the Latin Quarter whose first beard is not yet dark upon their cheeks. Idealists and reformers have the floor. There are the aesthetic anarchists, who are working for the spiritual regeneration of their nation by means of Walt Whitman and Nietzsche, art expression and individualism. There is M. Marc Sangnier with his "Jeune République," who pursues ardently and mystically the dream of a democratic renaissance founded upon the Catholic Church; The Independent Republicans, with M. Paul Hyacinthe Loyson and his newspaper, "Les Droits de l'Homme," for fulcrum; then, as a stand-off to these, here are M. Gaston RIo and his "Jeune France," grouped about their review, "Foi et Vie," who are determined to recapture the old dream of the philosopher Renouvier, the spiritualizing of France by means of Protestantism. It is to the Protestants that we owe the book whose publication, in an atmosphere so surcharged with indetermined longing, can be significant of so much.

For the last six years the directors of "Foi et Vie" have held a series of conferences. The lecturers have been broadly chosen from divers schools of philosophy and religion. "The connecting link between them," says Paul Doumergue, editor of the review, "is very great preoccupation with all moral and religious problems. . . . They are happy to be assembled for the work—a work that consists of laying firmly the foundations of spiritual life." This year the subject chosen was a discussion of the state of materialism in French science and art, and an examination of its philosophical basis. The greatest savants were not too deeply occupied elsewhere to lend their assistance. At the conclusion the series of seven lectures, including in addition a discourse given by M. RIo at Bordeaux, were united and published as "Present-day Materialism" (first expressed in "Matière et Mémoire," 1896), namely, that neither psychology nor old-line philosophy can offer a decent justification for the belief in the materialism they have taught. M. Bergson's argument is like his thought, tempered and flexible as a Damascene blade, and like it, capable of dividing at a blow a fluttering silk scarf of an objection, or the clumsy mace of some more brutal opponent.

Consider first, he asks, the evidence of common sense. Each of us finds himself mind and body. Now in appearance at least, "by the side of our body, confined to the present moment in time and limited to the place it occupies in space . . . we notice something which extends much farther than the body into space (our sense perceptions) and which produces through time (by means of memory); something which demands or imposes on the body movements unforeseen and free . . . this is the 'me,' it is the mind, the mind being precisely a force which can draw from itself more than it contained, render back more than it receives, give up more than it has." At this no materialism objects. Consciousness—a thing it affirms, imagines it can govern movements of which it is really the mechanical result. Consciousness is "like the luminous mark that follows and traces the movement of a scratched match." The truth is," say the materialistic psychologists, "that if we could see through the skull all that passes in a brain that is working, if we might, to observe its interior, dispose of instruments strong enough to assist at the dance of the atoms, and if we possessed a table of correspondences between the cerebral and the mental, we should know as well as the pretended soul ' all that it thinks, feels and wills.'"

This, replies Bergson, you can never prove. It does not fall under immediate observation. Though it be, as you say, opposed to the law of the conservation of energy that the mind be in any sense truly creative, this law, like all physical laws, is only the summing up of observations made upon physical phenomena. What you do is to assume that the laws which hold for the physical world apply equally well to the mental. But this is the point to be proved. As a matter of fact, from observations made upon the nervous system in general, one is driven to the conclusion that the constant contrivance of consciousness is to convert physical determinism to its own ends. All that observation, experiment, and in consequence, science, permit us to affirm, is the existence of a certain relation between the brain and consciousness.

There is reason to reach the scientists; they did the best they could. "But that such or such a one of them comes and tells us that experimentation reveals a rigorous and complete parallelism between the cerebral and mental lives, ah no! we shall stop him and reply: you savants can very well maintain this thesis, as metaphysicians maintain it. . . . But . . . you give back to us simply what we loaned you. We know the doctrine that you bring: it is a product of our workshops; it is we, philosophers, who manufactured it; and it is old, very old merchandise. Give it for what it is, and do not go passing it for a result of science."
From this point the distinguished philosopher expounds his own idea of the mental-physical relation following, in the main, his former development of the topic. By an examination of the psychology of language he arrives at the conclusion: thought is always turned toward action. "The brain is an organ of pantomime, and of pantomime alone. Its rôle is to mime the life of the mind, and to mime also the exterior situation to which the mind is enough attached... (It) is the organ of attention to life."

Then by another brief examination of the facts of asphasia, he proves that the memory, a faculty which so gently into present consciousness that we cannot say where the mind ends and the other begins, is not in the brain. "I shall here probably assume the existence of a container wherein memories are lodged, and I shall quite candidly that they are in the mind."

The brain serves as an "intermediary mechanism" by which our mind is kept "concentrated on the act to be accomplished." The mind overflows the brain on all sides, and cerebral activity corresponds only to the least part of the mind.

How does this affect the problem of materialism? What may be said of birth and death and personal immortality? Though disposed to dogmatize, Mr. Bergson assures us that his choice has already been made between a narrow rationalism that condemns us, by its insistence on absolutes, to the purely possible, and a looser, more human method which "operates upon a ground where probability is capable of infinite growth."

In so terminating his discourse, the great Frenchman announces his position more simply and definitely than it has ever before appeared in writing. The vigour and fertility of his most casual ideas are nothing less than marvellous. In passing he offers a theory of style (Mat. Act. p. 29) dazzling in its possibilities. He should know about style. Says one writer (*) by no means extreme in his admiration for the philosophy itself: "Bergson's style has been the object of an almost extravagantly admiring comment; and there is no doubt that even when analyzed in the dryest light it appears as the most wonderful vehicle through which philosophic thought has ever found speech." By his brilliant illustrations of difficult points he has excited the admiration of the world. But here (pp. 43-44) is the most marvellous yet utter. With it he comes nearer than he has ever come before to expressing his answer to the enigma, what is life.

"Let us suppose," he says, "that my lecture has been going on for years, from the time when my consciousness first awakened, that it goes on in a single sentence and that my consciousness be enough detached from the future, sufficiently unconcerned with action, to be able to employ itself exclusively to embrace the entire meaning of the sentence. I then should no longer seek an explanation for the integral conservation of this entire past. Now, if my complete psychological existence is something like this single sentence that was begun at the first awakening of consciousness, a sentence strewn with commas but in no place cut by a period."

To the mathematical mind of the late Henri Poincaré (New Conceptions of Matter) there is no such thing as a problem of materialism. Or if there be, science can never utter the last word toward its solution. Science will always be by definition imperfect and uncertain. Science would commit the mind that knows and the object known; and so long as this duality subsists, so long as mind distinguishes itself from its object, it can never know the latter perfectly because it will never see but the exterior. Intellect cannot transcend itself in order to conduct investigations upon its own person. Although each new scientific discovery is a success for determinism, there will always remain a region unknown. In this region will be found human liberty, and from this place of vantage the mind will direct all the rest.

In its own way, however, physical science tends to divide itself into two more or less deterministic camps— that of the extreme atomists, whose definitive conclusions respond to the human need to understand, and that of the others, the continuum-ists, who cannot believe in a final division of units and who therefore respond to that other need of men, to see. Between the two "ultimate reality has been cut off about, its atoms split into electrons, and this duality subsists, so long as mind distinguishes itself from its object, it can never know the latter perfectly because it will never see but the exterior. Intellect cannot transcend itself in order..."

Thus we go, tripping lightly among the latest conclusions of the physical sciences, juggling with Planck's theory of the quantum, according to which, as William James suggested some years since, time and space are given only in jumps, and human history is a matter of drops and atoms.

"Matter is called matter, in order to settle that matter at the very beginning, messieurs."

III.

The biologist, M. Jean Friedel (Materialism and the Biological Sciences) is philosophically a near relative of M. Bergson. Biology, he insists, cannot impose a particular outlook upon us, since it is always possible to explain a series of facts by at least two theories. Moreover, biology is both confined to the earth (unlike the physical sciences) and, to an overwhelming degree, to modern times.

But M. Friedel bases his faith in the ultimate spirituality of life, not on these slight points, but on the evidence of purpose, of which the fitness of all the beings in the botanico-zoological hierarchy of organisms offers evidence. "Life," he says, "is both transformation and self-transformation, in virtue of the flood of matter incessantly renewed in the body's mould; permanence, in virtue of the mould itself, which develops according to its own law, conferring to a mysterious plan, even when the matter which realizes this plan is completely renewed." Back of life lies the \textit{élan vital}. Farther than this M. Friedel does not need (or cannot?) go.

His is the weakest essay in the volume under consideration.

IV.

Economists are strange fellows. After proclaiming for the last forty or fifty years the independence of economics of morality, here is M. Charles Gide of the Faculty of Law of the University of Paris gone further than the moralists have dreamed. He asks (Materialism and Political Economy) for a new kind of value, based on neither the brute natural production of the physiocrats nor naked labour. "Desire, that is the unique cause of value."

Moreover, since that which is most important in determining desire is belief in the powers of anything to give satisfaction, the control of desirability comes under human influence, for "the future will be made of what we most believe in." If we have, as at present, our profoundest faith in money, in the future we can have only a money-ridden commonwealth. It behoves us, then, to let ethics enter upon the scene at once. With a system of ethical values predominant— that of the extreme atomists, in opposition to the

\textit{Eucken and Bergson.} E. Hermann. (J. Clark & Co. London, 1913.)
This "transvaluation of all values," though not a Nietzschean project, namely, the spiritualization of desire, must come about chiefly through the work of the artist. Christ condemned avarice as the worst desire, must come about chiefly through the work of the artist. Nietzschean project, namely, the spiritualization of sins, and avarice at that time meant simple attachment to property. In following the man of Galilee, who expressed his own opinion as follows: "The ultimate need of the new industrialism is more artists and poets. . . . When these have done their work, a revolution will have been accomplished: a revolution in ideals and in values."

V.

MM. François de Witt-Guizot, Gaston Riou and Firman Roz in turn trace the course of evolution in French literature during the last two decades; the first in literature properly speaking, the second, the colour of thought of the writers, critics and philosophers themselves (a possibility in France where at all times the solidarity of artists and thinkers is virtually complete); and M. Roz the progress of the very unliterary French theatre of the last half century. Materialism, all admit, has been and remains the curse of French letters. Born in France in the XVIII. cent. "philosophers" and astounding Diderot, lurking unperceived under the huge enthusiasm of the giants of French Romanticism, colouring the realism of Flaubert and the cold externality of the Parannsians, materialism received its best treatment at the hands of the Naturalists, Zola and his De_simulation. It was an epoch of eccentricity. In consequence, after Taine had taken the old formula of Hegel, forgotten in the country where it arose, "whatever is has a right to be," and embroidered it with his master imagination; when Renan was preaching futility eternal and an empty stoicism whose sole passion was to know—it was easy for Zola to defend his thesis, "to study man as he is—no longer the metaphysical man but the physiological man.

"Thought is a product of the whole body." The error of Naturalism was that arbitrarily it cut men in two and rejected half. Thus its products lack any touch of spirit—"no soul, no inner life, hence no truth," exclaims M. de Witt-Guizot. Sainte-Beuve remarked ironically that "truth is not entirely and necessarily on the side of evil, on the side of human folly and perversity.

Nevertheless, materialism persisted in spite of Balzac and Dumas Fils. And though its strongest child, Naturalism, succumbed to the blows of the muscular trio, Ferdinand Bruneïtre, Melchior de Vogüé and Paul Bourget, materialism still persists in France under the cover of a "sensualité exquise" and a "brutal theater." "Philosophic materialism in the XVIII. century, naturalistic materialism in the middle of the XIX. century, sensualistic and "intellectualist" materialism at the opening of the XX. century"—such is the summary of the situation given by M. de Witt-Guizot. M. Roz is hardly more hopeful. "There is," he says, "in our contemporary theatre what might be called a social materialism."

Yet the dawn is breaking. Pascal has come into the veneration he has so long deserved. Though the wornout play of sensual intrigue continue to haunt the stage, the novelists and the poets are delving into deeper levels. M. Riou foresees a renaissance of Christian faith. This opinion is not shared by M. Roz, who declares flatly that the new zeal has nothing to do with philosophical idealism or religious spirit. The point is that he finds a new zeal permeating France, and a new generation nourished on Maeterlinck, Walt Whitman and Emerson. Even the old scepticism of Anatole France and Pierre Loti seems strangely out of date. Maurice Barrès and Romain Rolland have the ear of youth. Their message, their outlook, is no longer jaded and blasé; it is more knowing and more courageous.

VI.

To-day the unhealthy vapours of materialism are dissolving fast. In consequence, all France is perceiving with a sort of relieved horror just how great their nation has been running to the shoals of mental and material dissolution. Viewed in retrospect, the danger appears clear-cut. France has been stifling beneath the fog of its own emptiness. The spiritual air was void of oxygen. Having nothing fit to breathe, men inhaled what they found. This was the time of moral "decadence," when disease increased to a national menace and the theatrical billboards flamed with advertisements of plays "for people of sixteen years and over." Sensuality we have always with us. But having found no more profound interests, men and women gave themselves frankly to the "jouissance du corps." Cynicism followed. Against what remains of these attitudes M. Charles Wagner, "Pastor Wagner," as he is called, writes the last of the papers under consideration.

The worst is past, he thinks, but much remains to be done. "Practical materialism is a deprivation of human values. . . . A profit of the thing." The blight of the thing penetrated society's sub-soils thoroughly. In working quarters it lingers; it brings the death of joy, the death of sense for beauty, and forces its victims to fanatical negations.

As sensuality, materialism has led to the corrupting of French culture, to making Paris a city from which hypocrite strangers, drawn thither at the lure of its vice, may return to dub it the modern Babylon. It has done worse: it has ruined art, it has stamped a social system in which prostitution plays a most honourable rôle upon a nation formerly renowned for its refinement. In older times social marriage without love was the practice of a society of vested aristocrats, whose power and self-maintenance depended upon keeping an intact front. In a republic the custom of marrying blights the first and last flowers of love. It must be done away with.

These are the vital inferences to be drawn from M. Wagner's discourse. With it the lectures organized by "Foi et Vie," this riding to hounds of famous hunters with materialism for quarry, come to an end.

What matters is that the clergyman, Wagner, has found such vigorous supporters among men in other lines who, with Christian faith to join, are sure to make the event of the coming age that is shown—an age that will witness the fusion of the idealistic cults? I feel that a movement wherein are enlisted the best minds of France, who represent a culture so ancient as hers, cannot be the mere vagabondage of a shooting star. It must be a more durable fire.

There has been too much talk of the downfall of French prestige, of inherent Gallic viciousness and imminent decay. The French are not a nation of natural sceptics; they are among the most religious of peoples. Though for a time deprived of their faith by scientific progress, which made upon their more sensitive intellects a more conjuring impression, they are gradually returning to a sturdy idealism. Among young France to-day the most admired attitude toward life is one to which their ancestors first gave a name—le bel sérieux.

EDGAR A. MOWRER.

The Cubist Room

FUTURISM, one of the alternative terms for modern painting, was patented in Milan. It means the Present with the Past rigidly excluded, and flavoured strongly with H. G. Wells' dreams of the dance of monstrous and arrogant Machinery, to the frenzied clapping of men's hands. But futurism will never mean anything else, in painting, than the Art practised by the five or six
Italian painters grouped beneath Marinetti's influence. Gino Severini, the foremost of them, has for subject matter the night resorts of Paris. This, as subject matter, is obviously not of the future. For we all foresee in a century or so everybody being put to bed at 7 o'clock in the evening by a State Nurse. Therefore the Pan Pan at the Monaco will be, for Ginos of the Future, an archaistic experience.

Cubism means, chiefly, the art, superbly severe and so far morose, of those who have taken the genius of Cézanne as a starting point, and organised the character of the works he threw up in his indiscriminate and grand labour. It is the reconstruction of a simpler earth, left as choked and muddy fragments by him. Cubism includes much more than this, but the "cube" is implicit in that master's painting.

To be done with terms and tags, post impressionism is an insipid and pointless name invented by a journalist, which has been naturally ousted by the better word "Futurism" in public debate on modern art.

This room is chiefly composed of works by a group of painters, consisting of Frederick Etchells, Cuthbert Hamilton, Edward Wadsworth, C. R. W. Levinson, and most forewarned word is not accidentally associated here, but form a vertiginous but not exotic island, in the placid and respectable archipelago of English art. This formation is undeniably of volcanic matter, and even origin; for it appeared suddenly above the waves following other waves of dynamic shakings beneath. It is very closely-knit and admirably adapted to withstand the imperturbable Britannic breakers which roll pleasantly against its sides.

Beneath the Past and the Future the most sanguine art would hardly expect a more different skeleton to exist than that respectively of ape and man. Man with an aeroplane is still merely a baby, and a man who passes his days amid the rigid lines of houses, a plague of cheap ornamentation, noisy street locomotion, the Bedlam of the press, will evidently possess a different habit of vision to a man living amongst the lines of a landscape. As to turning the back, most wise men, Egyptians, Chinese or what not, have been known to depart from its professional petulance betrays its ill-feeding, and therefore no superior person will believe in the loftiness and un-biasedness of his ill-fed opinion. True it is that the younger generation is ill-fed and worse-mannered.

"In short, the younger generation is ill-fed, and its petulance betrays its ill-feeding, and therefore no superior person will believe in the loftiness and unbiasedness of its ill-fed opinion. True it is that the younger generation is ill-fed and worse-mannered."

"A generation came down to London resolved to speak as they wrote." For all that disastrous decade men spoke with the balanced sentence. There was great awe in the world.

And then there came to London a generation that tried to write as it speaks—and these young men are termed petulant—a praise by faint condemnation?

Let us admit the defect. We cannot read Thomas Browne to develop a cadence, or rather if we did, or even do, the cadence escapes us when we become hot in composition.

We have attained to a weariness more highly energised than the weariness of the glorious nineties, or at least more obviously volcanic. We see on the one side the elaborate prose period and we see on the other some highly systematised smugness—as for instance "The Times," and when we try to treat one with the other, when we try to speak of, say, "The Times" with, say, the cadence of Urn Burial, we lose the connection. There is within us nothing to say beyond the Gallic "five letters," it is so with many things that have outlived their day. We feel that we have shattered all professional position of supporting the upper dog. We do not see through the eyes of romance nor of impressionism. These organisations do not represent a worthy solidity. They no longer affect one as Lions in Trafalgar Square. They exist in the open. They ask for concessions of territory, or for concessions in the intellectual territory. They criticise books with an elaborate pomposity of ignorance that no longer deceives any but rustics.

And in the face of this are we in the
heat of our declining youth expected to stretch the one word *merde* over eighteen elaborate paragraphs? Are we expected to believe that people whom we dine with will be so involved ambiguity that people with whom we dine later will not know that their relatives have been insulted? Are we to carry the courtesy of Urbino to the shambles?

You will say that we should preserve a lofty indifference—surely we have mentioned these things very seldom. We have gone our own gait—and indifference—surely we have mentioned these things often.

It is possible that England tolerates only two sorts of writers: the institution or the outlaw, and that being the case, a young writer would probably fare better in writing for "Modern Society" than in contributing to "The Spectator"—a serious writer I mean—one who has some hunger for immortality and some hope of meeting De Maupassant in the not too celestial paradise.

At any rate, let me draw to the end of my gentle homily, cautioning the "young writer" to seek out henceforth a not too honied suavity in dealing with "current questions," for by this means alone shall you gain empery over the moderate minds of his elders.

**PORREX ON FERREX.**

W E must really explain that Ferrex is a fine specimen, *pulcher ac fortissimus, sccris apitissimus*, but he fails to understand our passions. Are we expected to believe that any generation are truly well opined of our parts, that we write with truculence rather than with that air of triumph which designates and distinguishes those authors who are getting well on toward forty. For all that I am in unison with a certain distinguished papist who says that certain things do not matter. As for influencing the suet-like minds of our prosperous forerunners—why should we bother? These men will probably die in due season and we shall be left to insult above their tribe with a placid insouciance. Why should we bother to express ourselves at length and in flowing periods? Is it not cogent argument enough to say we see through you, you are a kettle of wind and transparent? Is it not enough to say we see through you, you are an academic hyper-resthetes left us a fine large stench to grow up to "The Spectator"—a serious writer I mean, but he fails to understand our passions.

This criticism by institutional method that Ferrex rails at is not really a force that matters. Saintsbury cannot possibly matter in 1941, he is as little alive as William of Orange.

As for petulance among the younger writers, I confess I do not much find it—save possibly in some weeklies.

They may say that we are lacking in deference for our elders, but if we consider these elders we see that in their youth they may have had causes for deference to Browning and Fitzgerald and Rossetti. Yet what have they left us?

The decade of villanelle left us nothing and the hypermeter metes us the same. What have they left us? And as for the survivors: what have they to do with the deeds of our timorous laureate, or with the cult of the utterly innocuous, or with an academic committee which has made itself the laughing-stock of Europe by failing to elect Rabindranath Tagore?

Surely there was never a time when the English 'elder generation as a whole' mattered less or had less claim to be taken seriously by 'those on the threshold.'

**PORREX.**

Books, Drawings, and Papers.

ANYONE who has read only "The Road to the Open" of Arthur Schnitzler will be a little puzzled to understand why he has been called the "Austrian de Maupassant." "Bertha Garlan" rather explains this flattering cognomen. It is really written in accordance with the traditions of Madame Bovary itself is above "The Road to the Open." It is simple presentation, not impressionism, but clear un rhetorical presentation of events and psychology. Schnitzler neither raves nor becomes dull; he is never vulgar. The tone of the book is level and impersonal. He never "works up the emotion." He does not scallentasticize. When he describes a set of circumstances in which people's minds are highly emotionalised it is all done so calmly that you hardly realise at the moment that the writing is so intense. I do not mean that the sense of emotion is lacking; I mean that as the thing is presented you feel that Schnitzler is not trying to cast your sympathies for or against his characters; he is content to give you their emotions without intruding his own, and the effect in the sum is immeasurably superior to the sentimental devices of popular authors.

I spoke of the resemblance of "Bertha Garlan" to "Madame Bovary"; indeed, one might say that the former is a book about Emma Bovary's half-sister. For instance, in Madame Bovary after Emma has returned from her ride with Rodolphe she looks at herself in the mirror and wonders to see how beautiful she has become:—"Elle se repérait : 'J'ai un amant ! un amant !' se délectant à cette idée comme à celle d'une autre puberté qui lui serait survenue. Elle se baignait donc possesse de son amour et de ses rêves de l'amour, cette âme inerte dont elle avait désespressée." And in Bertha Garlan there is a somewhat similar incident after Bertha returns from Vienna where she has had an affair with her old lover. She meets a woman friend who appears to Bertha to exult in marital bliss and to pity her:—

"Bertha had an overwhelming desire to shriek in that person's face; "I had a much better time than you think! I have been with an enchanting young man who is a thousand times more charming than your husband! And I understand how to enjoy life quite as well as you do! You have only a husband, but I have a lover!—a lover!—a lover!"

Again it might be pointed out that the death of Frau Rupius has a resemblance to that of Madame Bovary, and that the effect of her death on Bertha is precisely like what one could imagine Madame Bovary's death to have upon any woman friend of hers who happened to be in condition similar to Bertha's. Maybe that sounds a little obscure, but I think it is sound. Still, these things are mere details, far less important than the many scenes and characters which de Maupassant borrowed from his master. There is really only one error in the book, and that occupies seven lines and is debatable. I refer to the

"Bertha Garlan." A Novel by Arthur Schnitzler, translated from the German by J. H. Wisdom and Marr Murray. (Max Goschen, Ltd. 4/6)
passage at the end, where Schnitzler allows himself to moralise. " Bertha divined what an enormous wrong had been wrought against the world in that the longing for pleasure is placed in woman just as in man; and that with women that longing is a sin, demanding expiation, if the yearning for pleasure is not at the same time a yearning for motherhood. This from the Austrian de Maupassant! This in the twentieth century! This from a German over-populated to the extent of—how many millions is it?—five, fifty? This at the end of a perfectly wonderful novel! How M. de Gourmont would smile.

Putting all this aside as minor, and somewhat carping, we have in Bertha Garlan a work of art, sufficient to assure everyone interested in literature that Austria has produced a writer who is not lost in the slimy marsh of Victorianism—I don’t know what they call it in Austria, Nudaism I suppose. Schnitzler has observed the intelligence of French writers and he has taken his lessons from them without blame. Bertha Garlan, taken as a whole, is just as Austrian as " L’Education Sentimentale " is French. And Schnitzler has in this book completely eliminated Tedescan sentimentality—except in the seven lines I have quoted. He has boiled the blubber out of Germany. He has written a work which is precise without being provincial, Austrian without being patriotic, typical without being abstract. I don’t know what else is expected of an artist.

Mr. Stewart Caven’s "Green Enigma” is a very different sort of book. Just exactly what he is aiming at is a little difficult to determine. He may have meant to mystify; he may have been ironic; or he may have been trying to tell a story in his own fashion. There are certain marked literary derivations to be noticed; perhaps one might define the book as a curious and not unsuccessful blending of Salambo, the Arabian Nights, Pater, Buddhism, Wilde, and Occultism. It sounds a most incongruous mixture, and yet is pleasing enough if one can forget the despairs from which the attempts to parallel are obviously the model for Mr. Caven’s temple; I do not mean to say that there is any definite imitation, but the following passage is typical:—

"To the height of a man’s shoulder the walls were clothed in a wainscot of rare, scented woods of a light colour, arranged in mosaics of involved geometrical design. Silver arms and chains held, at regular intervals along the cornices, six bird-shaped lamps of silver, from the beaks of which protruded unaltering bulbs of white light."

Now who is to say whether that is presented as the imaginative work of a devoted disciple or as an ironic parody? If it is parody it is exceptionally well done; if it is imitation it is written with so much imagination as to deserve applause.

I do not propose to illustrate with quotations all the prose-writers whom Mr. Bevan has studied and reproduced in his book, but I will give one to show the kind of effect he gets by a subtle Pater-Wilde blending:—

"And there was, too, something in the pallor and delicacy of her hands and face, as well as a quality in the tone of her hair, that made her seem foreign to the daylight itself, so that in that shapely garden, where every leaf upon the cream and pale green shrubs and pippolas looked as if it had been newly washed and curled, as she tripped away over shorn turf that might have been laid on by the tender brush of a Japanese artist, even these fine objects were coarse and crude in comparison with her frail, exotic person." And elsewhere the phrases "imaginative intelligence" and "sanctuary swept and garnished" demonstrate—how shall we put it?—a too close study of a somewhat uneven master? I do not wish to decry Mr. Caven’s productions in this direction; they are singularly clever; but it is necessary to point them out.

The plot of the book is far too complex to reproduce here even if such a barbarous thing were desirable. Yet without doing so it is quite impossible to indicate my reasons for judging the thing as ironic. There can be no doubt that Mr. Caven possesses a descriptive talent—however derived—quite unlike and superior to that of any other English prose writer that I know of. Wilde tried to do that sort of thing but failed, and it is possible to a slight degree that Schnitzler has observed the intelligence of readers to put it for ever beyond the pale of a "great popular success," but it would not be surprising if the book became, in a mild way, a sort of cult in certain circles. My own particular crowd will "pooh-pooh" and "to-hell-with-it"; I am not so certain; it may come through, it may simply drop out. If it is a serious apprentice work, it is a fine effort; even as a finished product its curious originality, its strange blending of styles, its real literary qualities should commend it to the elect. It is not the highest praise to say that a book will live because it is a literary curiosity. It is damning it to premature death. I am not certain that I can do such a thing. It is that it is so good that one is absolutely unable to abuse it, and not quite good enough for one to praise it without reserve. Dash it all, here is a book worth a hundred Hewletts and Dorian Greys and tedious social plays and yet more tedious social novels. Did not Heine say of Byron, "I like this young man, and I are equals. Shakespeare tires me with his superiority"—or something rather like that?...
to represent anything, I get a great deal of pleasure from them. The drawing of Act IV. which looks rather like a lot of cinders thrown into a big black spider's web delights me; at night I sit opposite it, smoking my pipe, and all sorts of curious ideas come out of it and take shape and curl away, and I never get tired and the picture never gets dull. After all no one could sit and look at even Mona Lisa every night without getting bored; more representation becomes insipid.

Mr. Lewis has an article in another page of The Egoist which will explain his views, or some of his views, much better than I can. When confronted with these drawings and asked for an opinion I feel like "that ridiculous journalism which usurps the judgment-seat when it should be apologising in the dock." Mr. Lewis is—I think there is no artistic insult in this—a Cubist. Most of us have seen his pictures at the Doré Galleries and have probably wondered what on earth they were, seeking for analogies like unimaginative poets. I decline to regard Mr. Lewis as an imbecile, or as deficient in curiosity of science.

"Le Mercure de France" has some prose poems called "Stèles" by Victor Segalen. They are not Greek sepulchral inscriptions, but poems with curious titles like "Table de la Sagesse" and "Les Gens de Mani." They have a certain originality. It is somewhat flattering to notice that M. Davray in his article on the eternal (or infernal) Tagore has made use of one of Ezra Pound's articles which appeared in these columns. Incidentally M. Davray has perpetrated an excellent joke, by calling Tagore the "confrère hindou" of Mr. Pound. It should please all parties. Among other things the "Mercure" has two unpublished letters of Arthur Rimbaud, and an article on Stendhal's method of composition by Henry Debraye.

"La Flora" is edited by M. Lucien Rolmer. The cover is decorated with engraving of Botticelli's Flora, and the inside is devoted to the service "des lettres et de l'art gracieux." A large portion of the review is devoted to poetry. The contributors to this number are MM. Gasquet, Galzy, Marie Delétang, Jean-Desthieux, Verane, and Lucien Rolmer.

Richard Aldington.

"The Horses of Diomedes." By Remy de Gourmont.

(Transrated by C. Sartoris.)

XVIII.—THE JUGGLER.

Inimitable juggler, hail! . . . How artfully you cheat life!

Fanette was dying, submerged by love, in her great luxurious bed. Her feverish face with its crimson burning cheek-bones, its parched lips and sparkling eyes, showed the interior fire, the flame, devourer of life. She had bared her somewhat sunken bosom and her hands played slowly with pages torn from the tender book.

Diomedes knelt down, kissed the burning breast. A muffled but still gentle voice thanked him:

— Your lips are cool. Again! O Diomedes, it is you, you are here. I knew you would come, you. The others have forsaken me, all, all! But you, you could not forsake me because you are Diomedes. . . . O you . . . O thou! . . . To think I am going to die in your arms! I am very happy. . . . You and the Book!

And he put his hand to her lips, kissing them with an equal love, Diomedes' hand and the pages torn from the tender book.

But you are pretty, little Nette, you smile, your eyes shine. Give your arm. . . . Fever . . . much fever. . . . To lie covered up, with one's arms under the bedclothes, to think of nothing, to sleep. . . .

— Sleep for a little. It is so long since I have slept! But I await the immense sleep. . . . Oh! how comfortable I shall be! Already I feel well. . . . You are there! Yes, he is there! Listen, they came this afternoon, the great ghosts with eyes of fire under their shrouds. . . . They wanted to take me away but I beseeched them. I wanted to see you. . . . They will come back. Do not be afraid, Diomedes, they are not cruel. They are angels come to take souls and lead them towards the joy, out there. . . . Ah! how I suffer! My heart is burning like a red hot coal, it writhe, it screams, it bursts, it is ablaze! Put your hand to quench the flames. . . . Your hand is cool. . . . Oh! how I love you.

Diomedes let his hand stay long on the wasted bosom, though its burning was really that of a furnace; then, as Fanette had been wounded by the magnetism of his touch, he withdrew, to ask some questions of the servant who was crying in her kitchen.

Then he understood that in presence of grief and of death everything faded away, intelligence, social and moral differences, castes, virtue, all those chance clothes with which man covers his bare instinct.

This old woman who had never waited on Fanette but reluctantly, shocked in her pauper's morality by all the refinements of a sensual life, this homely slattern wept truly and her simple words protested.

— So pretty, so young and so good, Monsieur Diomedes! It is not just! You will tell me that she followed her fancies and that she is punished for her sins! Oh, Monsieur Diomedes, death all the same, is a very great punishment! I know that she went about always, quite naked, even here, before me, and I should be without shame. That offends the good God that does. . . . No one has ever seen me quite naked, me, Monsieur Diomedes, but each one has his own ideas. . . . However I forgive all willingly. . . . The doctor has said it was the end. He said also: Ah how many, smoothed girls I have seen die just that way. He will come back at midnight. Here are the remedies. One is missing. I am going to fetch it. When she suffocates, we must make her drink some. Then she will die quietly, peacefully like a child dropping into sleep. That is what he says.

Diomedes came back into the room bearing the phials.

All these manoeuvres seemed to him ugly. He would have wished so close to death, less medicine, more dignity, flowers, distant music, pale tapers.

"The Horses of Diomedes." January 1st, 1914
"Poor child! But how privileged she is. She is going to die, but in full happiness. Her eyes will have seen a last vision, my serious face and the ray of a mute good-bye; her sinking hands will clutch at the hand of a friend; and, heavy from being filled with nothingness, her drooping head will rest on my brotherly shoulder. Ah! die in happiness, Fanette, since you must die and give me, dear little girl, the example of a smile, at the hour when a smile is perfect beauty.

Diomedes scarcely heard, faint and slow, Fanette's voice.
— You are there?
He laid his hand on her hot brow.
— He is there.
I felt his hand on my brow. His hand is cool. My forehead is bathed in fresh water. . . . Now I am doing my hair. . . . My comb has fallen. . . . Never mind. . . . Give me my white robe and my long veil. . . . Yes, Madame, it is my little Communicant—She is so sweet — A little angel Madame — Ah! night has come — No, it is a cloud. . . .
I don't know anything any more, I don't know.

Diomedes, as soon as the voice had ceased, lost in the catching of her breath, turned slightly, for he thought he had heard steps on the carpet: It was so and the servant was saying:
— Monsieur Diomedes. I thought I was doing right. Returning from the chemists, I met him.
He is here.

Diomedes turned round completely. A priest was there standing at the foot of the bed, his hat in his hand, like a visitor, rather indifferent, almost shy. That priest, met by chance.

Diomedes hesitated, fearing the recitation of formulas, a commonplace ministry, a harsh and pernicious voice which would terrify the gentle sleeper. . . . But he mused:
"The liturgies must be accomplished:
Then:
"He is perhaps called by Fanette's desire."
And he trembled at the thought that this desire might have been unfulfilled, despised himself for not having read better in the obscure soul of his little dying friend.
Meanwhile the priest, feeling that his presence was not hostile, had knelt down. His head, in both hands, he prayed.

Diomedes thought his attitude beautiful. His cloak swung back, his somewhat long hair gave him the appearance of a great black angel, of a mysterious messenger of compassion and mercy. He lifted his head, his eyes full of tears.
Surprised, Diomedes asked in a whisper:
— You cry, Monsieur! You know her then?
— No, but every death touches my heart, answered Diomedes. The sight of the priest caused her no dread; she lifted towards him her weary hand which dropped at once, exhausted—and already the eyes were closing, the head sinking. . . .

The priest laid his lips on the wan hand. He seemed to wish to be blessed and absolved by this soul whose wings were beating.

The mist-like breath hurried, muffled and almost harsh; the muscles of the neck trembled; the priest murmured, whilst Diomedes held in his hands the thin fingers that moved like grasses going with the stream:
"Free thyself, poor soul, go towards mercy.
Love holds out its arms to thee and Pity, its sister, kneels to smooth the path on which thy naked feet must tread.

Free thyself, poor Soul!
Suffer no more, candid creature, go towards mercy.
May the vast white wings of Hope be the sails of thy craft, and may the good winds of heaven urge thee towards the shore!"

Free thyself, poor Soul!
Rejoice, heart full of grace and go towards mercy.
Freed from sin, purified from untruths, enter into the choir of angels and become the viola which repeats in melodies the thought of the Infinite.
Free thyself, dear Soul and having once entered into glory, deign to pray for us, miserable sinners. Amen."

At these last words, Fanette died, swept away by a great shudder.
The priest went out.

Diomedes remained alone whilst the servant sobbed, he mused. This peaceful death had moved him without his feeling real sorrow.
"If I had only heard of her death in a few weeks, I would scarcely have been troubled. Therefore did I not love Fanette! And yet? No, I loved her less cordially than did this poor servant by whom she was secretly despised. I loved her body, her hair, her voice, all that was Fanette, but herself? No. She was to me one of the moments and one of the forms of the race and I never asked of her anything but sensual communion. It was myself alone I loved, echoed by the vibrations of her nerves. i, i alone, and always i. . . . Ah! yes that alone is possession; that alone is true. Ah! I find myself without seeking, to-day! Sad night during which I will understand that my nature excludes me from the banquet. And Néo? Do I love Néo? Yesterday. . . . It was yesterday, at the very hour of this agony. . . . How simple everything is, how everything is classed according to order, how everything succeeds to everything naively! What a succession of miracles resolved with a truly divine and candid elegance. Inimitable juggler, hail! Thy pure movements are so rapid that I fail to follow the thread of the skein they sketch on space. How artfully you cheat life! And in the empty goblet, filled only with a mouldiness of death, think with what grace you pour for the assassin and the widow of eternal fecundations. I am but one of the black dots painted on your dice, and you make me spin around as you wish, divine juggler, inimitable juggler; but I have confidence in you, and I repeat with the chance priest, the word that says all things: Amen.

How cowardly it makes one to have lived, to have understood that no will power can burst the rhythm of life! Strength? It is foreseen in its measure and
its direction. Not a spark of fire shall be stolen! One spark only and I should fire the world. . . . So then one must keep out of the currents, far from the lightning and look on at those who die. . . . And oneself. I look at myself, Ah! hop, frog! Thou art like the others, one of the puppets life swings on its wire!"

At that moment, Diomedes was asked by the servant for the funereal preparations. The grief of the woman was appeased; once skimmed of its first surprise, she could be heard moaning gently to herself, without however it disturbing the assurance of her work. Smiling, she even excused Diomedes' clumsiness.

— Pull a little. There. . . . My mother's profession was to lay out, she used to take me with her. . . . Then I was a novice at the Sisters of Mercy. It is painful, it is sad. . . . To-morrow I will go and fetch a Sister to watch by her. Mother Sainte-Praxède, if she is free. Ah, Monsieur Diomedes, for the last forty years that she lays out people, many dead have passed through her hands. She knows what death is to be sure, yes, she knows.

As he was leaving, going from that room in which Fanette so many times had played with him, disrobed and supple, sumptuous, or moved by her readings, by her dreams, Diomedes felt in his throat, the strangling of a sob.

He cried long, nervously biting the fragrant hair of his little friend whose hands were crossed piously on the Book, as on a pillow of love.

(To be Continued.)

Poems.
By F. S. Flint.

I.

London, my beautiful
it is not the sunset
nor the pale green sky
shimmering through the curtain
of the silver birch,
nor the quietness;
it is not the hopping
of birds
upon the lawn,
nor the darkness
stealing over all things
that moves me.

But as the moon creeps slowly
over the tree-tops
among the stars,
I think of her
and the glow which her passing
sheds upon men.

Dear one!
you sit there
in the corner of the carriage;
and you do not know me;
your eyes forbid.

Is it the dirt, the squalor,
the wear of human bodies,
and the dead faces of our neighbours?
These are but symbols.

You are proud; I praise you;
your mouth is set; you see beyond us;
I watch you; I love you;
I desire you.

There is a quiet here
within the thud-thud of the wheels
upon the railway.

There is a quiet here
within my heart,
but tense and tender.

this is my station.

III.

Under the lily shadow
and the gold
and the blue and mauve
that the whin and the lilac
pour down on the water,
the fishes quiver.

Over the green cold leaves
and the rippled silver
and the tarnished copper
of its neck and beak,
toward the deep black water
beneath the arches,
the swan floats slowly.

Into the dark of the arch the swan floats
and the black depth of my sorrow
bears a white rose of flame.

IV.

IN THE GARDEN.

The grass is beneath my head;
and I gaze
at the thronging stars
in the night.

They fall . . . they fall
I am overwhelmed,
and afraid.

Each little leaf of the aspen
is caressed by the wind,
and each is crying.

And the perfume
of invisible roses
deepens the anguish.

Let a strong mesh of roots
feed the crimson of roses
upon my heart;
and then fold over the hollow
where all the pain was.

V.

TUBE.

You look in vain for a sign,
for a light in their eyes. No!
Stolid they sit, lulled
by the roar of the train in the tube,
content with the electric light,
assured, comfortable, warm.

Dispair? . . .
For a moment, yes:
this is the mass, inert;
intent on being the mass,
unalarmed, undisturbed;
and we, the spirit that moves,
we leaven the mass,
and it changes;
we sweeten the mass,
or the world
would stink in the ether.
On the Interference with the Environment.

VI.—THE QUESTION OF OBSCENITY.

As to obscenity, it will be said with much plausibility that an obscene exhibition in a public place makes itself known to a person—or for many persons—to pass that way without suffering a penalty more serious than the mere necessity of enduring something distasteful. I reject this argument, not without having considered it.

Let us define our terms. The popular conception of obscenity (and the legal conception too) covers two very different things: first, the disgusting; second, that which stirs sexual feeling. The argument which I have just described as "plausible" cannot apply to the first of these two except in so far as certain sensitive people are moved to physical nausea by certain sights. I never heard of an actual case, however, in which a person who had eaten a good meal lost it by looking at anything publicly displayed, or in which anyone was saved from such an experience by the restrictive power of laws against obscenity. I conclude, therefore, that we do not need juridical detection. But nobody seems to devote to such business much more time and money than is involved in bringing his case before a judge from whom he can expect favour. (My only authority for this statement is the autobiographical reminiscences published by the eminent prosecutors themselves, or by their friends on their behalf.) The net result of all this is that a man of ordinary prudence settles the question by regarding as probably legally obscene everything that opinions might differ on, and so the laws produce practically the effect of a prohibition of all such matters, to the considerable injury of the public. The mischief would be less, of course, if the range of difference of opinion on this topic were not so frightfully wide. But all this is directly against the principle that a man should be treated as innocent till those who know the facts can agree that he is guilty.

It appears, however, that it is found easier to define obscenity exhibited to the eye than obscenity in words; so the evils of the laws against obscene literature would not be absolutely stamped by recognising as probably legally obscene everything that opinions might differ on, and so the laws produce practically the effect of a prohibition of all such matters, to the considerable injury of the public. The mischief would be less, of course, if the range of difference of opinion on this topic were not so frightfully wide. But all this is directly against the principle that a man should be treated as innocent till those who know the facts can agree that he is guilty.

Indeed, substantially that experiment has been tried in the numerous collections of Alaskan Eskimo art are a few carvings which, instead of following the conventional routine of those tribes, show a marvellous lifelikeness and power of characterisation: if the carving shows a long team of dogs, every dog has its own individuality, his own psychology. Inquiry into the origin of these unique works of genius shows that some years ago there lived in Alaska an old fellow who was universally recognised as weak-minded; for he insisted on spending his time in carving, to the neglect of the practical duties of his domains, a born painter like Leonardo da Vinci would doubtless have the prudence to conform to the law, but a born painter like William Blake would break the law and incur the penalty.

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that a man will thus neglect all his material interests to produce works of art that his neighbours do not even think well of, this is plain abnormality. So I do not necessarily imply anything as to whether the impulse toward nudity is a worthy or unworthy one when I speak of its abnormal development as furnishing an impulse toward nudity is a worthy or unworthy one. If one wishes to suppress it, all the difficulties of suppressing a mania. The case of Socrates is not far from parallel again. Or take the normal delight in building fires, and its development to an abnormal incendiarism. He was never caught. If the police undertook to protect the monument, in honour of Haldane Macfall to whom we are indebted for the monument did. If the police undertook to protect him, it is not certain that their protection would be more effective than it was in the case of the monument. As long as the sight of the undisguised human figure is unfamiliar in a certain inhabited place, the person who exhibits it must reckon with a probability that of stones and whip-lashes. And if anybody undertakes either the protection of that person or the protection of the public peace, the protector will have to produce works of art that his neighbours do not even think well of, this is plain abnormality. So I do not necessarily imply anything as to whether the impulse toward nudity is a worthy or unworthy one when I speak of its abnormal development as furnishing an impulse toward nudity is a worthy or unworthy one. If one wishes to suppress it, all the difficulties of suppressing a mania. The case of Socrates is not far from parallel again. Or take the normal delight in building fires, and its development to an abnormal incendiarism. He was never caught. If the police undertook to protect the monument, in honour of Haldane Macfall to whom we are indebted for the monument did. If the police undertook to protect him, it is not certain that their protection would be more effective than it was in the case of the monument. As long as the sight of the undisguised human figure is unfamiliar in a certain inhabited place, the person who exhibits it must reckon with a probability that of stones and whip-lashes. And if anybody undertakes either the protection of that person or the protection of the public peace, the protector will have to produce works of art that his neighbours do not even think well of, this is plain abnormality. So I do not necessarily imply anything as to whether the impulse toward nudity is a worthy or unworthy one when I speak of its abnormal development as furnishing an impulse toward nudity is a worthy or unworthy one. If one wishes to suppress it, all the difficulties of suppressing a mania. The case of Socrates is not far from parallel again. Or take the normal delight in building fires, and its development to an abnormal incendiarism. He was never caught. If the police undertook to protect the monument, in honour of Haldane Macfall to whom we are indebted for the monument did. If the police undertook to protect him, it is not certain that their protection would be more effective than it was in the case of the monument. As long as the sight of the undisguised human figure is unfamiliar in a certain inhabited place, the person who exhibits it must reckon with a probability that of stones and whip-lashes. And if anybody undertakes either the protection of that person or the protection of the public peace, the protector will have to produce works of art that his neighbours do not even think well of, this is plain abnormality. So I do not necessarily imply anything as to whether the impulse toward nudity is a worthy or unworthy one when I speak of its abnormal development as furnishing an impulse toward nudity is a worthy or unworthy one. If one wishes to suppress it, all the difficulties of suppressing a mania. The case of Socrates is not far from parallel again. Or take the normal delight in building fires, and its development to an abnormal incendiarism. He was never caught. If the police undertook to protect the monument, in honour of Haldane Macfall to whom we are indebted for the monument did. If the police undertook to protect him, it is not certain that their protection would be more effective than it was in the case of the monument. As long as the sight of the undisguised human figure is unfamiliar in a certain inhabited place, the person who exhibits it must reckon with a probability that of stones and whip-lashes. And if anybody undertakes either the protection of that person or the protection of the public peace, the protector will have
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**Violet Hunt**

**WHENEVER** a woman goes to write a novel she first chooses herself as heroine; she then decides that she had better take someone else, and ends up by choosing herself again. If she doesn't do that she sermonises. Even in Romola you always have the horrid suspicion that Tito will throw off his disguise and appear as Mary Evans. And Adam Bede is an allegorical figure representing George Eliot's better nature. It is probably due to the pernicious influence of this author that women adopt these evil courses. And her indifference to style is typical.

It is a great pleasure to betraying myself into writing the "whenever a woman" sort of generality I shall have to hedge and say that Violet Hunt writes like a woman better than any other woman. After all if women are incapable of the indirect method of writing—like a great many men—if they will persist in writing like George Eliot instead of like Flaubert and if they will not beco and scold and tease and argue about their characters, why in Heaven's name shouldn't they? It is much more reasonable to take them for what they are, as writers belonging to the great second class, like Rousseau, and not to the small first class, like Flaubert. So much for generalities.

Violet Hunt has two qualities in her books—in some of her books—one of which some men have possessed; the other is her own particular possession. I refer to her gift of humour and to her gift of insight into the mind of "flappers." Violet Hunt's flappers are perfect; when she writes of them you feel as if—like Florizel—you would have her do that always. Her early book The Maiden's Progress and the later Celebrity at Home give her the best opportunity for displaying her genius in this direction. If anyone is curious—as I have been—to know exactly what those strange female creatures with long legs and pig-tails are thinking about let him read chapter six of the Maid's Progress. He will arise a more well-informed man, feeling more scarred than ever of the omnipotent sex in every stage of its development. I swear these flappers are a new frisson. Violet Hunt has given us a marvellous pleasure in the way she has—by portraying them, but she has also added a new intellectual horror. They are like a Poe story. Listen to this, part of the reflections of a little girl of fifteen at a tennis party:—

"I wonder if I could eat another petit four? I've had six, but then William has had eight. We were beginning to make the dish look silly, so I sent him away with three or four balls. He was cross. He's a year older than me. He's at Eton. Poor Eton! I begin to make the dish look silly, so I sent him away to field for balls. He was cross. He's a year older than me. He's at Eton. Poor Eton! I manage him of course. I manage everybody. It's all my doing that we took this sweet Vicarage for three months, and didn't go to Folkestone or Eastbourne, or some other unearthly place. There is never anything for me to do there, and I bore myself to death. Mr. Macfall was a British Army officer stationed in Jamaica, and has his knowledge of life there from actual contact. He has long since resigned his commission and is now devoting his time to Art and Literature and other inconsequentialities.

G. W.
Celebrity at Home is entirely written by a—I mean to call her, is one of these child-woman-devils. Almost at the very beginning she says that it is nice to do what you like even if it isn’t good for you. As she likes, and gets everyone into all sorts of scrapes and taxes Violet Hunt’s ingenuity to the utmost to get them out again. Naturally enough we know exactly whom we are to like and whom not to. But that’s just the thing in The Celebrity. It ought to begin “once upon a time.” And if one can get out of one’s stolid worry about quality. The marvel is that she should write so much so well. She is like the editions of the spontaneous joke. And those of us who like to be amused, grin and feel better afterwards.

H.

Le Théâtre du Vieux Colombier.

This theatre is a little box of a place, seating about four hundred people. The decorative scheme is simple; white walls, and a white ceiling with two rows of big, square, orange-coloured lanterns hanging from it. The low arch is black, with a little door on each side, and green curtains to shut out the stage. Unfortunately, footlights are used instead of the more modern Fortenay systems for diffusing light; and a big prompter’s box hides far too much of the stage. These faults, which are merely faults of construction, will probably be remedied later.

Besides plays, the Director has announced a series of “Conferences,” half on the classic poets, and half on modern French poets. Among the latter are MM. Claudel, Jammes, Verhaeren, Vielé-Griffin and others. Yesterday the first conference of the modern series was given. It was on the poetry of Malarmé and Verlaine. M. André Gide was the speaker. From time to time in his discourse M. Gide stopped to allow some member of the “Vieux Colombier” troupe to illustrate his point by reciting the poems in question. These lectures should become very popular. Yesterday no fewer than two hundred people were turned away.

The inaugural programme consisted of a one-act play by Molière and a translation of Heywood’s “Killed by Kindness” (une Femme tuée par la Douceur). In English this play is dull, in French it is duller. How the company succeeded in making it interesting (and they did) is incomprehensible. Two scenes in particular were very effective. Mr. Yeats has better plays—Synge’s, Boyle’s, and his own—but even so, the Irish players have not surpassed the two scenes I mention. And their simple scenery has been surpassed only by the first act of “Le Sacre du Printemps.” The décors owe much to Mr. Gordon Craig. The acting was not too good: it was competent but not “modern.” It contained no element of newness. But then I was perhaps unfortunate in the play I saw, for I did not see them perform Mr. Yeats’ play “On Baile’s Strand.”

The setting for the two scenes mentioned above could not have cost over £25; and their effectiveness was marvellous.

If this theatre, only a month old now, improves as there is every hope of its doing, it will be one of the most interesting theatres in the world.

H. S. C.
Correspondence.

To the Editor of The Egoist.

MADAM,

The enclosed will interest you in connection with the statement in your issue of December 1st to the effect that our State of New York covering the period of ten years ending with December 31, 1912, the increase in output of the legislative mills during that decade, in proportion to the population, was so great that were the increase maintained in the same ratio for the succeeding ten years, at the end of that term over half of the adult male population would be in the meshes of the law or engaged in the administration of it. To be exact, thirty-one per cent. would be connected with the public service in some way and twenty-six per cent. would be imprisoned or prosecuted. It is true our statistician added the naïve proviso: if all laws were strictly enforced there would be no divorce.

In addition to the actual statistics upon which the above calculations are based, it is to be borne in mind that actually a condition of affairs exists of which the instance of divorce will provide an illustration. Although divorces are reckoned at one hundred and sixty per thousand, in proportion and among others for these reasons.

(1) Good Catholics do not get divorces.
(2) Almost no Jews get divorces. It is a common boast among them that "there has never been 'yahoolah' (fraudulent bankruptcy) nor a divorce in our family."
(3rd and most important) The poor do not get divorces. They cannot afford it, and it is not necessary. If Bridge and Pat quarrel too much, or Pat does not bring home his wages, she throws a flat-iron at him and he takes his kit of tools and goes to Philadelphia. They are practically divorced.

I have among my clients (who are not numerous as I am not in active practice) a woman whose husband abuses her. She is poor, and after considering her remedies I told her to take a carving knife and tell him she would stick it in him if he struck her. That accomplished a practical divorce, and relieves her of his abuse.

In another case, the lady and her husband simply cannot agree. She lives in Europe and he lives here and they alternate about every six months. That is a practical divorce.

In the third case, also among my clients, the husband could not contribute to her support, and the wife simply took her furniture, moved away, and refuses to consort with him. Fear of public opinion keeps him from making any demand on her, or on the children who are a practical divorce.

My own estimate is that roughly, one marriage in three results in what is equivalent to divorce.

I would be glad to know how this strikes you.

It is not possible accurately to state the number of laws to which a citizen of the State of New York is subject because of the code of civil procedure, for instance, contain three or four "laws"; on one paragraph there have been thousands of decisions to try to find out what it means. However, as accurately as can be calculated, Mr. E. L. Heydecker, the author of a voluminous digest of laws, and I, calculated that they number twenty-one thousand two hundred and sixty (21,260). This includes the laws of the United States, but does not include the absolutely innumerable ordinances, regulations and rules issued by police, fire, tenement, water, streets, licenses, Aldermanic, dock, charity and other departments, which have all the force of law. You can get in prison probably quicker for disobeying an ordinance of the Health Department or a traffic regulation of the Police Department than you can for disobeying the holy tariff law.

BOLTON HALL.

MR. HAWKINS ON MR. CARTER.

To the Editor of The Egoist.

MADAM,

Dear Editor if yewll forgive me fer being so konfideshul loike wot i wants to say is this that ere Untly Carter es a jolly good chap e is wot i allways res is wots the good of it all? all this ere poetry and stile and tawkin and jawin yer end off like the missus does i yer as a drop but Untly es got stil e as tawk abash shikesper and g. r. Simms wy they aint nowheres in it. i ses give me a feller wot knows is bisiness i ses an dont go gassin abtng things wot fellers like us dont know and dont want ter know i ses oo wants ter eort a lot o jaw abash immiges and forun langwidges and sich? call it dam blarsted forun cheek i do if yewll pawdon me missy fer sayin so thow yewre a b.a. still i rekkon the bord schools good enuf fer Untly and me and chaps like us wot as to rool the kuntry dear missy i wants yew ter write an tell Untly that me an my mates we loike is stilte we do an if he loikes ter kum dahn ar elly bahrt arf pas nine sadty nite weil giv im a nice o dish a pigs turds and sum beer an pudin an if so be e loikes a gaine o airpny nep we don min talkin a hand or a bit o kockfightin like jes ter amewse us pore fellers an tell Untly from us that e ort to be primmminster e ort its a shime thats wot it is fer a feller like that ter be waisted on jurnalissum dear missy tell im not ter forget next sadty arf pas nine crooks eely of kent rowd clos ter the ol megpy and gawd bless yer Untly.

Henri Hawkins.

THE INDIVIDUALIST.

To the Editor of The Egoist.

MADAM,

Miss Alice Groff asserts that "there is no 'the' individual." Will she tell me to what she refers when she speaks of Huntly Carter? Does she refer to my individuality as distinct from that individuality which I call Alice Groff?

HUNTLY CARTER.

EDITORIAL.

Letters, &c., intended for the Editor should be personally addressed: Ainsdale, England.

PUBLICATION.

All business communications relative to the publication of The Egoist should be addressed, and all cheques, postal and money orders, &c., made payable to The Egoist Ltd., Oakley House, Bloomsbury Street, London, W.C., and could be crossed "Parr's Bank, Bloomsbury Branch."

Terms of Subscription.—Yearly, 14/- (U.S.A., 3 dollars 50 cents); Six Months, 7/- (U.S.A., 1 dollar 75 cents); Three Months, 3/6 (U.S.A., 50 cents). Single Copies 7d., post free to any address in the Postal Union.

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