I HAVE lately been a fascinated observer of the contortions a word will undergo if by any means it may compass its own preservation. From having been at old time a stern guide, counsellor and friend, the word "Principle" has in these latter days doffed much of its solid and forbidding character—the character as of one who in every walk of life and on all occasions is to be looked up to with respect and allowed a deciding voice in the settling of troubled human affairs—and is fast taking on the lighter bearing of ornamental or sportive guest, one whose rôle is that of entertainer rather than instructor, one who feels he can for the future present a decent and seductive appearance only by keeping as much as possible in the background when matters of importance are up for discussion, one who realises that the time has come to hand on his working mantle of counsellor to an upstart successor, by name "Expediency." It is interesting to watch this turn of affairs and to note that the present-day flank attacks upon "Principle" are being delivered by its one-time best friends who have not hesitated to deal it wound after wound. For instance, in the recent parliamentary debates on the Military Service Bill speaker after speaker occurred in recognising the necessity of sacrificing "Principle" when this failed to be useful: a very far cry indeed from the attitude which animated lovers of "Principles" in their heroic era, in the period when "Principles" were dominant and were to be followed with a fine and reckless abandonment ready to "Damn the consequences." Our modern parliamentarians have expressed themselves otherwise. Mr. Asquith, in introducing the Military Service Bill, stated that though he himself disliked the idea of conscription, his objection to it was based, not on principle, but on grounds of expediency. Sir John Simon was opposed to conscription on principle, but defended his opposition to the Bill on grounds of expediency—that is, he believed no case for its necessity had been made out, and Mr. Balfour supported the Bill as a matter of expediency, "circumstances being what they were."; and so on with the rest of the speakers. As to what in these days constituted the difference between these two Mr. Balfour thoughtfully informed us. He said: "Remember we are living in a world of fact and reality. Do not in obedience to what I cannot help regarding as merely speculative considerations deny the Government that which they unanimously believe to be necessary for the conduct of the war." "This is not a debating society dealing with abstract resolutions." "Surely for a moment you can abandon these abstractions and view the situation as you find it." It was to be observed that no speaker attempted to gloze the fact that they considered "Principles" to be abstractions and that the sphere from which they were abstracted and divorced was that of practical affairs. They all implied that principles were not for use; leaving it to be conjectured accordingly that they must therefore be either for ornament or amusement, and were an adornment to existence as exhortations—provided they were not rashly carried out. Or perhaps that they were rules for conduct which might be unfailingly observed in an imaginary abstract world simplified by being emasculated of those disturbing features which are the unhappy outcome of the fact that man is a perverse and unsymmetrically minded animal.

So that we are not necessarily driven to the inference that men who speak after the manner indicated by the foregoing illustrations—destroying with one breath and preserving with the next—are the victims of mere habit. It might quite conceivably be that in laying such gentle hands on "Principle" they have regard to the great usefulness of the ornamental, and on such grounds it is explicable that when a hoary principle becomes in certain circumstances inconvenient to countenance it should be claimed that the particular occasion is an emergency not foreseen when the principle was drawn up, and that "facts being what they are," it is necessary to act from expediency in the particular instance and contrary to the established principle.
It is, in short, found preferable when traversing the reverse route—i.e. from the regions of the abstract to contact with actual facts—and when the principle is thus in danger of being overthrown on grounds of its non-applicability, not to permit it to be defeated by allowing it to go to the lengths of application—and subsequent disaster in spheres other than its own—but to seek to preserve it in its integrity by dismissing it at once to spheres where it is unlikely to be put to proof and harassed by interfering fact—to debating societies and similar resorts where its rigid intellectual and symmetrical qualities can be safely and uninterruptedly admired.

Thus would logically be sustained the proposition of the usefulness of the ornamental is illustrated by laying side by side two sets of facts, namely: that while the Government are cautiously and delicately proving that principles can be taken much too seriously, their recruiting agents in the country are working the emotional "esthetic" effects of the principle to its last ounce. All recruiting speeches and all the ordinary apologies for our participation in the war insist that England joined in the strife for the sake of the principles of honour solely. For our honour’s sake we had to uphold Belgian neutrality and the principle of defending the rights of small nationalities. And without a doubt the people seem to have been fired upon. The war was popular on its defence of principles alone. The ornament is here exceedingly useful. That the Government perceive this usefulness the indignities which they have put up with to save the sanctity of the "principle of voluntarism" furnish proof.

To save the "principle" of voluntary military service and a voluntary army, most of the substance of the thing has been already parted with. The recruiting campaigns have always amounted in substance to compulsion and of an odious sort. As one member of Parliament pointed out in his speech, the Prime Minister in effect had said: "Let them carry by force, in five weeks I take you home in the meantime as free men." One merely among a thousand absurdities all undertaken to preserve the "voluntary principle."

* * *

It is to be observed that the less experience people have of governing, initial arranging and actual dealing with men and affairs at first hand, the more they extol the beauty of common obedience to a universal principle. In particular the masses, the working classes, and almost all women, being unaccustomed to first-hand dealing with affairs, see no reason why a uniformity which "works" in their own sphere should not work in all spheres. Such assumption, one would imagine, is behind the demand for the democratization of diplomacy and the widespread belief in the all-potency of verbal guarantees which leads to the multiplication of peace societies, arbitration societies and the like.

* * *

Perhaps it is because it is irritating in itself that one is always inclined to invest stupidity with the suspicion of being insincere as well as foolish. For instance, much wrathful vituperation has been cast on the Union of Democratic Control—the society which is canvassing for an immediate peace—because of its supposed traitorous tendencies. I have just been reading a copy of the Society's official journal—the December number—and in particular a contributing article contributed by a Belgian gentleman on the Belgian outlook. The perusal has led me to believe that far more intelligence is necessary for the profitable practice of duplicity than the simple-minded and principle-ridden document shows any trace of. The journal of course is out for peace by the brutal methods of war.

* * *

It seems as if minds under the fascination of these symmetry-suggesting propositions become hermetically sealed to dissenting propositions. Fire, pestilence, famine and the blunt lessons of war as waged in Belgium reveal nothing and teach nothing to them. They continue to live in the hypothetical, and the foundation of their universe is the small word "If." "If" only the Kaiser suffers a heart-change; "if" only Germany will evacuate Belgium and other conquered territory and compensate all sufferers; "if" only the "inherent justice of things" would see fit to triumph over the selfishness and waywardness of men—things would no doubt be quite different, even as the Belgian gentleman very solemnly states. He would "believe in the "inherent justice" with power to alter the course of human affairs apart from the desires of those concerned and apart from their ability to carry out their desires. "Yes, certainly," he says, "militarism—the whole philosophy of conquest and Germany's heading the list—must receive a salutary lesson. But could there be a more salutary and durable lesson for Germany than the triumph of the inherent justice of things, greater than justice of men, because emanating from God, and compelling her to abandon all the territory conquered by German iron and by German blood?" He wonders no doubt if the "inherent justice of things" had begun to move earlier, before, and not after, Belgium had been overrun by German iron and German blood, and that this tardiness will prove of no little hindrance in its difficult task of compelling Germany to listen to and take to heart the salutary lessons which we wish to see triumph. Unfortunately, thus far Germany, at any rate, does not appear to have paid much heed either to "inherent justice" or to principles of any kind; nor does she appear to be much in the mind for receiving any salutary lessons other than those forced upon her by the brutal methods of war.

H. S. W.

[We very much regret that owing to illness Miss Marsden has again been unable to furnish her usual contribution.—Ed.]
HUMAN NATURE AND UTOPIANISM*

By H. STAFFORD HATFIELD

My object in writing this paper is to advance certain considerations which tend to show that a vast amount of what is talked and written about social reform has no serious value. There are, no doubt, years of obstacles to the steady advance in knowledge which is essential to any real social progress. The first is the glamour for immediate remedies, and the consequent multitude of individual and corporate quack doctors whose existence and activity will be sufficiently accounted for, I hope, on the subjoined lines. The second is "the pain in the self-esteem produced by that honest study of human nature which shirks nothing." Yet it is just this study which, so far from leading to cynicism or pessimism, leads to that readjustment—often painful—of valuations, which is the only alteration in human nature possible.

The ultimate goal of all social reform is an increase in the sum of social happiness. To attain this goal it will not suffice to confine by legislation or otherwise material benefits, or remove material hurts, for it is the profoundest truth that happiness comes from within and not from without ourselves. That may mean that some men are born to be happy and some to be unhappy, in which case no social reform can be of use. Or it may mean that only religious persuasions, or something similar, can bring real happiness, in which case also the social reformer is powerless, for he cannot seek a new religion as the chemist seeks a new explosive. But it may mean that the feeling of happiness is generated within the individual by psychological processes. For the social reformer, there is the assumption upon which all interest in social reform is based, and it is clear therefore that we must first possess a very thorough science of human nature by which to test the value of any social proposition. As we obviously do not possess that science, or, if it exists, are not prepared to face it, and acknowledge it to the extent, let us say, of teaching it to children in schools, the discussion of Utopias and Utopian schemes is profitless.

The Psychology of to-day, in the sense in which I am using the word—namely, the study of our human mentality apart from both physiology and metaphysics—is hardly more than the beginning. It is a science. There is the pure empiricism of the man of the world, complicated with purpose and subjective emotion; and there is also the analytic and synthetic study by the imaginative writer, complicated with aesthetics; and, finally, psychology usually so-called, which ranges from brain anatomy and reaction-times to transvectionalism. Thus, while the study of matter on the three corresponding lines of attack, mineralogy and geology, chemistry, and physics, has made enormous strides, the study of human nature has hardly yet begun to shake itself free from its encumbrances. * * * * * Not merely into the effect of a social change, but also into the working of the machinery designed to bring about, does the psychological factor enter largely. There is, of course, a sense in which everyone may claim to have a knowledge of human nature. It is indeed essential to success as lawyer, politician, criminal adventurer, priest, and in a hundred other professions. But this knowledge is of the nature of a technology rather than a science—that is, it is limited by being made for the practical purposes of the individual possessing it. All his knowledge outside of this may be hopelessly distorted and mutilated by the intervention of his emotional nature. Shaw has spoken of "that pain in the self-esteem which causes the critics to raise the cry of Ibsenism"; and just as it was long before civilised humanity could bring itself to permit the dissection of the human body, it is only of late, that we have begun to look into our own anatomy and physical origin. We are still extremely reluctant to be shown the inside of our souls.

This reluctance has perhaps an evolutionary basis. We live in conflict. We each desire to impose upon others such rules of conduct as best suit ourselves, and the refusal of others to follow the rules we desire raises a strong emotion in us: moral indignation. A psychiatrist once said to me, "One of the effects of my profession is to remove the capacity for moral indignation." He had come to understand, not everything perhaps, but a great deal, and to pardon everything. We are improving. We no longer treat the sexual aberrations of children with such vindictive severity, and the Bible, hitherto the law of the land, has made enormous strides, the study of human nature. If we can bring real happiness, in which case also the social reformer is powerless, for he cannot seek a new religion as the chemist seeks a new explosive. But it may mean that the feeling of happiness is generated within the individual by psychological processes. For the social reformer, there is the assumption upon which all interest in social reform is based, and it is clear therefore that we must first possess a very thorough science of human nature by which to test the value of any social proposition. As we obviously do not possess that science, or, if it exists, are not prepared to face it, and acknowledge it to the extent, let us say, of teaching it to children in schools, the discussion of Utopias and Utopian schemes is profitless.

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* This article is the substance of a paper read recently at a meeting of the Arts and Science Union (of which the writer is president) at the Internment Camp at Ruhleben.—Ex.**
politics is the establishment of a certain machinery, and it is usual to go on with measure after measure until the machine is working, just as the Americans have cut the Panama Canal in spite of unforeseen geological troubles. The relations of recent years between the Local Government Board and the Local Authorities illustrate this point. The machinery which social reformers wish to set up is an active local government, the machinery which shall watch over the final dissolution of his body. It is first attempted to set up this machinery on the democratic basis: the people in each district are to decide for themselves and their peculiar needs the details of their State-providence. But owing to causes of a psychological nature our democratic bodies refuse to do their duty—that is to say, to do what we want them to do: set up the machinery of our ideal. Presuming we succeed in forcing them, we are still confronted with the second psychological uncertainty: will the perfect machinery produce an increase in mass happiness?

The empirical self of each of us is all that he is tempted to call by the name of himself. It is clear that between what a man calls ME and what he simply calls MINE the line is difficult to draw. We feel and act about certain things that are OURS, very much as we feel and act about ourselves. Our fame, our children, the work of our hands, may be as dear to us as our bodies are, and arouse the same acts of reprisal if attacked. And our bodies themselves, are they simply OURS, or are they US? Certain men have been ready to disown their very bodies and to regard them as mere vessels, or even as prisons of our which they should some day be ready to escape. We are dealing thus with a frustrating material, the same object being sometimes treated as a part of me, at other times as simply mine, and then again as if I had nothing to do with it at all.

In its widest possible sense, however, a man's self is the sum total of all that he can call his, not only his body and his psychic powers, but his clothes and his house, his wife and children, his ancestors and friends, his reputation and works, his lands and horses, and yacht and bank account. All these things give him the same emotions. If they wax and prosper, he feels triumphant, if they dwindle and die away he feels cast down—not necessarily in the same degree for each thing, but in much the same way for all.

Later on he makes the very significant statement:

There is a certain average tone of self-feeling which each carries with him, whatever his occupation, and which is independent of objective reasons we may have for satisfaction or discontent.

I propose to consider a certain chapter in psychology and its bearing on the Social Problem. William James commences his chapter on the consciousness of self with the following words:

The empirical self of each of us is all that he is tempted to call by the name of himself. It is clear that between what a man calls ME and what he simply calls MINE the line is difficult to draw. We feel and act about certain things that are OURS, very much as we feel and act about ourselves. Our fame, our children, the work of our hands, may be as dear to us as our bodies are, and arouse the same acts of reprisal if attacked. And our bodies themselves, are they simply OURS, or are they US? Certain men have been ready to disown their very bodies and to regard them as mere vessels, or even as prisons of our which they should some day be ready to escape. We are dealing thus with a frustrating material, the same object being sometimes treated as a part of me, at other times as simply mine, and then again as if I had nothing to do with it at all.

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Later on he makes the very significant statement:

There is a certain average tone of self-feeling which each carries with him, whatever his occupation, and which is independent of objective reasons we may have for satisfaction or discontent.

Now I think that the latter statement deserves close attention. It seems to me a characteristic of the development of human mentality that the maintenance unimpaired of this tone or temperature of self-feeling, the feeling of one's own personal value as a human unit, becomes essential to the existence of the individual. It may be compared to the development of warm-bloodedness in the higher animals. A warm-blooded animal is compelled, with few exceptions, to maintain a continued temperature of its blood. Whatever the evolutionary origin of warm-bloodedness may have been, once it came into existence, the continued activity it conditioned in its possessors almost guaranteed an immediate and rapid evolutionary advance. Civilised man has a dual temperature, bodily and spiritual, to maintain, and we can regard almost the whole of an individual's activity from this standpoint. The reproductive function tends more and more to be divested of its separate primitive and distinctive character, and to be assimilated to the other activities concerned with the maintenance of self-feeling. And if the development of warm-bloodedness has conditioned in almost all mammals activity of body, which passed over in man to an activity of mind, this development of self-feeling has conditioned in him a mental activity far beyond the immediate demands of the struggle for existence. It seems to me that just as the primary necessities for the maintenance of the bodily temperature—food, clothing, shelter and fuel—must be maintained unimpaired in any successful social change, so must the factors in the maintenance of the self-feeling.

The work of Freud, the Viennese psychiatrist, has shed a flood of new light on this question. James is still without any scheme which will co-ordinate the complexity of the inner phenomena of self. Our consciousness is obviously altogether incapable of grasping at one time all factors of self such as those enumerated in the quotation from James which I have given above. Just as no one eats more food, wears more clothing, or otherwise tends to do more than is necessary to keep up the temperature of his body, so with the self-feeling; there, too, a thermostat must be at work. It is a kind of conscience giving sign of sufficiency. That thermostat is not our conscious self. To a very different degree in different persons, that conscious self DOES busy itself with our own merits and demerits; it values our work, our possessions, our reputation, our status, the increase in the happiness of others our acts bring about, and conceives in the other side of the balance sheet—our idleness, our failures, our losses, our insignificance, the contempt or indifference of the world towards us, the evil effects upon others of our actions. But it can never arrive at any result, and only in abnormal persons is it very much concerned with trying to do so. Such persons are morbidly vain, sensitive, timorous, or conscientious.

For we have no conscious means of finally evaluating the items: they themselves, as well as the weights against which we would weigh them, and the balance which we would use for the purpose, are in continued flux and movement while consciously present to us.

But the investigations of Freud have disclosed the fact that there goes on in each of us beneath the threshold of consciousness a surprising amount of activity of a hitherto unsuspected sort. For the purpose of this article I may perhaps be allowed to go beyond Freud's strict economy of theory and state the result of his investigations in the following way: more picturesque, I fear, than scientific. We seem to possess a very active unconscious personality, a kind of stores-manager whose existence is hardly suspected by the director, our conscious personality; and, like many stores-managers, often very obstinate, narrow-minded, and unscrupulous person.

Freud has demonstrated experimentally how utterly unscrupulous the unconscious self is in dealing with memories. Obliged, so to speak, to be prepared to present the vouchers of actual memories in confirmation of its accounts, it is in a manner made to go beyond Freud's strict economy of theory and state the result of his investigations in the following way: more picturesque, I fear, than scientific. We seem to possess a very active unconscious personality, a kind of stores-manager whose existence is hardly suspected by the director, our conscious personality; and, like many stores-managers, often very obstinate, narrow-minded, and unscrupulous person.

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tasteful to us, or he or his name has distasteful associations.

We are most of us inclined to think of our memory as a sort of cinema film, successive portions of which are driven into our consciousness at a uniform rate, there to receive the impress of our momentary experience; afterwards to be passed on and stored in a more or less orderly manner for future reference. We imagine these pictures to have a sort of uniform tendency to fade with time; also, to get lost away and difficult to get at in some dark corner of the store-house. We may have dimly imagined some useful mental at work there classifying them. But much more than that is going on within each of us without our knowledge.

For it is in our unconscious personality which evaluates our self. We get from it a regular balance-sheet, which we have no time to read. We glance at the balance in our favour, find it good, and go on. Or we find it low, and feel depressed. Or we find it vanishing, and become extremely upset, and look about for a way to put it right. Very often the unconscious self formulates a demand for the balance sheet to be revised in a specific form. If we cannot comply with this, or redress the balance in some way, we commit suicide or go mad.

I think I shall not go far wrong in saying that the degree of assurance of the maintenance of this balance, the sense of the self-solvency, is one of the great factors in happiness. Certainly retrospectively, it is almost the sole factor. Hence the golden colours which a youth filled with energetic activity takes in the retrospect of the man whose energies have declined. The social reformer who thinks to bring happiness by means of hygiene, three acres, and a cow leaves out of account, however, the unconscious valuation of the self. The whole question of the sense of happiness, well-being, joy, satisfaction, or whatever we call it, has hitherto been the prey of the mystical and metaphysical quacks. None of the data for its solution have been established.

Allowing then such to be the psychic constitution of every member of a civilised race, it concerns us to inquire what scale of valuations the unconscious personality employs. Anyone may verify from his own experience the fact that the unconscious valuations are very different from the conscious ones in the same individual. We are proud or ashamed of a thing, as we say, in spite of ourselves or of our "better judgment." Not infrequently, by the way, the better judgment proves the worse: the unconscious is wiser than the conscious self—instinct wiser than reason. The unconscious self is eternally seeking to shield its valuations from conscious criticism by supplying plausible reasons. Thus a man may occupy an honorary position, and really value the status and title extraordinarily. He may however consciously be persuaded that he sets no store on status and title, and that all his activity unconscious wise than the conscious position is on account of the good the position enables him to do for others—and this in men of obviously selfish nature, that is, those in whom the unconscious valuation of good done to others is comparatively low.

On the other hand, we have the revolt against duty and outside opinion, and subtest of all, the revolt against our own opinion. Again and again we find in our own experience that of the cases where we have believed one thing to be our duty, or the best for us, or the most expedient, and have nevertheless acted otherwise: and, as the issue proved, chosen the better course in spite, as we say, of ourselves. Here we touch the seeming paradox of self-control and self-development: on the one hand, the gaining of command over "ourselves," training ourselves to carry out the course of action our considered judgment calls for; in the extreme case, the formation of a habit of obedience to certain "principles" accepted by an anticipating and conscious choice for the suppression of inclinations judged idle, vicious, or wasteful; on the other hand, the recording of free play to the spontaneous impulses of our nature and in our unconsciousness; the rejection of nothing "on principle," but instead the free acceptance of all experiences, emotions, and opportunities.

Examining our psychic constitution, on the credit-side of our balance-sheet of self-feeling, we find the most impressive item to be any natural gift or competence whose exercise has recognisable value in the world, and as complement to such gift an abundant vital energy to ensure it full exercise; with, on the debit-side, deficiency of energy, which the arts of self-control and self-development will fill so far as it is possible to fill them, and the expenditure of energy to which man may occupy an honorary position, and really value the status and title extraordinarily. He may rely on other sources of self-feeling, which may be classified under ownership, reputation and status, under membership, and a host of activities. Under ownership falls wife, children, material possessions; under reputation, general respectability, as well as business or professional repute; under membership that of a family, a country, a social set, clubs and like associations, and religious sects. It is interesting to note how the man of special gifts (real or imagined) and great initial energy draws upon these various things as the credit-side of his account diminishes with the exhaustion of his gift (or, it may be, the discovery of its insignificance) and the decline of his energies. But the point of supreme importance to the student of Social Reform is that every institution of society has its two-fold aspect: first as an instrument to an end, and second, as a source of self-feeling; and it is in this latter aspect that it is loved and nourished. The vast majority of men are too ignorant, lazy, and indifferent to support any institution for reason of its purpose alone. But an institution may have served its purpose, and have become demonstrably inefficient and even injurious and demoralising as regards it, and will nevertheless find large numbers eager to support it. It is thus, and not by any mystic power of tradition, that monarchies and aristocracies, churches and freemasonries are so long-lived. No integral part of human society is a dead thing, merely a relic of the past. And every living thing continues to exist by a dynamic
process, which is kept in movement and directed by Life. The moment Life ceases to maintain its manifestation in matter, that manifestation decays. He superficially imagines to be its dead, useless, or dangerous features, is usually wholly unaware of the existence of the factors which entail his failure. For to suggest the forcible abolition of any institution is on a par with a suggestion to confiscate Savings Bank deposits. It threatens a greater or less number of people with a deprivation of their self-assets. For, as I have said, it is the unconscious self which evaluates. You may prove by most excellent and convincing arguments that there is no value at all in attendance at church; even that the church is an injurious institution; and you may gain a man's assent to the cogency of your argument. But you need not in the least be surprised to find that some man at church now and then; defending it politically against spoliation, paying respect to the Cloth. The director may talk and think as he pleases, but his stores-manager knows that he wants that bit of what the director is pleased to call "old rubbish" and sees that it is not thrown away. The very attack on an institution is a justification of his action in the defence of it for those who defend it, however little real enterprise and energy the defence may involve. The working-man may join a Conservative Club and vote Conservative, although he is propertyless, fully aware (as he supposes) of the empty pomp of the monarchy and the hard selfishness of the opulent classes, and be no believer in the Established Church. His more gifted and energetic colleague may be able to afford to be Radical, though even he will very probably belong to a chapel and send his wife and children there. And this brings us to a consideration of that item of self-feeling called "altruistic." In contradistinction to the special gift, it would seem to be within everyone's reach to act altruistically. Yet even so, it is universally admitted that genuinely altruistic action is extremely rare. Nearly all action which appears at the first blush to be altruistic can be referred on analysis to other heads, such as special gift, reputation, and membership. Then we have a group of acts of the "conscience-money" type, which form the most obvious confirmation possible of the theory I am advancing. The conscious self of almost everyone values altruistic action very highly, and hence, in the case of acts which mean a large debit, every endeavour is made by the conscious self to find a little altruism to balance. The unconscious self is thus compelled to buy itself very indifferently with the memories, and is very soon able to present, if required, some delightfully retouched photographs. There is however in almost all persons a distinct debit value attached to neglect of, or injury to, others, and in proportion as this increases, the person becomes unselfish. Unfortunately, however, a vast proportion of acts involving injury to others bring with them an addition under other headings to the credit side. As members of a nation we agree to carry on a great war involving incalculable injury to human life. There is a certain debit, too, attaching to neglect of duty imposed by the State, and the good working of free institutions depends entirely on the unconscious valuation of this debit in the minds of the majority. Note, please, the word unconscious. Consciousness, we are all aware of the fact I have just stated. But unless the balance of self-feeling is actually jeopardised by neglect, unless, that is, our store-keeper planks down neglect of duty as a serious debit, and fulfilsment as a good credit, we shall find every possible excuse to hand for neglect. For our store-keeper may suggest other activities of more use for his point of view, or permit us to recuperate our energies over a cigar and a whisky when we ought to be at the poll. The question of actual public service in parliament or council is complicated with the membership of their self-esteeem. Certain rare souls resemble in the constitution of their ego the first class I mentioned, those with special gifts, in that their whole self-feeling depends upon the continual exercise of that gift we all possess but use so rarely, doing good to others. 

There is, finally, a broad classification of valuation to bear in mind, into static and dynamic: possession, and activity with the faith upon which it is based. We cannot imagine the balance of self made up once and for all and remaining without additions to either side of the account, though some semi-vegetable existences come surprisingly near to this state of affairs. For almost all, the credit-side is partly at least of a nature requiring to be maintained: the debit has continual additions made to it. The static sources of self do some of them bear interest. Actual money possessions do. The faithful wife and obedient children minister continually to the self-esteem of the head of the family. But we are, as I have already said, essentially on a line of evolution to greater activity, and corresponding to this is inborn in us a preference for the dynamic values. And it seems to me that we can trace in recent history a rapid shifting of valuations in favour of the dynamic. Modern civilised man no longer sees the haven of perfect content in possession. He values a large income—apart from the conveniences and pleasures it will purchase—as an assurance of his own valuation of his active work, and is less concerned to save it with a view to fortifying his self by possessions, than to spend it, if not on enjoyment, then on ways tending to reduplicate the assurance to his self-esteem, which the receipt of it brought him. Not improbably, indeed, we may gain here some light on the problem of happiness. One potent cause of unhappiness is boredom. Now boredom may certainly co-exist with the most complete sense of self-credit: that self-credit, however, being made up mainly of static values, when the unconscious self is not engaged in any impulse to action, surely the very essence of boredom.

FRENCH POEMS.

Il pêse sur la vie un poids de fer,
Il n'y a plus ni jour, ni nuit sur terre;
Deux saisons ont passé et c'est l'hiver:
Mais qui a vu tomber la feuille à terre?

Qui ose encore penser à sa douleur
Ou écouter le sombre bruit des heures?
Nous avons tous un seul énorme cœur
Qui bat en vain aux cris de ceux qui meurent.

Les jardins sont déserts; dans les maisons
Sanglote un être ancien quand le soir tombe.
Ces vieux qui s'en reviennent si las,
Ont échappé de lueurs dans la grisaille
Depuis l'aube à peine claire, creusé des tombes.
Ou écouter le sombre bruit des heures?
Qui bat en vain aux cris de ceux qui meurent.

Le canon tonne au loin; sur l'horizon
S'éventent des lueurs dans la grisaille
Et silencieusement nous écoutons
Le sourd éloignement de la bataille.

Fritz R. Vanderpyl.

December 1914.
THE BETROTHED.

By ALEKSEI REMIZOV.

(Translated from the Russian by John Cournos.)

THREE years a lad played with a lass, three autumns. Countless were the words spoken in this way. That was how Maria loved Ivan! Who, among us, nowadays, loves like that? The time came to put blossoms in the hair. And Maria was given to another, she was not given to Ivan.

Quickly the parents made the match between them. A nice, well-to-do son-in-law was found; the old folk were pleased with themselves. And there was no more honey in life for her; dark grew the face of Maria, even darker than an autumnal night. Only her eyes flickered, flickered like two candles.

Her soul was weary, a frosty cold congealed her heart. Desolate, she sang in the evening her dolorous songs. Death itself would have been wel­come. Yet bravely she resigned herself, and bravely endured.

Three years Maria lived with the ungracious one, three autumns. And one day she fell ill. She did not pine a long time, but died during the feast of Kuzma and Demian.

And then they buried Maria. Oh! the winter had come, with its frosts; white snow covered the grave! And Maria lay under the white snow; no longer flickered those eyes, the eyelids were sealed over them.

One night Maria rose from her grave; she went to her husband.

A sign of the cross made he, Feodor her husband, the ungracious one.

"What does she want, the accursed one?" and he would not let his wife in.

Maria then went to her father, to her mother she went.

"At whom are you gaping?" said her father.

"Where, witch, are you going?" said her mother.

The father was frightened, the mother was frightened, they would not let their daughter into the house.

Maria went to her godmother.

Of a sudden she came, soul of a sinner, where you will, there is no room for you here," and away sent the godmother her godchild.

And Maria was now left alone, a stranger in this wide world; no other roof had she than the sky.

"I will go to him, to my first one, my earlier one," thought Maria suddenly. "He will take me in!"

And she appeared before Ivan's window.

Near the window she could see Ivan sitting; he was painting a picture of the Virgin Mary.

She knocked on the window.

Then Ivan wakened his servant. It was night, and together they went out with hatchets.

The servant, when he saw Maria, was frightened. Without looking round once he ran away.

She looked at Ivan.

"Take me in, I will not harm you." Ivan was overjoyed; he approached her, and he embraced her.

"Stop!" she cried. "Don't press me so tightly, my bones have lain idle for some time.

And she herself kept looking at him; she could not tear her eyes away; she caressed him, and could not care him enough. That was how Maria loved Ivan!

Who, among us, nowadays, loves like that?

Ivan took Maria into his house, he did not show her to anyone; he gave her dresses, also food and drink. And thus they lived until Christmas together.

On Christmas Day they went to church. In the church all began to look at Maria—her father and her mother, her husband Feodor and her godmother.

When the service ended Maria went over to her mother.

"Yes, I am your own," said Maria. "You will remember that one night I came to you, and none of you would let me in, and so I went to my first one, my earlier one, and he took me in."

And they all acknowledged Maria, and they gave judgment: they gave her not to her old husband Feodor, but they gave her to Ivan.

O ho! the spring had come, the snows had thawed away, the green grass sprang up, and upon the little Red Hill were wedded Ivan and Maria.

Here is an end to my tale, an end to my novel.

PASSING PARIS

Mr. FRITZ R. VANDERP YL'S name has already occurred in these columns in connection with that model little essay of his, the best handbook extant to the Louvre, De Giotto à Paris de Chavannes. This month he favours us with an original poem pending its publication in the last volume of the trilogy respectively entitled Les Saisons Douloureuses (Editions de l'Abbaye), Les Saisons d'un Poète (Eugène Figuière et Cie.), and Les Saisons Dernières, much of which has been read in different periodicals: Vers et Prose, the Mercure de France, Les Bandeaux d'Or, and the Revue des Nations.

Having started out in life a Hollander, Mr. Vanderpyl started out in literature a poet of the Dutch language; then, when he began to think in French and after the manner of a Frenchman (so many of us are born in the wrong places) he became a French poet, "automatically" as Mlle. Char­asson once put it in the Revue du Temps Présent. M. Dukamel of the Mercure called him by the most flattering epithet, namely, a poet, pure and simple, characterised by peculiar docility to all impulse. A German critic has qualified him a poet of capitals (Groszstadtdichter) because his vision of Nature is abstract Nature, but Nature as moulded in the man's mind and soul. A certain hesitation in the choice of words (diagnosed by Mlle. Charasson) might have pleased Verlaine, and there is the freshness of youth in the spontaneity and candour of one who has written:

Ah! je voudrais être acrobate
Pour enfin m'entendre applaudir:

lines which induced M. de Gonzaque Frick to say that had sincerity not existed before him he would have invented it.

Hardly a poem of his but opens suddenly on to some unexpected, whimsical vision. There is one in the third verse of the poem here reproduced: those old men returning so tired after digging graves from the scarce-light dawn.

"Poems of Innocence" is a title to which much of his work, for the unconsciousness of its inspiration, might lay claim.

M. Henri Barbusse, whose remarkable book, L'Enfer, is dealt with in this issue, has received the Croix de Guerre for distinguished action in the field. Mr. Vanderpyl, after several months' leave, has resumed his uniform.
A young futurist (of course young) sends me a catalogue of his exhibition. Herewith some extracts: "Plastic synthesis of the idea 'war' (study)"; "Soldier = Vase"; "Centrifugal expansion of light forms"; "Sea = Battle (words at liberty and forms)"; "Dancer + Light = Fan"; "Woman + Baby + Lamp"; "Articulated Dancer (pull the string and blow into the mobile planes)."

The French are more partial to rewards, other than those afforded by mere popularity, for artistic achievements than are the English. There are numbers of endowments to which writers may aspire in their different qualities. The late Paul Hervieu has added one more to the many existing by a legacy of 25,000 francs, the interest of which is to be granted every two years to the author of some dramatic work written and produced without commercial intent. The Goncourt left a sum which permits the distribution by a committee known as the Académie Goncourt of an annual prize of 5000 francs for a work of fiction, and to the one to whom it falls it gives an excellent start not only on account of its intrinsic value but for the publicity and increase of sale obviously ensuing. The Goncourt award for 1915, preceding that for 1914, which was still awaits a recipient, has accrued to M. René Benjamin, who has strung a clever storybook together from his own experiences as a soldier in the war: Les Soldats de la Guerre: Gaspard (Fayard; 3fr. 50c). Whoever is tired of reading about the war and its participants, who abhors fiction will be conquered by the life, humour, pathos, and unpretentiousness in this skilful bit of imaginative realism. Of its kind there is nothing better. But it defies translation, and could only be appreciated by the most fluently conversant with the popular idiom. A few pages which happen to be selected from slang and colloquialisms are here rendered as they give a unique picture of the martyrdom undergone during the last eighteen months by the youth of Europe. As nothing that I can write about current events could prove as interesting, I curtail these notes this month in favour of one whose narrative is so vastly more thrilling.

M. C.

**SOLDIERS OF WAR.**

[Being a translated extract from Gaspard, by René Benjamin, winner of the Prix Goncourt for 1915.]

THEN, while continuing to contemplate his feet in the water, moving them about to keep them from freezing, he added again and continually: "God Almighty!"

Bullets. Shells. Explosions. Crumbling. The quarters fell drop by drop, grain by grain in the desperate sandglass of this new, stupefying, horrifying life wherein men with vague minds and sore bodies waited in the fog, the cold, the mud, for Fate to show herself more compassionate. Confused images of home passed beneath their brows, but their flesh was frozen and numb under their stiffened cloaks; dull, awkward thoughts unfurled themselves within their minds, for they did not realise exactly why they suffered, cursing, swearing, freezing, dying, from discipline, from habit, like every one...

A foggy winter’s day is in itself something so fatal that when night falls man is scarcely stirred by it. Gaspard put his wet rug over his head; and Mousse, trembling with cold, huddled up against him. The trench is as restful in the light time as during the day. The men sleep, snore and moan, their elbows well in as though to withhold the vanishing warmth, they crowd up against their neighbours with beseeching shoulders: physical brotherhood, moving and the most sincere.

The dawn, when it returns to these shiverings, is a wan, far more sinister hour than all the shadows of the night. To die then is no surprise, for it seems as though death’s very shroud had grazed your eyes. With a hot shirt, a warm cup of tea, and a shiver down your back. The weapons shine mournfully in the bleak light. And if your name is Mousse you remain silent, reflecting that a leap out of the trench means, no doubt, a leap into the other world. But if your name is Gaspard you simply wipe the hoar-frost off your mustache with the back of your hand and repeat your eternal “God Almighty!”

It’s a refrain.

The trench, when you think you are living your last moment, is hard to climb. Then comes the surprise at being no longer buried; you seem to have grown: and, clutching hold of your rifle, you march gravely, your eyes searching for bullets. They come suddenly, sweeping the whole breadth of the atmosphere, and some men fall without a cry; but their fall face-forwards is interrupted by the weapon which slips and digs itself into the ground with the soldier hanging on it, stopped, impaled in a strange, frightful posture—dead and almost standing, half-slaughtered, horrible to see, like all corpses which do not seem at rest.

Mousse, as soon as the bullets began to whistle, said again to Gaspard:

"Eh, you won’t forget my letter?"

And almost at once shells began to burst all around them, the enemy thousand hundred metres away; they saw him grow out of the earth in little lumps of men which joined one another to form a moving wall. So they were to meet, to strike, to walk into each other. In spite of the bullets the French closed up.

The German wall became denser and approached nearer. A few holes lit it up: fallen men. The pointed helmets were now distinguishable. No one fired, and on each side the men marched on without a cry, gravely. But when the two troops were within fifty metres of each other they could be seen, as though someone from above directed them, joined the two towards the right and left, in a turning movement which seemed to have been agreed upon, or, rather, in a mutual terror to come into contact without having seen each other. They had to feel and look at each other, have time to hate; they were like dogs scenting and circling about one another before jumping at each other’s throats.

But on this tragic calm new shells fell which tore, mutilated, and carried off pieces of the field and of the men.

One of them threw Gaspard and Mousse violently down.

When the thick, stinking cloud of its smoke had vanished, Gaspard, stupefied, endeavoured to rise. He fell again, saying:

"Oh my leg! . . . God Almighty!"

His right leg was broken beneath the kneecap and hung limply, the trouser being torn and blood-drenched; and he stared in front of him, dull, while his companions hurried on, head foremost, shoulder high, without taking notice.

He called in hollow tones:

"Mousse, wid. where are you?"

A voice answered:

"He’s there, on the ground, his head opened, like a pie."
I had crossed the dark flood of the swift Nava (Nahe), and admired the new walls added to the ancient fountain (Bingen), whence the Romans at Cannae, and where the troops of the dead lie in the fields unwept and unhonoured. Thence, entering a lonely path through a deserted wooded country, where can be seen no trace of human cultivation, I pass by arid Dumnissus, with thirsty lands crumbled over Mousse's body. He was seen no more. The German guns had killed him; they buried him. The shell had made a hideous wound; it had at once dug his grave, laid him in it, and covered him. He returned to Earth without the aid of human hand. The war had struck him and kept him. Rest, following on death, at once. No fingering of the corpse, no pockets emptied, no groans, no words. Private Mousse: missing.

Gaspard began to moan.

"Ah! ah! William . . . if I could get at that pig."

Two stretcher-bearers approached who took him quickly, one under the back, the other by the arm-

"Don't stiffen yourself. Allow yourself to be carried."

"Yes, yes; you're good coves; but if I held him, that pig!"

In spite of the shells bursting all around they rolled him on a wheeled stretcher as far as the road, where others undertook to take him to the ambulance. This had been fitted in a house in runs, in a big cellar ripped open by shells. Gaspard, who was beginning to suffer and was suddenly raising himself on his stretcher, was laid down here.

Two surgeons approached. They said at once: "My poor fellow, it'll have to be cut."

"Cut?" repeated Gaspard automatically.

"Yes, there," said the first surgeon.

"I don't think so: it had better be cut here," said the second surgeon.

"Why there?" said the first.

"Just as you like, cut there," said the second.

"No, no; I don't mind. We'll cut here," said the first surgeon.

In spite of the doctors' urging, he sat there with his whole eyes, making an awful face and clenching his fists. Then he let his head drop and murmured once more: "God Almighty!"

His winter campaign has just lasted two-and-twenty hours.

The voice answered, grumblingly:

"What? Is he done for?"

The second surgeon.

"More than likely."

"Just as you like, cut there," said the second.

"Yes, yes; you're good coves; but if I held him, that reverse current in your stream and have thought its flow perhaps more sluggish because of it. You do not sow your banks with marsh-weeds, nor lazily overflow your shores with filthy mire; a man may approach dry-shod to the edge of your river, whose banks are covered with grasses! Navigable like the sea, your waters are borne down like a river's; by your glassy deeps you resemble a lake; by your rippling stream you may be likened to a brook; and by the purity of the drinking-water you suitably you deck your banks with cold springs; you alone have all the excellencies of spring and stream and river and lake and of the sea that by its ebb and flow makes a double path. Your peaceful waters glide by without suffering either the roar of the wind or the conflict of hidden rocks. You are not driven by whirling rapids to hasten your course; you have no islands rising in mid-stream to stay your waters, and, dividing them and turning them aside, are robbed of the honour of a well-deserved name. Fate has given you two waterways: one when you flow down with a favourable current and the swift oars strike and churn the waters, and the other when the sailors, towing their barge along the banks without stopping, strain on the mast-ropes with which they are yoked. How often have you wondered at the reverse current in your stream and have thought its natural flow perhaps more sluggish because of it. You do not sow your banks with marsh-weeds, nor lazily overflow your shores with filthy mire; a man may approach dry-shod to the edge of your water. Go now and incrust a smooth soil with Phrygian inlay; spread out a plain of marble in your pannelled halls; for my part, despising those things which wealth and fortune give, I will admire the works of nature, which are unheeded by spendthrifts, who, rejoicing in ruin, run riot into beggary. Here the water-shores are covered by firm sand, in which the feet leave no track of their footprint; through your smooth surface can be seen your transparent depths; O river, you have no secrets: as the sweet air lies open to the clear gaze, and the still winds offer no hindrance to the eyes through space, so, our sight reaching into the intimate recesses of the river, we behold, far down, its sunken life; and, as the stream flows gently by, the inmost heart of its silent depths lies open to us, and in the blue light of the clear, gliding waters are revealed scattered forms; here, the sand is furrowed, ridged by the light waves; and there, the water-grasses tremble, bending over the green bottom; underneath the waters of their birth, the quivering plants suffer the movement of the stream, the long, the short, the gentle, and then hide; and the gravel serves as a foil to all. Along the coast of the Britons of Caedona may be seen the like, when the ebb-tide leaves bare the green seaweed, the red coral, and the white pearls, seeds of the shells, the delight of men; and these, beneath the rich waves, resemble the necklaces of our finery. In the same way, beneath the happy waves of the peaceful Mosella, the weeds by their different colour show up the pebbles mingled with them. The slippery shoals of fishes at play among themselves tire the attentive eyes with their continual maze. But how many species there are swimming in slanting paths, and what armies of them pass up the stream, their names, and the number of the
children of this great race, I must not say: he to

EPGRAMS
By Richard Aldington

REPLIES

I
When I was hungry and implored them, they said:
"The sun-beetle eats dung: imitate him."
I implored them for my life's sake and they re­plied: "Last year's roses are dead; why should you live?"

II
(THREE YEARS LATER)
They came to me and said: "You must aid us for the sake of our God and our World."
I replied: "Your god is a beetle and your world a ball of dung.
But they returned and said: "You must give your life to defend us."
And I answered: "Though a million of you die, next spring shall not lack roses."

HAPINESS
(To F. S. F.)
Cease grumbling, brother! All men are wretched; Some too rich; Most too poor— Happiness eludes them.
We have books and talk, Women (not many) And rich imaginings. Let us pardon the gods Who made us men For they have made us poets!

BEAUTY
Those who would write great poems Without the love of beauty Are like men who desire strong children Without the love of women; And like a man who should give a feast Without wine; And like a country that goes to war Without great armies.

POETRY AND PATRIOTISM
By Alec W. G. Randall.

Some misguided people, I believe, still hold that war is a good thing for the arts; even this machine-made, absolutely unromantic war has not convinced them of the contrary. They may still be found writing to the Times letters full of panegyric nonsense on young heroes such as Rupert Brooke, whose death was a far greater poem than his life. And the same letters almost invariably conclude with remarks on Prussian militarism, as if the two attitudes were not in every respect alike. The German militarist is a man who has exalted war into a thing of beauty, whereas nine people out of every ten in this country
believe it to be in its essentials an unmitigated horror or, at least, a very regrettable necessity. In France circumstances are obviously quite different. The Frenchman has at least the sight of invaded Departments to raise his just anger—or anger of a kind which, it would be easy to show, has prompted much true art and real poetry. But war for war's sake, with its consequent encouragement of the patriotic gloom or fervour in any intelligent, imaginative Frenchman of fighting age since the cry "A Berlin!" died upon the lips of Parisians.

It is customary to make Germany the villain of the piece in the matter of militarism. And there is a very great deal to be said for this view. No country but Prussia, I believe, has such a continuous tradition of glorification of war for its own sake. The average Prussian apparently considers war as a necessary exercise—to put it on the lowest plane; at certain moments his native rhetoric seems to get the better of him, and he chants the praises of war as the great inspirer of art, the efficient servant of religion, the stimulus of imagination, and Heaven knows what. Goebbels' "hittis light" Treitschke quotation about war being God's "bitter medicine" is nothing in comparison with what the Prussian professor can do when he is really warmed up to his subject. Take such a book as the philosopher Friedrich Theodor Vischer's 'Krieg und die Kunst (War and the Arts), or the military historian Max Jähn's essays of 'Kultur und Krieg, if you wish to see the genuine German militarist at his very best.

But there are hopeful signs in Germany; not in the Press, not in the Chancellor's speech, not even in such Socialist declarations as we have been allowed to know, but in certain volumes of poetry which have been published during the past year. In 1914 Stefan George and Karl Wolfskehl published Volume X. of their well-known Blätter der Kunst—a collection of poems, about 150 pages in length. There was not a single reference to the war, except in a note at the end, which emphasised the need for true poets in times of national stress, and described the majority of the poems then being written as "singsong." This last remark was a jibe at the Chauvinist critics who, but even in such Socialist declarations as we have been allowed to know, but in certain volumes of poetry which have been published during the past year.

At the beginning of the first months of war. A critic of repute has proudly and solemnly affirmed that during August 1914 about 50,000 poems per day were written, and during the first twelve months about 6,000,000. Poetic enthusiasm! Of these comparatively few out of this alarming number succeeded in getting published, but, judging from the best samples—Dehmel's, Lissauer's, Thoma's, Carl Hauptmann's, Schaukal's, Werfel's—there is nothing of really permanent importance or value for art. Patriotic jingle, melodramatic rant, at best stirring rhythms and rhetorical fervour, as in Lissauer's 'Hymn of Hate' and Dehmel's 'Song to All.

The poets who have been to the war are better, if less patriotic in the usual sense. War-patriotism is proved to be a very barren emotion, unless brought into relation with the "grim realities." Then some approach to true art may be looked for. I am not sure whether this has been shown in France and England, but it has in Germany. Walther Heymann, who was killed last January; Ernst Stadler, who died on the Western Front at the beginning of last year; Wilhelm Klemm, who is serving with the Ambulance Corps on the Russian Front—all these young poets and a score it would be possible to name have been producing work of genuine poetic worth in a time when most of the romantic, easy, oratorical efforts of stay-at-homes.

Certain poets among those unfit or too old for service, such as René Schickelé and Stefan George, have done good work, not by writing pieces of patriotic poetry, but by maintaining the inter-

national and essentially peaceful character of all true art. They do not say that there is no beauty in a nation struggling to defend itself or no room for war-poems, but they do emphatically declare that poetry, that all art, should be regarded as superior to national quarrels, and so they continue, in the face of much unpopularity, in their work of recon­structing the universe. And in this work shall we not wish them well?

THE FRENCH WORD IN MODERN PROSE

II.—HENRI BARBUSSE: L'Enfer.

The object of these surveys is not to embrace triumphs to the exclusion of failures, for the latter may prove as indicative of the contemporary spirit as the most impeccable successes. Perhaps more so. Nor are they intended to class, catalogue, and commend. Asterisks will not be distributed as in Baedeker's lists of "sights" and hosterlies. I do not claim to be warranted to distinguish the great from the worthy men of our time, but I would fain hesitate from drawing up a scale for fear of condemning an innocent one by omission due to lapse of memory or ignorance: worthy being such as are in line with their period or who anticipate on it; as have strained after emancipation; as bring an element of novelty; as turn things over; as have died a little over their task. Worthy, those ready to shed their own blood. Worthy still, many others.

No age has ever discovered its own greatest men. Estimation is only possible at a certain distance. We are, without doubt, surrounded by ignored genius waiting for recognition from subsequent generations. How strange that a reputedly practical and po­sitivist period as is ours should allow itself to be boundless criticism possible. Any hyperbolic term, such as genius tout court, might have done as well were it not that genius has but a vague, while "Shakespeare" has a quite definite, signification. Indeed, the chase after contemporary genius is of all vain pursuits the vainest. Were it accessible to us who are in line with their period or who anticipate on it; as have strained after emancipation; as bring an element of novelty; as turn things over; as have died a little over their task. Worthy, those ready to shed their own blood. Worthy still, many others.

When M. Octave Mirbeau proclaimed M. Maeter­linck a new Shakespeare he, no doubt, served him admirably, but committed the most ideologically resourceless criticism possible. Any hyperbolic term, such as genius tout court, might have done as well were it not that genius has but a vague, while "Shakespeare" has a quite definite, signification. Indeed, the chase after contemporary genius is of all vain pursuits the vainest. Were it accessible to us who are in line with their period or who anticipate on it; as have strained after emancipation; as bring an element of novelty; as turn things over; as have died a little over their task. Worthy, those ready to shed their own blood. Worthy still, many others.

It is of solemn and capital importance," he writes in his remarkable holocaust of possibilities, L'Enfer, "to liberate the true word from silence, to put reason where it is, to replace truth." Further on he adopts the individual, egotistic, and only intelligible standpoint, so wholly indifferent to un­intelligible, universal truth, and finding himself in lieu of truth, his discovery proves in contradiction to the line of research. But it is because he is contradictory and worried that I propose to halt before his anguish. I prefer his vast and tormented picture of possibilities rather than the "truth" with which it shares with "truth" the fascination of a mirage. How strange that a reputedly practical and positivist period as is ours should allow itself to be deceived by such illusiveness!

M. Barbusse has, of course, failed, and failed nobly, in giving form to that "truth" which so hurts him.

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masters, the other being his philosophic conscience which was harassed by the consideration that

Truth itself, owing to the timidity or ignorance of great writers, hitherto the object only of metaphysical speculation or of prayer, has never been put into a great work [secondary works not existing, as he holds] ... the drama of each has never been mingled with the drama of everything. When (he cries) will profound truth and the higher beauty at last unite? They must unite, they who singly already unite men among one another, for it is on account of the reign of vague admirations that grand moments pass where there are no longer limitations or petris, and it is owing to the one truth that the blind see, the poor are brothers, and that man will one day be in the right. The book of poetry and truth is the noblest discovery remaining to be made.

Were I to set out arguing with M. Barbusse here in one article as M. Barbusse has attempted to argue with life in his one book, half a dozen issues of The Egoist would not suffice for the purpose. But I can never or by any means hope to do justice by a book; the best I can hope for being to achieve a tolerably readable article and to excite some curiosities. What can Barbusse hope to do in regard to "truth"? His case proves that there is but one safe guide, but one safe criterion, and that is the artistic, i.e. immutable, eternal criterion. One craves for a frame; one would give a whole philosophy for a frame. The union M. Barbusse strives after breeds discord. It is responsible for the sale-success of this book. What could read the

THE EGOIST February 1, 1916

There is however one fact which the lover of Russian literature will have to realise, whether he likes it or not. And that is that the Russian wench, like any other, puts her dresses nowadays from Paris. He may be comforted by the fact that she has suddenly shown them,—silk-stockinged. But it is useless to close our own eyes to the fact that she has suddenly discovered that she has pretty ankles and that she means to show them,—after all she is a Russian soul with a French mind—is as true of most of the finer Russian writers to-day. It is also true of Aleksei Remizov. Remizov, who I believe is in his forties, is in the Dostoyevsky tradition. He loves the Russian word. The "tendency to pity" is strong in him. He penetrates into dark places and monologues which pass on the other side of the wall. He is primarily a writer of novels and short stories and poems in prose—and these are so beautiful as to be almost untranslatable.

WOODCUT OF ALEKSEI REMIZOV

By ROALD KRISTIAN

Aleksei Remizov must be classed among those artists who say an old thing in a new way. This is good, for it makes an old thing new, a dead thing living, and what once belonged to our fathers our very own again. This is strong in him. He penetrates into dark places and monologues which pass on the other side of the wall. He is primarily a writer of novels and short stories and poems in prose—and these are so beautiful as to be almost untranslatable.
This last word describes one of the chief differences between him and Dostoyevsky. Remizov loves his words. No Russian writer ever knew so many Russian words. And he loves to orchestrate them as a musician orchestrates his notes. The result he obtains is not always the same. Sometimes it is as simple as in his new version of the little folk tale, in prose-ballad form, that I've translated here; sometimes it is rather obscure in meaning though extremely beautiful and suggestive as vocal music.

SPONTANEITICS

By Henty Carter

Adventurers in the world of the spirit are beginning to grasp the spontaneity theory of Art, Drama, and Poetry. The theory is that every sensible object encloses a something which is the formative spirit or soul of the thing. This something is manifested spontaneously and evokes its own form, colour, and illusion.

Thus, Rabindranath Tagore, writing in the current "Drama," utters some telling things on the evocative power of acting, as well as its limitations. In the case of the concrete arts, it may be argued that any one of the arts is only to be seen in its full glory when she is sole mistress." Again, "I cannot agree with this opinion . . . that the drama is created with the view of its being enveloped in means of outside help, and therefore awaits the acting, scenery, music, and other accessories of the stage." . . . "If the art of acting would keep up its true dignity, let it not accept any bonds other than those absolutely requisite for its own self-expression. The attempt of the actor to surround himself with "all this illusory paraphernalia" is a sign of "faint-heartedness." To persons with common sense it is a sign of ignorance and inefficiency. Tagore's argument in favour of evocative acting is excellent, but it does not go deep enough. What is needed is an evocative form of drama. I have long expressed the belief that drama, like art and poetry, externalises itself by a process of obliteration. Rightly understood, everything in the theatre but itself, and evokes just that form, colour, and illusion essential to the process of obliteration. Tagore asks this question: "When the flower-girl is cast, does her flowers on the empty stage, how would the importation of artificial plants help the situation? Must not the flowers bloom at her every motion?" Of course, if they do, then property flowers are not required. If they do not, then the flower-girl is not required. Here in half an inch of print is the whole case for motion evoking form, colour, and illusion.

Tagore's perception of fundamental unity is not shared by all advanced minds. Some are still wobbling between dull disconnection and synthesis. A week or two ago I saw some little plays interpreted by Saint-Hilaire's enthusiastic players known as the Clarissa Club. I liked what I saw immensely. The Clarissians have conceived a theory of design in movement to them expression is everything, but right design is the first requirement. I felt that if they succeeded in developing their particular sense of design-acting it would be a great gain to the theatre. Still, I was left with the impression that the young players were adding unnecessary perfume to exquisite blooms. Instead of one simple impression at every point of the performance I was aware of four distinct things. There were the poetry, the words, the movements and the backgrounds. Now I can imagine poetry which is at once melodious, and full of beautiful movement, form and illusion, but quite destitute of words. To me poetry is experienced in an elevation of the spirit into illuminating expressiveness which may be manifested anywhere, at any time. Poetry is something to be lived, not written. The same criticism applies to the amazing evocative dancing of Michio Ito given recently under the direction of Mr. John Rodker at the Margaret Morris Theatre. Than Michio Ito no dancer more resembles a living marionette. The spirit of dance seems to take all conscious power from him and to actuate him with its own vivid and spontaneous movements. Yet music, green and purple hangings and decorative costumes were permitted to clog the stage with their externalities. Logically, the proper accompaniments for such movements are space and nudity. Of course a new kind of moral sense would have to be called into being for their true appreciation.

The game of placing accidents upon a foundation that carries its own principle of construction is continued by Mr. Mark Perugini in "The Art of Ballet." (Martin Seeker, Mr. Perugini traces the origin, growth, and development of the dance, particularly that form known as the ballet. He, however, almost forgets to mention the Russian Ballet. In order to reach a determinate position he starts off with a distinction which leads to a sharp division.

Says Mr. Perugini, "It should be borne in mind that it is possible to dance and not represent an idea save that of dancing, as when a child dances for joy, not in order to exhibit the joy of another." The child-dance is simply dancing. The representation of an idea or a story is, it seems, ballet-dancing. I suppose Mr. Perugini would agree that the ballet must stand alone, since it is a complete structure having all the quality of its movements and proceeding from the creative source of the dance. But the second is not so fortunate. Evidently it has certain limitations which entailed upon the ballet are such that you must build it up in order that it may "exhibit that balance of subordinated and developed arts which the best of operas of other times have so well shown, and which the Russian Ballet will increasingly show. Whether Mr. Perugini knows precisely what he is talking about is extremely doubtful. For on one hand he is quoting Menostyer as saying, "Ballet expresses the movement which painting and sculpture could not express, and by these movements can represent the nature of things," and on the other hand he is saying, "the new kind of moral sense would have to be called into being for their true appreciation.

A further example of a mind seeing things in dull disconnection and without spirit is found in Mr. L. March-Phillips. It seems that Mr. Phillips hands one side of it, the subjective or emotional, to the East and the other side, the objective or intellectual, to the West. He then plunges the subjective and the objective into the aesthetic region, and one emerges as colour and the other as form. An idea must be expressed before it can be recognised as an idea. These quotations are, of course, too few to be of much value for the purpose of criticising the author's hypothesis and method of verification. But they might easily be supplemented.

Phillips has no real ground, artistic, philosophical, or architectural, for his separation of form and colour.

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If he will read Ross's "Theory of Pure Design," or Mr. Loftus Hare's series of articles in the "Herald of the Star," he might perhaps agree to this. Mr. Hare has formulated an hypothesis and verified it by history. The hypothesis assumes a fundamental religious unity of mankind. This antecedent unity buds in many and varied forms of religion. Each form carries colour and illusion. All three may be externalised in appropriate spontaneous ritual.

AMERICAN POEMS

CÉZANNE

Our door was shut to the noon-day heat.
We could not see him.
We might not have heard him either—
resting, dozing, dreaming pleasantly.
But his step was tremendous—
are mountains on the march?

He was no man who passed.
But a great faithful horse
dragging a load
up the hill.

—

IN A CAFÉ

I gaze on the people about me,
The crowd of many faces,
And suddenly I become detached . . .
I stand apart
Watching the mimic masquerade of life.
I hear laughter,
I see grimaces of joy,
And I wonder silently
Which one of them is himself, naked and
unashamed.
Which one of them dares the despair of beauty,
Which one of them is other than an actor in a puppet-show?
And a longing comes to me for something sublime—
Some stellar flight of loveliness,
Some impassioned utterance,
A lover who perished on the bosom of his sweet-heart—
Some sudden swing of the pendulum
That shall shatter this hollow carnival!

I gaze on the faces of the people about me
And I know that all is unreal,
All is mist and skimming shadow
Passing, passing into nothingness . . .
It must end some time
This hollow carnival . . .
And I stand awaiting the hour
When they will all have to doff their masks . . .

—

THE FRUIT-VENDOR

Sweet cant—élôpe! Sweet cant—élôpe!
Or the hoarse coaxing cry of a fruit-vendor,
Plodding the pit of the street,
Rise to me the images of my desire:

Open spaces covered with deep lush grass!
Wooded hilltops through blossomy lanes!
The music of bees, birds and leaves!
Brooks frolicking with freedom!
The tang of moist earth!
A zenith of blue!
A horizon!

Here, through my window,
I can see nothing
But the brown stone of houses and houses:
A barrier of sombre stone!

The golden image of my desire
Is a kind world
Where life can stretch and grow.

Sweet cant—élôpe! Sweet cant—élôpe!
Blessed be the fruit-vendor!
For he has given me my vision of a world—
Nay, of Heaven!

New York: Summer.

—

THE FRUIT-VENDOR

White-clad girls walking through the green with
blowing skirts:
A yellow-haired child in blue who looks at me
And looks back as she passes:
A baby toddling to escape its nurse, rebellious in
adventure:
Children down by the water daring the waves to
reach them;
Loudly calling out:
Old women, thick-bodied, with small eyes and small
bonnets,
Holding their baskets and satchels;
Young men, gregarious on the benches,
Examining those who pass:
Automobiles, and boats and boat-house—
And over and above and around, greenness:
Greenness,
And heat.

—

JULY MORNING

The wet pavement is crusted with gold
Blossoms of the linden-tree;
A cold wind like water
Darting here and there
Unbinds the heavy fragrance of the linden-blossoms;
The languid scent droops about me—
A kind world
Unashamed,
A baby toddling to escape its nurse, rebellious in
adventure:
Some impassioned utterance,
Some sudden swing of the pendulum
That shall shatter this hollow carnival!
I gaze on the faces of the people about me
And I know that all is unreal,
All is mist and skimming shadow
Passing, passing into nothingness . . .
It must end some time
This hollow carnival . . .
And I stand awaiting the hour
When they will all have to doff their masks . . .

—

CORRESPONDENCE

THE FANTAISISTE SPIRIT IN MODERN FRENCH MUSIC.

To the Editor, The Egoist:

MADAM,—I notice the following series of curious coincidences between Mr. Leigh Henry's article in your January number on the "Fantaïsiste Spirit in Modern French Music" and two articles of mine which appeared in Poetry and Drama for March and June 1914.

1. The genealogy of French "fantaïsiste" poetry given by Mr. Henry and the following list of modern French "fantaïsiste" poets are identical in Mr. Henry's article and in mine.

2. The translated quotations from M. A. Séché's book, "Les Caractères de la Poesie contemporaine," are also identical word for word.

3. The speculation on the untranslatability of the words "fantaïsiste" and "fantaïsiste" can be found in my articles.

4. The quotation of M. Henri Clouard's opinion of the "fantaïsiste" movement appears in the same words in Poetry and Drama.

It would appear, in fact, that all that Mr. Henry has to say about the French "fantaïsiste" poets is either taken or paraphrased from me, or else is a mere description of the poems I quoted. Too bad.

F. S. FLINT.
February 1, 1916

THE EGOIST

To the Editor, The Egoist.

MADAM—I can forgive Mr. Alan Adair the stones, "foolish words" which he so gratuitously shoes to me the glass house from which they throw them.

I am not ignorant, as he so gratuitously intimates, of any of the claims or ideals that anarchists have given to the world. But I am not convinced that the centrifugal forces of society, which he throws at me, is an utterly wild claim, based neither upon reason nor common-sense, to say nothing of experience and science. Besides, no co-ordination of life in the universe can afford to have its centrifugal forces set free; its centrifugal forces must remain bound in balanced equilibrium with its centripetal forces if it is to exist at all.

Iconoclasm, destruction—can do nothing to set free centrifugal forces; they only serve to wipe out the results of defective co-ordinations that are the outcomes of the jangled relations of centrifugal and centripetal forces.

The will to use means, on the part of either an individual or a social ego, is "a will to a desired end" in itself. If Mr. Alan Adair will do me the justice to read me aright in The Egoist, he will see that I have stoutly maintained that anarchy, like every other social ideal, has its end in its means, and can be "only a period of transition." But in his denial of anarchy as an end, and his own claim that it will set the centrifugal forces of society free, he not only flatly contradicts himself, but he out-Herods Herod as to the Galileans and their belief in their eternal wisdom.

ALICE GROFF.

THE SOCIAL EGO AND REBELLION

To the Editor, The Egoist.

MADAM—It is most refreshing to find in Miss Marsden a mind capable of philosophically realising that majorities and minorities do not mean numbers exclusively—that they mean, rather, power or the lack of it in a social ego, whether large or small. It would be more refreshing to find a mind capable of realising that kings do not rule subjects any more than subjects rule kings and each other. In the social ego dominated seemingly by Kaiser Wilhelm II., every individual human element is in principle himself a Kaiser Wilhelm II. deliberately "seeking to impose his will" upon others, whether a majority or a minority. It would be refreshing still to find a mind capable of realising that the "strong few" dominate, not by means of the personal superiority as to power in any one individual, but because the unity of a social ego, they are able to control the means of living—food, shelter, clothing, and the natural and economic resources back of these—and are weak not because of a lack of personal faculty as to power, but because of their inability to form a social ego to control these means of life.

And it would be even still more refreshing to find a mind capable of realising that "rebels" based upon the mutual spirit of "service and kindness" to all, with the power to control the means of living, would make a heaven on earth. All rebellions belong in the same category as to success when they are based upon such control. But all rebellions do not belong in the same category as to the principles upon which they are based. A mind so one can deny that the principles of mutual "service and kindness" to all would be about the best principles possible to conceive of as bases for a rebellion capable of gaining control of the means of life. The part of what "one believes in" is the establishing of such a social ego is simply the part of suggested inspiration in winning followers to such belief, with a view to getting control of the resources of life. Otherwise the spirit of "social service and kindness" must simply waste itself upon the desert air.

It is sadly true that the followers of that most seductive of rebels against dominating social ego that ever lived—Jesus—utterly failed to realise the necessity of this control in order to establish "service and kindness" upon the earth, and still more sadly that by the time they obtained the power they had abandoned the principles of their teacher. But this is no reason whatever for ceasing to advocate service and kindness. The cause to establish a sufficiently powerful social ego based upon these principles and supported by control of the means of living. And it is no reason for questioning the fact that such a social ego would fulfil the prophecy of Jesus in the "Kingdom of Heaven upon the earth," which means simply "the greatest good to the greatest number," or any of the other catch-phrases of social philosophy.

ALICE GROFF.

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