

# THE NEW AGE

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART.

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## NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THE Press is busy calling Labour to account for the unrest both here and in South Africa, but who is going to call the Press to account? Since the age of newspapers nothing so scandalous has been seen as the failure of the Press last week to warn the public of the approaching troubles in South Africa. It is no excuse that the Press was not aware that trouble was brewing; for not only was it its business to know, and not only has it by its own profession every means of knowing everything, but the labour situation in South Africa, since the last miners' strike, has been of a nature to ensure a conflagration at the first match dropped. Besides, we are by no means sure that the Press has not been aware for some weeks of the advent of a new crisis in the Transvaal. Cables to London insurance offices have warned investors that things were growing dangerous, and the insurance rates have lately been rising steadily. Would any meteorologist be fit for his job who should fail to note the rise of a simple thermometer? Yet, as our readers know, the first news of the threatened strike vouchsafed to the public by our wonderful Press was on Thursday, when we heard that a strike was called for the following day; and on the following day it was duly recorded that the strike had failed. But how wrong, not to say mendacious, the whole of these reports proved to be was shown on Saturday morning, when in place of jeers and sneers at the strikers for having been as the "Times" said, pre-

cipitate, the columns of the Press were filled with effeminate squeals about civil war. If to be taken by surprise and seized by panic at news that should have been anticipated weeks ago is not to condemn the Press to the choice between being liars or dolts, then reason fails us. We say, indeed, that for anybody capable of judgment the choice of names for the Press is between these two.

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But if on matters of fact the Press can be so untrustworthy, what about the interpretations of facts, what about the fair presentation of the case for justice? Even to understand, let alone to sympathise with, the case for the men, it is necessary not only to be well-informed as to the facts, but strong-minded enough to resist the first interested suggestions for their interpretation. Any number of wealthy scoundrels exist both in South Africa and here who can pay to have their views inoculated into the Press without appearing to have said anything; and, by most people, these suggestions are as readily lapped up as milk by cats. But to go further than an a priori admission that possibly the men have some kind of a case, and definitely to conclude that they have a good case and a case a thousand times better than any case that can be put against them, requires more even than the fair understanding already assumed; it requires something like an original as well as an active mind. We certainly do not exaggerate the feeble-mindedness of the Press when we say that not one in a score of its writers has or has ever had such a mind. And the proof of our moderation is to be found in the fact that of the whole Press (not avowedly Socialist) not a unit, daily or weekly, has so much as given the South African strikers the benefit of a doubt, even before the respective sides to the struggle have been heard. We will, however, for the purposes of these Notes, ignore the omniscient twaddle of the "Nation," the booming impertinence of the "Times," and the yap of the "Saturday Review," and confine ourselves to replying to the challenge thrown out by the "Spectator." The "Spectator," as is well known, is what is called a fair paper: that is, it is what should be called a fair-weather paper, being very friendly to Labour when the skies are blue and Labour needs no support, and very unfriendly at other times.

(Damn all such friends, say we, they are the curse of friendship as well as of decent hatred!) Following its custom, however, the "Spectator" of the current week, after putting, with a kind of snivelling speciousness, the case for the South African Government, proceeded to assume that there could be no possible reply to it, and, in fact, challenged us to reply. From several experiences of controversy with the "Spectator" we have no hope that, even if convinced, the "Spectator" will yield for more than a single issue; but the occasion being public, we accept the challenge as in duty bound.

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Before entering into even the shallows of a discussion the depths of which will be found to involve the right of Society to exist, it is desirable to contradict once more (we have done it a thousand times) the habitual assumption of papers like the "Spectator" that men, in South Africa or anywhere else, go on strike out of pure folly or pure devilry. Such people must have the notion that the proletariat are a kind of paleolithic savage, half beast, half imbecile, to whom a strike is a bloody debauch, or else a snatch at the shadow of somebody else's property. But striking for the proletariat is neither a holiday, nor is it, in one case out of every hundred, aggression. Would, indeed, that they had guts enough to make aggression of it! It is, on the contrary, forced on them by the downward pressure of their subsistence level, and, in addition, offers risks of loss and suffering only little less than the prospect that peace offers them. The wonder, indeed, should be for Mr. Strachey and his rump-fed class not that men strike under occasional provocation, but that they ever cease striking at all. There is not a middle-class philistine, however obsequious now to the capitalist classes, who would not strike with his fellows (and probably at their head) if he found himself in the position of the proletariat. Let us, for God's holy sake and for the sake of truth, drop this superstition that men strike without reason or without good cause. If anywhere or at any time wage-slaves strike, they do it taking their lives in their hands and under the pressure of what, rightly or wrongly, they feel to be desperate necessity.

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In the case of the South African strike we are told by the "Spectator" that the only cause that can be assigned for it is the "retrenchment" by the Government of several hundred superfluous workmen on the State railways. Is it reasonable, it is asked, that the State any more than any other employer should be debarred from reducing its staff when economically possible? What better claim have men on the State than on private employers for permanent employment? We will postpone these questions for a moment to ask and answer another. Is it reasonable that, if the proposed retrenchment itself were reasonable, the whole of the railway service of South Africa would come out on strike and threaten civil war on account of it? Once more it will be seen that the assumption concerning the proletariat is that they are unreasoning savages, incapable of appreciating the difference between a fair and an unfair procedure. The brutes, it is supposed, cannot see or be made to see (for, of course, the State has tried!) that the retrenchment is necessary and right; but they must needs fly out when a perfectly reasonable course is adopted in public interests. The conclusion, of course, is obvious to those who, like ourselves and a few Christians, regard the proletariat as, on the whole, well within the human kingdom; it is that either the "retrenchment" proposed by the South African Government is repugnant, in matter or in manner, to common justice, or, it is not the only cause of the trouble, but merely the last. We believe, in fact, that both causes have co-existed and that both are operating at this moment. For the existence of other causes than the immediate retrenchment we have only to point to the facts of the last Rand strike and their

inevitable sequel in the depression and desperation of the spirit of the South African workers. Will the oafs who lickspittle capitalism only once try to understand that spirit, even though only the spirit of wage-slaves, cannot be crushed without being bruised, and cannot be bruised without inducing prolonged effects? We saw under our own eyes, as it were, the humiliating defeat and what came of it in the case of our own railwaymen; we have not, indeed, seen the last effect yet by a long way. What wonder should there be then that a defeat, even more humiliating, inflicted on the South African workmen, should have left them inflammable as tinder and sensitive to the least fresh injustice? To whatever is adduced on the ground of the retrenchment as the cause of the present strike, we must add the whole circumstances as they were left by the last strike.

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Even supposing, however, that the retrenchment were the sole cause of the strike, the assumption that the men are necessarily or (as we prefer to state it) possibly, wrong, has no foundation. It cannot, in any case, be more than a generous error on the part of thousands of men to strike in defence of tens of their number; and what else at worst is alleged against them? Again, it is not known (and we are pretty sure that it never will be known) whether the retrenchment is really necessary. The "Spectator," of course, with as much zeal as if a peerage depended upon it, assumes without question that the retrenchment was not only necessary, but long overdue. A Committee that sat in 1912 recommended reductions to the number of as many as nearly two thousand? But the "Times" correspondent (if the "Spectator" will believe him) reported only recently that the service is anything but overstuffed, and that, in fact, the whole system is from the point of view of efficiency understaffed; and on this matter the opinion of the men, if not of the "Times," is decisive. What the men doubt, in short, is whether the retrenchment is necessary even in the public interest; and they have good reason to doubt it when to their certain and daily knowledge the service is understaffed, and, in addition, the sinister fact emerges that as fast as the men are retrenched they are offered re-engagement at reduced wages! Did the "Spectator," we wonder, take that last little item of news into account—an item small enough to be slurred over in London, but large enough in our opinion, to justify the doubt whether the so-called retrenchment for economy is not retrenchment as an excuse for reducing wages all round? It is certain that the "Spectator" did not take this item into account. Coming from the men's side and being, if true, fatal to the bunkum about economy, the "Spectator" no doubt dismissed it as a mere proletarian lie.

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And still we have not exhausted even the preliminary grounds for assuming that the men may at least as likely be right as wrong. The necessity of the retrenchment we have seen can be questioned, but equally so may its manner be criticised. On the admission that retrenchment in the matter of staff was both necessary and urgent, it does not follow that the means chosen by the South African Government for carrying it out were the best possible or even not the worst imaginable. The "Spectator," however, tacitly assumes that either the means are of no importance in the discussion of the origin of the strike or the means were all that could be wished. But in even the most necessary cases of retrenchment, when men's livings are at stake, the methods used are of importance; and in the case of the South African Government we have no warrant from experience for believing their means necessarily the best. Not to put too fine a point on it, we should say that if there is any blunder, due to ignorance, inexperience or greed, open to employers to commit in an affair of this kind, the South African governing classes are the first people in the world to commit it. Far from giving them the benefit of the

doubt (even if it were a question for doubt) we should assume, in the absence of better information, that in its means of retrenchment (admitting retrenchment to be necessary) the Government has certainly given the men ample cause for striking and a good deal more besides. What, we should like to know, has the "Spectator" to say of this view of the case—a view as firmly based on facts as its own that the men are wrong from alpha to omega? Nothing, we anticipate. Yet if English military officers on active service, or if English naval commanders in action repeatedly provoked mutiny among their men, surely the "Spectator," as well as punishing the men, would institute an inquiry into the competence of the officers! We say no more on the point than this: that assuming (as we do not) the urgency and the full reasonableness of the retrenchment, its manner must have been such as to have raised suspicion in the men's minds of its good faith; and for this the South African Government is assuredly to blame.

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Having now, as we hope, introduced at least some little doubt into the assumption that the men must be wrong because they have struck, we can turn to consider the question as framed by the "Spectator" (and in an even more offensive form by the "Saturday Review")—can a Government act like a private employer? To this astonishing question we reply that a Government with sufficient power can act like Beelzebub if it is mad or bad enough—but that it should, even to the measure of private human employers (to flatter them for a moment), not only we deny, but the "Spectator" itself on many other occasions. The journal is crazy past hellebore that seriously puts this question in this form as if any other answer than a flat negative could be given it by any civilised being. The State may not only act like a private employer, but in so far as by its privileges it is above all private employers, in so far also are its responsibilities different from and greater than theirs. Is this denied? But, if so, what price anarchism now? What price also the series of attitudes struck by the "Spectator" during the last few years on every question concerning the State that has arisen? Let us recall a few. When the Union Government was first formed and the deposits of Lord Milner's patronage came to be reviewed, a series of retrenchments, partly of Englishmen, was begun in the well-paid civil staff. Did the "Spectator" then denounce the resistance offered by its sons and nephews or the agitation they promoted in the English Press, as unreasonable and flying in the face of proper economy? Well, ask its files! Ask Mr. Strachey—though he will not answer! But if "retrenchment" without compensation is a crime in the case of salaried officials, each, as it happened, with plenty of jobs opened to him, what is it in the case of wage-earners with no possible savings, no friends and no alternative employment? If Mr. Strachey was wild over the injustice to the retrenched officials of five years ago, he should be scrabbling over the wrongs of the retrenched railwaymen to-day; for the case in its essence is the same now as then, namely, that the State may not behave like any private employer and scrap its servants when they are not wanted—and in detail the present case is a thousand times worse. But does justice only apply to salaries and not to wages?

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Another example. When it was proposed some weeks ago that the postal servants should strike for their arrears of wages; and when the Leeds municipal employees did actually go on strike for the same object, what argument did the "Spectator" employ to "bring the men to reason"? As everybody knows, the common argument of the "Spectator" and its pack down to the meanest jackal-pup of the litter (we refer, of course, to the "Daily Express") was that just because public service carries with it the privileges of security of employment, pensions, and the like, public servants are in

honour bound to forgo the strike, the weapon proper to private employment with its risks. Where is that argument to-day when the boot is on the other leg? If men may not strike against public corporations because the latter are not as private employers, tell us, Mr. Strachey, why they may not strike when public corporations behave like private employers? But Mr. Strachey will not reply, for the simple reason that he cannot. No man, indeed, can extricate himself by reason from such a position as Mr. Strachey now occupies: to have proved to be willing to employ a principle on one day for the object of defeating starving men, and on the next day to throw it over for the same brave object, is to be where reason will not descend to deliver him. But these instances are by no means all or half or a quarter of the evidence against the "Spectator's" plea that Governments are to be judged as private employers. Has the "Spectator" never heard of the obligations of the State in the matter of casual labour, seasonal unemployment, unemployment proper and blind-alley occupations? Not only has the "Spectator" heard of them; but its readers have heard of them through its pages, and always, we believe, to the same tune, namely, that though not directly responsible for employment the duty of the State is to "adjust the irregularities" (or some such phrase) of private employment. But this is not to class the State with private employers or to require of it no more than we require of them. On the contrary, it is to differentiate the State entirely from profiteers and to throw on it the duty rather of mitigating their evil work than of emulating it. Will the "Spectator" in its new-minted enthusiasm for the State as Profiteer now abandon its social-reform programme (such as it is) and invite the State to compete outright with the worst of its citizens? If we know the "Spectator," it will not; but, on the other hand, it will continue to move as the wind of opportunism blows it, but always with its sails set towards strengthening the class of the wealthy and damning the wage-slaves.

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A few words now on the immediate question of the strike before taking another step towards the deeper economic problems involved. It may very well be asked whether, apart altogether from side issues, a State is not entitled to retrench a staff when retrenchment is economically necessary. We reply, in the general case, that it all depends upon circumstances, circumstances of engagement, circumstances of agreement, tacit or otherwise, circumstances of time and place. The Army Office of the State, for example, may disband whole regiments after a campaign and provided its agreements with the men have been fulfilled; but a General Commanding in India, let us say, could scarcely be regarded as sane who disbanded a regiment in India and left them to find their way home! The comparison, the "Spectator" will say, is far-fetched; but indeed it is not. The South African railways are now practically a State monopoly; a man dismissed therefore from one of them is dismissed in effect from employment altogether. What is to become of him and of the hundreds like him? Specialised for one occupation and dismissed from its sole employer, what remains to him but to starve as an Indian regiment disbanded in Tibet might starve? Again, it is not suggested even by Mr. Strachey that the South African State engaged men on the understanding that they were to be in private employment or could be dismissed for no fault at a week's notice. If there be, in fact, a surplus of men on the railways the fault is not the men's, but the State's. Who set them on? Who drew them from the mines with the prospect of permanent employment? The State. Finally, it is disingenuous if not simply ignorance to pretend that retrenchment in this form was necessary. Was the service over-manned for its work and in comparison with its revenue? A score of means exist to get over such a difficulty—and any one of them would have been employed if the men had been partners

and not slaves. Why should not the State, for example, have ceased new engagements until the staff was normal? Do railway servants in South Africa never leave or never die? Or the defects of the system, as reported by the "Times," might have been made good. Two thousand men to play with would themselves, we should have thought, have offered a stimulus to their useful employment. And what about the raising of the freight-rates until such time as the surplus staff was absorbed or provided for elsewhere? Such a thing as raising rates has been known even with no excuse to justify it. But pah! we are wasting words. The South African Government had neither bowels nor brains; and as little have the journalists over here who defend it. For provoking "civil war" on a plea so paltry and for a possible gain so insignificant, the South African Government should be deposed and set, with a good dog, to mind sheep. Men, it is clear, are too good for it.

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We come now to that aspect of the problem which, as we said at the outset, will raise the question ultimately of the very existence of society. Of what does society consist? Does it not consist, in part at any rate, of the class we call the proletariat? For we are a Christian people and no longer exclude, as the Greeks did or even as the Barons at Runnymede did, eighty per cent. or more of the population from our conception of society; and in all affairs concerning society, present and future, they have as much title as any of us to ask where, and exactly where, they come in. But their only means of existence (since in "society's" interest property has been made exclusively private) is to sell their labour, and in such an out and out form that no more of its proceeds "belongs" to them than the bare means of renewing it. But what is to happen to them if, in the first place, nobody chances to think their labour worth the cost of reproduction; and, in the second place, if in comparison with other forms of labour power, human labour-power generally ceases to be of sufficient value to command the price of subsistence? Under these circumstances, the proletariat are actually in the position of horses, let us say, threatened with extinction by petrol; or of natural rubber threatened with the competition of synthetic rubber; or of any other raw material on the eve of the introduction of a cheaper and, ex hypothesi, equally serviceable raw material. The fact that in this instance the obsolescent material consists of human beings, each made in the image of God, does not disqualify it from falling under the general rule of economics which is to the effect that a more costly material shall not be employed when a cheaper material is available. But is there any evidence that such a state of things is possible now or in the future? Can it come about that not only a couple of thousand men in South Africa may be economically retrenched, but, in course of time, millions and from life? There is not evidence alone, but for every rational thinker, there is the certainty that this condition is both coming, has already partly come, and will continue to come at a geometric ratio of acceleration. Certainly there may be checks, as Malthus would say, upon this natural law of Capitalism to extinguish the proletarian class, but the extinction in due course is inevitable and most of all in countries where science grows its roses in most abundance.

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Look, not this time at Africa, but at home. The agricultural expert of the "Times" in an article last week deprecated in cautious language the scare our flibbertigibbets have been making on the subject of rural depopulation. Economists, he said (and quite truly) measure the advance of an industry not by the increase in the number of men it employs but by the increase of production at a diminished cost. "Provided that the yield is maintained or increased a reduction in the number of hands employed is a gain." But a gain to whom, we may ask? It is not a gain to the

"hands," for a reduction in the demand for "hands" implies a reduction in their price and finally in their numbers. Yet it is a gain, and nobody can deny it in the abstract; for the economists, as we say, are right in measuring progress by the ease with which production is maintained. To whom, then, is it a gain? Why, to them only who own whatever is produced. From agriculture we may pass to every other industry in which proletarian labour is a raw material—the same fact meets us, with the same justification in economics, but with the same effect on that part of society (is it really a part?) which we call the proletariat. Everywhere, machine-labour is competing with human labour, and everywhere (as is only proper, for we, too, are economists) machine labour is displacing human labour, to the increasing detriment of the proletariat whose status declines as science advances. We may say, indeed, that of all the instances we could choose, agriculture is the most favourable to complacency. For elsewhere it is not only depopulation that is going on, but depopulation waits round every corner. We have just received the prospectus of a new company that undertakes to reduce the wages bill of the London railway companies by several millions a year. And it can do it! How many more such schemes are in the offing we can dimly descry; but they are numerous as the Armada and as threatening to the existence of the proletariat as *that* was to England. Now will Mr. Strachey begin to see where retrenchments for economy may carry us? Now will he look, like a statesman, at things a little further off than the next issue of the "Spectator"?

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But would we on this account stop science, would we (even supposing that we could!) put a period to progress, cease inventing proletariat-saving machinery, and resume hand labour? We would not. Then, on the other hand, are we prepared, as we know our damned social reformers are prepared, to bustle up one section of the proletariat to make the pace for new machines and to bustle down the other section to prevent it from reproducing itself? Again we say we are not. But there only remain two means of dealing with them, and each is a revolution—of a kind: one is castration and the lethal chamber for every proletarian not equal to the least efficient machine; and the other is the complete abolition of the proletariat class by the incorporation of wage-earners with the other principals of industry. This social device for at once saving part of society from extinction (and it is agreed, is it not, that the proletariat *are* part of society?) and ensuring the continuance of economic progress, is known, to our readers at any rate, as the National Guilds System. The question for the moment, however, is this: is it known or can it be made known to the proletariat themselves? Can our prosecuting friend in Jesus, Mr. Thomas of the Railwaymen's Union, be made to see it? Is it within the compass of the all-knowing mind of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald? Truce—is it in any degree in the minds of the South African Labour leaders? We happen to have assurances that in the case of the latter there is indeed some ground for hope. Far be it from us to magnify the intelligence of South Africa what time we must appear to be inverting the glass for our own country, but not only the outward signs of the inward appreciation of the gravity of Labour's situation are to be seen in South Africa, but the inward signs as well by those who look for them. It will be a mistake to regard the present strike as an isolated phenomenon, "a thunderbolt" as the "Daily News" calls it. It is rooted in the future no less than in the past. As surely as it looks back to the days of the last great strike when the miners were out and were almost declaring a provisional government, does it also look forward to the strike (if strike it must be) that shall set the African proletariat on a level with the other human whites of their country.

## Current Cant.

"History in the making."—"Everyman."

"I will not allow people to laugh."—COLONEL VON REUTTER.

"It will be our business to set up complete political democracy."—"Daily Citizen."

"Heaven knows what a living wage is."—LORD BARNARD.

"The King has a terrible sense of duty."—"Modern Society."

"With the mission lies the key to the Imperial situation."—PROFESSOR HENRY SCOTT HOLLAND.

"Mr. Lloyd George is 'for' the Socialist programme as preached in the Parks and published in penny pamphlets."—GEORGE R. SIMS.

"The long controversy between the relative influence of heredity and environment has been settled for all time."—EDITOR of "Nash's Magazine."

"Prince and Princess Arthur of Connaught followed the prevailing fashion for 'quiet' weddings when they were married. The photograph shows the wax models of the Prince and Princess at Madame Tussauds."—"Home Chat."

"Lord Alfred Douglas is one of the few poets, perhaps the only poet, who dresses like an English gentleman."—"Daily Mirror."

"Both the King and the Queen have realised that it is incumbent upon them to keep expenses down as much as possible, as with so much Socialism and industrial discontent rampant . . ."—"London Mail."

"We, in the theatrical profession, look after our actors and actresses."—SIR HERBERT TREE.

"Mr. Lascelles Abercrombie's poetry is the real thing . . . the poetic thought expressed in words to the shell which has the momentum of some driving force outside itself and potential force within it to cause an explosion when it strikes the target of the reader's mind."—DEAN INGE.

"The only happy omen is that the Archbishop of Canterbury is a cautious Scotsman."—"The Scotsman."

"The feeling seems to be very general that the time has come for the Church of England to assert herself, and to say that she will not have her work impeded by interference on the part of temporal power in purely spiritual concerns."—"The Standard."

"The strike will not be serious outside the Transvaal; nor even there will it be general."—"The Nation."

"We are the friends of trade unionism on the right lines, and we should sincerely lament its ruin."—"The Daily Express."

"With the object of securing the co-operation of all present and retired employees of the Company in promoting the progress and efficiency of the undertaking, suggestions are invited on all matters affecting the organisation, conduct, and operation of the Company's business."—GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY'S CIRCULAR TO ITS MEN.

## Foreign Affairs.

By S. Verdad.

IN our moments of self-complacency it may perhaps be well for us to remember occasionally that Napoleon called this country of ours Perfidious Albion, and that the name has stuck. In spite of our very obvious emphasis on Christianity, and the unctuous phrases which our missionaries roll round their tongues as they go about the world, we have managed to annex a good many States, provinces, islands, and even a continent or so, and we have frequently been by no means gentle or just in our dealings with some of the native inhabitants of these places. In short, our actions abroad have almost always contradicted our words at home; and, in spite of the fact that we think ourselves good fellows, and sincerely mean to be good fellows when we can, our Continental friends and enemies are justified in accusing us of hypocrisy.

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This state of bad feeling which we have aroused during the last century is one of the reasons why our offers, or half-offers, to Germany in connection with a reduction of armaments usually meet with very outspoken newspaper criticism from practically every representative section of the German Press. We are not trusted; we must have some subtle dodge at the back of our minds when we make these offers, or presumably we should not make them. We pay more lip-service to the cause of universal peace than any other people in the world—I cannot even except the United States of America—because here our peacemongers are wealthy, noisy, and influential; and they have secured control over many of our most widely circulated newspapers and periodicals. In spite of this lip-service, we go on pegging out claims in various parts of the world and we show a most obstinate determination not to give up command of the sea.

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I have written the foregoing sentences to remind the reader of the impression which we have produced on our friends abroad; and, by recollecting this, it will be easier for us all to understand why a certain amount of indignation should have been caused in France by the very tactless utterances of Mr. Lloyd George to a "Daily Chronicle" interviewer. It is true that Mr. Lloyd George did not advocate a reduction in the strength of our fleet; but he did protest strongly against any increase in the estimates, and the whole tone of his lengthy discourse was of a nature to irritate all those French politicians who have put their trust in the promises of British Ministers to come to the support of France, by land and more especially by sea, in the event of any dispute with Germany.

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I do not wish for a moment to lay stress on the actual strength of our fleet as compared with the fleets of any of our potential rivals. It is sufficient for us to note that Germany, Austria, and Italy are making very extensive preparations, that the naval estimates of the two last countries in particular have gone up enormously within the last two years, and that the withdrawal of a permanent squadron of our navy from the Eastern Mediterranean has left our route to India in what we must recognise to be an unguarded condition. It follows that no increase in our naval estimates this year means a relative decrease. What I do wish to lay stress on is the fact that Mr. Lloyd George has caused a wholly unnecessary amount of uneasiness among the political leaders and the people of a friendly nation—a nation so friendly that we may almost refer to it as an ally.

Some of Mr. George's remarks and hints, not to mention the obtuse comments of the "Daily Chronicle," were very much out of place. It is quite true to say that the less Germany spends on her fleet the more she spends on her army; and if there is a reduction at any time in the German naval estimates it may be taken for granted that the money thus saved will be devoted, not to "social reform" but to an increase in the army. Any increase in the German army necessarily affects France; and any saving which we might be able to induce Germany to make on her fleet would indirectly cause our neighbours greater expense than before. In the name of common sense could not this delicate subject have been left alone? The fact is a commonplace in official circles; but now it has been discussed elsewhere. If the German Chancellor himself had wished to create ill-feeling between this country and France, he could not have done so better than by arranging the "Daily Chronicle" interview.

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Obviously, what had to be done at once was to assure the responsible Ministers in the French Government that Mr. Lloyd George's opinions were simply Mr. Lloyd George's opinions—the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in colloquial language, was to be thrown over. This delicate and not pleasant task was successfully carried out a few days ago by Mr. Churchill; and Mr. Asquith, when he is in Paris, is expected to confirm these assurances.

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Now, Mr. Lloyd George has rivals in the Cabinet; there are men in the party who distrust him; and it is not for me to remind NEW AGE readers that there are several millions of our adult population who actively dislike him. I think the time has come when Mr. George's incompetency should result in his being quietly shelved until the next election, when he might well be dropped out of sight altogether. There is no reason, I hope, why the information at my disposal concerning the Asquith Cabinet should be kept a secret. I have never hesitated to criticise foreign Ministers; and when our own Ministers indirectly mix themselves up in subjects pertaining to foreign affairs it must be taken for granted that they do not mind being criticised on that account.

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Only two names have been mentioned for the leadership of the Liberal Party after Mr. Asquith's retirement: those of Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Lloyd George. Was this latest outburst, this "Daily Chronicle" interview, the result of an impulsive desire to take the wind out of Sir Edward Grey's sails, an attempt to show that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who knows all about national insurance, conciliation boards, land, minimum wages, finance, etc., is perfectly competent to deal tactfully with complicated questions of naval strategy and foreign politics? If so, it was a failure, a hopeless fiasco. Or perhaps it was an outpouring of spleen and venom. If it was, that is not a good example for a budding party leader to set.

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Apart from the fact that Mr. Lloyd George's retirement would be a matter of satisfaction to Mr. Churchill, there is one other point. Mr. George is said to be in favour because he is a powerful speaker and can rouse the country as no other Minister can. This is an error. Can he rouse the country better than that Minister whose eyes always remind me of the eyes of Peter the Hermit when addressing his crusaders? I do not think so. If I am wrong, a small proportion of my wealth will find its way into the pocket of one of Mr. Sidney Webb's followers. I hope Mr. Burns will see to it that I do not lose my money.

## Land Reform v. the Agricultural Labourers.

By Odon Por.

I.

WE can take it for granted that unless organised labour interferes, the Land Reform announced by Mr. Lloyd George will sooner or later be made. In last analysis, practically all political parties approve of it. During the next few years we shall hear pretentious descriptions of the agricultural revolution expected to follow in the wake of these "thorough, searching, complete, drastic" remedies.

What these remedies will really achieve may be guessed from the very consent given to them by all concerned, or, rather, by all those who have a voice in the matter, with the exception of the agricultural labourer. He is yet inarticulate. Somebody ought to protest. Somebody ought to feel that his interests are impaired. Somebody ought to pay for these drastic measures "which shall sweep away ruthlessly the outrageous evils" in the present land system.

But, as it is certain that the State—this omnipotent representative of a mythical society—is going to foot the bill, nobody feels himself a loser. The myth of the State being an objective power above the classes and always meting out full justice deludes the majority of the people to be inactive.

Politicians have a keen instinct for things about to happen, but their noisy hurry to dodge dangers often betrays them and puts the enemies on their track. The Government say that they cannot wait for the Trade Union action of the agricultural labourers. It is too slow. Conditions have become unbearable and must be dealt with thoroughly and at once.

We must be on our guard. The ruling classes have learned their lessons quickly. They have realised the danger of the industrial unions trying to establish a monopoly of labour. They are trying to forestall this attempt. For instance, the Miners' Minimum Wage Bill was principally an attempt at thwarting the intention of the miners to bring about a complete and organic unity of all workers in the mining industry. Setting up District Boards and dividing the labourers engaged in the mining industry into different categories, it set local and trade interests against general and industrial interests. It put the selfish and therefore conservative spirit of small groups into the place of the revolutionary spirit of whole classes. The approach of Nationalisation of the Railroads tends to arrest the rapid growth of the National Union of Railwaymen towards a monopoly of railway labour.

The ruling classes know that when an industrial union has obtained a monopoly of labour in its industry, it will inevitably mutate into a revolutionary power bent on the conquering of the industry itself.

Therefore this feverish dealing in "thorough" reforms. The formative process of this new monopoly must be interrupted. Reforms will come in previous to the maturing of the industrial consciousness of the workers, in order to break their impetus of organisation.

While the ruling classes are aware of the fact that they are somewhat late in the industries, that they have let things go too far, they still hope, by quick action, to overtake the industrial workers and stop their advance.

In agriculture, however, they have yet an open field. Few agricultural labour organisations exist. Here developments that may endanger the privileges of the ruling classes may yet be anticipated. Reforms should block the revolution. Moreover, the irrational hope is fostered that the reformed country-side will absorb the unemployed of the cities, thus releasing the pressure that is well-nigh rending society asunder.

Only THE NEW AGE has seen the futility of the present "land reform" sprung upon the nation chiefly in the name of the interests of the farm labourers. It has pointed out in a few pertinent editorial paragraphs that, so far as the conditions of the agricultural workers are concerned, no essential changes can be expected from these reforms. They will not touch the actual ownership of the land, they will modify nothing in the essentials of management, and will not redistribute profits on a new basis. In short, they will not put the agricultural labourer in a new initial position upon which he could have intensified agricultural production and at the same time increase his own income. He will remain a wage earner at a legal minimum wage exactly cut to fit his animal needs, while the landlords and the farmers will be put, at the nation's expense and effort, in the position of cultivating more rationally and of combining to hold up the collectivity of consumers, labourers included, with higher prices of farm products.

Beside a legal minimum wage, the farm labourer may get a legally limited working day, he may get even better cottages and a patch of land; but the Land Reform, leaving him in the state of wage earner, guarantees the landowners and the farmers against his ever acquiring the means necessary to his becoming a successful small holder. Unless the workers interfere, the first steps of the Land Reform will be the last ones in the direction of an agricultural regeneration, because they will take the labourers towards the perfection and not the abolition of the wage system.

From the ruling class point of view, the Land Reform is perfect. It is an excellent business proposition, and by side-tracking the attention of the labourers from complex realities to prospects and hopes in an almighty State, it may bring peace upon the land for a long period of time. Being presented as a gift to the labourers, it has all the air of generosity about it, and "public opinion"—the other nebulous expression of a fictitious nation—will throw all its weight against the labourers, charging them with ingratitude and selfishness, if they dare to oppose it.

What remains? asks THE NEW AGE; what is to be done to raise the standard of living of the agricultural workers simultaneously with the intensification of agricultural production? It answers with the fundamental Syndicalist principle: "The economic power latent in the organisation of labour into a monopoly."

"To produce economic effects, economic causes must be set in motion; and of these the proletariat have in their possession one, and one only, and that dependent upon their solidarity—their labour. It follows from the general reasoning also that until their labour is formed into a monopoly and becomes their property, to give, to sell, or to hold, no device exists to prevent it from being exploited so as to subtract from its product every penny of value over the cost of its keep."

Here THE NEW AGE touches the fundamentals of revolutionary economy. Here it implicitly accepts the theory that all the problems of social progress or revolution reduce themselves to problems of a science of organisation.

In order that the working class shall be able to raise the level of its existence, it must conquer a new initial position. It cannot grow into an essentially new condition. It must take it by a *saltum*. Therefore the working class tends to form a monopoly of labour through the medium of its industrial organisations, which try to embrace the great majority if not all the workers engaged in a given industry. Controlling labour, they must affirm its power. They may push their claims on the usual plane of wage and time scales until they have reached the margin considered as prohibitive by the organised capitalists who monopolise the means of production. Insistence to go beyond this margin calls forth the most energetic answer of the capitalists. The workers are locked-out or production is limited. In both cases the organisations have to support their members. While in times of industrial

peace, in order to prepare for the coming struggles, the organisations are obliged to levy such heavy assessments as neutralise all eventual increase in wages.

Consequently, merely through their monopoly of labour, the organisations are not yet arbiters of the situation. They may control to a certain extent the standard of wages, but they cannot force the owners of the industries to employ all their members at full time.

Evidently a monopoly of labour by a labour organisation is a powerful means of forcing up wages to the limit. But this is only a relative gain, limited to a more or less short period of time. A monopoly of labour by a labour organisation constitutes a new situation to be dealt with by new methods. In order to exploit the power of coercion resting with it new aims have to be set. Labour must acquire a new significance. The old methods of action and the old objects cease to be feasible and become even dangerous and contributive to the dissolution of the monopoly of labour itself.

The force accumulated within such a monopoly will have to be expressed. The monopoly will continue to exist only on the condition of exercising it. If the organisations will not move, grow and gain by virtue of the monopoly they are holding, they will cave in. Remaining inactive, they will neither maintain nor increase their past material gains, nor will they conserve the changes they wrought in the mentality of their members. Consequently, they will lose their position of monopoly and will enter a period of decadence.

A monopoly held by a labour organisation will bring it either on a new plane of action or will throw it back to a primitive state.

Practice, however, authorises us to presume that this state of monopoly will urge the workers to produce new economic relations, inasmuch as it will be reached always through a period of intense preparation, transformation and action during which the smaller changes in the individuals and in their organisations will accumulate into one new and superior force. Under the onward pressure which the monopoly of labour will exercise upon the workers, they will become fully conscious of their capacities and their social responsibilities, their professional consciousness will become dynamic, and extend to a higher plane in order to assume new functions.

Through a supreme struggle they will acquire a collective voice and share in the organisation, management and exploitation of industries. This will bring essential modifications into the capitalist system precisely where it hitherto seemed unassailable. They will have ceased to be wage earners. They will become partners in the industries. How large a share of profits they will obtain will be quite different. What will count will be the fact of having conquered a new initial position upon which they will continue to build.

Thus they will drive a wedge into the structure of the capitalist system, by limiting the rights of the capitalists in the management of their business, by controlling the discipline in the factories, and by interfering with the distribution of profits.

On this plane the industrial unions will come into open conflict with the efficiency of the organised capitalists. Their further success will depend therefore exclusively upon the intensification of the power of resting with their monopoly and upon the development of their efficiency in handling the processes of production and distribution.

It is well that social progress and the new social order should issue from a contest of efficiency. Only this guarantees a productive and progressive future.

How is this monopoly of labour to be created? is then the only vital problem before the working class. How can such organisations be called into existence that, while welding the labourers into a supreme unity, will prepare them morally and professionally for the new position they will have to conquer?

## Legislative Quackery.

THERE is probably some excuse for Cabinet Ministers like Mr. Lloyd George, and well-meaning but innocent people like the Duchess of Marlborough, committing economic blunders and proposing legislation which persons better informed know to be foolish and fraught with evil. But it is difficult to comprehend the mental attitude of professional economists like Sidney Webb and John A. Hobson—both well-read men—who deliberately champion such utterly absurd measures as the "Minimum Wage" and the "Right to Work." The average politician is rarely possessed of any sound economic sense. He sees many glaring social and industrial evils running riot, such as prostitution and sweating, and straightway rushes to Parliament to persuade his fellow members to enact laws forbidding such immoral practices, and then joyfully rubs his hands and congratulates himself upon having blotted out some of our social sins. Like the quack with the quick-cure ointment, he fancies by plastering the patient's pimples thick enough, he can purify the blood.

The minimum wage is our modern economic quack's remedy for all the ills of sweating and underpaid labour generally. It would be interesting to see by what kind of reasoning Messrs. Webb and Hobson have convinced themselves that the enactment of a legal minimum wage can operate beneficially for the working classes. To begin with, in what terms would such a law specify the amount of the minimum wage? So far, I think the only suggestion is in terms of money. But what about the great fluctuations in its purchasing power? Everyone knows that one pound a week to-day is not worth as much as sixteen shillings were a few years ago. Again, the purchasing power of money varies not only from time to time but from place to place. A workman with 25s. a week in Peterboro' is to-day better off than the workman with 30s. a week who is compelled to live in London. To be at all effective, a minimum wage would have to be arranged on a sliding scale, fluctuating from time to time and from place to place, the settlement of which would provide constant employment for an army of Government officials.

The object of a minimum wage must necessarily be to raise the average rate of wages generally. If it does not do this it would mean merely the raising of the status of the poorest wage-earners at the expense of the better paid, in the benefiting of the unskilled and the thriftless at the cost of the intelligent and industrious, which would result in the complete degradation of the working classes. As the annual wealth production is—broadly speaking—distributed among the four classes, the wage-earners, profit mongers, money-lords, and landlords, and it is proposed to increase the share of the wage-earners, which of the other classes is to provide this increase, and how? You cannot raise the status of one class without reducing that of another. Which is it to be? Evidently the profit mongers are the persons singled out. It is frequently stated by Minimum Wage Advocates, that since this and that firm are making fabulous profits they can afford to pay higher wages. The lowest rates of wages are paid by farmers—whose profits are certainly far from fabulous, in fact often precarious—and by small employers who have to compete with their richer rivals and are struggling to maintain a certain amount of independence. The enactment of a minimum wage would probably not seriously affect the great and wealthy profit mongers. It would strike most disastrously the small employer, who has little or no capital and who depends upon the modest credit he is able to get from his banker or friend, and for which he has usually to pay a high rate of interest. Hundreds of such men would be unable to continue their business and would simply be driven into the already overcrowded ranks of wage-earners. And at present the only alternative to "sweating" for thousands of people, is starvation.

Whilst we may enact a law compelling employers to pay a fixed minimum wage, we cannot compel them to keep operatives in employment, and the moment they find business unprofitable, the wage-earners will be turned out.

Supposing, however, that the minimum wage should affect the great industries generally by adding to the cost of production, the result would merely be a further advance in prices and a consequent lessening of the purchasing power of the minimum wage! To me it is inconceivable that ordinarily intelligent people should be deluded into believing that legislative pills of this kind are going to remedy evils which are the inevitable results of our whole industrial system.

At the time that the Labour Members were exciting themselves over the ridiculous "Right to Work" Bill, I endeavoured to point out that they were degrading the cause they represented by the low plane upon which they based their claims. From their standpoint the sole claim of the vast majority of the human race to existence is their mere mechanical co-operation in production as labour machines. If bread and commodities generally were rained from Heaven, their title to existence would be gone. The "Right to Work" meant the right to live, only the authors were afraid to say so, and the "Right to Work" Bill, if enacted, would have been a legalised recognition of the fact that an unemployed workman had no right to live. I suggested to one member of the Labour Party that the "Right to Work," if logically pursued, must be accompanied by another measure forbidding the number of labour-saving appliances, and making future inventions a crime punishable with death!

It is quite within the range of possibilities that before this century is completed, the need for human labour will have declined to a very small fraction of what it is. Given the requisite capital in the form of the most up-to-date agricultural machinery, and our farmers could already dispense with the services of three-fourths of their farm labourers.

The idea held out by Mr. Lloyd George that a minimum wage is going to put thousands of workers back on the soil is the vainest of hopes!

With the growth of wealth the results will be the very opposite. Invention must and will inevitably reduce the need of human toil—as it ought to do. Here is another of the many well-known instances of people mistaking the means for the end, a habit which has inverted many of our social and economic problems. Labour is surely only a means to maintaining life, and if life can be maintained healthily and happily, in all its fullness, without the employment of human machinery, such a consummation is devoutly to be sought. Why should the working class be the only one required to prove its right to a share in production by reason of its contributed efforts? The land and money lords offer no such plea! Their claims are based purely upon force. "We are in possession of the land and certain legal rights" they say, "which our ancestors kindly made over to us by the passing of certain legal enactments. The power of the State keeps us in secure possession of these rights and privileges. The things we own and control, we admit were not made by us, nor by our ancestors, but they are essential to you workers in the creation of wealth, and our Parliamentary laws have helped to make them essential. Therefore we permit you to use them only on condition that you pay us what we demand! Nous y sommes. Nous y restons! We intend to perpetuate these laws, and no man dare even to propose to repeal or alter them, for that would immediately raise the cry of 'Confiscation,' the cry of which would excite the moral and religious feeling of the whole nation against such robbery." And yet confiscation is the only possible remedy! We may try to disguise the fact as much as we like and refuse to hear or countenance the odious word! But the wage system can only be destroyed by confiscating the property rights—wholly or partially—which were acquired legally and immorally by the propertied classes. This may be

accomplished by the methods of the strike, by civil war or by guild socialism. But they all mean the forcible acquisition by the workers of a share in production now appropriated by the wealthy classes—in other words, Confiscation!

I agree with THE NEW AGE that the root of the "sweating" evils is contained in the wage system itself, and no permanent amelioration of labour can be achieved except by its total abolition.

The introduction of machinery to lighten and supersede human toil ought not to be a menace to any human being. On the contrary, it ought to be hailed as mankind's deliverer from the irksomeness, the soul-destroying bondage and drudgery to which the vast bulk of humanity is at present irrevocably doomed. The claim to a share in production will have to be based upon a far higher plane than that of being a mere mechanical factor in production. The simple fact that the applicant is a human being, a member of the great human family, and that it is both moral and expedient that society should provide for every member—that the safety and happiness of society depends upon the suppression of starvation and want—will eventually be a sufficient claim for one and all to participate in the bounties which are and will be provided by nature and machinery.

ARTHUR KITSON.

## Labour Leaders and the Parliamentary Levy.

RECENT developments in the labour world have caused some of us workers to think and consider the actions of our so-called leaders in the world of realities. In an article in a South Wales paper, contributed by that illustrious Labour leader, Vernon Hartshorn, there is displayed what one might term the overheated imagination of an ambitious intellectual prig, who, because he has had a better chance to develop his powers of expression—and this at the expense of the workers—thinks that he holds the key to humanity's emancipation. Should any individual worker dare to have an opinion other than his, he belches such epithets as "White Mice" and "Traitors." He says: Let me speak frankly! Well, I say: Let me, a pit labourer, speak frankly also. It appears to me that these die-hards are trembling in their shoes lest they should lose their influence with the workers. They have refrained from explaining the situation that has arisen from fear of being found out. They pose as law-abiding citizens, but when any individual worker dares to take advantage of an Act which these fakirs have helped to make we get such outbursts as herein mentioned. They are anxious enough to grab the £400, yet Mr. Hartshorn says: "I don't care the toss of a brass farthing about getting into Parliament, but I want to get there to use my experience, etc." He says: "That is, I know the conscientious attitude of all Trade Union leaders." My word! he has been around having afternoon tea with each individual; no wonder he knows their attitude. We workers know now where our so-called leading labour lights get to, and how it is we see them only when we kick a bit. They visit us then and hoodwink us into thinking of their value as men who ought to know best, by the experience of each other's round-table chats at home with the guest of the evening as, "Mr. So-and-So, prospective M.P.," or a full-blown Labour M.P.

Mr. Hartshorn talks of our dissipating our own strength and betraying our own movement; let him have no fears about this. The recent Trade Union Conference upon the Dublin strike showed to the world of thinkers who are the traitors and dissipators. It is well for the workers that we have Dublin strikes and Senghenydd catastrophes; otherwise we should not have thought these brilliant Labour lights capable of such daring dashes on the one hand, and such idiotic treachery on the other. We read of white mice, of the

workers flouting their obligations by taking advantage of the Trade Union Act. I should like to know what are my obligations to such men as are glued to the workers' organisations at the present time; men who cannot be made to see that they are the servants of the workers in the unions they are supposed to represent, and not divinely endowed dictators with a special mission? Mr. Hartshorn says now is the time for every short-sighted political blackleg among the workmen to act his sorry part. Mr. Hartshorn must have been merry when he wrote this. Well do we remember the flouting of our majority vote during the National Strike, and our leaders blacklegging of us on that occasion. I notice they do not want a two-third majority vote upon the Parliamentary levy.

Mr. Hartshorn writes of mean grudges against Labour candidates by workmen. The meanness of action and spirit of our leaders is shown in this so-called warning letter. They seem to think they have boiled down all the brains of our class into the Braceonian limit of possibilities; but let me tell them that they are the scum, the pure essence will always remain underneath. It is because I am not letting them do all the thinking for me that I can discover their make-up, and flout their self-appointed dictatorship of the class they despise in reality.

Mr. Hartshorn talks of our not being amenable to discipline, and of our lack of the class loyalty which always comes to men in trade unions. But has not their particular clique despised and hoodwinked us who make up the unions? Please bear in mind we, the workers, are the unions, not these political tricksters. These die-hards are the greatest stumbling block to our real progress. I, as a clear-sighted worker, am occupied a great deal in my talks with my fellow workmen in explaining the actions and treachery of the Labour leaders of to-day. Perhaps they do good as an object lesson to the workers, making them see the utter stupidity of trusting any Napoleon from their ranks too far from the workshop door. It is because the thinking worker cannot see how the ambitious talker is going to do him any good that he is rather dubious of letting him slip from close contact into the realms of pelf and place. The workers see that his policy and state of mind will never bring freedom and full existence. We cannot understand our Labour leaders talking of equal rights and brotherhood at one place, and then betraying these ethics by their actions at another. Their economic outlook is askint, their policy as antiquated as the philosophy of Jahveh.

Mr. Hartshorn says that the Act was not framed in the interests of Labour. But what protest did our leaders make in the House of Commons? He says that the opponents of Labour are telling fabulous tales of scores of thousands of requests for exemption forms. This may be an exaggeration, but I have reason to think there is an official conspiracy to keep the privilege given by the use of these forms secret from the workers, thereby gathering in more shekels, inasmuch as I have made repeated efforts at local union offices to obtain a form and have failed up to January 4. The sinister remark about saving less than a farthing per week is an attempt to avoid the principle and shows the petty meanness that inspires this attack on industrial action. Too true, we have learnt something from political history, and that is, not to trust certain characters from our own ranks with power. The mixed-up, dished-up warning letter truly has made some of us think. I have failed to see what benefit we have received that could not have been gotten in the industrial field without our suffering the incubus of the Labour fakirs; but I suppose we cannot blame these Labourites in trying to retain their opportunities to give their progeny a college education, with chances of a good salaried job as manager, or the like. Of course, we would not care to see the sons of Labour M.P.s doing some honest manual labour; it would look too degrading, and besides they are not fitted for it, they are destined to lead. Too true, the Labour Party,

as Mr. Hartshorn says, is a lively corpse. The life we find in it is as the life we find upon the decomposed carcase of a dog.

If these would-be leading lights were to come back once again and do some honest, useful work amongst us workers they would discover some honest-minded men who are not "White Mice" or "Traitors." The warning letter was thought to give the political tricksters a push forward, but it has failed in its mission, and has only served as an advertisement of the shallow-heartedness and weakmindedness of the make-believe saviours of mankind. Yes, Mr. Hartshorn, with all his disrespectful epithets, also the strong leads by presidents and the like, will not stop me, a mine labourer, from taking advantage of the Act and raising my hand and voice in assisting him to come back to some useful toil again. If his clique had been honest and open upon this matter, it might have had a severe shock from the "White Mice" over this business. But, go ahead: let us have another warning letter. It stimulates thought and gives us workers, who think, a chance to know where our leaders stand.

C. J. SMITH.

## The Crimes and Insolence of Slum-Owners.

By Peter Fanning.

There never was a greater fallacy than that it was the landlords who made the slums. In all the large cities and towns there was a small proportion who were the bane of every landlord. They were destructive, dirty, degraded, and degenerate in every respect; thriftless and filthy in person and habit, and often criminal by instinct.

THE above unlovely piece of slander on the poor was spoken, or, perhaps, spluttered at the Victoria Hotel, Manchester—a most appropriate place for such an utterance—on December 19, 1913, by the President of the Property Owners' Association of Great Britain and Ireland.

But the same vilification of their victims, with variations, can be met with every day in the week in the provincial press, and scarcely ever meets with contradiction: because in almost every instance the property-owners have secured a "pull" on the papers (by methods which I will explain later on) which enables them to circulate any falsehood which suits their purpose, and at the same time guards them against attack from those who would expose their tactics and champion the cause of their victims.

At times, however, men of a different stamp arise—men who are acutely conscious of the mental and physical degradation inflicted upon the people by their being forced to herd together in over-crowded slums, for which they are made to pay higher rents than can be obtained for first-class property. Such a man was the Rev. James Whitelaw, M.R.I.A., who, in 1798, took up his abode in the slums of Dublin, so that he might learn at first hand where and how the poor lived. The results of his investigations were afterwards published in a pamphlet from which I quote the following:

The poorer parts of Dublin are pregnant with nuisances unusually destructive of health and comfort. In the ancient parts of the city the streets are generally narrow and the back yards of the houses very confined. The greater part of these streets, with their numerous lanes and alleys, are tenanted by little shopkeepers, the labouring poor, and beggars crowded together to a degree painful and affecting to reflection. A single apartment in one of these wretched habitations lets from one to two shillings per week, and to lighten this rent, two, three, and even four families become joint tenants. A house in Braithwaite Street contained 108 souls. In July, 1798, the entire side of a house, four stories high, in School House Lane, fell from its foundations into an adjoining yard, where it destroyed an entire dairy of cows. When I ascended the remaining ruins through the usual approach of the shattered stairs, stench and filth, I

found that the floors had sunk on the side then unsupported, forming so many inclined planes. And I observed with astonishment, that the inhabitants, about thirty in number, who had escaped destruction by the circumstance of the wall falling outwards, had not deserted their apartments.

The above was written 115 years ago. It might have been written yesterday to describe the Dublin of to-day. How little have things altered since the days of Mr. Whitelaw will be seen from the following case, which I quote from a recent issue of the "Irish Times":—

In the course of the hearing a bright and terrible light was thrown on the conditions of life in the tenement-slums of Dublin. The brothers, William and Patrick O'Leary, are labourers. They live together in the front room on the third floor of 2, Marlborough Place. William O'Leary was asked to state the number of occupants of this room on the night of August 13, 1913. He replied:—My wife, myself, six children of mine, my brother Pat, and one child of his, who is dying of consumption. There are ten of us in the room.

Who is responsible for this hellish state of affairs, going on as we see from generation to generation, by which the people are plundered and murdered wholesale? Fortunately for our case, at the very moment when the slum owners were lushing themselves and slandering their victims at the Victoria Hotel, Manchester, a public inquiry was taking place into the ownership of Dublin's iniquities.

I quote the evidence of Mr. Travers, Superintendent of the Sanitary Staff of the Dublin Corporation:—

Alderman Corrigan's property was generally in the second and third class. In his opinion, the Alderman did not exercise proper supervision over his houses, and see that they were kept in due order and repair.

Councillor Crozier's property was, with one exception, in very poor repair, and neglected.

Alderman O'Reilly's houses were in bad repair. One of the houses was occupied by five families, another tenement was occupied by four families (sixteen persons.)

Councillor Bradshaw owned two tenement houses, which were occupied by twelve families. The houses were old and decaying, and there was one yard common to all.

Another house belonging to Councillor Bradshaw was occupied by seven families, numbering thirty-four persons.

Councillor Rooney owned a tenement occupied by six families, the chimneys and roof were defective, and they were taking proceedings to have the drains remedied.

Councillor Cole owned a tenement, in bad repair, which accommodated six families of twenty-one persons.

Mr. O'Connor, Local Government Board Inspector, who is holding the inquiry, put to Mr. Travers the following straight question:—

Speaking generally, would you say property owned by members of the Corporation is worse than other property?

Mr. Travers: Some of it is worse. Some of the houses constitute the worst property in Dublin.

The full significance of this accusation will be realised when it is remembered that the Corporation of which these scandalous slum-owners are members is the health and sanitary authority of the city.

But why do they crowd people together in this inhuman fashion? They would not do the like with dogs, pigs, or poultry. Here again we are furnished with the reason. An investigator, writing to the "Daily News," relates his experience thus:—

One top room of the first house we entered was inhabited (as an example of the tenements everywhere) by a young man, his wife, and four children. The children were born in it, and they live and sleep with their elders. In some such rooms as many as thirteen live and sleep. There was one bed, a table, and a bare fireplace, a chair and a picture of the *Holy Family*, and a shrine with its constant light before an image. The walls were falling into the room, and were everywhere stained with rain. The rent for it was 3s. per week, out of an inconstant wage of 16s. per week.

Three shillings per week per room and six and seven families occupying single tenements! No wonder their owners have the money to secure seats upon the Cor-

poration by beer and bribery. There is nothing "destructive, dirty, degraded and degenerate" about these people, except their surroundings. The picture of the "Holy Family" and the lighted Shrine in such a place indicates the character of the people. But what a mockery to find devout Christians condemned to such a life in a Christian city.

We who live on this side of the Irish Sea may feel inclined to congratulate ourselves that nowhere between Land's End and John O'Groats could such a body of public men as those who rule and rob the people of Dublin be discovered. Do not be too sure. Remember the Property Association covers the whole of Great Britain and Ireland. Let us first look at Glasgow. After that I will conduct you to Tyneside and show you a system of local government possessing all the evil features of Tammany, but without Tammany's candour.

For near a generation past, in certain political circles, it has been a matter of common knowledge that the local government of Glasgow was in the hands of the Whisky Ring and the slum owners. The effect upon the community has been abominable, in some respects even worse than that of Dublin.

According to a medical officer's report just issued, no fewer than 10,000 houses in Glasgow, occupied by 40,000 people, are unfit for habitation. Six hundred houses have been reported for closing, and most of them have been closed without appeal by the owners, which is, in itself, eloquent testimony as to their condition. For a moment the "rings" were nonplussed by the revelations of the medical staff. But they soon gathered their wits and forces together and determined that if they could no longer plunder the poor, then they would plunder the public. Legal or illegal, plunder they would have by hook or by crook.

It appears that out of the profits of its municipal undertakings, that is, out of its excess charges (or unpaid wages) for public services, the Corporation of Glasgow has been in the habit of setting aside a certain sum to a fund which they called the "Common Good." A most excellent title. Were the monies in such a fund devoted to the common good, no one would greatly complain. But the common good, according to the slum owners of Glasgow, is common to themselves, and does not include or concern anyone else.

On December 23, 1913, the "Common Good" fund contained £30,000, and the slum owners determined to sneak it if possible. For this purpose, at the meeting of the Council on that date, they moved the following resolution:—

That the Executive Committee be authorised in such cases as they think expedient, in which they have started the exercise of statutory powers of the Corporation in any congested area, to negotiate for the purchase, on behalf of the Corporation, of the properties in such areas, on such terms as they think fair and reasonable in each case, on the understanding that each such purchase, and the whole particulars thereof, be immediately after the transaction is concluded reported to the Corporation for their information.

Never, I would undertake to gamble, has anything so infernally impudent as the above been proposed in a public body. "Will report to the Corporation for their information"; not for their consent or approval, and only when the £30,000 of the "common good" is safe in the pockets of the slum owners!

The town clerk declared the motion was illegal. The Labour members of the Council protested against the methods of Tammany; but legal or not legal, that £30,000 the slum owners were determined to possess, so they ignored the ruling of the Town Clerk, and flung the Labour members out of the Council chamber by aid of the police. Not a single new dwelling, I imagine, will arise out of this £30,000. What is intended is, that the worst property shall be sold to the public, at prices fixed by the owners themselves, and when the property is closed the people will be driven out to create greater overcrowding and produce more rent elsewhere. Such is the price the people pay for

placing the machinery of local government in the hands of their enemies.

Accompany me now to my own door in Jarrow-on-Tyne and let us contemplate a modern industrial community from the inside. To those who read the "Chronicles of Palmerstown" in THE NEW AGE some time ago, the story of our local conditions will be somewhat familiar. But that series of papers did not contain the whole story; and as the subject has taken a new and interesting turn recently, I propose to reopen it and to throw some additional light on what was the constitution of the local government from which we inherit our present wretched conditions.

I may here mention the case of the good-natured man who is really desirous of helping the people; but is defeated in his efforts by lack of knowledge. The prospect of having to acquire first-hand information by fraternising with the slum dwellers appals him. After a vain attempt or two to serve the poor he gives up the idea in despair and leaves them to their fate. With me the case is different. Acquainted with slums from childhood, I have neither horror nor fear of slum dwellers. I know that the picture drawn of them as "destructive, dirty, degraded and degenerate" is an infamous lie, invented and circulated by those who live by plundering them. My experience of slums, like Sam Weller's knowledge of London, is extensive and peculiar, and includes many of the large towns and cities of England, Edinburgh and Glasgow in Scotland, Dublin and Belfast in Ireland, the Malay and Kaffir quarters of Cape Town, the Indian location outside Durban in Natal, and the queer mixture of Creoles, Indians, Chinese, and Africans, who inhabit the slum quarter of Port Louis, Mauritius. In all these places, whether the people were white, black, brown, yellow or piebald, I found that they suffered one thing in common—the exactions of plundering property owners. But when I came to Jarrow I soon discovered that I had lit upon the very Eldorado of the property owner, where slums were more valuable than Rand gold mines. And, as is usually the case, I found that my own people were the greatest victims.

The full extent of the evil, however, I did not fully realise till after the publication of the census of 1901, which disclosed the fact that out of 6,777 dwellings, no fewer than 2,649 were of one and two rooms and 3,468 of three rooms, which gave us an overcrowded population of 12,546 persons in a total population of thirty odd thousand. Naturally, I began to inquire what rents were paid for these rookeries and what condition they were in. In scores of cases the people invited me to inspect them for myself, which I did, taking notes of their condition. And then, as I have related before, I began to attend the monthly meetings of the town council, to learn at first hand what kind of men were running the town. By 1906 I had accumulated volumes of information. And then, most opportunely, a weekly paper, called the "Jarrow Labour Herald," was started, in the columns of which I had a free hand during the year it lasted. Taking occasion by the hand, I wrote a series of papers which I called the "Tale of the Rates." I investigated our local conditions from top to bottom, and published my discoveries week by week, and the community stood amazed. I found that every particle of local government, Council, Guardians, School Boards and magisterial bench was in the hands of the slum owners; that the system of rating was a gross fraud, by which manufacturers and tradesmen were being crushed and tenants plundered. How the game was worked will appear from the first article, called—

#### THE TALE OF THE RATES.

Do you live in the South or Grange ward and pay your rates direct? Then you are being victimised by the clique.

Do you carry on business in Ormande Street in the North Ward? If so the clique is fleeing you.

Have you the misfortune to occupy a one-roomed tenement in the Central or East Ward? Then, indeed, you

are to be pitied, for, considering your scanty resources, and the putrid surroundings in which you live, your case is far worse than that of your neighbours. But whatever our condition, we are all the victims of the property clique, and our efforts to destroy them should be as common as our sufferings. Would you know, my fellow victims, how the game of beggar my neighbour is played in Jarrow? If so—prehend.

The property clique monopolise the Town Council.

The Council appoints the four Overseers.

Two of the Overseers are members of the Council.

Three of the four Overseers are magistrates.

The Overseers assess property for rating purposes.

The whole four Overseers are property-owners.

The Council levies the rates made by the Overseers.

The Assistant-Overseer collects the rates made by the Overseers.

The Assistant-Overseer is a property-owner.

The Assistant-Overseer hands to the Council the rates collected.

The Town Council is run by the property clique.

The property clique has one hand on the throat of the community, and the other in its pocket.

The game is simplicity itself, so long as the victims do not kick. When will you arise, my fellows, and rid yourselves of this imposture?

As might be expected, the above created dismay amongst the clique. But when, week after week, I began to quote straight from the rate-book case after case of fraudulent returns being sent in for rating purposes, the combination began to crack up. And the man who was primarily responsible, without whose knowledge and consent the thing could not be done, thought it advisable to retire from office. One method I pursued was simple but effective. Seeing a poster on a block of property announcing that this desirable lot of tenements, bringing in an annual rental of so-and-so, would be sold by auction on such a date, I made a note of the figures and then went to the rate office to compare the selling rental with his rental for rating purposes. As I anticipated, I found the difference to be anywhere from 25 to 50 per cent. Now, it may be asked, did the people appreciate this effort on their behalf? Undoubtedly they did. They invited me into their houses and gave me information which enabled me to disclose a condition of things which was a disgrace to civilisation.

It is not worth while to reproduce many of these cases here, but I will reprint one, as a sample, because my attention was drawn to it by a medical gentleman.

Whilst walking along Monkton Road on Sunday morning last, I heard someone calling, "Hi! Hi! Mr. Fanning." On looking round, I found it was Dr. Johnstone-Weir who was calling me. On joining the doctor, he exclaimed: "Come along and examine a house in Albion Street, I'm afraid there's been an accident." On reaching the house indicated by Doctor Weir, we found that the whole of the west side of the chimney had collapsed, from its own internal rottenness, and part of the debris had fallen into the dwelling below.

We entered one of these tenements, and were nearly choked with stife. All the windows and doors were opened, and yet the air was so foul that we could scarcely breathe. On calling the attention of the tenant to the rotten condition of the lobby walls: "Oh, yes, sir," she exclaimed, "It is bad; but that's nothing. Look here!" She then opened a cupboard-door, and showed us that we could walk right through into the next block of property, without as much as "By your leave." Naturally, the doctor was much distressed at what he saw. But when I asked what rents were paid for these putrid shanties and received the information that the two tenants up paid 5s. per week, and the two down 4s. per week, or 9s. in all, the secret of much that prevails in Jarrow stood revealed.

I have already published in THE NEW AGE what is the effect on our death-rate and on those who happen to survive infancy by the existence of such slums. But strange to say I could never get a hearing in any of the local press for a report of our conditions. A tragedy in one of these dens had a passing news value, and people held their breath in horror whilst the sordid surroundings were described; but then the matter was forgotten, and the plundering of the poor went on as

usual. If good-natured people wrote, the paid penmen of the property owners were always ready with their tale. How does it arise, this difficulty of getting the case of the poor before the public? My experience has taught me that it is due to the fact that most papers are owned and run by the political parties; and further, that a considerable portion of their income is derived from public announcements, advertisements, and other printed matter given out by councils and boards of guardians, that is, by property-owners who control these public boards and whom the Press dare not offend.

On Tyneside, however, there is one journal, "The Newcastle Chronicle," which is independent both in its politics and what it admits to its columns. Recently there has been a movement on foot to utilise some of the corporation land in Newcastle for the purpose of erecting dwellings for the working classes. This, of course, brought forth the usual bleat from the property-owners, that they were doing all that was necessary in this direction. In reply to one of these gentry who had spun the usual tale, that slums were created by the people, I chanced a reply, stating that slums were created by the slum-owners, for the simple reason that they paid better even than good-class property. As a case in point I quoted an instance already cited in THE NEW AGE. To my agreeable surprise my letter appeared—and then the fun began.

Two property-owners replied: One stating that a property-owner who sent in an incorrect return of his rentals made himself liable to police court proceedings, while the other one asked for all particulars of the case quoted to be sent to him privately and he would investigate it.

I wrote an answer to these gentlemen and sent it to the "Chronicle."

In reply to the first I gave three further cases of incorrect returns in which three magistrates were involved, and asked him whether any property-owner had cause to fear a bench of magistrates composed of men who were up to the neck in the same business?

From the second one I inquired: Did he imagine that I had waited seven years for him to disclose himself before taking action in the case myself?

I mildly suggested that had he considered the matter a moment, it might have occurred to him that one who had sufficient wit to discover such a case, being directly interested in it and adversely affected by it, as a rate-payer, would surely know how to take the necessary measures to put an end to it.

I then made an offer to the "Chronicle," seeing that the case of slums, their cause and effects, was now opened out, that I would, were they agreeable, deal with the whole subject from the bottom upwards, and show its readers tricks in the art of local government, of which at the moment they have no suspicion.

Unfortunately the "Chronicle" did not see its way to publish my second letter, but instead closed the correspondence. However, the time is near at hand when the question of slums, their condition, their effects, renting and rating, will become the question of the hour. In that day people generally will realise what I realised years ago, that in the slum-owner we must recognise an enemy of national importance and devote the national energies to his utter destruction. When that fight is on I hope to participate in the battle.

In the meantime the property-owners, assuming that I had not replied to their letters in the "Chronicle," have begun to pester me with private communications, and the fury of these gentry at their hitherto well-preserved secret being given away in a paper so widely read as the "Chronicle," is intense. They afford us a complete insight of the character of those whom we shall have to encounter in the near future, when the moment for the destruction of the slums arrives.

When the last of the letters from the property-owners comes to hand I will let the readers of THE NEW AGE see what pure stylists they can become when they imagine their interests are endangered.

## A Pilgrimage to Turkey During Wartime.

By Marmaduke Pickthall.

XIX.

### Islam and Progress.

THE Mahomedan religion has been blamed for traits of character which are found in all the native inhabitants of warm climates. If the Christians in the hotter Muslim countries do to-day excel Mahomedans in energy it is owing to a difference of race and not of creed; but personally I believe the Christian's lead in this respect to be unreal, a mere affair of bustle and vivacity. The Ottoman Muslim's energies have up to now been spent, perforce, on war and the routine of agriculture; whereas the efforts of the Christian, who, until the Revolution, was exempt from military service, have for long been turned to commerce and the peaceful arts of self-advancement. The Muslim has for years known little peace, although he long ago gave up aggression. It must also be remembered that the Muslims of the Turkish Empire have been much neglected, the attention of the Government being absorbed in efforts to ward off encroachments of the Powers of Europe; while the Christian population has been nursed by missionaries and protected by the envoys of those Powers. Taking all these facts into account and also the tremendous increase of energy and initiative noticeable in the Turkish people since the Revolution, I believe that the Muslim population, given peace and a fair Government, will prove, if not superior to the Christian in commercial enterprise, superior in every kind of honest work. The Turks, as a white race, have a natural precedence over the many coloured races of the Muslim world. They are Hanafis, members of the only Sunnite sect of El Islâm which accepts man's reason as a guide before tradition; whereas the Egyptians, for example, are mostly Shefa'is and hold the opposite opinion—by temperament, it is certain, rather than by free choice. That the Turks are capable of understanding Europe more than are any other race of Muslims is deserving of remembrance. The whole Muslim East is rising, and will go on rising more fiercely under Christian than under Mahomedan rule. If progressive Turkey must be crushed, as Europe says, then one day Europe will behold an Arab Empire, with little of the toleration and good temper of the Turk. Much as I love the Arabs and respect their many virtues, I recognise a difference in their mentality, which makes it most desirable, from Europe's standpoint, that the Turks should long remain the leaders of the Muslim world. Alas, there is no head to Europe, only limbs and belly; so to what or whom can one appeal?

Much has been made of the common sayings: "Kismet dir" (It is fate), "Kismetim dir" (It is my lot in life), and so on, to demonstrate the fatalism of the Turk. This fatalism is ascribed to his religion rather hastily. That everybody's fate is preordained of God the Muslim certainly believes; well, so do many Christians. But, as the whole world is the material of each man's fate, the predestined course of which cannot be known by any till the Day of Judgment, this belief would seem to preclude energetic action and initiative no more than does the Christian doctrine of self-sacrifice. There is, I know, a text in the Coran:—

"The fate of each is tied about his neck, and no one laden may bear another's load," which has been taken by some critics to imply the opposite of: "Bear ye one another's burdens." In its context it does nothing of the kind, referring evidently to a man's relation to his works at the Last Judgment; while passages which preach the brotherhood of all believers, the need of charity and mutual help, abound in the Coran. In fact, as I have said already here and there, the failings generally charged to El Islâm are either incidental to the climate in which Muslims live or else,

and I believe more generally, the result of long subjection to a despotism which discouraged all endeavour of a peaceful kind. The genuine Turks are not a lazy race, as witness the amount of corn exported every year from Haïdar Pasha, the produce of those provinces of Anatolia of which the rural population is almost entirely Turkish. The Turkish peasant is exceedingly industrious, and has gone on working doggedly under conditions which would have broken the heart of any other agriculturist. But the slightest deviation or excursion from the mere routine of work, the least display of enterprise on his part, was punished by increased taxation; and so, routine being his sole refuge of philosophy, he clung to it with "Kismet" and due praise to Allah. Now at last he is emancipated, he has leave to be a man; the arena of his fate which man had narrowed is now once more made boundless as it came from God. In this the Turks behold the restoration of Islâm.

The work is but begun. The greatest task of the reformers, next to the reorganisation of the public schools, is the revival of the local governments, through which alone the poorer Muslims can be quickly raised to the position of responsible free citizens, and the rich compelled to help them and themselves. The road which ran past Misket Hanum's garden gate, beneath an avenue of fine acacias, was full of mounds and deep depressions, being quite unmade. It was the sole way of approach to thirty kiosks, inhabited by people of large means, who had all been grumbling over the state of the road, complaining of the Government, for more than twenty years. When I suggested that they should take the work in hand themselves and do it properly, they looked aghast and said that it was not their business. It is true that in the days of Abdul Hamid they could not have done it, for their action would have made a noise, and might have been resented as a personal affront by some high functionary, whose titular concern was roads. But now, when the Government is anxious for improvement and, having more than it can do, would welcome help, their horror at the thought was purely ludicrous in men who talked so much of progress and the value of initiative.

Again, it is the custom of the householder to take all rubbish to his boundary wall and cast it forth on to some road or public footpath. Rich men, who keep a lot of gardeners, observe this custom. While their gardens are kept beautifully neat within, the outer wall is an offence to passers-by. Responsibility ends there. The rubbish stinks; the owner of the garden walking in his fair domain curses the Government for allowing such a nuisance to remain where he can smell it. "In civilised countries," he remarks, "they send men daily to remove all refuse." In our road, Misket Hanum was, I think, the only householder who ever made her men go out beyond the garden gate with brooms or shovels, who ever had a bad hole in the road filled up, or proposed co-operation of the neighbours for the road's improvement.

When I submitted such examples of the dearth of public spirit to my Unionist adviser, he cried out in some impatience: "They concern rich people. We have no hope in the rich; we know them, they are useless. But the poor are very different. Among them you will find both energy and public spirit—undeveloped it is true, as yet, but evident." I also had some friends among the poor, and I agreed as to their vigour and their greater possibilities, while not despairing of the rich as he did. The rich, though still dejected by the fall of Abdul Hamid, would prove of service, I felt sure, when once the new regime appealed to them, as it could only do by a revival of the local governments, through which the poor would also gain the stimulus they needed, a sense of being something in the scheme of things. At present the poor Muslims still retain the feeling that outside the circle of their own immediate friends, outside their village, there is constant fear of trickery and foul oppression. The train will very likely

start an hour too soon, the steamer has a stupid purpose to go off without them, their fellow-men are minded to frustrate their every aim. Their notions of the outer world are vaguely hostile, as the result of past experience of injustice, from which a man's own weight or nimbleness alone could save him. My wife was terrified one day at Haïdar Pasha by the rush of the crowd to get on board the steamer for Stamboul. Foolishly she turned round to remonstrate halfway up the gangway, and was very nearly pushed into the water by an enormous sort of mattress advancing on a porter's legs. The bearer of the mattress, seeing nothing but his feet, marched straight ahead, impersonal as Juggernaut. When we recounted the adventure afterwards at Misket Hanum's, a Turkish lady present murmured gravely:—

"I congratulate you upon your escape, Madame; for had you fallen into the water, it is highly probable that no one would have moved a hand to save you."

She told a story of her personal knowledge of three women being drowned within reach of a crowd of boats and boatmen. I replied with one of mine about an Arab who was walking in the country with a friend of his, when that friend stepped abruptly into a disused well or cistern, such as is often met with in the country round Jerusalem. The Arab never thought of running to bring help, never paused to ascertain whether his friend yet lived, never even seemed to feel a thrill of horror; but simply raised his eyes to Heaven with the funeral oration: "La haula wa la qûwwata illa bi'llahi'l 'âlîyya 'l 'azîm" (There is no power nor might save in God, the High, the Tremendous), and tranquilly proceeded on his way. Yet I knew him for an excellent, kind-hearted man. It was only that he was resigned to anything which might befall in this strange world. "In the midst of life we are in death" was his sole comment when he told of the occurrence. He accepted facts as they appeared to him, unchangeable, coming, as he thought, directly from the hand of God.

The Turkish lady laughed at my anecdote, but said: "The Turks are different. Our people are not quite so apathetic as your Arab. They have been discouraged in the past from rescue of the drowning by dread of interfering in some great man's game. Stories of misfortune consequent upon such rescue are still told among them. Their indifference, I think, is but a legacy of old, unhappy days. And let me tell you that the boatmen who looked on while the three girls of whom I spoke were drowning near the landing-stage were most of them not Turks at all, but Christians."

She told us then of gallant rescues done by Turks. One man, an officer, happened to be on board a steamboat leaving Pasha Baghcheh on the Bosphorus, when a man fell overboard. The officer unslung his sword upon the instant, and was in the act of tearing off his tunic when his servant sprang on him and bellowed for assistance, supposing his poor master had gone mad. The officer called him a fool and flung him off, saying he was going to save that man from drowning, and bidding his servant make the captain stop the boat. At once, with the command which carried explanation, the soldier, from a hindrance, became serviceable. He caused the steamer to put back, and was standing ready with a rope to help his master when the latter with his burden swam in reach.

I have picked this story out from others, many of them more dramatic, because it seems to me to be a parable of subject Turkey, so long subject that it does not yet know how to move in freedom. At present it still gapes upon the strange procession of events, not understanding. Admit the poor Turks to the secret; teach them the sense of what is going on; above all, give them each some definite small work to do, and they will show an energy, a handiness, and a devotion to amaze the critic who had judged them in their frozen state.

The prejudice against the Muslim is, I know, deep-rooted in the Christian mind. But let the reader ask himself, after a glance at the ideals, the hopes, and eke the difficulties of progressive Turkey, whether such a people, though Mahomedan, does not deserve the toleration of the civilised. It is Turkey's exclusion from that magic circle which includes such shining lights as Russia and the Balkan States, her not being "Christian," simply, which is held to justify her persecution, and all kinds of brigandage at her expense. It will no doubt be held to justify the partition of her Asiatic territory, already, as I hear, arranged for by the Powers, and will give the character of a crusade to yet another cruel massacre. The deity behind the Powers of Europe being, as it is, not God, but Mammon, one must protest at least against the dragging in of Christianity as a mere blind to the true nature of the deed in contemplation. This is nothing but a crime against humanity. Such crimes in history never lack their Nemesis.

(THE END.)

## Cleanliness v. Godliness.

By Duxmia.

ON Friday last —th inst., before the Very Reverend Dean Inge (representing the Established Church), the Reverend F. B. Meyer (representing the Nonconformist Conscience), and the Reverend R. J. Campbell (representing the feeble-minded of all denominations), Jesus of Nazareth, described as an habitual vagrant, was charged with being in an unsanitary condition and constituting a "statutory nuisance" under the provisions of the Elimination of Dirt Act. FOR THE CROWN, Mr. Nice instructed by the Treasury Solicitor. The prisoner was not represented by Counsel.

The case on behalf of the Crown was opened by Mr. Nice, who stated that this action was being brought by the Health Authorities of England and Wales in the interests of public sanitation, recent events having rendered it imperative that the Churches should make some public announcement on this important subject. It would be within the recollection of the Court that the passing of the Elimination of Dirt Bill late in the preceding year had been followed by several thousand prosecutions under clauses 3 and 4 of that Act providing for compulsory washing, and that this unfortunate state of affairs was principally owing to an organised resistance to the law of the land. That opposition had been largely based, at any rate in allegation, upon prisoner's teaching, and the Crown had come to the very reluctant conclusion that the proper administration of the Act was impossible unless the so-called Christian Churches consented to actively dissociate themselves from prisoner and his doctrines. With this view prisoner had been summoned before the present specially appointed tribunal to answer for his opinions. In conclusion Mr. Nice observed that while actuated by no hostility towards the Christian religion as such—of whose important services to society they were not unaware—yet in the case of a refusal to repudiate prisoner, Ministers would have no alternative but to effect a change to the Mahomedan or any other more sanitary creed. He concluded by expressing the hope that so decisive a step would prove unnecessary.

Counsel then proceeded to call the High Priests Annas and Caiaphas, who were materialised jointly by the court medium and took their places in the box.

Witnesses deposed:—

That they had been Sadducees and High Priests of Jerusalem at the date of defendant's trial.

DEAN INGE: What is a Sadducee?

Witnesses replied that it was a term applied to educated and intelligent persons by the vulgar of the time. Prisoner had come before them in the execution of their official duties. He appeared to them a totally uneducated man with subversive views. He was, for

instance, quite ignorant of the Talmud. Everybody who *was* anybody in Jerusalem knew the Talmud.

MR. NICE : What observations had they made regarding prisoner's physical appearance?

WITNESSES : He was decidedly dirty. He seemed to have spent the night in the open and to have forgotten to shave. Everybody who *was* anybody in Jerusalem shaved. His ruffianly appearance had sensibly influenced their decision. They had the strongest possible objection to dirt. In their opinion it was not good form. Everybody who was anybody in Hell took care not to appear dirty.

By THE COURT : Yes, it was true that they had once denied the immortality of the soul. They had since had opportunities of realising their mistake.

DEAN INGE : I am very glad to hear it. I shall hope to have the pleasure of your more intimate acquaintance.

The Witnesses had no doubt that they would have further opportunities of prolonged conversation with His Reverence in another place. After they had disappeared, Mr. Nice proceeded to call the Prince of Darkness.

THE REV. R. J. CAMPBELL : I protest. No such person exists.

MR. NICE (excitedly) : I'll be damned if he doesn't.

DEAN INGE (pleasantly) : You'll be damned if he does ! (Laughter, in which the Rev. F. B. Meyer was observed not to join.)

REV. R. J. CAMPBELL : My theology cannot be made to work with the existence of the Devil.

REV. F. B. MEYER : Mine would never have come into existence without him.

After a protracted legal argument of several minutes, in which Counsel joined, the Dean announced that witness did not legally exist. This decision was greeted with evident relief by several persons in Court, and some applause, which was instantly suppressed.

JUDAS ISCARIOT was then called and appeared in charge of a couple of friends.

DEAN INGE : Do you know the prisoner?

WITNESS : Very slightly. According to witness's statement defendant had spent forty days and forty nights alone in the wilderness, and that on several occasions he had stated publicly that he "had not where to lay his head." Such modes of life were quite incompatible with sanitation.

DEAN INGE : A regular tramp !

WITNESS : Exactly. Defendant had been very fond of telling people to "change their hearts and not their garments." Witness had denounced prisoner to the local authorities solely on account of his insanitary state. He did not think that such things should be allowed.

DEAN INGE : We all agree with you. They shall not be—much longer. (To prisoner) Have you any questions which you would like to ask the witness?

Prisoner was here understood to say, "Ask him if his own hands were clean?"

DEAN INGE (sternly) : You need not answer that question. I am beginning to take a very strong view of this case.

PONTIUS PILATE was sworn and deposed that prisoner was a religious fanatic of the most troublesome description. Religious questions caused the Roman Government a great deal of trouble at Jerusalem. It was the opinion of official circles at Rome that it would be better if there were no religions. They were a hindrance to official administration.

By MR. NICE : The general sanitary condition of Jerusalem was not high. The Jews were a dirty, greasy crowd.

At this point a gentleman of Jewish race rose in the well of the Court and pointed out to the Bench that the uncleanness of the Jews of that period was due to persecution.

DEAN INGE : "Sit down, sir ! Sit down !" The gentleman was removed struggling furiously.

MR. MARMADUKE PICKTHALL stated in answer to

questions by Mr. Nice that in Turkey Mahomedans were far cleaner than the Christians. The Mahomedan religion was in the completest antipathy to dirt. All Greeks were dirty and so were all Armenians. Asked whether this was because they were Christians, witness said he did not know, but he expected so. Asked about Jews, witness said there was nothing to choose between Jews and Christians, except in the matter of noses—

At this moment another gentleman of Jewish race rose in the well of the Court and attempted to demonstrate that the shape of the Jewish nose was solely due to persecution. He was removed struggling furiously.

Continuing MR. PICKTHALL stated that he held prisoner solely responsible for the recent disgraceful attack upon Constantinople. If the Christian armies had cared half as much about keeping themselves clean as they had about getting at the Turks, their regrettable victories would have been spared us.

DR. OSCAR LEVY informed the Court that the Christian religion owed its great and regrettable hold over the servile classes to its countenance of dirt.

MR. SIDNEY WEBB confided to the Court that what had really actuated him in promoting all the effective reforms of the last thirty years was a dislike of dirt. He was of opinion that the removal of dirt would mean the end of any reform movement among the upper classes, who would be quite undisturbed by anything which their dependents might have to put up with so long as they did not look dirty. The founder of Christianity was an ignorant peasant with no knowledge of economics. Everybody who *was* anybody in the intellectual world knew economics.

THE REV. F. B. MEYER : What are economics?

MR. NICE : A sort of Talmud. (Laughter.)

THE REV. R. J. CAMPBELL : Are you in favour of revolutionary measures?

WITNESS : "Only by washed persons." His own outside was always washed.

The prisoner declined to call any evidence.

MR. NICE addressing the Court remarked that his case had been completely proved. He asked the Court for an exemplary sentence.

The prisoner did not reply.

DEAN INGE, in delivering judgment, said that the heinousness of prisoner's crime was equalled only by his contumacious insolence in refusing to offer a defence of it. The law of England was particularly severe on persons who refused to offer a defence. It was not cricket. It spoiled the game. Prisoner had been shown by a number of witnesses of unblemished reputation to have deliberately fostered the illegal element of dirt. Such conduct was unchristian in the truest sense of the word, and prisoner would therefore be excommunicated. He only regretted that the lapse of his disciplinary powers prevented his expressing his horror of prisoner's conduct by an exemplary sentence such as crucifixion or stoning by selected Jews.

Prisoner left the Court without speaking.

## Verses by Perse School Play Boys.

### THE BARGE.

Gliding, gliding, gliding,  
Over the water deep,  
Came a barge with dark brown canvas sails,  
And her name was "Land of Sleep."

Slowly, slowly, slowly,  
She moved by the Waveney's bank,  
She forged her way through rushes and reeds  
Growing both high and rank.

Sinking, sinking, sinking,  
The sun went down in the west,  
And the men in the barge hauled down her sails  
And sleepily went to rest.

(Age 10.)

R. A.

## HODR THE BLIND GOD.

Hodr the blind god  
Roams about the halls,  
For that god he never knows  
When the darkness falls.

He feeleth on every side,  
For he cannot see :  
Hodr the blind god,  
A poor god he.

He the god of darkness  
Ruleth o'er the night,  
The only god in Asgard  
That hath lost his sight.

Hodr the blind god  
That killed the god of light,  
Hodr the blind god  
That hath lost his sight.

(Age 10.)

D. H.

## THE FISHING FLEET.

I see them leave the harbour white,  
As the sun dips in the sea,  
I see them in the morning light,  
Returning again to me.

I see them return to the harbour again,  
With their brown sails wide to the breeze,  
I see them reach the shore of the main,  
With fish from over the seas.

(Age 12.)

R. E. N.

## THE MILL.

The arms of the mill swing slowly round  
As it grinds the golden corn,  
Standing alone on the crest of a hill,  
Looking so grave and forlorn.

A cart made its way to the top of the hill  
Laden with sacks of grain,  
The miller came out and took them all in,  
And back it came empty again.

(Age 10.)

R. A.

## BIG AND SMALL.

Big fish swim in the ocean,  
Small fish swim in the pond,  
But where I swim is a river that foams  
When the mill-wheel roars beyond.

Big beasts roam the jungle,  
Small beasts slink in the grass,  
But where I hunt is a green little copse,  
Where the pheasants scream as they pass.

Big ships roll on the billows,  
Small ships float on the lake,  
But my little ship on a dark black puddle  
Sails with a dinghy in her wake.

Soon I shall cross the ocean  
To fish in the farthest deep,  
And to hunt in the darkest jungle,  
Where the monkeys chatter and leap.

(Age 12.)

H. D. M.

## THE HUNTED HART.

The tawny deer-hounds search the woody glen  
For the fleet-footed hart; that seeks  
The remotest haunt in all the purple veiled hills;  
The deepest shadows of the oak and pine.  
In the alders growing by the silent tarn,

The deerhounds pass the bracken and the fern,  
And find, upon the sun-flecked ground,  
Beneath the gnarled limbs of a mighty forest oak,  
A graceful hart. He starts and clears  
The brake and bramble with a leap.  
He makes across the heather'd moor,  
The deerhounds baying at his flying heels;  
And as he nears the rushing burn  
He stumbles; and the hounds bury their white teeth  
In his perspiring flank; and crimson drops of blood  
Mingle with the foaming waters of the torrent.  
And as the huntsmen near he dies  
With a knife-blade touching  
His panting and exerted heart.

(Age 12.)

E. E.

## JOHN O' THE BYRE.

Oh ha'e ye heard of John o' the Byre,  
How he rode out and came hame nae mair?  
The hawk's in his mew,  
The hound's by the fire,  
But never more hame came John o' the Byre.

Lang may his lady sit laced in pall,  
Before she'll see him pace in hall.  
The hawk's in his mew,  
The hound's by the fire,  
But never more hame came John o' the Byre.

His hawk will ne'er soar on the eastern plain,  
Nor the hound chase after the boar again,  
The hawk's in his mew,  
The hound's by the fire,  
But never more hame came John o' the Byre.

The bonny young laird lies on the green sward,  
And lang will his lady wait at the board.  
The hawk's in his mew,  
The hound's by the fire,  
But never more hame came John o' the Byre.

(Age 12.)

T. L.

## THE AULD SKIPPER O' HAVEN.

A brown old man is he,  
The auld Skipper o' Haven;  
He used to sail upon the sea,—  
And the title of the tavern is The Old Black Raven.

His old ship rots upon the sand,  
The auld Skipper o' Haven;  
Many a crinkle he has in his hand,—  
And the title of the tavern is The Old Black Raven.

Once he toiled where the wild waves roar,  
The auld Skipper o' Haven;  
But now he sleeps in a shanty on the shore,—  
And the title of the tavern is The Old Black Raven.

(Age 10.)

D. H.

## THE TRAIN.

The children run to the crossing gate  
To see the train rush on.  
Now she is here a puffing fiend,  
And now—is gone.

Now she is gone—a dark small speck,  
Now only her smoke is seen.  
And a bright white line on the rails is left  
To show where her path has been.

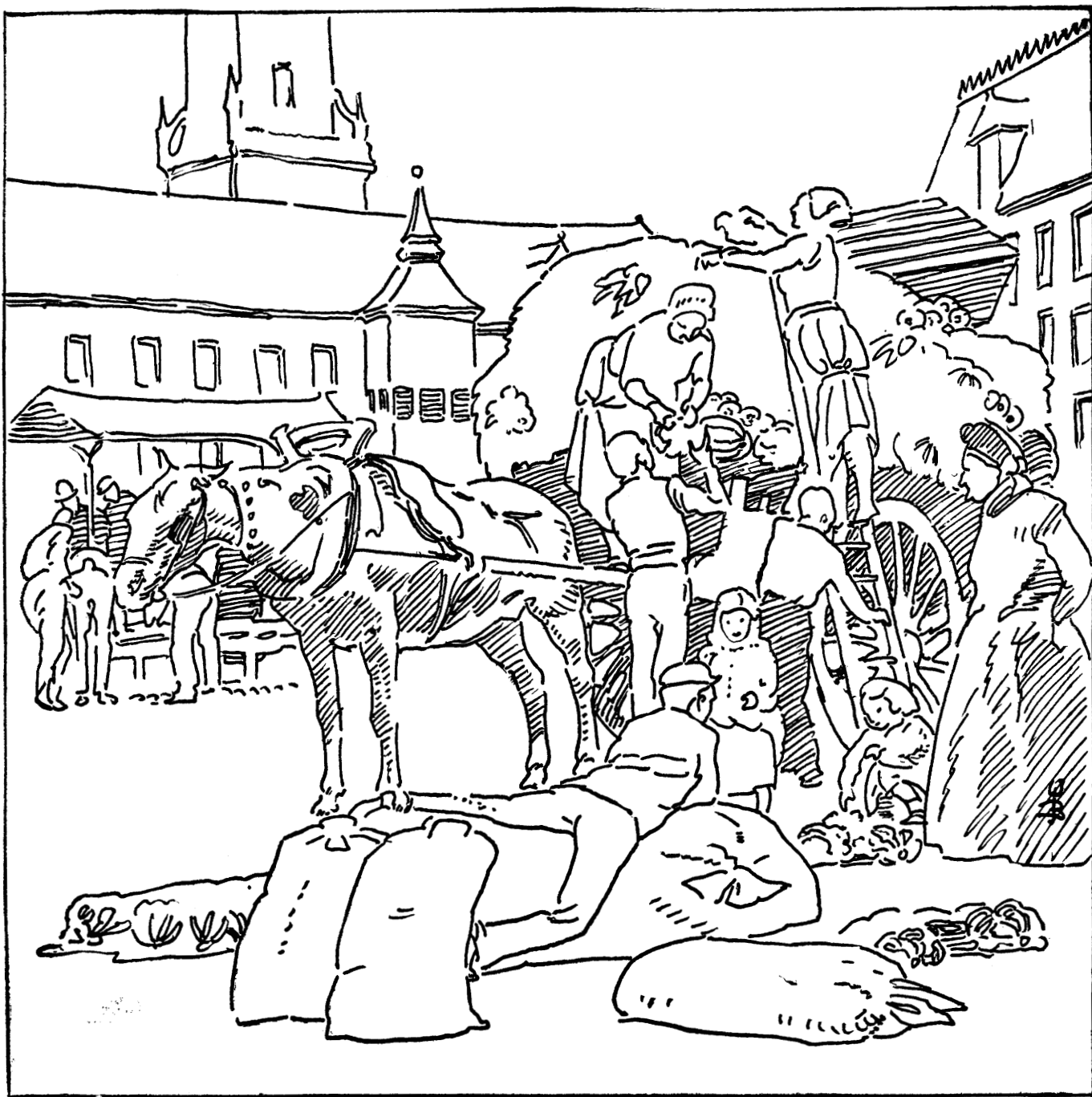
(Age 13.)

W. R. S.

The bridge spans the river,  
The field is full of grass,  
The road runs for ever,  
The sun's a ball of brass.

(Age 10.)

D. H.



THE WAGGON. BY WALTER BAYES.

## Readers and Writers.

MR. H. CALDWELL COOK, the Master of the Perse Players, some of whose recent "play" appears, I believe, elsewhere in this issue, has, without knowing it, hit upon the really primitive method of making poetry. I do not say (having in view my comments on the neo-primitive art of last week) that Mr. Cook's method would prove applicable to adults; I do not think it would. But for young boys, whose imagination corresponds with that of primitive humanity, the group creation is natural and, as can be seen, marvellously effective. Professor Gummere's work on "The Beginnings of Poetry" will be found to deal historically with what Mr. Caldwell Cook is re-creating contemporaneously; and to students of both folk-lore and modern literature the one throws light upon the other. I could wish, indeed, that in his travels throughout time and space Professor Gummere might find himself in the literary playroom at the Perse School, Cambridge, and see and hear among boys of from ten to fifteen the same methods of verse and play-construction as he tells us he has witnessed in Africa. And no less interesting should I find Mr. Caldwell Cook's comments on the Professor's treatise. In any case it will be a disgrace to the patrons of the Perse Players (among whom some of my readers may be numbered) if the most promising experiment in juvenile literary education now in progress should have to be discontinued for lack of a few hundred pounds.

\* \* \*

It has long been on my mind to protest against the exploitation by sundry journals of the dotage of Mr. Thomas Hardy. In common with every other judge of literature I find Mr. Hardy's verse not only wretched, but even pathetically so. I could not laugh at such lines and rhymes as:

'Twas hard to realise on  
This sad side of the horizon. . . .

The contrast between them and Mr. Hardy's prose was too grievous; but I could be and am angry with his publishers and his mean-spirited flatterers. This was as long ago as 1902, I think; and Mr. Hardy has been fooled almost continually ever since. The New Year issue of the "Saturday Review," for example, prints a six-stanza'd "poem" by Mr. Hardy and refers editorially to it as something of literary distinction. But can the most snobbish mind see in the following specimen stanza a phrase or hear a rhythm of real poetry:

"It is not death that harrows us," they lippled.  
"The soulless cell is in itself relief,  
For life is an unfenced flower, benumbed and nipped  
At unawares, and at its best but brief."

The December issue of "Poetry and Drama" has also a poem by the Old Man anything but Eloquent, the third and last stanza of which hobbles as follows:

And there you'll see me, if a jot  
You still should care  
For me and for my creepy air;  
If otherwise, then I shall not,  
For you, be there.

It is, of course, difficult for a journal to resist the temptation to publish anything a once-great man writes; but in the case of Mr. Thomas Hardy the attempt should be made.

\* \* \*

But perhaps the conductors of "Poetry and Drama" think Mr. Thomas Hardy a poet! Judging by what they both say and print I have indeed to conclude that anything not written as prose has in their opinion a *prima facie* claim to be regarded as poetry. Look, for example, at the lines by Mr. Robert Bridges—the first published since his appointment to the laureateship:

A dry biped he was, nurtured likewise  
On skins and skeletons, stale from top to toe  
With all manner of rubbish and all manner of lies.

Will anybody say that because this is not good prose it must needs be poetry? Why, it is not even verse. A good taste, however, is not to be expected of critics who allow their theories to run away with them—as is most certainly the case with several of the writers in the current issue. Take Mr. F. S. Flint's praise of Paul Claudel, for instance. The man is obviously merely a refiner upon Whitman (a curse we owe to America) and has neither form nor substance. Yet Mr. Flint dervish-dances himself into a frenzy and hails Claudel as "undeniably a great poet in every sense" because his "intoxication" has "lifted him above methodical composition." But it was not the poet in saner days who was intoxicated and lifted out of his normal—it was his readers! Now, however, it appears that his readers (I for one) may remain sober and critical while the poet may gash himself and whirl his mind into a trance above reason! Well, let it be so. By and by he will cease wasting his gesticulations on me. But elsewhere another writer takes us back to Wordsworth and bids poets abjure "literary" language and employ the words of everyday. What illiteracy, however, is implied in this! Back to Wordsworth by all means, but *not* back to Wordsworth's failures—far more numerous than his successes, and, of course, more easily imitated. Abjure "literary" language too, if you like; but remember that the exclusive use of "every-day" language is equally a "literary" affectation. I'm afraid, in fact, that these young men have not yet been entrusted by their genius with an idea to deliver. Otherwise, they would be talking of what they *must* do rather than of what they will or will not; for all good art is necessity.

\* \* \*

The new schools of advertisement have nothing much to teach our editors in the way of impudence and suggestio falsi. What would be more to the point, and even, I dare say, more profitable in the long run, would be a little taste. For myself (and there are, no doubt, thousands like me), I make it a social duty never to buy or commend an article that has been offensively advertised. For this reason I was sorry to see the "Daily Herald" of last week descending perilously into the area with an appeal to its readers to "support" its advertisers. Why the devil should I buy Dr. Tibbles' Vi-Cocoa or Owbridge's Lung Tonic to procure me a daily sight of Mr. Dyson's cartoons?

\* \* \*

The latter, it is true, are worth the money spent, but why should Messrs. Tibbles and the rest profit by my admiration? If, as I have repeatedly said, the "Daily Herald" or any other honest paper cannot exist without being subsidised by advertisers (and blackmailing its readers and prostituting its writers in return) it is far better that it should die. Only after a series of such deaths shall we see genuine resurrections. And again, I ask what the "New Witness" means by announcing in the "Daily Mail" that "amongst its *regular* contributors" are Messrs. Arnold Bennett, G. Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, etc.? These writers might much more truthfully be described as "regular contributors" to THE NEW AGE, since for once that they have appeared in the "New Witness" they have appeared in these columns at least half a score of times—prehistorically at any rate! The least unamusing, however, of the petty tricks of the advertisement manager is to be seen in the current issue of the "English Review." There in the very midmost of Mr. Wells' new serial may be found pasted a leaflet containing the details of Forcible Feeding, with an appeal to readers to protest against the practice. As it happens, in my issue the sequence of the serial is not altogether broken, but runs as follows:

Mr. Wells (p. 192): "In the days of my own prosperity. . . ."

Advertisement begins: "Readers of the 'English Review' will welcome the opportunity here given them to examine the actual facts of Forcible Feeding. . . ."

Advertisement concludes: "While you delay, women are being tortured."

Mr. Wells resumes (p. 193): "Things had seemed to me to be very well arranged."

I suppose the Suffragettes think the inclusion of their appeal in this context a smart piece of publicity. I don't.

\* \* \*

With Figgicisms my readers are always familiar; and Mr. Sidney Dark in the "Daily Express" has now discovered the existence of Huefferisms (pronounced, on authority, as Hoofersisms). The specimen quoted by Mr. Dark and pronounced by him "admirable" deserves to be examined:—

The real essence of art is a sense of appropriateness, almost, as it were, a sense of decency. The real artist feels for his subject a quality of chastity; while he is handling it he will no more introduce into it extraneous or unsuitable matter than a lady of niceness will go to the opera in the costume she reserves for the golf course.

I said this Huefferism deserves examination; but the examination cannot be made in public. As "Punch's" yokel said of pigs that they be rightly named, it is clear that such sentences as the foregoing are well named by Mr. Dark.

\* \* \*

On the whole subject of the modern newspaper Press the best recent work is Mr. Scott-James' "The Influence of the Press" (Partridge, 3s. 6d.). That the prestige of the Fourth Estate has fallen nobody, I suppose, will deny, and that it is still falling anybody with a measure in his mind can see. The evil genius that began it was undoubtedly Lord Northcliffe, whose brother has been made a peer for assisting him; but the evil genius that continues it is the spirit of profit and servility to be found more or less in everybody, and on which the large advertiser plays a kind of devil's tattoo. The extent, indeed, to which the journalist is in the pocket of the large advertiser is literally incredible to the outside public. They not only cannot guess, but they cannot realise when they are told, that nine-tenths of the policy down to the smallest details of the average newspaper is dictated and as good as written by the advertising profiteers. Mr. Scott-James' book will, perhaps, do something towards making belief possible, since he has been a daily journalist and knows what he is talking about; but more likely his book will be "remaindered" and forgotten.

\* \* \*

When, by the way, I hazarded my doubt last week of Mr. Ludovici's possession of an assumed "great order of society" as a background of his beliefs, I had in mind his apparent endorsement of Nietzsche's theory of the supervision of culture upon the modern wealthy classes. This transformation, I confess, is to me an impossible idealisation. The true ideal is in every case possible, even if it never become the actual; but the aristocratisation of the existing plutocracy appears to me to be not only improbable, but self-contradictory. After all, plutocracy has existed long enough to show signs of culture, if it is ever to be capable of culture, but where are they? The very Press that is professedly subsidised by the wealthy in the interests of culture is only a little less "corrupt" than the Press run to make money. If the plutocracy were even feeling after culture, if haply they might find it, the English Press would be in a very different state from what it is. Instead of one journal without advertisements we should have at least a dozen; and I venture to say that a dozen, or even half that number, would quickly reduce the rest to the vulgar level to which they belong. When Mr. Ludovici can produce me a self-made man of wealth who is also a man of public taste I shall re-read my Nietzsche with respect for his doctrines; but till then I select only from his occasional observations.

The publication of a new Dictionary is not an event of no importance, but, on the contrary, an event to be examined closely. Thousands may be misled into error by it, or, on the other hand, have their everyday judgments corrected by it. For this reason, and since a Dictionary is a standard, only the best minds should be employed in it, and we should require even of them a devotion corresponding to the responsibility entrusted to them. The "British Empire Universities Modern English Dictionary" (Syndicate Publishing Co., 10s. 6d.) appears, however, to have been compiled and published in a spirit the very reverse of respect for our language and its living traditions. To begin with, it is under the chief editorship of Mr. Edward D. Price, who, as the editor of Hazell's Annual Cyclopædia has more experience of general than of particular information; and it has, as its chief contributors, men like Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, Sir James Yoxall, Professors Gollancz, Rippmann and Saintsbury, to none of whom, I imagine, Dr. Johnson would have entrusted the definition of a single word. The word-book section is, as might be expected, perfunctory, and is apparently only thrown in to give weight to the original sections, which consist of special glossaries of Cricket, Tennis, Football, Golf, Aviation and Motoring Terms. Appended thereto are lists of Synonyms and Autonyms, Christian Names, Foreign Phrases, and the like—all of a less complete character than can be found elsewhere. The whole is, in fact, a compilation of a superficial nature and unworthy of the biblical form in which it is published.

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The Simplified Speling Sosieti had a gala day at the University of London last week, when at a special meeting presided over by Sir William Ramsay, a resolution was carried calling upon the Board of Education to convene a Conference to discuss the Laputan proposal. I do not imagine the Board of Education, even under Mr. Pease, will do anything so silly; and even if it does, the objects of the Sosieti will not be advanced by it. The promoters of the deform have no idea, it appears, of the impracticability of the task they have undertaken. They might as well attempt to reduce to mnemonic simplicity the orders of living nature as try to "simplify" the representations of living and natural sounds. No doubt it would save a good deal of time if our spelling were simplified; no doubt, also, our language then would be more easily read by Patagonians; but, alas for such notions, our language does not exist to be easily learned, but to convey our thoughts, and these, of course, are contained as much in the actual form and spelling of the word as in the "phonetic" symbol of it. As an instance of the current infantilism, the Speling Sosieti's existence is supreme; for whereas our writers and thinkers merely adapt their "ideas" to imagined children and idiots, the Sosieti would adapt the language as well. In two ticks from their triumph we should all be prattling like mothers to their first child! Against the Professor Skeat, by the way, who used to support the Society, should be recalled Professor Swete, who prided himself on being able to enunciate seventy or more distinct vowel sounds in English. Thank goodness, however, he never tried to "standardise" them on a gramophone!

\* \* \*

Mr. George Moore is no stylist, but his gossip is entertaining, particularly when it is a little malevolent. In the "English Review" for December he candidly records his observations, from the inside, of the Irish Literary Movement and of its leading figures. Neither Mr. Yeats nor Lady Gregory, nor even, strange to say, Mr. Moore himself, comes out from the exposure very well. "Love that has *not* been born again in the flesh crumbles like peat ash," is a remark he records as having made to A.E. And he must have been over forty! Concerning "Cuchulain" of which Synge wrote to Lady Gregory from Paris that it was a part of his daily bread, Mr. Moore tells us that it was pieced to-

gether by Lady Gregory from various French and German translations; and that this method in Mr. Yeats' opinion produced a rendering the most perfect ever written! I agree with Mr. Moore that this can hardly be the case, particularly since, as he tells us, in many instances Kuno Myer's translation is followed sentence by sentence. However, I do not imagine that history will bother itself much with the Irish Literary Movement. It has been an eddy on the main stream and has now got into a backwater. R. H. C.

## Tesserae.

By Beatrice Hastings.

ALL tradition tells of the overwhelming of nations for their wickedness. We moderns explain the cosmic catastrophes as the result of accident or of natural law. But since spirit keeps individual man alive in the very hand of death that attacks through matter, then, when spirit is broken in collective man, what shall ward off universal death?

If spirit, with all its variations from cunning to morality, gives man his control over matter, what is to uphold matter from overwhelming a nation when spirit abandons it?

Man is everywhere sacrificing spirit to machinery, and this is deadly. It is not difficult to realise that unspiritual nations may come upon death while believing that their goal is prosperity.

The Deluge was certainly one of real water.

\* \* \*

Men have to do with morals—women with conventions. It seems to have been against creative law that the female should be endowed with morals; her law is the physical law of terrestrial Nature.

In civilising himself, man wrought out for woman many conventions, and these were protective and, therefore good for her. These Conventions should be secured to women for a long era yet, until, in fact, man shall have mastered Nature—for if they were taken away, women would be terrified into reviving with awful nakedness the amoral law which is at the bottom of female consciousness. And culture might easier survive under anarchy than under this law.

Man, however, has himself been in danger of confounding conventions with morals—a sin in him: he has permitted the terms of morality—virtue, honour, purity, and similar expressions of virility—to be confused by conventional use of them. This confusion is made more difficult to correct by reason of women's clever adoption of the crude, but sound, code of morals which distinguishes schoolboys and long-sighted gamblers. But men need only meditate upon some subtlety of morals to discover women's limited mimicry. For instance, the morality of sacrifice cannot be grasped by women, who may not escape being injured and marked by the rites. Women naturally adore the Stigmata, invention of vulgar priests, the very holes of the very nails.

It is impolitic to prove to women that marriage is a convention, an agreed custom operating only geographically, and no way connected with morality which is universal. In this matter one might contrast the tolerance which is given to diverse forms of marriage, or, as in certain periods, to lack of all form of marriage—with the universal condemnation of traitors. Men may agree to any and every form of marriage, but they may not agree to treachery: the first has to do with convention, the second, with the changeless law of morality. Nevertheless, women should be taught that all forms of marriage are sinful save that prevailing in their particular country. Convention is less disastrous to culture than the nature of woman unrestrained. With a woman the penalty of breaking conventions usually deters as surely as a man's intellect deters him from immorality; and it is prudent that women should be forcibly deterred because of their easy reaction towards barbarism.

If, however, a woman, having experienced convention, ventures to seek only morality, the gods themselves cannot prevent her from going as far as she may. Such a woman must be spiritually dangerous to all enemies, not lightly forgiving, and never again trusting, one who may have slighted her on account of convention; for a slight of this sort arises either from dogmaticism or cowardice, the first of which states is incomputably cruel, and the second treacherous.

\* \* \*

A wise education for women would train them for nothing but to ameliorate the indignities of existence. Their present progress in this craft is amazing, for concealment of ugliness or defect is not natural to them: by their very reason for being, namely, conception, they expose the fact that some man was once at the mercy of his foes through sexuality. Seeing that they may be taught, however, they might be made of great service to man, who, although realising that there are probably better things than being born, determines to play out the game of life as though he had certainly, instead of doubtfully, elected to play it.

\* \* \*

The formidable women in literature, as in life, are those that astonish and charm men by their attitude of complacent sexual difference from men, the which includes all other differences.

Men may laugh away much of the artistic claim of such a writer as George Eliot—"An Artist," they might rightly scoff, "who cannot bear to leave alive and unwounded anything young and beautiful." Behold Hetty, Arthur, Romola, Maggie, and the rest—slain, or worse! Youth alone is most often excuse enough for her to do away with its body. Here is no artist but an ugly and disappointed woman wreaking her resentment." And, in fact, this novelist claiming all the world for her province, was too often nothing but a little local tyrant over her imaginary people.

But another woman writer, unpresumptuous, almost rationally self-limiting, competent and complacent before Fact, sensitive and sensible—I speak, of course, of Miss Jane Austen—such a writer will always fill true men with delighted respect. Here is an attitude which places the artist as high beyond assault as itself is removed from challenge. Men may sum up their whole works in literature, but here is something reputable yet different from their works. In life, also, it is not your political meddlers, Mesdames de Maintenon and de Stael, who astonish and unconsciously discipline men to them; the men-colleagues of such women observe their exploits unmystified and smile at their defeats. These characters among women do not uphold the position of less favoured women; they imperil it; for those who, often not frequenting women, yet secure the domestic protection of women, we must go to Sevigné, Récamier, Lespinasse (who said that women have the truth of nothing), and all that order of mystifying charm. I like to include with these our own witty, confident, suave, decorous and charitable Mary Wortley Montagu; the list is not too long!

\* \* \*

As a woman married to a man whose wealth is above her possession of dignity betrays this by her airs towards guests and her terror of servants, so one who has married above her intelligence is known by her abuse of her husband. Such women are femininely unculturable.

\* \* \*

Some day I shall burst out against the contemptibleness of men who do not provide us with houses fit to live in. A house is unfit which is not draught-proof, for instance. I do not speak of slums; to describe the owners of such the terms of iniquity would be needed. But a man should not suppose that he has acted well enough if his wife has a roof above her and walls around. Few women can make a home in spite of bad carpentry, and those that can perhaps should not.

## Modern Art.—I.

### The Grafton Group.

I AM attempting in this series of articles to define the characteristics of a new constructive geometric art which seems to me to be emerging at the present moment. In a later series, to be called the "Break up of the Renaissance," I shall attempt to show the relation between this art and a certain general changed outlook.

I am afraid that my use of the word "new" here will arouse a certain prejudice in the minds of the kind of people that I am anxious to convince. I may say then that I use the word with no enthusiasm. I want to convince those people who regard the feeble romanticism which is always wriggling and vibrating to the stimulus of the word "new," with a certain amount of disgust, that the art which they incline to condemn as decadent is in reality the new order for which they are looking. It seems to me to be the genuine expression of abhorrence of slop and romanticism which has quite mistakenly sought refuge in the conception of a classical revival. By temperament I should adopt the classical attitude myself. My assertion then that a "new" art is being formed is not due to any desire on my part to perceive something "new," but is forced on me almost against my inclination by an honest observation of the facts themselves.

In attempting thus to define the characteristics of a new movement a certain clearance of the ground is necessary. A certain work of dissociation and analysis is required, in connection with what is vaguely thought of as "modern" in art. A writer on art may perform a useful function in pointing out that what is generally thought of as one living movement consists really of many parts, some of which are as a matter of fact quite dead. The words "modern," "Post-Impressionist" and "Cubist" are used as synonyms, not only in the more simple form of instinctive reaction to an unpleasing phenomena, but also in a more positive way, the psychology of which seems to me to be rather interesting. The Post-Impressionist or Cubist appearances, at first perceived chaotically as "queer" and rejected as such, became after a mysterious act of conversion, a signal for exhilarated acceptance, irrespective of the quality of the painting itself. They give every picture, good or bad, which possesses them, a sort of cachet. But although this complex of qualities passes from the stage in which it is repulsive to that in which it is attractive, yet for most people it remains unanalysed. It must be pointed out that what has been grouped together as one, really contains within itself several diverse and even contradictory tendencies. One might separate the modern movement into three parts, to be roughly indicated as Post-Impressionism, analytical Cubism and a new constructive geometrical art. The first of these, and to a certain extent the second, seem to me to be necessary but entirely transitional stages leading up to the third, which is the only one containing possibilities of development.

This show at the Alpine Club provides a convenient illustration of these points. Mr. Fry organised the first Post-Impressionist exhibition in London and was thought to have established a corner in the movement. He probably regards himself, and is certainly regarded by many others, as the representative of the new direction in art. The earlier shows of the Grafton group were sufficiently comprehensive and varied to make this opinion seem plausible. . . . There was a mixture of a sort of æsthetic archaism and a more vigorous cubism which corresponded very well to the loose use of the words "modern art" which I have just mentioned, and helped to maintain the illusion that the whole formed in

reality one movement. But the departure of Mr. Wyndham Lewis, Mr. Etchells, Mr. Nevinson and several others has left concentrated in a purer form all the worked-out and dead elements in the movement. It has become increasingly obvious that Mr. Fry and his group are nothing but a kind of backwater, and it seems to me to be here worth while pointing out the character of this backwater. As you enter the room you almost know what to expect, from the effect of the general colour. It consists almost uniformly of pallid chalky blues, yellows and strawberry colours, with a strong family resemblance between all the pictures; in every case a kind of anæmic effect showing no personal or constructive use of colour. The subjects also are significant. One may recognise the whole familiar bag of tricks—the usual Cezanne landscapes, the still lifes, the Eves in their gardens, and the botched Byzantine. As the Frenchmen exhibited here have really no connection with the Grafton group, I will omit them and confine myself to the English painters. In Mr. Fry's landscape you can see his inability to follow a method to its proper conclusion. The colour is always rather sentimental and pretty. He thus accomplishes the extraordinary feat of adapting the austere Cezanne into something quite fitted for chocolate boxes. It is too tedious to go on mentioning mediocre stuff, so I should like to point out the two things which are worth seeing, No. 29, a very interesting pattern by Mr. Roberts, and M. Gaudier-Brzeska's sculpture.

However, I find it more interesting to escape from this show for a minute, by discussing a general subject which is to a certain extent suggested by it—the exact place of archaism in the new movement. I want to maintain (i) that a certain archaism was a natural stage in the preparation of a new method of expression, and (ii) that the persistence of a feeble imitation of archaism, such as one gets in this show, is an absolutely unnecessary survival when this stage has been passed through.

In the first place then, how does it come about that a movement towards a new method of expression should contain so many archaic elements? How can a movement whose essence is the exact opposite of romanticism and nostalgia, which is striving towards a hard and definite structure in art, take the form of archaism? How can a sensibility so opposed to that which generally finds satisfaction in the archaic, make such use of it? What happens, I take it, is something of this kind: a certain change of direction takes place which begins negatively with a feeling of dissatisfaction with and reaction against existing art. But the new tendency, admitting that it exists, cannot at once find its own appropriate expression. But although the artist feels that he must have done with contemporary means of expression, yet a new and more fitting method is not easily created. Expression is by no means a natural thing. It is an unnatural, artificial and, as it were, external thing which a man has to install himself in before he can manipulate it. The way from intention to expression does not come naturally as it were from in outwards. It in no way resembles the birth of Minerva. A gap between the intention and its actual expression in material exists, which cannot be bridged directly. A man has first to obtain a foothold in this, so to speak, alien and external world of material expression, at a point near to the one he is making for. He has to utilise some already existing method of expression, and work from that to the one that expresses his own personal conception more accurately and naturally. At the present moment this leads to archaism because the particular change of direction in the new movement is a striving towards a certain intensity which is already expressed in archaic form. This perhaps supplements what I said about the archaism of Mr. Epstein's "carvings in flenite." It perhaps enables me to state more clearly the relation between those works and the more recent work represented by the drawings. You get a breaking away from contemporary methods of expression, a new direction, an intenser perception of things striving towards expression. And as this intensity is funda-

mentally the same kind of intensity as that expressed in certain archaic arts, it quite naturally and legitimately finds a foothold in these archaic yet permanent formulæ. But as this intensity is at the same time no romantic revival, but part of a real change of sensibility occurring now in the modern mind, and is coloured by a particular and original quality due to this fact, it quite as naturally develops from the original formula one which is for it, a purer and more accurate medium of expression. [That the great change in outlook is coming about naturally at the present moment, I shall attempt to demonstrate later by a consideration which has nothing whatever to do with art. I shall then be able to explain what I meant by the "dregs of the Renaissance."]

To return then to the discussion from which I started. A certain archaism it seems is at the beginning a help to an artist. Although it may afterwards be repudiated, it is an assistance in the construction of a new method of expression. Most of the artists who prepared the new movement passed through this stage. Picasso, for example, used many forms taken from archaic art, and other examples will occur to everyone. It might be objected that a direct line of development could be traced through Cézanne showing no archaic influence. But I think it would be true to say of Cézanne, even in much of his later work, that he seeks expression through forms that are to a certain extent archaic. So much then for the function of archaism. Apply this to what you find in the Grafton group. If it were only a matter of serious experimentation in archaic forms, after the necessity for that experimentation had passed by, the thing would be regrettable but not a matter for any violent condemnation. But you do not find anything of that kind, but merely a cultured and anæmic imitation of it. What in the original was a sincere effort towards a certain kind of intensity, becomes in its English dress a mere utilisation of the archaic in the spirit of the æsthetic. It is used as a plaything to a certain quaintness. In Mr. Duncan Grant's "Adam and Eve," for example, elements taken out of the extremely intense and serious Byzantine art are used in an entirely meaningless and pointless way. There is no solidity about any of the things; all of them are quite flimsy. One delightful review of the show described Mr. Fry's landscapes as having "the fascination of reality seen through a cultured mind." The word "cultured" here explains a good deal. I feel about the whole show a typically Cambridge sort of atmosphere. I have a very vivid impression of what I mean here by Cambridge, as I have recently had the opportunity of observing the phenomenon at close quarters. I know the kind of dons who buy these pictures, the character of the dilettante appreciation they feel for them. It is so interesting and clever of the artist to use the archaic in this paradoxical way, so amusing to make Adam stand on his head, and the donkey's ear continue into the hills—gentle little Cambridge jokes.

It is all amusing enough in its way, a sort of æsthetic playing about. It can best be described in fact as a new disguise of æstheticism. It is not a new art, there is nothing new and creative about it. At first appearance the pictures seem to have no resemblance to pre-Raphaelitism. But when the spectator has overcome his first mild shock and is familiarised with them, he will perceive the fundamental likeness. Their "queerness," such as it is, is not the same serious queerness of the pre-Raphaelites, it is perhaps only quaint and playful; but essentially the same English æsthetic is behind both, and essentially the same cultured reminiscent pleasure is given to the spectator. This being the basic constituent of both arts, just as the one ultimately declined into Liberty's, so there is no reason why the other should not find its grave in some emporium which will provide the wives of young and advanced dons with suitable house decoration.

What is living and important in new art must be looked for elsewhere.

T. E. HULME.

## Views and Reviews.\*

IN the early days of the W.S.P.U., Miss Christabel Pankhurst, I believe, went to Cambridge to debate the question of "militancy." The debate was notable for one thing only, the description by an undergraduate of "militancy" as "glorified henpecking." From first to last, the literary and vocal efforts of the militant suffragists have not risen above this level; but, in this pamphlet, Miss Pankhurst has descended to the mental level of Doll Tearsheet. Lacking the power to convince by reason, and lacking also the power to convince by terror, she has descended to abuse, and has asserted not only that practically all men are suffering from venereal disease, but that "all over the world it is vice that finds its interest in the subjection of women, and this is so in our own country no less than in every other." To be indignant about such statements, to call them (as I have heard them called) insults to the male sex, would be absurd: one cannot insult a sex. Such statements only measure the mentality of the person who makes them, and provide one of the strongest arguments against admitting women to the exercise of political power.

For here is a disease of vast social import, which sooner or later must be discussed in all its bearings before society takes action to control its ravages; and the only contribution to the discussion made by Miss Pankhurst is to state that men, because they are sexually vicious and sexually diseased, are refusing to give the vote to women. If the accusation were true, it would not advance the cause of woman's suffrage; for if the men refuse to grant the franchise because they are sexually vicious, there is no hope of the vote until men are sexually virtuous; and as, according to Miss Pankhurst, they can only be made sexually virtuous by the women's exercise of the franchise, Miss Pankhurst is prescribing a cure that cannot be administered. The two-fold cure for venereal disease discovered by Miss Pankhurst, viz., Votes for Women and Chastity for Men, is as useless as every other pretended remedy. Men are and will be chaste without reference to questions of Parliamentary election; and the vital part of the cure, Votes for Women, cannot be applied precisely because sexually vicious men are refusing to grant the vote. As an example of the uselessness of the higher education of women, Miss Pankhurst's reasoning is valuable; for it shows that not even a forensic training can supply the want of comprehensive intelligence and judgment, or cause a woman to forgo the expression of personal feeling for the purpose of clear statement.

Miss Pankhurst is well fortified with authorities, but her acceptance of the statements of her authorities is unintelligent. Let it be admitted that Dr. Prince Morrow said that 75 per cent. or more of the adult male population suffer from one form of venereal disease; let it be admitted that Drs. Douglas White, Neisser, Noeggerath, and many others agree. A moment's reflection will show that this figure must be an estimate, for it is practically certain that 75 per cent. of the adult male population have not passed through the hands of the doctors. But to this estimate, Miss Pankhurst adds another; at least 20 per cent. of men are suffering from another form of venereal disease, in her opinion. So we reach a final estimate of a doubtful 5 per cent. of men who are free from venereal disease. But the value of such an estimate is nil. There would have been an end of civilisation years ago if such estimates had any validity; for a chief consequence of the first disease is sterility, and, of the second, insanity of various kinds, but chiefly dementia paralytica. Moreover, both of these diseases are supposed to be contagious; and if at least 75 per cent. of men are suffering from one, then Noeggerath's estimate, quoted by Miss Pankhurst, of 60 per cent. of married women suffering from this disease puts her in this dilemma, either the

\* "The Great Scourge, and How to End It." By Christabel Pankhurst, LL.B. (E. Pankhurst.)

disease is not always contagious, or the estimates are not valid. That the estimates are not valid, is my conclusion.

For without going beyond the covers of Miss Pankhurst's pamphlet, we can see on how slight a basis these estimates are made. An American surgeon performed 1,000 abdominal operations, 950 of which were due to one form of venereal disease. Noeggerath says that, in New York, of 1,000 married men 800 have had this particular disease; and so on. But the inference from such data to the whole population is an error of such magnitude as to vitiate all reasoning based on it. If a man were to discover, say, in Pittsburg, an acre on which machinery developing 5,000 horse-power was located, and was to multiply that horse-power by the acreage of England, and argue that the result was the amount of horse-power developed by machinery in England, I can conceive only one place where he would be regarded as sane, and that is in the W.S.P.U. Yet the error of Miss Pankhurst, and of the doctors she quotes, is of a similar kind; it supposes that the abnormal is the average.

But there is another aspect of this question which needs illumination. We have had about a century of attempted prison reform; Elizabeth Fry and John Howard set themselves to improve the conditions of prison life; Sir Samuel Romilly strove with considerable success to humanise the penal code. Since their time increasing attention has been devoted to the subject, and the trend of modern feeling is towards regarding crime as disease, and, therefore, as not being amenable to penal treatment. But Miss Pankhurst (and I wish it were confined to her, but doctors dealing with this subject fall into the same error) is asking us to treat disease as a crime, to revert to the unintelligent treatment of social evils. Miss Pankhurst's chief grievance with regard to the Piccadilly Flat case is that no men were punished, and that the woman defendant was only lightly sentenced. But if the sentence on Mrs. Pankhurst was a barbarous one, it is the height of unreason to demand similar barbarity for other offences. The fact that the barbarous sentences on militant suffragists do not prevent attacks on property should suggest to Miss Pankhurst that no penalising of prostitution will abolish it. The legal savagery that lurks behind Miss Pankhurst's suggestions is perhaps the most deplorable feature of the agitation for purity. Venereal disease and its connection with prostitution is no new discovery; let anyone read the conversation between Falstaff and Doll Tearsheet, if he thinks that it is. Prostitutes have been flogged at the cart-tail, they have been forced to do public penance in a state of semi-nudity, they have, in England, suffered all the barbarities of Puritanism, without effect. If Votes for Women means some more vindictive legislation, as Miss Pankhurst's remarks suggest, then we are asked to return to a state of mind that is certainly not favourable to the economic independence of women.

I am reminded at this point of the absurdity of the claim to economic independence. Thoreau's experiment is well known; but, as Russell Lowell remarked, his return to Nature owed everything to civilisation. The axe with which he prepared the logs for his hut was borrowed; the hammer and nails, the gardening implements, the rest, were all the borrowed products of civilisation. Miss Christabel Pankhurst is, I suppose, economically independent, that is, no one man is responsible for her maintenance. But a whole society of men maintains her, and all other non-producers of wealth; the education she has received is a man's education, the ideal of sexual purity that she preaches is a man's ideal, the very function that she wishes to perform, that of Parliamentary elector, is a man's function. For everything that she has, she is, like the rest of us, indebted to men, past and present; and men are not economically independent of each other. There would be no society to reform if they were. But if one asks what return Miss Pankhurst is going to make to men for the advantages she enjoys, the only answer is

that she wants to have the power to vote away sufficient of the property of men to enable women to be independent of them. If she came bearing gifts, she might still be suspected of ulterior motives; but to come demanding tolls is to make herself ridiculous. The "Stand and Deliver" methods of militancy have no terrors, and abuse, of the nature recorded in this pamphlet, only expresses the disappointment of a virago.

A. E. R.

## Pastiche.

### HISTORICAL IMPRESSIONS.—II.

Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb jointly discover that on November 24, 1913, at 7.30 a.m., Sara Sniffkins, the daughter of Pauper Samuel Sniffkins and Susan Sniffkins, in the General Mixed Workhouse of Codlingham-on-the-Tree, was improperly deprived of soup for making a remark which, on investigation, seems to have been strictly accurate.

SCENE: The Webbs' workroom in their house at Westminster. It is large, with bookshelves running round the walls from floor to ceiling, fitted with roll-up doors, on all of which hang charts and diagrams showing the rise and fall of population, the migration of trades, the birth and death rates for town and country, the number of diatoms that fall to the bottom of the sea per second, the variation in wages over two decades, the price of flour and beef since 1875, the dimensions of the heads of great men since Herbert Spencer, the statistics of the growth of Trade Unionism, and a number of other striking facts. Lest time should be wasted when the doors are up, the books themselves have all been rebound and a slot left in the covers for a removable tag on every one of which is written some scrap of information. It is the duty of Private Secretaries Nos. 14 to 17 to replenish these weekly from Blue Books, etc. On the ceiling have been pasted tracts from the Bible and Pilgrim's Progress for the influence of their literary style. Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb are sitting at two flat tables, writing.

MRS. WEBB: There, I've finished this letter to Asquith. Just listen. (Reads.) "Dear Mr. Asquith, we are loth to trouble you with the administration of the Poor Law, which we sadly recognise has been relegated to the limbo of dead and moribund—"

MR. WEBB (interrupting): Moribund? Do you think we'd better use that word? You see, everything is really moribund, even you and I. Suppose we say decrepit, which I just discovered in Skeat means etymologically noiseless, although, of course, there's a nice rhythm about moribund? Perhaps we could use them both?

MRS. WEBB: Yes, that's it: "Dead, moribund, and decrepit reforms; but a case has come to our notice of a flagrant breach of the spirit, if not of the letter, of the last draft order empowering Guardians to withhold soup on adequate grounds which, if ignored, will lead to the complete nullification and abrogation of the order in question. We—"

MR. WEBB: Good! But don't you think it would be as well to put in there: "Which we are aware you are keenly interested in maintaining"?

MRS. WEBB: Very well, then. "Which we are aware you are keenly interested in maintaining. We refer to Sara Sniffkins." (Webb involuntarily shudders.)

MRS. WEBB (sharply): What is it?

MR. WEBB (softly): Nothing, my dear, nothing.

MRS. WEBB (continuing): "Sara Sniffkins, in common with the majority of workhouse children, is aged eight. Now, Sara Sniffkins, with her father, Samuel Sniffkins, and her mother, Susan Sniffkins—"

MR. WEBB (suavely): My dear, is it essential to mention their names?

MRS. WEBB: Of course it is. Now, don't you start advocating that slovenly fashion of weak generalisation.

MR. WEBB (feebly): But they come so closely together. I was thinking rather of euphony, my dear.

MRS. WEBB (coldly): We can soon find that out. (She presses an electric bell button numbered 19, and a young man comes quickly in.) Mr. Jullywugs, will you bring me Tome 14 on Shelf 57, Compartment W on word-order?

MR. WEBB (plaintively): We seem to get secretaries with very curious, not to say displeasing, names. I never

like speaking to any of them when we have visitors here.

MRS. WEBB (firmly): Nonsense! You must conquer such pusillanimity, such atony.

MR. WEBB: Atony?

MRS. WEBB (decisively): Yes, atony.

MR. WEBB: Very well, my dear. (He plays noughts and crosses on a piece of paper as Mr. Jollywugs returns and Mrs. Webb pores over the book.)

MRS. WEBB (reads): "The judicious repetition of the same words forms one of the most effective weapons of the writer as of the rhetorician." There now! Thank you, Mr. Jollywugs; you can take it back. (Exit Mr. Jollywugs.)

MRS. WEBB: Now, then, let us proceed! (Webb hastily covers his noughts and crosses with a piece of blotting paper and looks up attentively.)

MRS. WEBB: "Now, Sara Sniffkins, with her father, Samuel Sniffkins, and her mother, Susan Sniffkins, being confined in the same dormitory—in fact, according to the latest draft order, there is nothing to prevent their being in the same bed as other persons."

MR. WEBB (gently): You must remember, of course, the size of the bed, my dear. We must keep within the realms of probability.

MRS. WEBB: Well, I shall add: "Other than the bed's natural limitations, which it is disgraceful for the Government of the country to rely upon. It is, therefore, not surprising that, on waking, their tempers should not be of the most placable, and that words should be heard of uncomplimentary character to the Guardians concerned. That such casual criticism, even though justified, should result in the stoppage of necessary food to the poor children who inhabit these wards through no fault of their own cannot, we feel convinced, be the intention of the President of the L.G.B., much as his latest draft order may appear to condone if not to actively stimulate such action. We therefore hope to learn that Mr. John Burns—"

MR. WEBB: Say "your esteemed colleague," my dear.

MRS. WEBB: "That your esteemed colleague, Mr. John Burns, has issued a circular strongly condemning such conduct. We are, etc.—"

MR. WEBB: Whom will you have to sign it? A lord, a Labour M.P., an ordinary M.P., a Privy Councillor, a duchess, or a bishop?

MRS. WEBB: I have not thought about that yet.

MR. WEBB: Perhaps, dear, as it's about little children, it had better be a bishop. (He takes a bishop's seal from a number of signets and stamps on his table and passes it on to Mrs. Webb.)

(Curtain.)

W. J. T.

#### MODERN REVIEWING.

(Mr. F. J. Sullivan in the "New Witness," January 1.)

This being my sister's book, it gave me the shivers to be asked to review it, but there's nothing like a sister, so here goes.

Polly could write before she could hold a pen. Nothing could have stopped her probably from writing, but luckily Ma recognised the budding talent and let her write away like anything. Father was a writer of sorts, being a railway navvy's clerk, and would, I think, have become a famous novelist, only the exigencies of a large and ever-growing family compelled him to the more prosaic labour above referred to, which included keeping the list of all the pubs barred to his employer.

Well, as I says, Polly was a genius. Ma done all she could for her. I mean *did*. Polly was put through the mill, and she conscientiously kept up a correspondence with "T.P.'s Weekly's" young-author-advisory column. The rough grounding she thus received, she loved, and literature became securely embedded in her constitution. After a course of journalistic and magazine work, Poll settled down to book-writing, and there ain't no harm in my saying that she is now permanently represented in many libraries. This, I fear, reads like advertisement, but please attribute it to family pride! (Joke.)

I must not say that Poll has re-written "Omar Khayyám," else I might get into trouble. Poll puts it this way: "The Rubáiyát, or its Equivalent. By Polly Dullman." Poll has the Rubáiyát by heart. Wish I had. She says herself, though, that it is not everyone who has the Rubáiyát by heart. And I know she is right. Why, even last summer an amiable seaside landlady showed me a book given her by the local land agent. "I dunno whether he wrote it himself," she

remarked. It was the Rubáiyát, and I told her that if the auctioneer had written it, the verses did him credit!! Wasn't I a Nut, eh?

Poll's undoubtedly an Omar enthusiast and a philosopher. She goes in and comes out—y'know—the door verse! And I venture to say the "Equivalent" is as good as the original. For Poll's a poet, and a poet's a poet wherever you find poetry. Old Poll can actually get on with her rhymes while her husband reads the "Mail" to her! Being myself only a member of the public—except in so far as I happen to be her brother—I can only repeat what the critics say about Polly. And the critics are all simply astonished.

There are anachronisms in the "Equivalent" (for instance, my sister puts "Polly" instead of "Thou" under the bough, which she calls, of course, "holly"), but Poll doesn't mind about these. I pointed it out to her in a spirit of swank, just to let her see I knew something, but she only said: "We-ell, what about it?" That disarmed me.

I have intensely enjoyed the "Equivalent," and shall read the "Rubáiyát" henceforth with even better understanding than before. Everybody ought to read both, and I think Poll's stuff will induce many people to do so again and again.

The dedicatory verses are to "Mother in Heaven." How I wish I could send her a copy! But it would be a queer kind of testimonial to her former piety, I admit.

R. A. F.

#### EPIGRAMS: MANNERS SERIES.

By T. K. L.

To Mr. Richard Aldington.

Your knuckles, O sub. for a "Freewoman," previously rapped in these columns, need rapping again. For six whole months you were so benefited by an exposure of your thoughtless English that, pulling up your socks, you paid tribute to us of a more or less brilliant and often very intelligible series of epistles. Nevertheless, destiny was not to be avoided; you overflowed with your natural flowerish and rococo sentimentality: and the fate once prophesied to you, of some day lying dead in THE NEW AGE, has come upon you. Your obituary notice was duly printed in "Current Cant." But why yourself with your own hands drag out your brainless and decayed trunk? If, like a more celebrated, but also departed, contributor, you have habituated men to expect folly from your pen, you can only appear twice ridiculous when you come protesting 'twas irony you were intending.

To Mr. Thomas Seccombe.

So, on July the 12th, 1913, you penned an article for the "New Witness," indicating the only living poet who was clearly in harmony with the requisite conditions of laureateship! Well, your printers might have done it for you in that style without your needing even to see a proof, for they can set up similar stuff blindfold. However, on the very morning following the appearance of the article, the Prime Minister, as you say, "was sensible enough to take our advice and appoint Mr. Robert Bridges." My good sir—haw-haw!

To Mr. Hermann Scheffauer.

Do not be silly about Piccadilly and the sensuality which you declare is "abroad in this 'vale of tears.'" The people who now are sinking upon sensuality in dens from Bow to Battersea are of small account in the run of things. They are certainly uncontrolled while the Master of Labour is fighting the Master of Money, but at worst they may make horror more apparently horrible before they troop back to the heel of the victor. Surely the Spirit of Piccadilly has not taken possession of you, O writer of a stunt! Do believe, then, that many other persons contain their souls. And cease wallowing in the delicate slush! "Lips voluptuous, bubbles, foam, palms, mirrors, odour of dishes, languors, clamours, blood wolf, Love-Force, naked, primitive." Let me say, "Passion of Dionysos! whence did thou lift this vocabulary?"

To the Editor of "Poetry and Drama."

Your intention to quote, without criticism, from poetical volumes offered for review had seemed to me not well judged, for futility might justly be charged against you; and I had meant, after some expressions of regard, to soften the advice, to beg you print the current verse side by side with examples from the classic poets—for thus, thought I, both the living author and your readers might come by good taste. But, truly, good taste is not to be come by unless, to begin with, one is born with a tolerable share of it. In your maga-

zine for December I find what almost checks my suggestion. Therein Mr. J. C. Squire actually places the poet Vaughan side by side with Francis Thompson, to conclude that Thompson is only superficially the inferior, and alleged to be really so because, firstly, his vocabulary and religion were unfashionable in his day, and, secondly, because this vocabulary and religion were considered properties of certain of the older writers.

I transcribe the lines as quoted from Vaughan and those from Thompson, and defer an exclamation against Mr. Squire.

Here (says Mr. Squire) is Vaughan on "The Timber":

"Sure thou didst flourish once! and many springs,  
Many bright mornings, much dew, many showers  
Passed o'er thy head; many light hearts and wings,  
Which now are dead, lodg'd in thy living bowers.

"But thou beneath the sad and heavy line  
Of death doth waste, all senseless, cold and dark;  
Where not so much as dreams of light may shine,  
Nor any thought of greenness, leaf or bark."

And here Thompson on "A Fallen Yew":

"It seemed corral of the world's great prime  
Made to un-edge the scythe of Time,  
And last with stateliest rhyme.

Stirred by its fall—poor destined bark of Dis!  
Along my soul a bruit there is  
Of echoing images,

Reverberations of mortality;  
Spelt backward from its death, to me  
Its life reads saddenedly.

Its breast was hollowed as the tooth of eld;  
And boys, there creeping unbeheld,  
A laughing moment dwelled.

Yet they, within its very heart so crept,  
Reached not the heart that courage kept,  
With winds and years beswept.

And in its boughs did close and kindly nest  
The birds, as they within its breast,  
By all its leaves caressed.

But bird nor child might touch by any art  
Each other's or the tree's hid heart,  
A whole God's breadth apart;

The breadth of God, the breadth of death and  
life! . . ."

The man who cannot feel here the purity of Vaughan and the impurity of Thompson with his panting metres, his suffocating imagerism, his loutish rhymes, his adverb and his hollow tooth—that man should not pretend to poetical criticism.

But, perchance, Sir Editor, 'twas some such shock as this to your hope of finding men of sure taste that set you banishing your fry of reviewers!

## Art.

### False Remedies and other Considerations.

By Anthony M. Ludovici.

IF the history of the last hundred years of European Culture ever comes to be written, it will be found to consist chiefly in the record of a general reduction in the power of ideas over facts. The influence of the Empirical school of philosophy and of its consequence, materialism, will, no doubt, be assigned as one of the primary causes of this decline in the power of ideas; while the free passport given to every Tom, Dick and Harry to enter the domain of facts, without a previous equipment of ideas, will, no doubt, be considered as another important secondary cause. But for either of these influences to have been successful, something else must have happened, and that was the degeneration of those who are responsible for culture, and on whose guidance the healthy life of the world depends. For it is impossible to interpret or even to "place" facts properly without true ideas, and you cannot distinguish false from true ideas without deep intellectual culture. Even if we suppose that the disease at present is simply temporary cachexy induced by too great a volume of undigested facts—a most sober diagnosis—what prospect have we that the co-ordinating and digesting fluids, which in this case consist of true

ideas, are ever going to appear to master the unwieldy and undigested mass? Everything points the other way. Not deep intellectual culture, the only generator of true ideas, but shallow, specious, tawdry information, is all that stands at the disposal of mankind. Raw material is stacked high in our courtyards and in the midst of it man goes about poorly clad and without a garment of ideas to his back.

People belonging to an order of society in which the interpretation of facts follows a certain strict tradition, are far less in need of a guide to interpretation than ourselves; for they are not faced every day by one, two, or three fresh facts, which demand immediate attention and the prompt assumption of a definite attitude. In a society, however, where traditional interpretation is at an end, and where the accumulation of facts has been allowed far to outpace the corresponding and necessary formation of co-ordinating and mastering ideas, a difficulty is presented which naturally leaves the ordinary person utterly helpless and even the extraordinary one profoundly baffled.

Now when such a society bears on its shoulders the additional burden of the lie of equality, the lie of the rights of the individual conscience, and the lie of the rights of individual expression, there is an aggravation of this malady, cachexy, which renders it wellnigh hopeless. For with the lie of equality, no one can make any claim to superior rights of interpretation at all, with the lie of the individual conscience, every interpretation, however crude and however crass, demands a hearing, and with the lie of the rights of individual expression, almost every portion of that stack of raw material becomes either refashioned into a myriad different forms without either relation or scheme, or else worshipped crudely for its own sake as Raw Material, in the hope, I suppose, that eggs treated with sufficient reverence may produce an omelette.

Certain it is, that the decline of culture, with the concomitant decline in the power and depth of ideas, has led to no panic, no wild revulsion of feeling towards the exaltation of the naked fact. On the contrary, Raw Material, which is the naked fact, is now sought, coveted, treasured, and worshipped, almost for its own sake—or, if not for its own sake, for the sake of its infinite potentialities and all the romantic hopes to which these potentialities give rise.

Thus amid the confusion of the modern age, the very remedy sought by the majority of these emancipated individual consciences, is the worst aggravation of the malady itself. We are suffering, understand, from a lack of deep intellectual culture, and a consequent paucity of true ideas with which to deal with facts, with raw material. Indeed, our attitude to fact is that almost of the natural savage or the immature man. What could be worse than to suggest as a remedy for this Rousseau's panacea "back to barbarity," or Schiller's tacit incitement to the worship of the child!

But that amid the anarchy of the age a strong temptation does exist to seek refuge from the hopeless confusion and complexity of badly-managed and incompetent maturity in the apparent simplicity of immaturity and raw material, no one, I suppose, will deny. This is, and always has been, the romantic solace or regenerating Spa of all peoples who have botched maturity, or who have failed to master its problems. It is, however, a solace, an opiate, a sedative, and nothing more. The tremendously important position which the child now enjoys in modern life, and the un-governed worship of Nature, per se, are both symptoms of the wholesale manner in which people are having recourse to drugs instead of to a prompt and courageous struggle with themselves, in order to overcome the difficulties of their position.

Nor will anybody deny, I suppose, that with the spectacle of unmastered maturity and increasing muddle constantly before his eyes, together with the influence of this modern bias in favour of Nature and raw material, there is also a strong temptation for

every man to believe that that part of Nature which is in him, that portion of him which makes him akin to the vegetation and the fauna of the world, may impart a primitive value to his utterances, to his point of view, to his individual expression, which no claims of culture, however profound, can put into question. And this is more particularly the case when, as at present in Europe, almost two-thirds of the population believe, or are beginning to believe, in the eligibility of the individual conscience as an ultimate tribunal.

Furthermore, with the source of ideas—that is to say, a deep intellectual culture—now unfortunately run dry, and artistic expression or the expression of each individual in his daily life having become almost generally, not an interpretation of life through the medium of true ideas, but either a transcript of life or else an interpretation of life in the isolated terms of the individual (the former approaching photography and the latter nonsense); there has arisen, owing to the necessary sterility and futility of these two expedients of artistic bankruptcy, a temptation to add a semblance of vitality to art, by exciting interest and creating sensations by tricks of form alone. And again, here, as I pointed out in "T.P.'s Weekly" three years ago, the prepossession in favour of the immature and of the child and the savage, was not even scouted in matters of form. The very writer of the Introduction to the Catalogue of the Exhibition to which I then referred, described the general effect of the pictures as "that of a return to primitive, even, perhaps, of a return to barbaric art." But, as I remarked then, and as I believe to-day, no good can come, no fruitful correction of adults, of adult life, and of adult errors, can arise out of this "ring-a-ring-of-roses" attitude. It is no panacea for modern ills "to hand rattles all round and to try to be coyly idiotic like babies."

These attempted remedies, or rather havens of refuge, can do nothing towards reforming the arts. They can do nothing towards reforming anything at all. They can only succeed in making things a thousand times worse. It is futile to inveigh against the Academy or against the cliché. For they are not causes, but symptoms; they are not even the disease, but the outward signs of it. What we are in need of most of all, is a deep intellectual culture, which will give us the instruments in the form of ideas for dealing with raw material, and no deep intellectual culture has ever arisen out of Toms, Dicks and Harrys all seeking their own remedies or inveighing against the past. Culture is not an abstract quantity that can be realised through the deliberation of no matter how many mediocrities. It is a definite thing with which we are all acquainted only in connection with those who create it. It is the definite possession, and necessary emanation of a certain type of man, called by Chinese philosophers, the superior man. And any reform which starts from below, by altering the methods or institutions of the inferior men, without reckoning with the existence or non-existence of the superior man, is bound to be absolutely sterile and abortive. It is the superior man who creates the weapons, the ideas, with which to deal with life; and to send a people nauseated by an effete Academy or by effete leaders, out to Nature without the guidance of the superior man, is just as absurd as to send your agricultural labourer out into the tangle of a jungle and to tell him to cultivate the soil, without allowing him a single instrument or tool with which to work.

Any form of society, therefore, which does not allow of the superior man, the creator of a deep intellectual culture, to rise to the position of a leader—any society, that is to say, which is not strictly aristocratic, is bound to become impoverished in its power over raw material, over facts, over Nature, over life; and must ultimately seek in barbarity or in open anarchy a remedy for its condition of cachexy induced by indigestion. To stand for an aristocratic order of society, as I do, therefore, in which the best, according to a

very definite set of values are the leaders, is only to claim that we simply cannot deal with life without that control of it which the superior man naturally possesses, and which he hands on to us by means of the ideas inseparable from his culture. But, say objectors: Who are the best? How are they to be found? Are they to be elected, are they to rise by war, by miracle, or by what?

Let me call attention to the state of affairs to-day! The values of to-day point in a very definite direction, do they not? There are still some ideals, I will admit, some notions of superiority, lingering about, which are not wholly materialistic and which do not exalt material success and quantity or material wealth, as the highest thing; still, when we have made all due allowance for that hopeful but shrunken remnant of quality in our midst, most people will agree, I suppose, that superiority to-day, in the minds of most men, means wealth, opulence, quantitative success. Now, I ask you, does the opulent wealthy man require election, or self-assertion, to be placed on the top-most pedestal of modern life? No, of course not. He is placed there by general consent. Why? Because wherever the ruling values of a people point to superiority in a certain form, the masses invariably exercise judgment in accordance with those ruling values, without giving the matter any further thought.

When, I am asked, then, how the superior man of an artistic society is to be found, I always point to the mechanism by means of which the supposed superior man even of this age is found and exalted; and people then begin to realise that there is something more practical than theoretical vapourings, and more vital than mere guess-work, in the reply—by means of the general direction of taste in a community. It is that which consciously or unconsciously seizes upon value and non-value. And if there were a healthier, a more cultured taste abroad to-morrow; if valuations could by a stroke of the wand be rendered nobler, less materialistic, and less myopic, although such a revolution could not, of course, spontaneously create the superior man of an aristocratic community, it would so far prepare the way for him, as to avoid his crucifixion when he appeared; while if his type were already present, it would bring it to almost immediate prominence.

An aristocratic order of society and all its ramifications, with the best at the head, may, in these days of superficial thinking and plausible tags, sound a facile solution of present-day problems; nor is a short article precisely the best medium, either for the promulgation or substantiation of such a scheme; but I am willing to contest my ground with the best. For three years now I have done little else than endeavour to consolidate my position from this standpoint. And it is from this point of view, from an aristocratic order of society, that I have striven to mould my opinions. Perhaps this will answer as adequately as possible in the space at my disposal the point raised last week by my colleague R. H. C., relative to the order of society I have in my mind when I write.

## Drama.

By John Francis Hope.

I AM a prophet, and what I say comes true. For example—but why bother about examples? Everybody must have read the interview with Mr. Granville Barker published in the "Observer" of January 4, 1914, and the two-column leading article on the same subject which concluded with an exhortation to the readers of the "Observer" to "down with the dust." If these same people will turn back to my article published on January 1, and to the two preceding articles, and compare them with the "Observer" manifesto, they will discover that it was really I who was interviewed by the "Observer." Mr. Granville Barker actually draws a distinction between "true repertory and false repertory";

true repertory being what Mr. Barker supplies and false repertory being what "all these theatres that call themselves repertory theatres" supply. All these theatres are really "short-run theatres," says Mr. Barker; so, by the way, was Mr. Barker's, until he had this six weeks of repertory at the St. James's; and discovered that "The Boiled Duck," or whatever it is called, could attract full houses once a week during the pantomime season. The difference between true and false repertory seems to be that false repertory (like Miss Horniman's, for example) produces plays for, say, a fortnight's run, while the true Barkerian repertory would, so soon as the box-office became vocal, prolong the life of the play by reducing the number of performances per week, and playing something just as bad on the other nights. For example (I must bother about examples, after all), "we are now giving only one performance of 'The Wild [not boiled, as I thought] Duck.' You could go on giving the one performance a week all through the year if necessary, if you have a repertory theatre; and when 'The Doctor's Dilemma' ceased to be so popular you could reduce it to three performances a week, or two. That is the theory and practice of repertory." But what I want to know is, what particular sort of repertory it is that will reduce the number of performances of this latter play to none a week; and evidently my repertory is not that of Mr. Barker.

Mr. Barker's idea of repertory has a strange resemblance to the idea of the praying wheel. "Supply me with £25,000 a year for three years," he says, in effect, "and, by the way, if the profits permit, I will pay you 4 per cent. interest on your money, and I will produce a most variegated praying wheel with which I will extract alms from the public. They will hear only those petitions that they like more than once in succession; the rest will be revived at such intervals that the public will have forgotten its response to their last appeal. 'Pity the poor blind,' will be my chief petition, but this will be so varied that the public will think that it is doing a great work in the cause of art, that it is actually helping me to keep alive a 'fine lot of English dramatic literature.'" The money will, I suppose, be forthcoming; the response to Mr. Barker's appeal from the stage of the St. James's has been "quite satisfactory" to Mr. Barker, and the "Observer's" appeal to its readers will probably have the expected results. This "runner-up" to the National Theatre (I prefer the use of this sporting phrase to Mr. Barker's statement that the repertory will "pave the way" for the National Theatre) is practically certain of its three-years' guarantee; and when the National Theatre is opened in three years' time, this repertory theatre will be established and then, says Mr. Barker, "there could be nothing but good from official and non-official institutions running side by side." As Mr. Barker is a member of the committee of the National Theatre, and will, in my opinion, be its first manager, his own simile suggests that he hopes to attempt the famous circus feat of riding two horses at once. The metaphors of this paragraph are deliberately mixed.

All this is very interesting, and I hope that Mr. Barker will be a peer of the realm before he dies, and that he will not become a member of the London County Council. But where do I come in? The future Lord Barker of Barking has not forgotten me. I said that I hoped that the repertory would be comprehensive, that is, selected without taste. It will. "It is not intended to do merely Ibsen, and Shaw, and Galsworthy [notice that "merely"]. I want to do Shakespeare—I want to do Tchekoff—I want to do Congreve. I want to do all sorts and conditions of plays. I mean that there shall be very great catholicity in their choice." This is the ideal of the universal provider, and I suggest that the repertory theatre adopt as its motto the phrase: "We have what you want." That there will be something even for John Francis Hope is suggested by the exclamation: "I want to do Congreve." This is apparently to be the great "draw"

of the programme, for the "Observer" twice emphasises it in its editorial article. "What we like almost best in Mr. Barker's frank talk with our representative yesterday is 'I want to do Congreve,'" says the "Observer." But why this sudden enthusiasm for Congreve? Congreve, like the rest of the post-Restoration school, was largely influenced by French ideas. He is not characteristically English; he is not an expression of our native genius, as the Elizabethans were, and therefore he finds a place in the exotic drama that Mr. Barker wishes to preserve, and revive.

But what is the value of this catholicity in selection? It only means that the repertory theatre will provide a summary of the Continental drama. It is asking us to be European, in Nietzsche's phrase, before we are national; before we are anything of ourselves, it asks us to be everybody else by adoption. At the moment when art is so fiercely individualistic that scarcely one artist can understand the work of another, at the very moment when a tradition should be revived or formed to provide a common source of individual inspiration, we are asked to fill our hearts and minds with the knowledge and the love of foreign works. But we may well ask why we should be nothing of ourselves. Greek drama is unmistakably Greek, French drama is unmistakably French, Russian and Scandinavian dramas have their characteristic national qualities. But what is English drama at the present time? It is an imitation by Irishmen primarily of the Scandinavian and French dramas, and secondarily an imitation by Englishmen of the Irishman's imitation of the Scandinavian and French dramas. Ever since Englishwomen discovered that Nora went out and banged the door, we have had nothing but plays in which the women went out and banged the door. The pertinacity with which the door has been banged is characteristically English, but the fact reminds us how necessary it is to provide Englishmen with proper objects for imitation. Banging the door is not the most desirable action to be imitated.

I am not denying the educational value of such a repertory as that provided by Mr. Barker; it will teach the English artist what to avoid; but its cultural value is open to question. Apart from the opportunities afforded by such a scheme to Mr. Barker's ambition as a "producer," its ideal of culture is quantitative, not qualitative. It is not, as Matthew Arnold wished, an attempt to acquaint us with the *best* that has been thought and written; it is an attempt to provide us with the *most* of foreign art. It must depend largely on translations, and the literary artist will thereby be shocked. It will be an importation, not an assimilation, of foreign ideas; and its deliberate appeal to a selected public means that the works of native dramatists that will be accepted will be of the same type, that is, will be imitations.

For the power of assimilation of foreign culture is very limited. The Italian Renaissance, for example, produced an abundant crop of imitations of Greek and Roman antiquities; but most of the works that live were not imitations, but original Italian works of which the writers were ashamed. The "Decameron," Petrarch's "Sonnets," and Machiavelli's works, are examples. In England, the only effect of the perpetuation of Greek culture has been a plentiful crop of imitations of Greek works. Matthew Arnold prided himself on his Greek drama, "Merope"; but, as Russell Lowell asked: "Where is 'Merope' now?" Matthew Arnold lives as a poet by his original works, not by his imitations of the Greek. I need not multiply examples; but it should be clear that English drama has nothing to hope for from Mr. Barker's scheme. Its distinctive feature is the obliteration of distinctions; and if our religious instincts have suffered as a consequence of the importation and adoption of the Hebraic creed, if our art is nothing but a confused jumble of styles as a consequence of the preservation of Greek, Roman, and Renaissance ideals, our characteristic drama will not

derive any inspiration from Mr. Barker's repertory theatre. Shakespeare and Congreve, cheek by jowl with Tchekoff, is the most comprehensive insult ever offered to taste; and the confusion of mind that will tolerate Shakespeare and Congreve in one scheme indicates that Mr. Barker has no principle of selection, and that no purpose different from that of the manager of a commercial theatre inspires the institution of the repertory theatre.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

### ITALIAN SYNDICALISM.

Sir,—In two of your recent issues (Oct. 23 and Nov. 20) are references to the movement of the Italian bottle-blowers. Curiously enough, *THE NEW AGE* containing these articles reached me at Gaeta, where the Bottle-Blowers' Co-operative Association have their new and largest plant working at full capacity, a plant, which, besides being the most up to date in Europe, is so well located and so efficiently planned that it is destined to absorb the whole market in the South of Italy. The factory is right on the sea-coast, getting its sand—the chief raw material—from the shore, which represents an inexhaustible source of raw material. The seaport is a few hundred yards away; and the coal—the next most important material—is brought through elevators from the steamers right to the furnaces. The factory employs six hundred labourers, all members and shareholders. There are no capitalist shareholders in the whole organisation, and only those workers can hold a share in the organisation who actually do the work. I do not know where your correspondents got their information, but I think that they are mixing up the Italian bottle-blowers with the affairs of the French bottle-blowers, who have a factory at Albi and are continually in financial troubles, and, what is worse, they have rebelled several times against the management.

It is true that this Italian organisation went through a period of crisis, and that at present it is in reorganisation. They made debts, they capitalised too largely for improvements and for the erection of the plant in Gaeta. The bad financial situation brought about by the war and other minor matters necessitated a reorganisation. The Co-operative Bank in Milan has paid all debts of the organisation, and has distributed the total sum proportionately to the five factories of the organisation. Every factory pays off its debt in rates. After paying all debts, they will return full owners of the plants.

Such transactions occur every day in the co-operative movement and in the capitalist world. The biggest capitalist concerns with great paid-in capital are continually relying on credit. A labour organisation with small capital and a turnover of more than ten million lire per year cannot keep its affairs going without applying for credit to the banks or to private individuals. And it goes without saying that the terms of credit to such militant anti-capitalist organisations are very hard.

In all my articles about this movement (the first of which was published in "Wiltshire's Magazine," November, 1909, long before Syndicalism came into vogue in the English-speaking countries) I tried to make the point that if a labour union industrially organised—i.e., admitting to membership all trades, the unskilled included—is successful in obtaining a monopoly of its own labour, it will inevitably aim at assuming new functions and will break into a higher plane of activity, getting partial or entire control of its industry, progressing on this new plane in the measure of the power held by the monopoly exercised. But the monopoly alone is not enough. Its holders must have a new vision, that of conquering the industries; and must develop within their ranks the moral capacity of directing the mass towards this campaign of conquest and the technical efficiency to run the industries.

Now, this point has not been shaken at all by the vicissitudes of the organisation of the bottle-blowers of Italy. I have never stated that they have obtained a complete monopoly of the labour in their industry. They have not reached this point yet. All the more wonderful is what they have achieved. And the creditors who at the first sign of crisis tried to supplant the old managers (all working men developed from the rank and file, with their own men), had to give it up in despair after a short period of experimenting and after losing a great deal of money, and were obliged, greatly humiliated, to reinstate the old managers, who alone knew how to organise pro-

duction and distribution, and who alone could secure the collaboration of the mass.

At present the five factories of the workers are working at full time and at profits, and as far as we can see to-day they will be in the position to pay off their debts even before these fall due.

There is no big capitalist concern in the world which did not go through a period of crisis, reorganisation, and consolidation. And this labour organisation has come out magnificently from a very hard test of efficiency. It has never fought for profits. Its sole intention was to demonstrate that the workers can run the industries without the direction of the so-called captains of industry. It stood for a revolutionary principle, and it has saved this principle. We must consider, also, that they fought alone, that they are pioneers far ahead of any other organisation in Italy or in any other country.

I hope that this statement will induce our critics to distinguish between what is essential, pertaining to the sphere of principles, and what is of minor importance, pertaining to the workings of any industrial concern in the capitalist world, in this unique and daring experiment of a couple of thousand self-sacrificing, daring, and enthusiastic labourers.

ODON POR.

### LABOUR IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Sir,—The profoundest researches and inquiries yield me only the information that the miners were so pestered by Mrs. Mary Fitzgerald that a majority of the delegates got rid of her by even unconstitutional means—which fact the epistle of your correspondent "Nemo" affirms.

I regret that the festive season has made me somewhat soft-headed towards the fair sex, but I hope shortly to repair my errors. I see that Mrs. Dora Montefiore is departing shortly for South Africa, though poor old Dublin is still starving. A saloon ticket to Cape Town costs forty-four guineas, but Dublin should think this very cheap indeed. When will Labour understand that its weeping saviours take trips abroad to enjoy themselves? Such should be held as suspect as the soldier who voluntarily leaves the field to tell his general that the squadron is in a tight place!

EDWARD STAFFORD.

### THE INSURANCE ACT.

Sir,—The principles and working of the Insurance Act will be the subject of a debate which is being arranged by the Women's Tax Resistance League, at the Caxton Hall, Westminster, on Monday, January 19, at 8 p.m. Miss Margaret Douglas (Hon. Secretary of the Insurance Tax Resisters' Defence Association) will move a resolution condemning the Insurance Act as undemocratic in principle and in its operation particularly unjust to women.

The defence of the Act will be entrusted to Sir Victor Horsley, and the chair will be occupied by Sir Edward Busk, M.A., LL.B.

Admission will be free, but tickets for reserved seats at 2s. 6d. and 1s., and free tickets may be obtained from the Women's Tax Resistance League, 10, Talbot House, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

N. M.

### NATIONAL UNION OF CLERKS.

Sir,—With reference to the criticism which Mr. Hester has directed against the administration of the N.U.C. and Mr. Hughes' reply thereto, may I be permitted to state that the final paragraph of Mr. Hughes' letter is inaccurate.

I was present at the tribunal to which he refers when a resolution was moved condemning the system of engaging clerks at a weekly rate and discharging them at the end of a day's work with a day's pay only, and further, censuring the Assistant General Secretary for his action in the matter referred to by our friend Mr. Hester.

This resolution was lost, it is true, by 13 votes for with 21 against, but it was apparent that this was owing to a division of opinion concerning the justice of censuring Mr. Hughes, and when a resolution was moved calling upon the Executive Council of the N.U.C. to at once abolish the system, which Mr. Hester is attacking, but deleting the personal reference to Mr. Hughes, it was carried unanimously. This is conclusive proof that Mr. Hughes' statement as to the verdict of the tribunal is inaccurate.

I was of the opinion that Mr. Hughes had learnt the lesson of his life at that tribunal, and would not have hastened into print, but would have occupied his time in putting his own house in order.

H. GODSPEED,  
President—Islington Branch—N.U.C.

"E. P. P. P."

Sir,—With reference to the question of "Economic and Political power," I take the liberty of sending you an extract from Macaulay's speech in Parliament on the Disabilities (Civil) of the Jews.

JOHN JOHNSTON.

"... When my honourable friend tells us that he will allow the Jews to possess property to any amount, but that he will not allow them to possess the smallest political power, he holds contradictory language. Property is power. The Hon. member for Oldham reasons better than my hon. friend. The Hon. member for Oldham sees very clearly that it is impossible to deprive a man of political power if you suffer him to be the proprietor of half a county, and, therefore, very consistently proposes to confiscate the landed estates of the Jews. But even the hon. member for Oldham does not go far enough. He has not proposed to confiscate the personal property of the Jews. Yet it is perfectly certain that any Jew who has a million (of money) may easily make himself very important in the State. . . . The Jew must not sit in Parliament, but he may be the proprietor of all the Ten Pound houses in a borough! He may have more Fifty Pound tenants than any Peer in the kingdom."

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#### THE ANGLO-OTTOMAN MOVEMENT.

Sir,—The undersigned have, since August, 1913, been more or less prominently before the public in connection with an organisation known as the Ottoman Committee. That Committee was brought to an end by a vote taken in December. We are now carrying on the same movement under the Anglo-Ottoman Society. Its office is at 158, Fleet Street, in the City of London, which address has been since August last the only centre of a public Turcophile propaganda in Great Britain. The reorganisation of the movement has given us the opportunity to effect certain improvements. The organisation is now international, with corresponding branches abroad. It will, as heretofore, defend the interests of the Ottoman Empire, and it will now in addition espouse the cause of Muslims throughout the world. The society is opened to all men and women, without distinction of race or of political and religious beliefs.

The objects are those laid down by us in 1913:—

1. To resist encroachments upon the integrity of the Ottoman Empire.
2. To emphasise the strategical and commercial importance of that integrity to the British Empire.
3. To maintain the friendship of Britain with the Ottoman Empire, and to promote a cordial understanding between Turks and Britons.

The supporters of the society have resolved that special efforts shall be directed towards interesting the British commercial and business classes in the cause of Turkey, and to advocate more direct commercial relation between Turkey and Great Britain.

For five months we have attempted much, and at best effected a little, in favour of a British policy of justice to Turkey. If any who support such a policy would wish to show their approval of the Ottoman propaganda, we venture to suggest that no more effective way could be taken than joining the Anglo-Ottoman Society.

For the Anglo-Ottoman Society, Executive Committee,

MOWBAY AND STOURTON, President.

O'DONNELL OF O'DONNELL, Vice President.

DUSE MOHAMED, Hon. Treasurer.

GEORGE PALMER, Organiser.

ARTHUR FIELD, Hon. Secretary.

158, Fleet Street, London, E.C., Jan. 5, 1914.

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#### LETTERS ON WAR.

Sir,—Your contributors are such infernally clever fellows, one feels doubtful of some trap or other, some undercurrent of meaning not disclosed to ordinary intelligences; consequently I am not quite sure, though I feel I am on safe ground with "A Rifleman."

He writes good old-fashioned sense about Might and Right, which cannot be misunderstood. I congratulate him. But what I wanted to do is just to give him a hint that he is on the wrong track with regard to the strong man having started the moral code and the property right. It was really a fellow of another kidney altogether. It was a little devil of a chap, the natural son of the witch-doctor or wise man, a kind of hanger-on of the camp, who did the writing such as they did, with a burnt stick, and other odd jobs.

He captured a girl, a really good-looking one, and, not being strong, knew he could not keep her under the old regime, so persuaded the strong fellows of the tribe

that it would be much better for them, whilst they had the pull, to recognise property rights, as very likely a stronger might come along; whereas, if they got the whole tribe with them now, etc., etc. Needless to say, he got the thing going, and then brought out the girl.

So much for the start. "A Rifleman" is all in order about the rest. But I do wish you would keep that other clever chap, "Romney," from making unkind remarks, or I am afraid "A Rifleman" will not have a fair chance.

J. H.

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#### A PSYCHOLOGICAL BASIS FOR EDUCATION.

Sir,—"Romney's" letter under this heading caught my attention through the misspelling of the name Dalcroze. I should like to suggest that "Romney" cannot have studied the Dalcroze teaching sufficiently. Nowhere, writing from memory, does he claim that it is a complete educational system. He claims, on the contrary, that what he teaches should be part, possibly an important part, of the ordinary education, and that it will vivify this wonderfully.

I can, however, only claim a small knowledge of it, including a holiday course at the college at Helleran, and "Romney" may have access to information not yet come my way.

F. Y. S.

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Sir,—As a working man and an ardent student of THE NEW AGE since its first number, I have managed to gather together a "partial and scrappy knowledge which is better than none." However, for some time past certain nebulous material has existed in my mind—struggling to take form—the substance I discovered exemplified by "Romney" in the following. Referring to the activities of the Organisation Society (NEW AGE, December 25), he says:—"The researches of this Society into the analogy which exists between man and the universe ended in the conclusion that man is literally, as well as analogically, a miniature cosmos, and that the various strata which are discoverable in the organic life of the universe are reproduced in the mind of man." Sir, though only an amateur celestial peregrinator, the following analogy recently took form and struggled to the surface of my mind. I send it for what it is worth. "Remove, I thought, the sun or centre from the solar system, and the planets and planetary systems would immediately disperse in a myriad directions, finding new centres and a new balance of attraction and inertia set up in the firmament. And so in the psychological firmament of all human institutions are numberless centres of varying degrees of psychological attractiveness, all swaying satellites in a proportion to their powers of attraction, these satellites becoming centres of smaller systems and so on, making up system within system, and all swaying in the balance of persuasion and dissuasion. Remove one of these centres, and the displacement and readjustment will be just in proportion to the power of the centre removed." Further, and in conclusion, the psychology of the present labour unrest is analogous to that great nebulous mass in the heavens, straining for form and new systems—the Guild System possibly—and destined to oust a Capitalism which has reached its meridian.

H. WELLSRING.

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Sir,—Does the demand for the abolition of wagedom receive the sanction of biological law? It does, for the following reasons (the bearing of my remarks on the psychological factor will appear later):—

(1) It will be a step towards closer adaptation of structure to environment. What is adaptation of structure to environment? It is that state in which the environment is so suited to the organism as to allow of full play for all the activities of the individual. When such adaptation is reached for the whole of the individuals in a given community, it is complete. The environment in our particular case is the social. That state of social environment wherein each member of society will have attained full play for his faculties will be the complete social state. In societies the liberty of the individual to exercise his faculties is now—at any rate theoretically—universally recognised as being limited only by the similar liberty for others. The perfect social state would therefore be that in which this law of equal freedom was lived up to in its entirety. Now, under wagedom this law is violated, since wagedom renders one class of the community dependent on another class for its existence. Nay, this dependence is even tacitly, and often openly, admitted by such social thinkers as, lacking a biological

training, do not see the implications of the admission. Slightly altering, then, the words of the "Guild Writers," we may say that the wage relation, under which one man receives service from another in return for an otherwise withheld subsistence, is a breach of the social law of equal freedom.

(2) The abolition of the wage relation is in harmony with biological teaching as to atrophy of organs through cessation of function. The wage system has as its necessary accompaniment the unemployed. The presence of the unemployed class produces politically the unemployed question. The unemployed question has brought along State help, with its tacit acceptance of the wage relation. To the extent now that the wage-earner accepts aid from the State his own functional activity is restricted. Certain functions connected with the providing for the full present and future maintenance of himself and family are performed for him by the State. The result, biologically expressed, is partial atrophy. Give the worker the status he can justly claim under the law of equal liberty, and legislation that (a) accepts the wage relation and (b) undertakes to perform for the wage-earner certain work to which, under wage-dom, he himself cannot devote his faculties, will die a natural death.

(3) The demand of our physiologists for "mutational novelties," "definite favourable varieties," is also here fully met on the social side. The constant tendency towards complete social adaptation will produce these. The abolition of wagedom, having for its avowed object the raising of the status of the worker, would produce of necessity the required favourable social variation.

Since, also, all adaptation thus produced must of necessity be instinctive, we have thus that physiological variation of instinct which forms the basis of all stable change of institutions.

Enough has been said to show that anyone with the elements of biological training must perceive that "motive," "spiritual conversion," etc., are the necessary and inevitable accompaniments of any adaptation of structure to environment. Especially in the case of adaptation to the requirements of the perfect social environment do we perceive the approach to the complete condition of equal freedom. No great movement can have inception *without* a motive. The motive is that of greater adaptation of structure to environment, since no class will consciously strive for less adaptation, with its consequent penalties. When, further, it is seen that the move from wagedom is one towards a completer social adaptation, the "morality" of the movement is obvious. Put rather differently, we may say that, since our environment is *social*, all further adaptation of structure to environment must be moral in its essence. The social is the moral. We are therefore moral of necessity. The above is but an elucidation of my previous contention that in human societies the biological and the psychological factors accompany one another of necessity. We do not need the religionists to urge us to be moral. Social environment forces it on us. Especially when the religionists preach "change of heart," whilst tacitly accepting—nay, evenly openly accepting—the wage relation, do they place themselves out of court. They preach the good, whilst countenancing the evil. (We have here, Mr. Cowley, the fundamental cause of the inefficacy of past religious teaching. That teaching rejects—at any rate, in practice—the main conclusions of biological thought.)

Our argument may be summarised, in a slightly different sequence from the one adopted above, as follows:—(a) All fresh adaptation to social requirements is ultimately, in spite of temporary failures, owing to misdirected State effort, one towards *greater* adaptation; (b) perfect social adaptation is reached only when the law of equal liberty has its full application; (c) the abolition of the wage relation will be an approach towards this full application; it has therefore "heaps" of morality.

Hamburg.

A. N.

#### HARLEY STREET.

Sir,—The article—"Harley Street in the Limelight"—which appeared in your issue of January 8 has greatly interested me, for I have just heard of a case which justifies to the hilt your cynical strictures on the methods of some, at least, of the Harley Street practitioners.

A certain gentleman—a Lieutenant R.N.R.—was practically incapacitated by trouble in the knee-joint. He consulted a leading light in the surgical world, and was told by him that the mischief was due to his teeth. Two equally eminent men gave an entirely different diagnosis. The treatment recommended was utterly ineffective, and

after weeks of despair, he was induced to consult Mr. H. A. Barker, the bonesetter, of Park Lane, who promptly diagnosed a displaced cartilage, replaced it at once, and effected an immediate and permanent cure.

Now, Sir, what are the poor, long-suffering public to think? At what conclusion are they justified in arriving?

Either these eminent men are deliberately trifling with their patients, or else they are hopelessly lacking in knowledge. The innumerable letters that have appeared in the columns of all the leading journals during the last few years demonstrate, beyond a doubt, that the medical profession is utterly ignorant in this particular department of surgery. They are fully aware of the fact, and yet they entirely refuse to be taught by men who are thoroughly competent to teach them, because, it so happens, that they are what is called "unqualified." Mr. H. A. Barker is such an one. His life is occupied in effecting rapid, not to say immediate cures, in cases which have been baffling for months or years the highest medical and surgical treatment.

He has offered, time after time, to demonstrate in the medical schools the system of bloodless surgery, of which overwhelming testimony has proved him to be a past-master. In response, the medical Press has abused him, the profession has sneered at him; the gentleman who has had the moral courage to assist him as anæsthetist—Dr. F. W. Axham—has been struck off the register, and branded as "infamous."

I think, Sir, it is monstrous, and totally inexplicable conduct on the part of a noble profession to allow the suffering public to go on suffering because they are consumed by an utterly unworthy jealousy, or hidebound by the foolish restrictions of a senseless etiquette.

M. A.

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#### THE KIKUYU CONFERENCE.

Sir,—In your note on the Kikuyu Conference you incidentally use an argument which appears to ignore the plain law of the land as to the admission of unconfirmed persons to communion. May I remind you, firstly, that such admission is forbidden in unequivocal terms by a rubric of the Prayer Book, and, secondly, that it has been laid down by the highest judicial authority that all the rubrics are legally binding on the clergy, having, as far as they (the clergy) are concerned, the force of an Act of Parliament. In the light of these indisputable facts it is difficult to see how your statement that "every citizen," confirmed or not, has the right to be admitted to communion, seeing that the clergy are forbidden by law to admit them. Whether the same rule applies to Africa I cannot say, but I do not think it can be denied that what I have written is a correct summary of the law in this country as far as Acts of Parliament and the courts are concerned.

GORDON CROSSE.

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#### "WHAT'S IN A NAME?"

Sir,—Mr. Wordsworth Donisthorpe likes to describe the "three stages in industrialism" as "Serfdom, Wagedom, Freedom" because of the "symmetry in the nomenclature." For the same reason I suggest Slavery, Wagery, Livery—I mean Liberty!

R. NORTH.

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#### FAINT PRAISE.

Sir,—The other day Mr. Herbert Samuel, Postmaster-General, was the guest of the City Liberal Club. In the course of his inevitable speech he referred to the Liberal land policy. I quote from the "Daily Telegraph" of December 11:—"The opponents of the policy did not damn it with faint praise, but praised it with faint damnation." Mr. Samuel may have read THE NEW AGE before the Marconi scandal if he has not done so since, for this little quip was used by Mr. Bechhöfer in "Pastiche" on August 15, 1912.

J. W. GIBBON.

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#### CURRENT CANT.

Sir,—The retort obvious with a vengeance! The Compiler of "Current Cant" certainly found his level when he became a compiler.

HERMON OULD.

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Sir,—Mr. E. A. Kiorboe's suggestion that Mr. Lloyd George's statement, "I stand for the bottom dog," should be headed "Current Commonplace," is absurd. It should be obvious that Mr. Lloyd George stands *on*, not *for* the "bottom dog." His cant lies in his confusing the interests of Liberal officials with the interests of "bottom dogs."

THE COMPILER OF "CURRENT CANT."

## CURRENT CANT.

Sir,—May I draw your attention to page 302 in the January "English Review." The following passage is perhaps worth a place in "Current Cant":—

"You must hold your own position,  
Crushing down the opposition,  
And can leave the fight's fruition  
To your General Jehovah."

This is not derivative, not imitative. In a sense it strikes a new note in English poetry, though the test of time must be applied before we can claim admission for it to the highest class." HUGH KINGSMILL.

\* \* \*

Sir,—After re-reading Mr. Richard Aldington's article entitled "Truth about Homer," I note that the phrase, "We should always believe everything we read in books," is not intended seriously, but merely as a "moral." I owe him an apology for carelessness.

THE COMPILER OF CURRENT CANT.

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## "THE PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD."

Sir,—Your correspondent, Montgomery Beligion, writes of this play as a piece "that no true broth of a bhoy of an Irishman can hear mentioned without that righteous indignation which expresses itself in abuse and shouting." I wish to protest against this assertion. If an Irishman (broth or not) feels like this about the play he is suffering from stupidity or arrested mental development. Years ago when the play was first put on, it is true that roughs from the quays made stormy scenes at the Abbey Theatre, but they know better now. The "Playboy" is always well received in these days.

One knows that the satire of this humorous play is not perceived at first by the unthinking or uneducated, or the "tenth transmitter of a foolish face." I have wept tears of laughter on hearing a group of "English" people back from the Court Theatre solemnly discussing what a dreadful thing it is, to make a hero of a man who killed his father. They had missed the point of the play. Synge meant to satirise a defect in the Irish peasant character, namely, that they are too prone to praise those who perform brave deeds of whatever kind. To do this he chose a supposed parricide, in the Shaw manner, and not meant to be taken seriously. To my mind the action of the play shows this clearly. The Playboy walking through the country gets made much of for telling how he killed his father, and the father, not killed at all, but following him up, gets his three meals a day for telling his version of the incident. Could anything be funnier? The subduing of the Playboy, and his subsequent assertion of himself, the husband-hunting Widow Quinn, and the beautiful but bad-tempered Pegeen, and everything else in the play; how amusing it all is! The French critics were able to appreciate it. M. K. HULL.

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## MODERN SCULPTURE.

Sir,—I am delighted to see letters in your pages on much neglected "Sculpture." Mr. Wyndham Lewis is amusingly angular in abuse. There should be no question of "substituting God Epstein for God Michelangelo," for the former, if he continues to produce the best he is capable of, and does not become the slave of one formula, may take a place among great sculptors, to whose company England up to the present has given but one—Alfred Stevens. Neither Stevens, Michelangelo, nor the greatest Greek or Egyptian workers in stone made their art the cinematograph of small contemporary happenings in technique or idea; of an example of a living man who, while being passionately himself, has controlled his technique and ideas to worthy ends, may be found in Ivan Nestrovic, whose glorious work (in sculpture) for Servian freedom is too little known in England.

ERNEST H. R. COLLINGS.

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## MR. WYNDHAM LEWIS'S METHODS.

Sir,—There is only one passage in Mr. Wyndham Lewis's effusion of last week which invites serious attention, and I feel the more ready to reply to it as it throws some interesting light upon this Futurist's methods. I refer to his statement that in my "Open Letter to My Friends" of January 1, I attempted in a cowardly manner to shift my ground with regard to Mr. Epstein, by class-

ing the graphic artist among the minor artists, relative to the artist in ruling. Mr. Wyndham Lewis says that in doing this I "would escape further trouble. . . . Mr. Epstein being meant to think: 'Oh, so all artists are minor personalities; come, I needn't mind so much!'" This is, indeed, an ingenious and lofty interpretation, revealing the lines along which Mr. Wyndham Lewis's mind works, but having nothing whatever to do with what I actually did or intended to do. For, if Mr. Wyndham Lewis had only taken the trouble to think, he would have known that, for his statement to be valid, I must have talked "innocently of all artists as 'minor personalities'" for the first time in my "Open Letter to My Friends." But, unfortunately for Mr. Wyndham Lewis's contention, this is not the case. If he turns up THE NEW AGE of December 4, 1913, he will find that I explained the relationship of the graphic artist to the artist-ruler, exactly as I explained it on January 1, 1914; and December 4 was exactly three weeks before Mr. Hulme's article appeared, and a fortnight before I noticed Mr. Epstein's show. Mr. Wyndham Lewis may scorn to refer to my art-criticisms in THE NEW AGE; but in that case he should refrain from interpreting my actions and statements in the terms of his own mind.

ANTHONY M. LUDOVICI.

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## WHILE OR WILE.

Sir,—Permit me to thank Mr. Humphrey for a scholarly exposition with quoted authorities, but to submit some internal rebutting evidence.

The primary meaning of "while" being "a period of time" the verb, in the sense of "to pass the time away," might evolve naturally, but in that case "whiling the hours" would be redundant. In that case also whence, necessarily, the idea of pleasure? The idea of time is most prominent in dull or unhappy hours, yet one does not speak of whiling away the time on the rack, except, perhaps, laconically.

On the other hand, it is only by illusion or deception that happy hours appear short, and the idea of deception is contained in the primary meaning of "wile."

Holding this view, I had visualised a scene in which some one person used the phrase "to wile away the time." He used it in a definitely metaphorical sense, as someone first spoke of "the pursuit of pleasure." Time is not literally wiled, nor pleasure literally pursued. The unknown person's hearers or readers were struck by the phrase, regarded it as a poetic conceit, and used it till it became a cliché. THE AGE being then too "New" to have a review of that name for the castigation of clichés, the cliché persisted till it became a super-cliché, or established form.

At some undetermined period in the evolution certain persons, also unknown, being familiar with "while" as connected with "time," but unfamiliar with the "value" of the "h" in the former word, rendered the written super-cliché as "to while the time away." The cliché being then thoroughly super, and the written "h" firmly established, the phrase was adopted in that form by writers of standard English, Longfellow, Messrs. Ludovici, Selver, and Belloc, and Mrs. Hastings. Et tu, Beate!

Does not this theory of the evolution appear natural?

R. S. GRAHAM.

## CARICATURES

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