H. G. WELLS ON CHESTERTON AND BELLOC.

THE NEW AGE

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THE week has been full of suggestions for solving the problem of unemployment. Everybody, it seems, has a remedy. Naturally we are delighted at the interest taken at last in the subject, but as for the proposed remedies, we cannot, with the best will in the world, find them effective. We should indeed be relieved from the duty of damnable iteration if only someone were to suggest something both practicable and effective. As it is, we are under the painful necessity of repeating that Socialism is the only remedy—a phrase of which we are ourselves beginning to grow somewhat tired. Will our readers therefore bear with us yet a little while until the week's crop of alternatives to Socialism has been duly harvested?

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Of Charity we can hardly speak with political toleration. Nothing will convince us that any good will come of the L.C.C.'s ignoble shirking of its plain, straightforward duty of providing meals for starving children out of the rates. On the contrary, we are certain that the bad odour into which the very name of Charity has begun to fall will become worse as time goes on. The association of a splendid virtue with mean and despicable motives never ennobles the motives, but it does degrade the virtue. Even from the ethical standpoint, the abandonment of the name of Charity to the rapacious tax-shirkers and Unsocialists is a calamity. And we are surprised that the custodians of ethics have not realised and resented the fact. Unfortunately the name is still sufficiently potent to unbutton the pockets of many. We see that the total income of 719 charitable London societies for the year 1907 was over seven and a half million pounds. And there are nearly two hundred charitable societies in London alone which are not included in the return.

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Mr. Howe, the Editor of the "Classified Directory of Metropolitan Charities," told the "Daily Mail" that charity was not yet drying up, but that Socialism threatened it. We sincerely hope that Socialism may not only threaten but destroy such forms of charity as the subsidising of the L.C.C. by Lords Rothschild, Rosebery, and party. Of the ridiculously small sum needed to carry on the work of feeding, we observe that solid lumps of £100 and £500 have been given by the Queen and the Duke of Westminster respectively. But the most striking contribution of all is the sum of £288 7s. 9d. made by Sir George Livesey on behalf of the South Metropolitan Gas Company. This odd sum is equal, we are told, to a half year's rate of ½d. in the pound on the Company's assessment; and was frankly given to stave off a demand for a penny or so rate. Better, Sir George thought, a halfpenny given than a penny taken! Such incorrigibly Individualist reasoning is too ludicrous to deceive even a politician.

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We are told, of course, that the matter is one of principle, and not of profit. However the British Constitution Society may argue, the point is clear that with Sir George Livesey, and indeed, with Lord Rosebery and Mr. Balfour, it is far more a question of profit than of principle. Mr. Spectator Strachey, no doubt, would rather give a shilling in the pound than pay a halfpenny rate towards a "Socialist" measure; but in the long run, Mr. Strachey will find himself almost alone. Thank goodness, the world is not run on abstract principles of Individualism, but on common sense (hindered, of course, by stupidity), and when a measure is obviously profitable to everybody, everybody's principles will become elastic enough to accept it. What therefore we have to do is to convince our friends that feeding children pays, and pays handsomely; that, indeed, we advocate Socialism on grounds of sheer downright good business. At present we are running the Empire at a ruinous cost, and Socialism is no more than a means of enormous economy and saving. Refusing to raise a rate is therefore from our standpoint absurdly bad business. The fact that the refusal is on grounds of principle, or is designed to ward off Socialism makes the procedure no better. In either case, it is bad business.

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But we have not quite finished with Mr. Strachey. In Saturday's "Spectator" (Jan. 4) he began a series of Letters to a Working Man on "The Problems and Perils of Socialism." We admire, as always, Mr. Strachey's honesty, but exceedingly regret, as always, his lack of comprehension. His first letter (a model, by the way, of how not to address a working-man) was a quite unnecessary demonstration of the necessity of Capital to production. What, however, Mr. Strachey fails to explain is the necessity of the private capitalist. We all want capital; we all want capital increased; all Socialists are in favour of increasing capital; Socialism as an economic theory is designed to increase capital. But that is a very different thing from desiring to increase the number of capitalists. While increasing capital, we desire to see decrease the capitalists. In a word, Socialism does not propose to destroy capital but capitalists.

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Mr. Strachey's criticism of Socialism may, therefore,

be dismissed as a misunderstanding of our views. Plainly he agrees with what he understands and differs only when he misconceives. The case is different, however, with Professor Sadler, who has been speaking and writing during the week on Education as a remedy for Unemployment. Now we have a great respect for Professor Sadler, both as an administrator and as an educationist, but as so often happens with these experts, he allows himself to be ridden by his hobby. Taking the returns of the registered unemployed, Professor Sadler finds that a considerable and an increasing percentage (30.2) are young men below the age of thirty,—that is, men who have been at least Board School educated. Seeking an explanation of this fact, Professor Sadler concludes that the education was insufficient, and that if only the boys had continued their elementary education at technical and secondary schools they would be in employment to-day.

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Unfortunately this is wildly untrue. Unfortunately, education even of the highest kind is no guarantee whatever of employment. We hear at this very minute of hundreds of skilled workmen who are simply not wanted,—not because their skill is denied, but because there is no sale for their work. Consider the building trade, for example. From architects downwards there is the constant cry of nothing doing. Would Professor Sadler's proposed secondary education make something doing? As far as we can see, the manufacture of skilled workmen by our schools simply makes competition fiercer; and so long as the monopolies of land and capital exist in private hands, so long will the competition continue. It is part of the curse of modern society that superior education is often a positive hindrance to finding employment, and more particularly when the education is special and technical.

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The Church Army (to take another candidate for honours in Economics) has this week been urging Emigration as a remedy for unemployment. The population, we are to suppose, is too big, and needs constant subtraction by emigration. But anything more hopeless except in individual cases it would be hard to discover. If unemployment were really due to over-population, emigration might be a remedy. But unemployment is not due to over-population, but to private ownership of land and capital. If there were only forty thousand instead of forty million people in England, and our system of ownership remained the same, one hundred of those forty thousand might at any moment throw out of employment all the rest by the simple device of refusing them the use of the means of production. As it is, some twenty thousand land-owners in England could conceivably order the rest of us off the soil of most of England with not an Act of Parliament to save us. Under the circumstances, emigration would only solve the problem of unemployment if we were happy enough to find a Socialist system of property in another country.

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There being no such country, every English emigrant to Canada, Australia, or elsewhere, is simply jumping out of the frying-pan into the fire. The English frying-pan is not relieved either, for the same system that makes unemployment to-day will make unemployment to-morrow. In plain words, you may emigrate until our boats are doing nothing else, without affecting the problem of poverty. And if the Church Army will think for five minutes about Ireland (the classic land of emigrants) they will realise the fact.

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Mr. Frederick Smallman, one of the directors of the Manchester Crematorium, has suggested a remedy which many people would only too gladly employ if they had the courage. His plan is to put tramps, wastrels, and ne'erdowells into a lethal chamber and afterwards through the furnaces of the Manchester Crematorium, Limited,—at so much per head. We have every sympathy, in theory at any rate, with the use of a lethal chamber for persons really obnoxious to society, but we have no patience with Mr. Smallman, or anybody else who would use a lethal chamber to save themselves the trouble of thinking. If poverty and unemployment were really incurable, the sensible thing, and even the kindly thing, would be to shoot the poor and unemployed at sight or to offer them (in the probable circumstance that none of us could shoot straight) the use of a comfortable lethal chamber. Frankly, if we believed, as for instance, Lord Balfour of Burleigh believes, that poverty is inevitable and unemployment necessary, we would try to be bold enough to get us to Mr. Smallman (of the Manchester Crematorium, Limited) straight away. We defy any Unsocialist to tell us a better thing to do under the circumstances. If our Gadarene herds of unemployed can be dealt with in no other way, then in the name of humanity let us possess them with devils and drive them to instant destruction. Mr. Smallman's suggestion is merely the reductio ad absurdum of the whole attitude of the Individualists.

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Not, of course, that the lethal chamber, even if extensively used, would make the smallest difference to the problem of poverty and unemployment. It might possibly intensify the struggle for work; it might even drive our docile proletariat to demand forcibly another solution at the hands of our legislators; it would certainly advertise to all the world the impossible nature of poverty, stamping it as an evil of the first magnitude. But it would be no solution in itself for the same reason that emigration is no solution. After all, emigration is, for patriots at least, a lethal chamber of the worst sort; and if emigration is no cure neither is death.

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But the suggestion reveals the desperation of the Unsocialist politicians. They are almost prepared now to kill the symptoms of their problem. Yet all the while the very men who make these despairing suggestions are loud in their eagerness to solve the problems of Empire. Mr. John Burns once said of certain politicians that they asked to organise a nation even when they could not organise a whelk-stall. We admit that men who manage a whelk-stall are not thereby proved equal to managing the affairs of a nation; but still more certainly, the men who fail to solve a simple problem in practical economics would fail in the infinitely greater tasks of solving the problems of advanced Imperialism. We would, in fact, make the problem of poverty the pons asinorum of politics; and whoever did not know the solution should be condemned to silence regarding the later and more difficult problems. Why not? Are the greater Mysteries revealed before the lesser? Can we trust Lord Curzon, for instance, to be polite to India when he is insulting to Ireland; Lord Balfour of Burleigh to advise Scotland about Land when he knows nothing of Labour and opposes the feeding of hungry children; Mr. Balfour to be Premier when he stands cap in hand in the "Times" begging for the solution of the same simple problem?

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The fact is that Socialists are the only genuine Imperialists going. They are the only people who have taken the trouble to work at and solve the simpler problems before approaching the more complex. Our quarrel with the non-Socialist Imperialists is that they are ignoramuses, political charlatans, and superficial quacks. Their Imperialism is merely a cover for their dimly-realised ignorance of the very elements of politics. There are not half a dozen of them we would trust to settle a single Imperial problem. We repeat that in politics the man who cannot understand the parish-pump cannot understand the Empire, and the politician who poses as an Imperialist and does not know how to abolish poverty should be put back to school or elevated to the House of Lords.

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Again we must observe that our remarks do not apply to English Imperialists alone. In most countries, politicians prefer the mystical regions of foreign affairs to the coldly rational regions of domestic affairs. Germany is perhaps in all Europe the single great exception. Everything we hear of German politics fills us

with a strange and patriotic fear. We are not a bit afraid of Germany invading and conquering England. That would be a less evil than we have in mind. What would gall our soul would be the reflection that England deserved to be conquered and Germany to conquer. It is true that politics even in Germany are second or third-rate in intelligence, but in comparison with ours they are first-rate. Only our national capacity for humbugging ourselves will find pleasure, for instance, in the Moltke-Harden case and all it implies. The truth is that in Germany, despite of hideous barbarities comparable only to our own, Imperialism and Social Reform are made to go hand in hand.

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In France, on the contrary, things are quite as bad as in England. The trial and condemnation of M. Hervé for his revelations regarding the criminal and idiotic Morocco mess were proof, if proof were needed, that French Imperialists do not even know their own business. It is pretty certain that the entente cordiale has done one thing for the French Government—it has shut the mouths of our newspapers. A few years ago such an enterprise as the French Moroccan enterprise would have awakened in our Press the barking watchdogs of Lord knows what sort of honour. To-day not a paper in England tells a quarter as much to us as the French papers tell to the French. It will be remembered that during the Boer War the Continental papers had to be read by Englishmen in search of news. No Frenchman need at this moment look to English papers; we are dumb. Yet, as M. Hervé's speech in his defence showed, affairs are about as bad as they can be in Morocco. We hope shortly to be permitted to translate for our readers the eloquent indictment of French incompetence in Imperialism which was delivered by M. Hervé during his trial.

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Fortunately, we are better informed of the Belgium attempts at Imperialism in the Congo. But our knowledge is mainly due to the indefatigable exertions of Mr. E. D. Morel, hon. sec. of the Congo Reform Association. Some weeks ago Mr. Hilaire Belloc, M.P., saw fit to raise in these columns (December 7) some questions regarding the bona-fides of the members of the Association, and our readers had the satisfaction of a vigorous reply from Mr. Morel (December 21). Mr. Belloc, it is true, did no more than ask questions, but nobody who read his questions could doubt that they conveyed, and were intended to convey, certain statements as insinuations. Now, we have no intention of questioning anybody's right to make critical enquiries of any public or semi-public association; nor do we regret for an instant Mr. Belloc's use of his privilege. What we do, however, most sincerely regret, is that Mr. Belloc should have made no response whatever to Mr. Morel's reply to his questions.

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On one point at least it appears to us incumbent on Mr. Belloc to make himself either more explicit or infinitely less implicit. He threw doubt by implication on the source of the funds expended by the Congo Reform Association, and explicitly referred to them as "necessarily very large sums of money." In his reply, Mr. Morel states quite as explicitly that in the nearly four years of its existence, during which time an enormous activity has been carried on, the total income of the Association has amounted to less than five thousand pounds, of which more than one-half has been subscribed by members of the sect of the Friends. That is not a "very large sum" with which to fight a multi-millionaire like the Belgian King. Nor does it support the implication of Mr. Belloc's question. For the rest, we are disposed to agree with Mr. Morel; as it appears our Belgian Socialist friends are also. And we can only repeat our regret that Mr. Belloc should have raised questions only to ignore their answer.

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While, however, the Belgian King is Imperialising for himself, it must never be forgotten that it is theoretically at least with the consent of Mr. Chesterton's beloved democracy that our own Empire is being chiefly misconducted. Mr. Chesterton's "jolly Englishman" may be a good fellow, but he is hopelessly incompetent as an Empire-preserver. Building an Empire is one thing, but preserving it and renewing it is quite another; and the "jolly Englishman" who may be good for the one may be, and in fact often is, bad for the other task. In sheer rollicking good spirits, Englishmen have spread themselves over the earth only to find that they have been "let in" for responsibilities of which they never dreamed. Everywhere in the Empire at this moment, for example, the problem of race is facing our "jolly Englishman"; and with no more than Mr. Chesterton's decalogue in his head, our jolly Englishman is nowhere really master of the situation.

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In South Africa it is certain that he is not. We do not know what has become of the instinct of justice, but we know that the Natalese would gladly endorse either or both of the suggestions discussed above for dealing with the Unemployed by Emigration and the Lethal Chamber. The former, at any rate, is the only thing that occurs to their wretched minds for dealing with their fellow-subjects of a different colour. We observe that Mr. L. W. Ritch, writing to the "Morning Post" on the 3rd inst., said that the British Indians were willing to submit to the most stringent regulations so long as they applied equally to white people. That, we agree, is the sound principle in an Empire of many different races. If there is to be preference for one race over another in any part of the Empire all is up with Imperialism. We would not give a year's purchase for an Empire run by Natal.

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In Australia, unfortunately, Natalism appears to be spreading like ignorance. Some time ago the "Times" warned the Australians that they could not exclude Japanese without British protection. In reply, the "Sydney Morning Herald" says: "If the mother country's protection were withdrawn, Australia might or might not be able to assist herself, but we should make the attempt; there is no possibility of compromise. Asiatic exclusion is a life-and-death matter for a small white community within jumping-off distance of the teeming Orient. In declaring for a white Australia we have at stake Western civilisation, our breed, and our institutions." Such balderdash is perhaps a fitting reply to the "Times's" warning, but it scarcely merits the name of Imperial thinking. Why on earth should Australia exclude with British protection Japanese or any other race of men merely on grounds of race difference? Human values we can understand; and we would gladly exclude from England—yes, and ship many already in England—men who have proved themselves willing to degrade a community by sweating their fellows for the sake of profits. And how many "jolly Englishmen" would be of the number? England had better tell herself first and the Empire afterwards that race and colour are of no more Imperial concern than sex or creed; and that in the long run (if there is to be a long run) these race prejudices must die or be killed out as prejudices of sex and creed are beginning to be.

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A final note on the subject. In the current number of the "Nineteenth Century" we notice an article by Sir Harry Johnston on "How to Make the Negro Work." The title is an admirable illustration of the spirit which inspires the "patriotic" oratory of the noisy Tory Imperialist; the spirit which uses the phrase "the white man's burden" as a cover for the policy of forcing the native to work for the benefit of white capitalists. We ourselves care very greatly for the welfare and the maintenance of the British Empire, regarding it as an invaluable piece of organisation for the spread of liberty and justice throughout the world. But we would far rather see it broken up than used as an instrument for the exploitation of native races. What right have we to force our industrial system upon the negro and to make him work? The man who answers that it is done from a disinterested desire to inculcate good habits and improve the negro's moral character cannot expect us to treat him as a serious or honest person. The fact is

that the Empire is regarded by a number of influential British politicians purely as a profit-making concern, and they openly talk of putting it "on a sound commercial basis." Such a view, while quite intelligible, is opposed to all the traditions of justice and anti-slavery on which the British Empire is supposed to be founded; and we venture to add that it is not destined ever to gain much hold on the British democracy. We have got to recognise that "the white man's burden" is a very real and an onerous responsibility for the well-being of the native, and not merely an excuse for robbing him. The moral, by the way, of Sir Harry Johnstone's article is better than the title. He advises that negroes should be given good European money in return for their services and should not be cheated. Excellent advice; but the appalling thing is that it should be printed to-day in a reputable English review as a novel contribution to the native labour problem, and that the only reason given for putting it forward is that it pays!

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We are extremely glad to hear of the success of the first number of "The Clerk" (1d. monthly), the new organ of the National Union of Clerks. With the courteous permission of the editor, we are allowed to make some extracts from an autobiographical chapter contributed to the January issue by Mr. Bernard Shaw:—

Of all the qualities of man I find nothing so astonishing as his sheepishness, his docility, his cowardice. When these qualities are developed to their utmost by civilisation and poverty in the middle class, you get the clerk You cannot make an Arab a clerk. You cannot make a North American Indian a clerk. But you can make an Imperial Englishman a clerk quite easily. All you have to do is to drop him into a poor middle-class family, with a father who cannot afford to keep him, cannot afford to give him capital to start with, and cannot afford to carry his education bevond the elementary stage, but who would yet be disgraced if his son became "a working man." Given these circumstances, what can the poor wretch do but become a clerk?

I became a clerk myself in the genteel modification of this course. My father was a man of business. The particular way in which he did business as a corn merchant and mill owner is now extinct, and was becoming extinct in his time, which means that he was getting poorer without knowing why; for, like ninety-nine out of a hundred men of business, he pursued a routine which he did not understand, and attributed his difficulties vaguely to want of capital, the sum he started with having gone in the bankruptcy of one of his customers. But though he had no capital to give me, it was assumed in the usual helpless way that I was to become a man of business, too. Accordingly, an uncle who, as a high official in a Government department, had exceptional opportunities of obliging people, not to mention obstructing them if he disliked them, easily obtained for me a stool in a very genteel office; and I should have been there still if I had not broken loose in defiance of all prudence, and become a professional man of genius—a resource not open to every clerk. I mention this to show that the fact that I am not still a clerk may be regarded for the purposes of this article as a mere accident. I am not one of those successful men who can say, "Why don't you do as I did?"

I sometimes dream that I am back in that office again. It is always a bad dream, in which I am bothered by a consciousness that a long period has elapsed, during which, for some reason which I cannot grasp, I have neglected my most important duties. I have drawn no money at the bank in the mornings, and lodged none in the afternoons. I have paid no insurance premiums, nor head-rents, nor mortgage interests. Whole estates must have been sold up, widows and orphans left to starve, mortgages foreclosed, and the landed gentry of Ireland abandoned to general ruin, confusion, and anarchy, all through my unaccountable omission of my daily duties for more than thirty years, during which, equally unaccountably, neither I nor anyone else in the office has aged by a single day. I generally wake in the act of asking my principals, with the sternness and authority which belong to my later years, whether they realise what has happened, and whether they propose to leave so disgracefully untrustworthy a person as myself in a position of such responsibility. . . The total period of my service was four and a half years, though I broke loose before I was twenty. During most of that four and a half years I occupied a post of considerable activity and responsibility. It had become vacant in an emergency when I was only junior clerk As it was of such a nature that it could not be left in abeyance even for half a day, I had been put into it as a stop-gap, and, like many another stop-gap, I stayed where I was stuck. Naturally, if I was to be cooped up in an office all day I preferred the higher post, the more varied work, the bigger responsibility. It was not a question of salary. I was quite prepared to take as big a salary as anybody would give me; but even if I had been still at my starting figure of £18 a year, and I had been asked whether for that money I would act as junior clerk or senior partner, I should have unhesitatingly chosen to be senior partner. Later in my life, when I became active in the Socialist movement, and people tried to pose me with the usual objections about inequality of work requiring inequality of pay, and so forth, I had no difficulty in assuring them from my own experience, and from the clue it had given me to the rest of the world, that, other things being equal, the higher the work the less people would do it for. If my employers had asked me to do the work of the charwoman they would have had to overcome my repugnance to it by a salary at least twenty times as large as they actually paid me after my promotion.

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[Articles next week by Bernard Shaw, Hubert Bland, and Aylmer Maude.]

The Working Man:

WHAT can be the matter with the working man? Even his detractors cannot accuse him of being unduly pushful or ostentatious, and yet he and his prospects are now the theme of almost every public discussion. For years he and his class have inhabited our dolorous rows of mean streets, confronting life with characteristic doggedness and independence; for the working man is slow to move, and slower still to ask favours. At election times he has been duly petted and cajoled, and then left to his own devices and to the tender mercies of capitalism. Can it be that his modern leaning towards Socialism has aroused on the part of his betters this belated interest in his welfare? At any rate, he has become the man of the hour. The Bishop of London laments the fact that he is unduly limiting his family, thus imperilling the supply of future raw material for capitalism; Mr. John Burns has just found out that he is too much given to drinking and gambling, and is inexpressibly shocked by the discovery. The Press, not to be outdone, is devoting columns to the discussion of his duties and wants, endeavouring to find out what the strange animal really desires. In particular, the "Morning Post" has granted interviews to men of such varied shades of opinion as Mr. Snowden, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, Mr. Claude Hay, and Mr. J. H. Hills as Members of Parliament, and to Mr. Ben Dent, of the Tariff Reform League, who spent twenty-five years at the bench as a cabinet-maker.

As might have been foretold, it appears that the primary need of the working man can be stated in one word—money. We have nothing to add to the views expressed by the Labour Members, and we are extremely gratified to find the Socialist position so moderately yet convincingly stated. We would specially commend to the fossilised laissez faire individualists of the Morley type Mr. Ramsay Macdonald's terse summary of the relation that exists between the State and the citizen: "If I make an attempt to commit suicide and am successful, I am taken before a magistrate, who will sentence me for having attempted my own life. That means that the State imposes upon me the duty of living. If the State imposes on me the duty of living, I can surely turn round to the State and say: 'Then I must have the opportunity of living.' The opportunity of living, so far as 95 per cent. of our population is concerned, is the opportunity to work."

The Unionist position is set out with sympathy, but

hardly with lucidity. For example, it does not much help us to be told by Mr. Claude Hay that, in order to provide better wages and steadier employment, a general improvement in trade must be brought about by means of Tariff Reform; that there must be the enforcement of a higher standard of living for the workers; and that we must not be deterred by the fear of being called Socialists from demanding the "right to work," if necessary. The evils of sweating, unemployment and pauperism, again, together with the pressing need for Old Age Pensions, are all stated to be due to Free Trade, and, we must suppose, are therefore preventible. Free Trade has assuredly much to answer for, but even in the days preceding Cobden, England could not exactly be described as Paradise. All this, of course, is merely the special pleading of the political partisan. To us the most encouraging feature about it all is the evidence it affords that these social evils are now admitted to be so pressing as to demand the attention of Parliament, and that a definite policy is being advanced which it is claimed will mitigate, if it does not entirely remove them.

We will endeavour to discuss the situation as fairly and temperately as possible. The working man is badly paid, and as a result is badly fed and badly housed. His very subsistence is endangered by circumstances over which he has no control, and the evil consequences of which he is powerless to avert. In the majority of cases his wages are insufficient to provide him with the decent necessaries of life, much less to enable him to make provision for sickness and old age. The Tariff Reformers, therefore, are confronted with a double task: they are pledged not only to secure constant employment and good wages, but they are committed also to provide large funds to be devoted to purposes of social reform without imposing any additional burden upon the working classes. We say at once that such a policy is impossible of achievement, for the two ideals are mutually destructive. Tariff Reform, indeed, would be a return to national sanity, in so far as it would to some extent protect the producer and penalise the idle non-producer, if a rise in the price of commodities were coincident with a rise in wages. On the other hand, the burden would fall heavily upon the non-producers of the middle and lower classes, such as thousands of railway servants, badly-paid clerks, etc., who might or might not receive an advance in wages. The Tariff Reformers are domiciled in such a fragile habitation that they cannot possibly with any decency or safety afford to throw stones at the Free Traders. For to the extent to which by means of a tariff they exclude foreign imports competing with our own to that extent they will cut off sources of revenue which might be applied to social reform. If, on the other hand, the imposition of a tariff does not have the effect of keeping out important commodities competing with our own the revenue would benefit, but obviously there would be no increase of employment in this country, and therefore no increase in the amount available for wages. It must have been a clear recognition of this dilemma that was responsible for Mr. Balfour's refusal to throw in his lot with the fanatics of his party.

The real solution of the problem was inadvertently revealed by Mr. Ben Dent, when he said, speaking of the unemployed: "You cannot for any length of time have one class living on the production of another." It is this monopoly of the national resources by the non-producer that is the cause of our economic troubles; and while this monopoly obtains, neither Free Trade nor Tariff Reform can be of any avail to help us. What the working man really wants is his share of the national produce. In order to obtain this, he first wants the landlord, the usurer, and the capitalist taken off his back, and afterwards he wants the nation's industry reorganised on a collectivist, instead of a competitive, basis. These things he wants, and before long he will take the necessary steps to get them.

Is the Empire a Going Concern?

IRISHMEN may be willing to undertake a chief's responsibilities at the office-boy's salary. The peculiar genius of the Englishman consists in drawing the principal's salary whilst shirking even the duties of the office-boy; he is ever ready to take the cash, and let the credit go. Of course, he pockets the wages and sticks to his position pour le bon motif. If he stepped out it would be merely to make room for another equally incompetent person. Mr. John Morley is the Secretary of State for India; we do not propose to review the course of his administration, upon which quite diverse views might perhaps be legitimately held, but it is Mr. Morley, the Imperial representative of the Indian as British subject that we must hold responsible for the failure to safeguard the primary rights of British subjects in the Transvaal.

Whatever view be held as to the limit of Governmental interference, none will gainsay that it is the first duty of a Government to watch over the interests of its subjects when pursuing their avocations peaceably in any part of the world—not least when they are domiciled in a country nominally within its sphere of control. Here is a least common measure upon which all—Whig, Tory, Socialist, Individualist—may agree. Mr. Harold Cox, in an article in the "Times" on the British Indians in the Transvaal, maintains that "our effective power of control over the Government of the Transvaal is as complete as is our Imperial responsibility for the defence of our Indian subjects in all parts of the world." Complete freedom for all men of all nations to come and go under the British flag is, he says, the principle upon which the British Empire has been built up.

The British Indian is, moreover, quite as much a British subject as the British Boer. The registration law in the Transvaal, which has received the sanction of our Liberal Government, could not have been more deliberately framed to give the utmost offence, to shower the most contemptuous indignities upon the British Indian. We are not under the necessity of comparing Boer with Hindu civilisation, because it is by reason of his acknowledged superiority that the Indian is to be treated as a potential malefactor. Under the law which came into force on January 1 every Indian over sixteen, however long resident in the country, must forthwith re-register himself. Then comes the degrading stipulation that, as part of the act of registration, an impression of each finger separately and of eight fingers together is to be taken for purposes of identification. Failing to comply with these humiliating conditions, these British subjects will be expelled from a British colony and will be deported at their own expense.

Since the passing of the Act some 5,000 Indians have left the Transvaal, whilst about 7,000 have refused to take out the certificates. Mr. Gandhi, the well-known barrister, and some other prominent Indians, have been ordered to leave the Colony; a request with which they refuse to comply. The Transvaal Government has not at the time of writing deported these gentlemen.

In the Councils of the Empire the British Indian has no one to speak for him but Mr. Morley. As the right honourable gentleman has not sent in his resignation, the presumption is that these proceedings receive his sanction. We have nothing to say of Lord Elgin's share in these transactions; we do not suppose that he is yet aware that anything at all unusual is taking place. He may read in the newspapers some mention of the disturbance, and as a demonstration of his activity will likely enough cable for a twenty-four hours' postponement after the "agitators" have been deported.

Sir Richard Solomon, the Agent-General for the Transvaal, in an interview with a representative of the "Morning Post," said: "If the Indians would only see that no insult to them is intended by asking them to take out these certificates, but that, on the contrary, the whole object is to prevent evasions of the law which restricts the immigration of Asiatics into the Transvaal, the present difficulty may be overcome." Reserving for the moment the question of Indian immigration,

we must characterise Sir R. Solomon's statement as mere legal quibbling. Every Indian in the country has been already registered under Lord Milner's administration. The Government dismissed forty railway servants who refused to take out certificates, but whose identity was perfectly assured. No, the new Act, which imposes treatment elsewhere reserved for law-breakers, is with every justification to be considered as a slim Boer attempt to get rid of the Indians already settled in the country.

From the hesitation to deport Mr. Gandhi and his friends and Sir R. Solomon's remark that he was unable to say whether his Government might not forego its power, but that the question appeared to be under consideration, it is just possible that some compromise will be attempted. But no compromise will remove the disgrace from the Imperial Government of having surrendered its right to protect the legitimate interests of its unrepresented subjects.

The question of Asiatic immigration opens up a wider field. How long shall we be able to run an Empire in our present irresponsible fashion? Is each self-governing Colony to be allowed to make laws which are absolutely destructive of unity, laws which imperil the proper interests of constituent parts of the Empire? If so, let us relinquish once and for all the idea of a federated Empire. The King can still be magniloquently proclaimed Majesty of all the British Dominions beyond the seas and Emperor of India. This will be mere picturesque survival of a past that never was, something less real than the post of Hereditary Grand Falconer held by the Dukes of St. Albans.

Each Colony will be a separate self-contained entity, republic or kingdom as it will. This is a policy for which something could be said were we able to undo the past. In South Africa we have set up rapacious little settlements of white colonists, whilst we have broken down the powers the native chiefs once possessed in their own tribes. Basutoland and Zululand would soon fall a prey to the greed of the white settler. We have lived too long in South Africa to be ensnared by the fiction that Boers and Natalese are animated by the spirit of justice towards the black entertained by the average English official. Frankly, they are not. They cannot understand the uses of a civilisation alien from a world of gold and iron-roofed habitations.

Dare we be cowards sufficient to relinquish responsibilities thrust upon us by the misdeeds of our forefathers? Or take India. Nothing would suit us better than the possibility of clearing out bag and baggage, leaving India to the Indians. But we cannot forget that our rule has definitely altered the country and its people. Railways, the beginnings of Western educational system, new land laws—leading to the break-up of immemorial customs—the beginnings of our horrible industrial system have made another India—a worse it may well be contended. This makes it all the more essential that British democracy should help the Indians to repair disasters that our rule has inflicted. British democracy must replace British by Indian administration, and see that India speaks with her own voice in the Councils of the Empire.

The Empire will never flourish as a huge trading concern; it can be placed upon a permanently stable basis only as a federated union of free democracies, with a full recognition of racial temperamental distinctions: one and all inspired by the spirit of justice, regardless of colour or caste, with no canting speech of superior and inferior civilisations, higher and lower races.

Legislation on Socialist lines is the one antidote to cheap European or Asiatic labour. Here we part company with Mr. Cox and most of the other political parties in the Empire. Coxites, Liberals, Tories offer little but fine phrases or avowedly dividend-hunting requirements in solution of the most momentous problem which now faces British democracy. Raise the standard of living for the worker, maintain it by impartial legislation, remove the parasitic classes, there will then be no occasion to debase the moral currency by tyrannical immigration, registration, or Alien laws, methods that are methods of barbarism whether practised by Boer or Briton.

The New Legislation.

On the first day of January most of the important Acts passed by Parliament during last session came into operation. The law of England during the coming year will be different from the law which governed us last year; and the difference is the exact measure of what the most powerful Liberal majority that has ever controlled the House of Commons considers desirable in the way of reform. There is, of course, the fact that the Lords rejected two Bills, both concerning Scotch land; and the Liberal Ministers have made picturesque speeches on the doom which is consequently soon to overtake the Peers. But the House of Lords, though admirable as a political whipping-boy for Liberal Cabinet Ministers, is not taken very seriously in these democratic days: the Peers know full well the first time they definitely thwart the people's will they will vanish from the British Constitution. It is sound constitutional law that a Government which does not desire to accept the veto of the Lords and Bishops can demand that the Crown shall create new peers until the vote is obtained. But the Lords, however evil may be their powers — no sane person desires anything but their entire abolition—did not tamper with any English and Welsh Bills last session; so that here, at least, we have the full cup of Liberal bounty. Here we have on record in black and white exactly what we have been given. Not what we were promised, but just exactly what the Liberal Cabinet asked their supporters to vote for in the House of Commons. Here is the Liberal policy plainly expressed without any of the sentimental trimmings which are part of the political speeches of all parties—Tory, Radical, or Socialist; the Liberal policy, as defined by counting heads in the division lobby. It is good to come to these matter-of-fact statements at times; to discuss hard facts, instead of political theories.

There is, I think, little doubt which of the Acts we are considering is the most valuable: the test of value in the mind of a Socialist being the quickest increase in the efficiency, and therefore the happiness, of the greatest number of our citizens. In Section 13 of the Education (Administrative Provisions) Act, 1907, we find a record of one of those rational thoughts which once or twice in a decade come into the heads of our legislators. The thought is always half a century behind its due time; still, we must express our thankfulness that at last it has dawned on the slowly-working intelligence of the Members of Parliament that the medical inspection of children is a rudimentary step towards national health, mental and physical. Henceforth it is the legal duty of a local educational authority to provide for the scientific examination of every child which enters a public elementary school. Further, the Board of Eduucation may order the education authority to medically inspect the children at any time subsequent to this entry examination. Still further, the education authority may "make such arrangements as may be sanctioned by the Board of Education for attending to the health and physical condition of the children educated in public elementary school." It will be observed that only the primary inspection is a compulsory legal duty; any later examination is left to the good sense of the Board. It is still more important to notice that the duty of the education authority is strictly confined to the barest inspection; there is no compulsory duty to take any remedial measures. If a child is certified for

tuberculosis, it is nobody's legal duty to attend to the cure; if the teeth are defective, it is no one's duty to mend them. So that the compulsion of this new Act is merely to register, in an authoritative manner, the already notorious facts of physical deficiency. But there follows the permissive clause which I have quoted above. It is dependent on the double goodwill of both the Board and the local council. If the council is willing to act, and if the Board will approve, then the council can go further than inspection; it can proceed to carry out the cure. The wording of this clause is extraordinarily wide in its scope. Apparently, on the face of it, if a council decided that the health of its children was injuriously affected by improper housing, with the consent of the Board of Education the council could build a village as one of the "arrangements" allowed by the Act. There seems no verbal objection to sending all the schools to the seaside. Now, it is quite clear that such a wide interpretation will not be permitted by the controlling authority, and there is no hope that our local councils, as at present constituted and as at present financed, will ask the Board to sanction anything so wise. But it is, on the other hand, equally clear that if the attention of the children's health goes no further than the provision of drugs and medical advice, then the children's general health will remain as it is now. The physical welfare of the next generation of English men and women will not be put on a sound foundation by an extension of the dispensary system. The trend of modern medicine shows that the drug is the last survival of the herbalist's art: modern medicine is preventive, not curative. The scientific doctor insists on a healthy environment; he relies very little on the old-fashioned bottle of "mixture as before."

The problem therefore stands, whether under this new Act an education authority will be able and willing to improve the environment of its scholars. Will it give them purer air in which to sleep, sufficient food, enough clothing? If we imagine we are going to get healthy children without these things, then we are idle dreamers. There does seem a possibility that this Act will result in the provision of a dentist for every school. It must be regarded as the minimum of our demands on our respective councils. And the medical inspection of every child as a legal duty must be rigorously enforced. There is hope that the facts which will be thus authoritatively disclosed will drive our rulers, both central and local, to begin to do what the case requires. We Socialists are quite clear what the real remedy must be. It is the State maintenance of children. Looked at from another side, it will take the shape of the endowment of motherhood. But such things were not in the minds of the men who drafted the Education Act of 1907. There are two radical defects in their Act, although it is fully admitted that it has its good points. It could, indeed, be made effective if it were administered up to its full scope. But will it be thus administered? There lies the first defect. It is only permissive, except for the mere inspection. The curing of the disease is left to the will of the local authority. Now there are some things of such vital importance that they must not be left optional. The Act should have been made compulsory. It should have been within the power of the Government to compel the local councils to do just whatever is necessary to bring the public health up to the highest possible standard. Imagine the exhilarating effect on local administration if the President of the Board of Education could order a regiment of soldiers to be quartered round Spring Gardens until the London County Council adopted the School Feeding Act. Why should our police force waste its time sifting a few sordid murder cases, while a hundred thousand children are being done to death by lack of food and fresh air? Our army and our policemen might be made really useful if handled with intelligence. The second defect of this Act is that the expenses will be thrown on the local rates; the charge should have been on the National Exchequer, and raised by a graduated income-tax on the larger incomes. But both these defects are there because Liberals are not Socialists.

G. R. S. TAYLOR.

A Note on South Africa.

THERE must be many of your readers who will be glad to hear of the great success of Miss Hobhouse in establishing "Boer Home Industries." The work is well appreciated by a Dutch Prime Minister, and a Dutch Cabinet, and a grant of £4,000 a year has been made to a Syndicate over which the authorities have asked Miss Hobhouse to preside. Needless to say, Milnerism did nothing to help on this work, while millions were wasted in trying to establish British settlers to outvote the Dutch, and the country was flooded with useless civil servants. Most of these have been got rid of, including an entomologist, a bacteriologist, and a chemist, at salaries of £1,000 to £1,200 a year. "The Imperial South African Association" will no doubt find them employment.

A few months ago ex-President Steyn made a most interesting speech at the opening of an Exhibition in Bloemfontein, of "Boer Home Industries," "begun and promoted by Miss Emily Hobhouse and Miss Clarke for the benefit of the poorer inhabitants of the Colony who have been such acute sufferers by the war and its aftermath. A few years ago he came out with Miss Hobhouse and Miss Clarke, and he then saw how those noble ladies denied themselves the pleasures of life on board ship, in order to prepare themselves for the starting of Home Industries. . . . Home Industries were not unknown amongst them in former days, and he still remembered the time when everything on a farm, such as hats, socks, soap, and candles, were made by the mother of the house. . . . Under modern influences 'the veldschoen' had to make way for the high-heeled boot and corns, the comfortable 'kappie' was superseded by the dreadful thing with poisonous pins, that ladies nowadays wore on their heads. South Africa was overrun by the rubbish made by sweating in European factories. . . . Here they had a factory that could be run at home. For all this they had to thank, not far-seeing politicians, not economists, but a noble and gentle lady, to whom they also owed . . . . the lives of thousands of their women and children. It would be a happy circumstance if that noble woman could restore their economic conditions. Still happier would it be, if it were given her who had once been banished from South Africa as an undesirable, to bring back the good understanding between Boer and Briton. When they were all gone, South African women would still teach their children to revere the name of Emily Hobhouse as that of a gracious and merciful guardian angel."

The work seems to be a labour of love, for Miss Hobhouse writes: "It is delightful to teach girls so eager to learn—the aptitude and intelligence of the girls are very striking, and makes the teaching a great pleasure." In the workroom she says there is "almost perfect silence and intense application, and resolute determination to conquer every branch of the work." The women find and prepare their own dyes from plants found on the Veldt, and each girl has a dye-book. She writes, for instance, of one girl (whose mother died in a concentration camp), as getting up at 2.30 a.m., to wash, bake, and iron, so as to be free at 8 a.m.—"She has her little brothers and sisters to be-mother, and spends six hours in the school!"

With a few honourable exceptions, the Press have entirely ignored the truly patriotic work done by this splendid Englishwoman. The Bishop of Hereford, alone among the 26 Bishops, eulogised this lady at a public dinner, and reminded his hearers that only a few years ago it was impossible to hire a building in London, chapel or otherwise, in which she could appeal to the public to mitigate the horrors of the concentration camps and save the children. For this Christ-like work of saving the children, her name was execrated from one end of the country to the other, by so-called "Christians," in chapel and cathedral, who were praying for the "success" of the war; one Bishop going the length of advocating "extermination" if the Boers did not surrender.

It is well that these facts should not be forgotten by the war-mongers in this country.

"Who," asked Mr. Chamberlain in a speech at the beginning of the war, "has influenced Her Majesty's Government? In the first rank I put the ministers of religion in South Africa . . . . all their organisations are heartily on our side." And now we have a special appeal in an illustrated pamphlet, issued by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and a long list of names given on the Committee, every man and woman of whom were in favour of the war; asking for subscriptions, not to relieve the temporal wants of the unfortunate Dutch, but with the object of forcing our "British Christianity" on the people. Not a word of regret or recantation of the part the clergy took in urging the nation on to war! But it is not Dogma that the thousands of orphans and widows want in those countries, but substantial aid, and no one reading the letters of Miss Clarke and Miss Hobhouse can doubt that our responsibilities in this matter are very great.

J. S. TROTTER.

The Irish Muddle.

THE religious feud in Ireland is "inexplicable." Quite so. I shall go further and say that to any Englishman the whole Irish question is inexplicable and incomprehensible.

For one thing, the Englishman is still a Saxon. True, the Roman, Dane, Norman, and Jew has each left his impress on the race, but the mental attitude and the outlook and the traditions and the language of the English people have remained essentially Saxon. On the other hand, the Irishman is a Gael. In his case also the Dane, the Norman, the Englishman, the Scotsman, and the "Yankee" have all had, or are having, their innings in Ireland. But the prepotency of the Gael in the race has never been destroyed. Until famine days, the stranger came to rule—he remained to become 'more Irish than the Irish themselves."

Through all, the mental attitude of the Gael has reigned supreme. Now, the outlook of the Gael is more widely separated from that of the Saxon than the poles are asunder. The one can never be reconciled with the other: they can never be fused. When they come into conflict one conquers, the other dies. Search in the slums of your British cities by all means. Look there at the hundreds of thousands of human beasts of burden of Irish descent—not further removed from Ireland than the third generation. They have Home Rule. Yes, lots of it. Why, then, do they remain in their desperate condition? Simply, the mental attitude of the Gael has met that of the Saxon in mortal conflict. The Saxon has come out on top and the Gael is dead. But the Saxon environment has not yet sufficiently impressed itself in all cases on the Gaelic heredity. The blood of the Gael battles with the environment and mental attitude of the Saxon. The result is disaster. In my wanderings all over Britain I have met many men—engineers, merchants, lawyers, doctors, clergymen, councillors, aldermen, and M.P.'s—with unmistakably Irish names. But in manner and feeling they have been indistinguishable from true Englishmen. These are the cases where the English environment has proved too strong for the Irish heredity. They have lost every characteristic of the Gael.

So, too, it is with Ireland. If Ireland could reconcile herself to the complete abandonment of her Gaelic heredity —were that possible—then her government by Britain would become easy. But the supposition is monstrous, outrageous, impossible. Ireland must be true to herself. Through all the weal and woe—mostly woe—of the past seven centuries Ireland remained on the whole true to herself. This truth she will maintain to the bitter end. Poverty may be the result—it is welcome. Extinction may be the end—well, be it so. Ireland must have all or none. If her destiny is to be a happy, contented prosperous West Britain, then in the name of all worthy of remembrance in the past, let a final and complete plantation be organised at once and extinguish the Gael for ever.

It is immaterial whether the Chief Secretary is Mr. Birrell, with his sympathy, sincerity, and intelligence, or a reactionary aristocrat, or a military martinet. For the Gael one is as bad as the other. No one of them can see the element of screaming farce there is in placing as the real ruler of Ireland a Catholic Liberal steeped to the lips in the traditions of Indian autocracy and calling the operation "government according to Irish ideas." No one of them has the traditional attitude of mind of the Gael and no one of them has succeeded in finding out exactly what it is. Each of them, however, in so far as he has worked for anything in Ireland other than autonomy, has assumed direct responsibility for the continued distressful condition of the country. The only Englishman who will ever do anything for the good of Ireland will be the one through whose instrumentality self-government is granted.

There is this essential difference between the wrongs of Ireland and the wrongs of England. The wrongs of England are the direct result of the actions of Englishmen the wrongs of Ireland are NOT the direct result of the actions of Irishmen, but of foreigners. It is needless to labour the resulting feelings of the wronged. Let it suffice to mention the additional bitterness there must be in the case of the Irishmen Again, the mentality of England has been allowed to develop along its own evolutionary lines. That of Ireland has been subject to attempts at suppression through the most barbarous list of penal laws the world's history has produced. Every sort of brutality has been practised against it until finally all rational development was stopped through the suppression of the Gaelic language.

Some English Socialists say Home Rule must wait for Socialism. I venture to say that if we had autonomy now Ireland would be living under Socialism generations before England will.

P. DE BURCA.

Charles Dickens as a Socialist.

By Edwin Pugh.

Part I. *Chapter IV.*

His Schooldays and Youth.

III.

BUT whatever Dickens's occupation may have lacked in the way of pecuniary reward and social standing was amply made good in his particular case by the rich and varied experience it afforded him in other and more valuable ways. It helped on the processes of his real education as a novelist and Socialist better perhaps than any other occupation could have done. It added to his mental equipment a knowledge of the worse side of human nature that is nowhere else so easily and surely obtainable by the observant and astute as in the purlieus of the law. That he realised to the full the immensity of his opportunities, and worked the mine of wealth thus providentially opened up to him to the last limits of its yield, is abundantly apparent in his books, not only in his explicit dealings with all manner of legal practitioners and their gangs of hangers-on, but in his facile manipulation of the motives of his baser characters.

Hitherto, all his experiences had been bounded on the one hand by the hideous cruelties of circumstance, and on the other hand by the wonderful, enduring, inscrutable kindnesses of people who were comparative strangers, only linked to him by the bonds of a community in misfortune. He had already learnt the uplifting lesson that the harder one's lot, and the poorer and the more mean and ignorant one's associates, the better and nobler our fellow-creatures will prove themselves to be. For wherever there is great suffering there is always great love also, set in its midst, all glorious and shining, like an image of the Christ. Wherever there are wounds and stripes there are always helping hands — commonly coarse and rough in grain — and tender hearts to pour out their unfailing store of healing balm, of pity and comfort. That flower of divinely sweet and gracious sympathy which speaks to the godlike strain in men and women as no other quality can, invariably flourishes best in soil that is watered with tears. Where poverty and pain are, there is ever to be found, growing out of its grime and filth, the fairest and most delicate blooms of virtue that our poor human nature is capable of putting forth. Little Charles Dickens had proved the truth of this in his own short life. He had found that no matter how grotesque or uncouth or unseemly those companions might be who had shared with him the dolours of his darkest days, and no matter how little they understood of his secret agonies and shames, they had been kind and gentle with him; they had shown themselves mindful of the weakness and shrinking sensitiveness of the child doomed to labour among them; they had held out to him the offer of their humble fellowship, had tried to make smoother the roughest places in the path his stumbling feet must tread, and to help him through the worst hours of his childish heart-sickness and bodily revolt. Indeed, one cannot but be an optimist—in regard to human nature, at least—if one has lived among the poor as one of themselves. The sickly growths of cynicism wilt and fade in that atmosphere perfume-laden with the incense from a host of lowly sacrificial altars.

But there are innumerable social strata above the poverty-line in which man's inhumanity to man is constantly and insistently in evidence; and in no place more blatantly so than in a lawyer's office. Against that spirit of tender goodwill which animates the poor, and is to the eternal credit of humanity, must be debited that other spirit of self-interest and ill-will which likewise plays its part in our civilisation. Those who have the least to spare are always the most generous; those who have the most are always the most niggardly and grasping. It was Dickens's salvation that both in the manner of his descent into, and his ascent out of, the

ultimate deeps there were qualifying stages. We have seen how that before he entered upon his spell of ignominious servitude in the blacking factory he had already been made free of the meaning of poverty; and now we are to see how, before he entered into full possession of his splendid kingdom, he was again to pass through the ordeal of another kind of purgatory.

He was to rid himself, this time, of any illusions that his near acquaintance with the sweet humanity of the poor had bred about him. He was to study at close quarters some very different phases of the human comedy. He was to discover that all men and women were not inevitably kind, as they may have seemed in the days of his degradation and misery—or even just; that cupidity and spite and envy are factors in the battle for existence almost as potent, and often more successful, than any of the virtues. He was to encounter meanness and trickery, falsehood and cruelty, lust and greed, in their ugliest forms; to watch the working of little minds reaching out slimy tentacles to grasp at paltry prizes of power and wealth; of base motives insinuating themselves tortuously, like the serpent in Eden, into every outwardly fair and goodly aspect of life.

In that passage in "Vanity Fair" describing George Osborne's visit to his father's solicitors, Thackeray gives us a brief glimpse of the average attorney's clerk of that day and of his real position in the scheme of things, which is characteristically radiant with insight, and expresses, better than any words at the disposal of the present writer could, exactly the attitude of that essentially mild and obsequious factotum toward the majority of his master's clients. Here is the passage:—

"George meanwhile, with his hat on one side, his elbows squared, and his swaggering martial air, made for Bedford Row, and stalked into the attorney's offices as if he was lord of every pale-faced clerk who was scribbling there. He ordered somebody to inform Mr. Higgs that Captain Osborne was waiting, in a fierce and patronising way, as if the pékin of an attorney, who had thrice his brains, fifty times his money, and a thousand times his experience, was a wretched underling who should instantly leave all his business in life to attend on the captain's pleasure. He did not see the sneer of contempt which passed all round the room, from the first clerk to the articled gents, from the articled gents to the ragged writers and white-faced runners in clothes too tight for them, as he sate there tapping his boot with his cane, and thinking what a parcel of miserable poor devils these were. The miserable poor devils knew all about his affairs. They talked about them over their pints of beer at their public-houses to other clerks of a night. Ye Gods, what do not attorneys and attorneys' clerks know in London? Nothing is hidden from their inquisition, and their familiars mutely rule our city.

And Charles Dickens was one of these.

(To be continued.)

A Crown of Life.

Death shall not come to me,
For if, in the warm days,
When flowers are blooming in the bright sunshine,
And the dear life I love, and know as mine,
In a cold grave shall mouldering lie;
I will not die.

I will not know thee Death,
But I have seen thy shade,
And looking straightway to eternal Life,
See where the Spirit, and the flesh, have strife;
I stand between, calm, undismayed,
And not afraid.

I was a fool and feared,
Because I did not know,
If thou art, I am not; and cannot be,
If I am, thou art not, therefore I see,
I am the Life, and cannot die;
Thou art—a lie!

E. M. WREFORD.

About Chesterton and Belloc.

IT has been one of the more impossible dreams of my life to be a painted Pagan God and live upon a ceiling. I crown myself becomingly in stars or tendrils or with electric coruscations (as the mood takes me), and wear an easy costume free from complications and appropriate to the climate of those agreeable spaces. The company about me on the clouds varies greatly with the mood of the vision, but always it is in some way, if not always a very obvious way, beautiful. One frequent presence is G. K. Chesterton, a joyous whirl of brushwork, appropriately garmented and crowned. When he is there, I remark, the whole ceiling is by a sort of radiation convivial. We drink limitless old October from handsome flagons, and we argue mightily about Pride (his weak point) and the nature of Deity. A hygienic, attentive, and essentially anæsthetic Eagle checks, in the absence of exercise, any undue enlargement of our Promethean livers . . . Chesterton often—but never by any chance Belloc. Belloc I admire beyond measure, but there is a sort of partisan viciousness about Belloc that bars him from my celestial dreams. He never figures, no, not even in the remotest corner, on my ceiling. And yet the divine artist, by some strange skill that my ignorance of his technique saves me from the presumption of explaining, does indicate exactly where Belloc is. A little quiver of the paint, a faint aura, about the spectacular masses of Chesterton? I am not certain. But no intelligent beholder can look up and miss the remarkable fact that Belloc exists—and that he is away, safely away, away in his heaven, which is, of course, the Park Lane Imperialist's hell. There he presides . . .

But in this life I do not meet Chesterton exalted upon clouds, and there is but the mockery of that endless leisure for abstract discussion afforded by my painted entertainments. I live in an urgent and incessant world, which is at its best a wildly beautiful confusion of impressions and at its worst a dingy uproar. It crowds upon us and jostles us, we get our little interludes for thinking and talking between much rough scuffling and laying about us with our fists. And I cannot afford to be continually bickering with Chesterton and Belloc about forms of expression. There are others for whom I want to save my knuckles. One may be wasteful in peace and leisure, but economies are the soul of conflict.

In many ways we three are closely akin; we diverge not by necessity but accident, because we speak in different dialects and have divergent metaphysics. All that I can I shall persuade to my way of thinking about thought and to the use of words in my loose, expressive manner, but Belloc and Chesterton and I are too grown and set to change our languages now and learn new ones; we are on different roads, and so we must needs shout to one another across intervening abysses. These two say Socialism is a thing they do not want for men, and I say Socialism is above all what I want for men. We shall go on saying that now to the end of our days. But what we do all three want is something very alike. Our different roads are parallel. I aim at a growing collective life, a perpetually enhanced inheritance for our race, through the fullest, freest development of the individual life. What they aim at ultimately I do not understand, but it is manifest that its immediate form is the fullest and freest development of the individual life. We all three hate equally and sympathetically the spectacle of human beings blown up with windy wealth and irresponsible power as cruelly and absurdly as boys blow up frogs; we all three detest the complex causes that dwarf and cripple lives from the moment of birth and starve and debase great masses of mankind. We want as universally as possible the jolly life, men and women warm-blooded and well-aired, acting freely and joyously, gathering life as children gather corn-cockles in corn. We all three want people to have property of a real

and personal sort, to have the son, as Chesterton put it, bringing up the port his father laid down, and pride in the pears one has grown in one's own garden. And I agree with Chesterton that giving—giving oneself out of love and fellowship—is the salt of life.

But there I diverge from him, less in spirit I think than in the manner of his expression. There is a base because impersonal way of giving. "Standing drink," which he praises as noble, is just the thing I cannot stand, the ultimate mockery and vulgarisation of that fine act of bringing out the cherished thing saved for the heaven-sent guest. It is a mere commercial transaction, essentially of the evil of our time. Think of it! Two temporarily homeless beings agree to drink together, and they turn in and face the public supply of drink (a little vitiated by private commercial necessities) in the public-house. (It is horrible that life should be so wholesale and heartless.) And Jones, with a sudden effusion of manner, thrusts twopence or ninepence (got God knows how) into the economic mysteries and personal delicacy of Brown. I'd as soon a man slipped sixpence down my neck. If Jones has used love and sympathy to detect a certain real thirst and need in Brown and knowledge and power in its assuaging by some specially appropriate fluid, then we have an altogether different matter; but the common business of "standing treat" and giving presents and entertainments is as proud and unspiritual as cock-crowing, as foolish and inhuman as that sorry compendium of mercantile vices, the game of poker, and I am amazed to find Chesterton commend it.

But that is a criticism by the way. Chesterton and Belloc agree with the Socialist that the present world doesn't give at all what they want. They agree that it fails to do so through a wild derangement of our property relations. They are in agreement with the common contemporary man (whose creed is stated, I think, not unfairly, but with the omission of certain important articles by Chesterton), that the derangements of our property relations are to be remedied by concerted action and in part by altered laws. The land and all sorts of great common interests must be, if not owned, then at least controlled, managed, checked, redistributed by the State. Our real difference is only about a little more or a little less owning. I do not see how Belloc and Chesterton can stand for anything but a strong State as against those wild monsters of property, the strong, big private owners. The State must be complex and powerful enough to prevent them. State or plutocrat, there is really no other practical alternative before the world at the present time. Either we have got to let the big financial adventurers, the aggregating capitalist and his Press, in a loose, informal combination, rule the earth, either we have got to stand aside from preventive legislation and leave things to work out on their present lines, or we have to construct a collective organisation sufficiently strong for the protection of the liberties of the some-day-to-be-jolly common man. So far we go in common. If Belloc and Chesterton are not Socialists, they are at any rate not anti-Socialists. If they say they want an organised Christian State (which involves practically seven-tenths of the Socialist desire), then, in the face of our big common enemies, of adventurous capital, of alien Imperialism, base ambition, base intelligence, and common prejudice and ignorance, I do not mean to quarrel with them politically, so long as they force no quarrel on me. Their organised Christian State is nearer the organised State I want than our present plutocracy. Our ideals will fight some day, and it will be, I know, a first-rate fight, but to fight now is to let the enemy in. When we have got all we want in common, then and only then can we afford to differ. I have never believed that a Socialist Party could hope to form a Government in this country in my life-time; I believe it less now than ever I did. I don't know if any of my Fabian colleagues entertain so remarkable a hope. But if they do not, then unless their political aim is pure cantankerousness, they must contemplate a working political combination between the Socialist members in Parliament and just that non-capitalist section of the Liberal Party for which Chesterton and Belloc speak. Perpetual opposition is a dishonourable aim in politics; and a man who mingles in political development with no intention of taking on responsible tasks unless he gets all his particular formulæ accepted is a pervert, a victim of Irish bad example, and unfit for decent democratic institutions . . .

I digress again, I see, but my drift I hope is clear. Differ as we may, Belloc and Chesterton are with all Socialists in being on the same side of the great political and social cleavage that opens at the present time. We and they are with the interests of the mass of common men as against that growing organisation of great owners who have common interests directly antagonistic to those of the community and State. We Socialists are only secondarily politicians. Our primary business is not to impose upon, but to ram right into the substance of that object of Chesterton's solicitude, the circle of ideas of the common man, the idea of the State as his own, as a thing he serves and is served by. We want to add to his sense of property rather than offend it. If I had my way I would do that at the street corners and on the trams, I would take down that alien-looking and often detested inscription "L.C.C.," and put up, "This Tram, this Street, belongs to the People of London." Would Chesterton or Belloc quarrel with that? Suppose that Chesterton is right, and that there are incurable things in the mind of the common man flatly hostile to our ideals; so much of our ideals will fail. But we are doing our best by our lights, and all we can. What are Chesterton and Belloc doing? If our ideal is partly right and partly wrong, are they trying to build up a better ideal? Will they state a Utopia and how they propose it shall be managed? If they lend their weight only to such fine old propositions as that a man wants freedom, that he has a right to do as he likes with his own, and so on, they won't help the common man much. All that fine talk, without some further exposition, goes to sustain Mr. Rockefeller's simple human love of property, and the woman and child sweating manufacturer in his fight for the inspector-free home industry. I bought on a bookstall the other day a pamphlet full of misrepresentation and bad argument against Socialism by an Australian Jew, published by the Single-Tax people apparently in a disinterested attempt to free the land from the landowner by the simple expedient of abusing anyone else who wanted to do as much but did not hold Henry George to be God and Lord; and I know Socialists who will protest with tears in their eyes against association with any human being who sings any song but the "Red Flag" and doubts whether Marx had much experience of affairs. Well, there is no reason why Chesterton and Belloc should at their level do the same sort of thing. When we talk on a ceiling or at a dinner-party with any touch of the celestial in its composition, Chesterton and I, Belloc and I, are antagonists with an undying feud, but in the fight against human selfishness and narrowness and for a finer, juster law, we are brothers—at the remotest, half-brothers.

Chesterton isn't a Socialist—agreed! But now, as between us and the Master of Elibank or Sir Hugh Bell or any other Free Trade Liberal capitalist or landlord, which side is he on? You cannot have more than one fight going on in the political arena at the same time, because only one party or group of parties can win.

And going back for a moment to that point about a Utopia, I want one from Chesterton. Purely unhelpful criticism isn't enough from a man of his size. It isn't fair for him to go about sitting on other people's Utopias. I appeal to his sense of fair play. I have done my best to reconcile the conception of a free and generous style of personal living with a social organisation that will save the world from the harsh predominance of dull, persistent, energetic, unscrupulous grabbers tempered only by the vulgar extravagance of their wives and sons. It isn't an adequate reply to say that nobody stood treat there, and that the simple, generous people like to beat their own wives and children on occasion in a loving and intimate manner, and that they won't endure the spirit of Sidney Webb.

H. G. WELLS.

Stagnation.

THERE is a stream, which, tired of casual village, green meadow, growling mill-wheel, and the whips of fishermen, takes a desperate dive in among sooty workshops and factories, among soap, gas, and chemical works that lie haphazard upon blank waste fringes of land, utterly loses its way there, and so winds dismally in meaningless semi-circles, hidden from the outer world, and getting thicker and thicker, grimier and grimier, more and more covered with débris, until it plunges its shame in the merciful oblivion of the tide.

Down side alleys of back streets, where windows are stuffed with rag and doors are perennially ajar, where dirt, on two and four legs, crawls intermingled in the gutter, where owl-eyed creatures look out helplessly at the forlorn greyness, down such if I wander—and so beyond, into regions past dwelling in, suddenly I surprise the poor stream in one of its blind turns, burrowing under steep banks of rubbish, languid, shimmering in oily prismatic colours of gas waste (but evilly black under it all), and bearing on its breast a stray barge or two, blackened with coal dust or heavy with raw plank, the dingy bargemen pushing stolidly at their long oars —luckless Charons out of hope of relief from their weary ferrying.

Further on, because the soil lacks nutriment, the houses fall step by step into decay, sink at last into mere heaps of powdering dust, wherefrom jagged nails stick out, whereon broken bottles lie scattered.

Great and greater grow the heaps—the garner of the dust and rubbish of all life—grow into mountains, into long ranges devouring the ground with big leaps of slithering slope. A fume of dust continually rises from them, so that when the wind is up the sun is blotted out, and always the sky is grey, thank God—since what but a mockery would it be if blue sky looked down upon such a desolation.

A desolation of desolations! Melancholy robbed of its honour—dust-choked of its tears!

How bedraggled is this decay! Here is no sumptuous spread of autumn colours, no sunset glory to make death seem but an ante-chamber to new births. Out of this sterile dust, out of this leaden stream will no new birth spring up, here shall be nought alive from now to the end of days. It is nothingness, stagnation, a stoppage of the eternal round, only, what is more ghastly than all, it is nothingness that remembers it was once alive.

What enemy has done this, has so stolen all his dignity from Death? If it were but horrible, terrifying, something to shudder at—but no, the eye follows wearily the featureless swell of the dust with its indecent scattering of tin cans and broken bottles, follows the slimy curl of the stream with its noisome, nondescript float, and the heart sinks into a yawning, passionless desperation.

It is shocking! Death has been beguiled. I am persuaded he is more beautiful than this. I think some day the great earth will open and suck the shame into her fire.

* * * * * *

Here rumble the dead-carts of the city to shoot their corpses on the general mound.

Had none earned a worthier burial than so casual a shooting off at the fag-end of the world? It seems a treachery to these poor dead.

Here sticks out a Noah's Ark—or the stem of it, aground for good and all after what earth-wanderings! After what fingerings of delight, what clutches of young joy! Into what strange water didst thou sail, old craft, upon what mad adventure? Not Noah only, but all the captains of the past have trod thy planks and steered their uncharted journeys by the stars. I cannot guess what names you had, you captains, what names the countries you discovered, names that only your toddling makers ever knew—could we do nothing better with thee, thou fairy craft, than this?

Broken oar, tattered coat, smashed, dangling hat, wheel dwindled to a lesser segment and three fangs, washed out sign-board which prattled so bravely to the world of the merits of its master, tattered, limbless doll, fondled, may be, more than are most other human creatures; miserable shards of crockery, worn-out knife blades, sans edge or handle, oh, sad wreckage of familiar things! what flippant contempt it is to leave your bodies naked to the wind and rain of heaven! Was there no fire to ease your weary spirits of their burden of broken flesh? Could we not have heaped the thick oblivious clods above you—rather than have let you rot and moulder so visibly to destruction—rot and moulder in company with tin cans and broken bottles that were only human for an hour?

Let me be more merciful than my fellows. To this poor fragment of an ark, at least, will I accord a fitting funeral, and to this broken oar-blade, to this headless trunk.

So, climb I heedfully up the slope, which rustles and slips beneath me, and rescue these my woeful treasures. So, with half-breathed invocation to the water, hurl I them from me. Ho! a brave throw. They fly circling; splash in the slimy stream, and off they sail on it. And yet! (I muse) is it so much the better burial that I have given? Yes, have patience, little voyagers; soon, if you can last so long, and not drift ashore, and you, in especial, poor trunk, if you will keep a stout heart, and not sink sodden to the bottom, soon you will know the clean, salt, slumberous washing of the sea . . .

"Hi, guvnor! Wotcher do that for?" grumbles a voice at my side.

I look down at a little remnant of a boy—grey-skinned and dusty—weirdly in tone with the landscape, his eyes fixed greedily on the wake of my fleet.

I blush.

"I am sorry, my man, it was silly. Would you like to have had them?"

"Not 'arf! Wotcher fink?" he replies with a venomous underlip.

The ways of sentimentality are hard. It seems I have done murder. These were quick that went down to the tide. That nose of an ark, that nucleus of doll, that shred of oar might have known much joy in this their second transmigration so heedlessly cut short.

I debauched the boy with a penny; but he looked sadly down the stream. And then up at me. And then down at the dust-heaps. I might at least have taken, said the glance, a tin can (of which there were plenty) or a dead cat for my artillery.

W. R. TITTERTON.

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

Abraham Lincoln. By Henry Bryan Binns. (Dent. 4s. 6d. net.)

At the end of his book Mr. Binns tells us that when he has been tempted to seek for links which will bind Abraham Lincoln with the rest of human kind, there have come into his mind the vague images of three people. He has seen the shadowy reminiscence of Socrates, of Don Quixote, and Uncle Remus. It would be, surely, hard to find a wiser summary of the grotesque mixture of sane wisdom, delightful romance, and irrepressible buffoonery which inhabited the weirdly-shaped body that were the outward and visible sign of the President of the United States during the most critical years of their history. If the vivid realisation of a concentrated piece of human personality is a triumph of biographical writing, then this book has succeeded beyond all praise. One feels compelled to rank this picture with the realities of George Meredith rather than with the unrealities of a history book. Mr. Binns has been ambitious; for he has set himself to tell us what manner of man this Lincoln was, rather than the history of the times in which he lived. Political history is a crude thing when considered beside the subtle nooks and corners of the most elusive of supernatural phenomena —a human mind. In the case of Abraham Lincoln, the mind was of infinite complexity; and I think that the author has shown the skill of his art, in that he sends us away with the curiosity unsatisfied. There is no assertion that the heart of this great American statesman has been torn out and laid bare. On the contrary,

Mr. Binns seems to want us to understand that he has continually found facts beyond explanation, things which have escaped his careful analysis. The last sentence in his book says: "Thus he stands before us all, erect but stooping a little, wrapt in thought, with kind, sad, strong, inscrutable face." There are eight portraits of Lincoln presented with the biography, and if the reader will consider them he will realise what that word "inscrutable" means. It is an essential part of all great men and of all great art; there is always the intangible "something" which evades our grasp. It is the delicate skill with which this story of Lincoln plays on this thought that has made me already turn to Mr. George Meredith for a concrete expression of my meaning.

The allurement of Abraham Lincoln seems altogether apart from his place in history. When one gets beneath the surface of the demand for the abolition of black slavery; when one has passed the first impulse of emotional certainty that it is eternally right that all men shall be free; then, on the cold page of history, the American Civil War of 1861-1865 has not all the qualities of ideal righteousness that one might wish. There was something sordid about much of the Northern policy; something altogether unworthy of being linked to the poetical insanity of John Brown's wild dash at Harper's Ferry. Even Lincoln almost seems to have been a tool of men who had nothing of his keen desire that his beloved land should not hold a slave within its borders. When he was a young man he had seen in the New Orleans market a mulatto girl standing on an auction platform; it is told how fiercely he blazed forth, "if ever I get a chance to hit that thing [slavery], I'll hit it hard." And one can imagine those "inscrutable" eyes for a moment losing their dreaminess as he said those words. When his chance came, and the rough backwoodsman became President, it is told in history how he carried out this determination of his youth. There were not lacking men who said that Lincoln was half-hearted in his abolition faith; he acted so warily, he saw the other side of the question. He saw too far along the vista of things to be a fanatic; his followers could not track his thoughts. Mr. Binns says, "he was more than ever a riddle to the wiser among them, more than ever a kindly simpleton or Merry-Andrew to the less wise and more self-confident." When an impulsive general published a proclamation of freedom for the slaves within his district, Lincoln promptly repudiated the document. He was talking of compensation and a fifty years time limit, when the abolitionists were filling his audience chamber with urgent demands for action next week. He grew tired of Biblical authority, for abolition and against it: "he had taken as much advice as he could swallow; and now, when it professed to come with the authority of special revelation, he declared that men on both sides could hardly be supposed to represent the Divine Will; and that since he himself was so earnest to do his duty it seemed probable that Providence would communicate its purpose to him, rather than to another. But he added, 'these are not the days of miracles, and I suppose it will be granted that I am not to expect a direct revelation. I must study the plain physical facts of the case, ascertain what is possible, and learn what appears to be wise and right'." It was not the excuse of a statesman wishing to avoid his responsibilities in a matter where the facts were clear. It was not a simple matter of Old Age Pensions or School Feeding. One hesitates to decide how far Lincoln had grasped the whole question which the Northern States had undertaken to settle with the Southern States at the point of the sword. Mr. Binns does not dwell on the subject for, as I have said, he has a more engrossing matter in hand than political history. Nevertheless, he gives many indications of what was Lincoln's private opinion of the rich Northern manufacturers and financiers who were so eager to abolish slavery in other States. Beyond all doubt, the question of slavery was rather an excuse for the war, than its real cause. The North fought the South because the former, with the instincts of tyrant monopolists, desired to prevent the Southern agriculturists obtaining cheap implements and clothing and the general necessities of a civilised life, from the English and European markets, instead of from the rising manufacturers of the Northern States. The slave system was impossible in the North, so it was quite convenient to use its abolition as a war-cry. The real sincerity of that cry will be valued according to the degree of our faith in human nature. I would only remind the reader of this life of Lincoln that it was the traders of the North who, a few years before, had voted down the petition of the Virginians that the slave trade should cease: there was the very awkward fact that this trade was profitable, and it was in the hands of gentlemen who did not live in the South. But listen to Lincoln's own comments on some of his wealthy supporters, when the war was at its crisis: "What do you think of those fellows in Wall Street who are gambling in gold at such a time as this? For my part, I wish everyone of them had his devilish head shot off." And again, some New York merchants came to him, begging for a gunboat to protect their trade from Confederate warships. They were met with the acid comment: "If I was worth half as much as you gentlemen are represented to be, and as badly frightened as you seem to be, I would build a gunboat and give it to the Government." Indeed, Lincoln's enthusiasm for the freeing of slaves must have been in inverse ratio to his realisation of the "free" labour which was shortly to take the place of slavery. Mr. Binns, with a firm grasp of the position, tells us Lincoln was not a Socialist, "but he belonged to the same great school as Mill and Mazzini, and, like theirs, his vigorous individualism was always balanced by the feeling of solidarity."

But if you would feel the intangible touch of a great personality, then you cannot afford to miss this book. It is packed with revelations of the deep places of human nature. It is a masterly analysis of a man who had "the ineffable note of vista." You cannot get to the end of him. You are just about to label his religion with the name of a sect, when you are faced with some phrase or act, which dissolves sectarianism into misty nothingness. At one moment this man is a type of melancholy, and the next he is shaking you with sheer drollery. The man whose six feet four inches of ungainly awkwardness is the butt of public jests, is the very same who is the centre of every social function, the one who always has the women on his side. His love affairs were a medley of comedy and tragedy. When he was elected President he declared that he was overweighed with his responsibilities, he would never be happy again; and yet he was shot as he sat at the theatre, listening to a farce with the relish of a schoolboy. In short, Abraham Lincoln was made for our delightful confusion, not for our understanding: it is the little men who fit into our rules and orders.

G. R. S. TAYLOR.

REVIEWS.

Criminals and Crime. By Sir Robert Anderson. (Nisbet and Co. 5s. net.)

It needs a "revolution in the spirit" to enable most men to realise that not only the way to hell, but hell itself is paved with good intentions. And what place is more packed with good intentions than this earth? Our social system is positively dripping with the milk of human kindness; only on the rarest occasions do we light on an individual with consciously evil intentions. Yet, for all that, the social system remains what it is, the most inhuman, brutal, and detestable method stupidity can devise for frustrating and mocking at the good intentions of its victims. Occasionally we find men who are acutely aware of this extraordinary discord of intention and act, and in them the effect is either humour or pathos or both. More often, however, men are indifferent, but they are worst when they are complacent. Sir Robert Anderson belongs to this last select circle of the complacent. If, as is possible, such a frame of mind as dictated this book is the effect of our criminal system on its actual administrators, we can only say that henceforth the humanitarian argument in favour of criminals needs to be supplemented, if not supplanted, by the humanitarian argument in favour of our criminal experts. Not, however, that Sir Robert Anderson is consciously wicked or means in the least degree anything but well. He is at times quite overcome with sympathy, and has all sorts of reforms to suggest. Nay, some of his suggested reforms are both excellent and practicable; we would go further, and say even humane, were it not that the suggestion of the word appears to enrage him. Briefly, his thesis is that punishment should be much more differentiated than it is, and arranged on a sliding scale after the analogy of a theocracy. Now, admirable crimes against property (the only crime considered in the volume!) are nowadays works of art, demanding splendid qualities of intelligence, nerve, and workmanship. In other words, these admirable crimes (and Sir Robert Anderson's professional pride cannot conceal his admiration of them) are the work of a handful of men, all of whom are "known to the police"—or were in Sir Robert's day. Hence his remedy is very simple: Put these few men into prison for life, and admirable crimes requiring genius will cease, and there will be none left to baffle the police. Beautiful theory; born, too, of how many years of experting? But as a critic of the Higher Critics (in his retired leisure, you understand!), Sir Robert should know that this method of rendering artists innocuous has been tried in every department and found wanting. It recalls the story of the Persian monarch who cut off the heads of the poppies as a sign to his Ambassador's messenger. And there is the same objection to it now as then and for ever, namely, that conditions breed men, and criminal conditions breed crime and criminals.

Sir Robert Anderson is specifically aware of this, but he is quite incapable of an intelligent deduction. He says in effect that society has the criminals as well as the government it deserves; but his method of criminal reform is exactly analogous to Anarchism in governmental reform. Had he the courage of the Anarchists, he would kill professional criminals as Anarchists kill kings — and with precisely the same result.

The Happy Moralist. By Hubert Bland. (Laurie. 3s. 6d.)

When Kinglake describes Mr. Gladstone as "a good man in the worst sense of the word" he had his mind undoubtedly on the disagreeable side of Morality. Mr. Bland, however, prefers quite rightly the sunny side; and as a sub-title of this volume of essays we might suggest: "How to be Happy Though Moral." Whether he is discussing "pink silk sins" or the ethics of Belief or Good Manners, Mr. Bland is always bright, always, and above all, readable, and only rarely guilty of lapses in either style or ideas. Moreover, as might be expected from the author of "With the Eyes of a Man," Mr. Bland knows his world very well, is not too uncomfortable in it, knows a good many nice people, and belongs essentially to the best type of the citizen of the world. There are hints occasionally of much deeper experiences, experiences that baffle the most accomplished man of the world, as when, for example, Mr. Bland tells us that certain profound questions are best answered by being evaded. There are, of course, no such questions for a moralist; but it is certain that there are such for the moralist intent on happiness. In short, Mr. Bland has deliberately chosen not to write de profundis. But this decision, while it has given us a pleasant book, and even a useful book, certainly a book not to be easily put down, has also given us a book full of unreconciled and perhaps irreconcileable contradictions. It is strange, for example, that both the first and the last essays deal with what Mr. Bland calls the "Perilous Edge" of conduct; strange, we mean, when we remember that the tragic problems of morality are over that edge. But Mr. Bland, as we have said, never goes over that edge, and therefore remains the happy moralist only by confining himself to "a boudoir in the Palace of Truth." Yet he does not fail to charge Mr. Shaw with making his characters talk but never act. If to act is to risk falling over the perilous edge, that is, as Mr. Bland believes, being damned "probably in this world and certainly in the next," Mr. Shaw's characters, in refusing to act, are simple "happy moralists."

A History of Sculpture. By Ernest H. Short. (Heinemann. 7s. 6d. net.)

We approached this book with keen pleasure and a hope that at last we had found a brief History of Sculpture that would give a starting-point to many who would be keenly interested, if they were not a little mystified. It should be easy for everyone to partially understand sculpture, and a much wider understanding would be existent now, had it not been for the many questionable friends of Art who have written much sentimental nonsense on the subject.

To this already long list of writers must be added Mr. Ernest H. Short. By no exercise of generosity can we admit his fitness for the task, which appears to have been approached with a confidence that is amazing, and a spirit the reverse of reverent. His airy dismissals of Babylonian and Gothic sculpture from the survey are among the most wonderful efforts we remember to have seen in the literature of the subject. Of the first he says: "The art was too closely identified with architecture to ever attain a vigorous independent growth," and of the second: "It is not an exaggeration to say that no great sculpture was pro-

duced under the Gothic passion for mystic communion with the Unseen." The implication in the first passage that the art of hewing the rock *needs* an independent growth seems decidedly quaint, when we reflect on the alliance between architecture and sculpture on the Parthenon; and there are many Gothic buildings of which it can be said that sculpture is no small part of their character, and the historian should surely deal with this period, even though the sculpture only helps to make the glory of the whole.

His treatment of decadent Greek and post-Renaissance work is in the same key as his treatment of The Golden Age. His explanations of the most profound works by Phidias and by Michael Angelo are annoying, and his examination of the circumstances which led up to these personalities, detracting as it does from their stupendous mental altitude, is too fantastic to be dealt with patiently.

Where any question arises as to the estimation of these giants, it is not surprising to have serious misgivings in following the treatment of smaller men. Sufficient for us to say that in only a few cases do we agree.

In view of the author's "only concern"—"Vital Sculpture"— "art with a message for the twentieth century," it is perhaps fortunate that the earlier chapters raise doubts enough to render his remarks on the Modern school of questionable value. We especially disagree with what is written of Harry Bates, who, in our opinion, merits a much higher place among English sculptors. The half apologetic explanation of Alfred Gilbert's work is impertinent; while the introduction of "Englishmen have little natural affection for the Whistler method of dashing off a 'Harmony' in a couple of days and charging 300 guineas for it," besides being unnecessary, suggests how superficial is the understanding which has been brought to bear on this work.

The selection of the hundred illustrations throughout the book is remarkable. To deal only with the Classic group: The Ilissos, the Demeter (Ceres), the Erechtheion Caryatid (in the British Museum), the Victory of Samothrace (Louvre), and the Narcissus statuette (Naples Museum) are not illustrated. The Three Fates and Theseus are given half pages, while Phocion, the Dying Gaul, the Seated Boxer, the Laocoon, and the Nile groups occupy full pages.

In conclusion, we think this work should not have been published. Opinions which may be harmless enough in an individual, become mischievous in a book masquerading as History. It appears to have been written with no worthy guiding spirit; the author drifts, presenting no new facts of interest and marshalling the old ones badly; or to take a liberty with an expression of Bunthorne's: We call it Art Foam!

Many Mansions. By William Samuel Lilly. (Chapman and Hall. 12s. 6d. net.)

This collection of essays is a praiseworthy attempt to co-relate the vital essence of ancient religions with—to use a vague and rather unsatisfactory term—"modern thought." It is most refreshing to find a Roman Catholic freely admitting that Buddhism may have a real message to those lapsed Christians—the lost sheep of the house of Israel—in whose eyes Theism is discredited by science. Even if, as Nietzsche said, convictions are prisons, a corollary truth is that denials are deserts. "A man is right when he affirms, wrong when he denies"; which, being interpreted, means that it is more stimulating to live by some positive truth than to use all one's faculties merely in destructive criticism of other people's ideas. The life-force of the French Revolution lay in its assertion of the Rights of Man rather than in mere denunciation of monarchy and aristocracy. Whether such a phrase was academically correct matters not, because revolutions, like other good things, spring from impulse, not from academical rules. And religion, above all, demands an affirming mind; or, as Mr. Lilly would express it, the Catholic lives not by criticism but by "faith."

We are glad to find our author emphasising the scandalous neglect of Oriental study in England. As he points out, Germany maintains a hundred chairs of Oriental subjects, as against half a dozen or so in Great Britain. London possesses an Oriental school in which the professors are actually unpaid, and have to escape death by starvation as best they can. Lest this should seem an exaggeration, Mr. Lilly declares that to his personal knowledge they sometimes come perilously near it. Perhaps the newly-formed British Buddhist Society will take note of this, and agitate for a Government grant.

Quite the most fascinating essay, we think, is that which deals with the Saints of Islam. Again and again one feels inclined to rub one's eyes and ask if these extracts really come from genuine Muslims and not from some cloistered Western monk. Such classics as the "Imitation of Christ" and the "Dark Night of the Soul" seem to find their parallel in the "Pend-Nama" of Attar. The path of the soul towards union with the Divine is designated as the "Seven Valleys," and the imagery used is almost precisely that of our European mystics. Even the charming little idyll of St. Francis asking the birds to cease their singing until he had sung his office is duplicated by the story of the famous Jelal Sufi, saint and poet of the thirteenth century, who went to preach at a religious musical festival near a lake:—

> The frogs were vociferous and made his words inaudible. He therefore shouted to them, saying, "What is all this noise about? Either do you pronounce a discourse, or allow me to speak." Complete silence immediately ensued nor was a frog heard to croak again so long as Jelal remained there. Before leaving, he went to the lake and gave them permission to croak again. The chorus instantly began.

Mr. Lilly prefers the gentler remonstrances of St. Francis; but then the interruption of birds during devotions is much less intolerable than that of frogs during a speech!

The self-abandonment and self-annihilation of the Sufis rest on the basis of their pantheism. With them personal existence is the great illusion of this world of appearances—to cling to it is to be blind and guilty. This conception, as Mr. Lilly might have pointed out, links them on to another subject of his essays, that inverted mystic, Schopenhauer. It is curious that Western speculative thought should approximate so closely to Sufism. Unfortunately, Schopenhauer, in spite of his profundity, leaves a nasty taste in one's mouth. He aimed at utterly despising mankind, and only succeeded in behaving generally like a cur. We cannot blame Mr. Lilly for obviously preferring the gentle and courageous Spinoza. Our author has no difficulty in squaring much of the message of the "God-intoxicated" man with the teaching of Aquinas. Spinoza clearly grasped Divine Immanence at a time when it was largely obscure in the mind of Europe: a service which European thought will not easily forget.

Mr. Lilly's concluding essay is a frank repudiation of German "attacks" on the divinity of Christ, and an explanation of the Catholic standpoint with regard to the Bible. We can only hope that his Catholic standpoint will be that of other Catholic writers when they deal with the "Bibles" of other religions than their own, and we thank him for a vigorous and brightly-written book.

The City of Pleasure. A Fantasia on Modern Times. By Arnold Bennett. (Chatto and Windus. 6s.)

To be able to write a novel of a fantastic humour and and an effervescing vitality is Mr. Arnold Bennett's peculiar genius. There is something in it that reminds one of Frank Stockton, but his method was somewhat different from Mr. Bennett's — and, by the way, superior. Stockton would construct a wildly fantastic situation, then with loving care and fulness set down in the thick of that situation a completely normal human being, a human being without a kink in her—it was generally her. Such human souls are transcendentally rare. None of us is normal. We all have several kinks. But the delightful humour of the book would lie in the interaction of the very clearest kind of ordinary common sense and the most unheard of fantasies of events. When the two old ladies sat comfortably in the boat till it sank from under them in the Pacific Ocean, one knew that it was the right thing to do, but one never would have thought of it at the time. Any other writer would have made his points out of the old ladies' panic. Stockton never attempted to make points. He left his old ladies to deal with things as they came up—each in its own time. However, it is Mr. Bennett's "The City of Pleasure" we are supposed to be talking about, not Stockton's Mrs. Lecks and Mrs. Aleshine. Mr. Bennett has put a thoroughly fantastic character in the midst of a thoroughly fantastic plot. This produces a slightly unsatisfactory feeling of unexpectedness and want of inevitableness; but it is mighty amusing reading. The hero bears a shadowy resemblance to Shaw—the Shaw who talks about himself at the beginning of his lectures before he has decided what manner of audience he is facing and what he intends to say to them; but it is only a shadowy resemblance; Carpentaria is really himself and nothing more. When he conducted "God Save the King," "with what snap, what dash, what *chic*, what splash, and what magnificent presence of mind did he save the King! The applause was wild and ample." In purple velvet he conducted, and while conducting his famous march, which began with the utmost possible volume of sound, a volume which continued without the slightest respite during the whole composition, the terrible old mother of his partner took pot shots at him with a rifle. After this Carpentaria dissembled and went more quietly, and the plot grows also wild and ample. It were a thousand pities to spoil the reader's pleasure by displaying its dry bones in anything but Mr. Bennett's own fitting style.

The Municipal Manual. By A. E. Lauder. (P. S. King and Son. 3s. 6d. net.)

We are very grateful to Mr. Lauder for having written this handy guide to English Local Government. The subject is one of great complexity. The existing boundaries of local government areas were some of them defined before the Norman Conquest, while others date but from yesterday, and the same may be said of the rights and functions of the various municipal corporations. A considerable amount of codification, as well as extension, of these functions has been accomplished during the last thirty years, but the task of mastering the details contained in the various Acts is still too formidable for most busy people to attempt. As a consequence, the average free and enlightened elector is most deplorably ignorant of the whole subject, and there are few men, not personally concerned with local government, who could answer such questions as whether a Parish Council may build a public wash-house or whether borough police are controlled by the county, by the borough, or by the Justices.

This is the first book which has come under our notice dealing with the subject in a readable and concise fashion, without unnecessary technicalities and without assuming any previous knowledge. Its scope may be indicated by the titles of its eight chapters, viz.: Constitution and General Powers of Local Authorities —Public Health—Highways—Protective and Regulative Powers—Extra Municipal Powers (Trading, etc) —Financial—Education—Poor Law. We heartily recommend it to all Socialist workers with a reminder that a full knowledge of the functions, and particularly of the optional powers, of local authorities gives the possessor a great advantage in gaining influence over local administration.

Three Plays with Happy Endings. By St. John Hankin. (Samuel French. 3s. 6d.)

Mr. St. John Hankin has published one excellent play and two that are far below it both in stagecraft and literary excellence. In "The Cassilis Engagement" he commits the usual blunder of the beginner, and, first telling us what he means to do, he does it without a single surprise in the course of the play. "The Charity that Began at Home" is about a singularly boring group of people, and, frankly, they bore us far too successfully. But the "Return of the Prodigal" is a delightful piece of work, fresh and witty, with that supreme wit which acts as a revelation, and even while we laugh sets the deeps astir and leaves behind it the gift of a new point of view.

We are amused that Mr. Hankin should trouble himself about the other suggested endings to his plays; irresponsible people are always brimming over with platitudes and second-hand ideas; but that hardly seems to make it worth while to write a preface about them.

Wake up, England. By P. A. Vaile. (Skeffington. 3s. 6d. net.)

This is our first introduction to Mr. Vaile, although we gather from his book that he is a Colonial barrister, has written an article on Mr. Shaw for the London Press, has enjoyed interviews with Mr. Haldane and Lord Roberts, is an authority on athletics, sport, travel, patents, military training, education, and the stage. With this equipment it is distressing to learn that Mr. Vaile finds our country full of faults; that the English, for example, have no national spirit and cannot speak their own tongue; want originality and imagination; are snobbish, blind, and hopelessly pessimistic; and that the whole tendency of English life is towards contraction and repression, and is thus self-centring and narrowing. The book is written in an incoherent, garrulous, breezy style; otherwise there is not much fault to be found with it, for Mr. Vaile is evidently sincere and well-meaning, and quite without malice. If he would pardon a suggestion, it would be that he might bring out another edition of his book, compress the matter into half the space, take a few necessary elementary lessons in style, and mercilessly delete every passage that he himself thinks funny; by so doing he would make quite a readable and acceptable book. As it is, we are grateful for a prefatory note which assures us that if his observations are incorrect the English nation will be able to withstand the shock. Speaking for ourselves, we intend to try.

MAGAZINES OF THE MONTH.

THE "Nineteenth Century and After" for January is an interesting number. With Lord Curzon's contribution, "The True Imperialism," we shall deal at length next week. Miss Una Birch's account of le Comte de Saint-Germain is the best we have seen. Sir Harry H. Johnston's "How to Make the Negro Work" is an example of a sort of Imperialism, and Mr. Montgomery's reply on the subject of Sir Robert Anderson's "Crime and Criminals" is peculiarly effective. (Our own review of Sir Robert Anderson's book appears, by the way, elsewhere in this issue.) Politically the important articles are, however, C. F. G. Masterman's "Politics in Transition" and T. E. Kebbel's "Parliament and Party." Mr. Kebbel believes that the group system of the Continent is unlikely to arise in England, despite the signs. On the contrary, he believes that "the two-party system is about to enjoy a renewed lease of life" in consequence of the fulfilment of an ancient Socialist prophecy. Liberals who prefer reform to revolution will, he thinks, be gradually drawn into the Conservative Party; the rest will join the advanced section.—Along with some horrid forecasts Mr. Masterman presents an encouraging outlook for the Labour and Socialist parties. We demur entirely to the following:—

"The Government is so strong in individual excellence and so popular in the House of Commons that one sometimes wonders whether it may not last for a generation."

The wonder, fortunately, is dispelled by Mr. Masterman's remark: "there is danger that it may find itself reckoned in history as a Government of the Great Cautions: the Government of Lost Opportunities." Why not be personal and add, the Ca'Canny Government? Here follows Mr. Masterman's sympathetic description of the Labour Party:—

"The Labour Party has no programme. It has no striking magnetic personality amongst its leaders. It is often divided internally upon the simplest question of public policy. In its tiny collection of representatives in Parliament it possesses every variety of opinion, from the most conservative of Trade Unionists to the most revolutionary advocate of the collectivist ideal. It has no newspapers to advocate its cause; and when it has intruded itself between both the recognised parties their organs vie with each other in assailing it with bitterness and fury. It fails at present to attract any large measure of support outside the artisan and labouring classes, and its agitation is regarded by the average middle-class ratepayer with a bewildered disgust. In the House of Commons its representatives, efficient, hard-working, and popular, have no claim to represent intellect or political sagacity adequate to the formation of a Government. Yet it advances in strength and confidence, like a wave of upheaval owning allegiance to no human volition. Tory Democracy has gone down and disappeared before it, and Liberal Democracy is haunted with the foreboding of a similar destruction."

Far and away the most interesting contributor to the "National Review" for January is the Editor himself. Mr. J. L. Garvin is quite entitled to say, "I told you so" to the Free Trade fanatics who imagined that the recent boom in trade was immortal. Most mortal it has proved, and all the signs now point to a corresponding slump. If the matter were not so serious we could afford to smile at both parties,—since it is obvious that there are *two* wrong ends of the fiscal stick. Mr. Garvin undoubtedly proves that the other was one wrong end.—The Editor remains incorrigibly optimistic on the future of Unionism We have no doubt he is right, or would be if only he could suppress his party's tendency to talk (as well as think) pitiful nonsense about Social Reform. With Lord Milner as leader in place of Mr. Balfour (depressed to the Peerage), and with Lord Curzon vice-regalling in the Lords, we should find nothing formidable in Mr. Strachey and his individualistic survivals. Back numbers do not tell in politics! The Editor, however, values their influence much too cheaply. The other articles are of only moderate interest —Three articles in the January "Albany" are worthy of attention. Mr. A. J. Penty contributes a solid paper on "The Fallacies of Collectivism," which would have been more accurately described as the "Limits of Collectivism." A theory is not fallacious because it fails to explain or cover everything: and Mr. Penty positively claims that Collectivism covers a good deal. Well, we are of the same opinion, and so are most Socialists. Once more, therefore, our withers are unwrung. Mr. Havelock Ellis's story of the Anglo-Saxon is interesting pathologically, we might almost say post-mortemistically. He apparently pronounces the doom of England as a physical power, and recommends for her a quiet assumption of intellectual leadership, the leadership of civilisation. But England is a civilising, never a civilised power. And if the victory of Japan is a blow to the prestige of Europe, and Japan refuses to be civilised, what shall we do?—In the January "Churchman" the Rev. J. E. Watts-Ditchfield writes of "The Church and the Labour Movement." Sweated industries no less than empty churches bear testimony to the failure of the Church; and Mr. Watts-Ditchfield pertinently asks: "Where are Christian employers of labour? Why cannot the Church summon these to rise and show themselves superior to their Masters' associations?—While, however, the Church is asleep, Trade Unionism must be awake. In the "Woman Worker" (1d.) for January the Bishop of Birmingham writes of the necessity for organising women. "If," he says, "we are to make any way in getting those free from trades which ought to be free from them, and in getting a proper living wage for those who remain at work, the first step is to organise the labour of women." In the same number, Mr. Victor Grayson, M.P., describes the neighbourhood of his own tenement in Ancoats—To "School" Miss F. B. Low contributes what presumably is her ideal of elementary education. We can only marvel at the hypothetical endurance of future children No wonder they show an increasing disinclination to be born. The article of the month is on the City of London School, by Mr. A. J. Spilsbury.—The Winter Number of the Irish magazine, the "Shanachie," is as good in literature as it is bad in illustration. With the exception of Mr. Orpen's "Gaol Gate," the drawings are absurd. But contributions by J. M. Synge, Lord Dunsany, Pádraic Colum, and J. H. Cousins, more than supply the deficiency, though on the subject of "Mysticism in English Poetry" Mr. Cousins does write pretty rubbish.—The quarterly "Hibbert Journal" is a particularly strong number, containing articles by Father Tyrrel, Sir Oliver Lodge, Dr. Wm. Wallace, L. P. Jacks and others. Mr. Jacks's style is a constant pleasure, but to adapt Meredith, it is almost an intrusion in philosophy. We could find it in our hearts to ask an icy Why of this sentence: "the least we can demand of a world which tells its own story is that the story shall be consistent with itself." But we quite accept this: "The total life which is rich enough to require the tiger as well as the good Samaritan for its full manifestation requires also Nietzsche as well as St. John." Sir Oliver Lodge writes interestingly, but quite unconvincingly, on the "Immortality of the Soul." We are familiar with his theory of Life as a director, but words unfortunately muddle the proposition. Why should we not have a technical vocabulary after the manner of the mythologists? But the article that will be most read in this number is the Rev. George Tyrrel's "Prospects of Modernism." If anybody supposes that Pius X will climb down, Mr. Tyrrel's admirable analysis will convince him to the contrary. On the other hand, Modernism is so far not a positive, but a negative thing; and in negation alone there is no hope. Thus "things are at a deadlock." Mr. Tyrrel, however, sees only one end to the deadlock,—the death of the medieval interpretation of Catholicism.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

"The Human Harvest." By D. S. Jordan. (Alston Rivers. 2s. net.)

"Toledo." By A. F. Calvert. (Lane. 3s. 6d. net.)

"The Happy Moralist." By Hubert Bland. (Werner Laurie. 3s. 6d.)

"Essays in Socialism." By E. Belfort Bax. (E. Grant Richards. 6d.)

"Echoes from the Gnosis."—A Mithraic Ritual; The Vision of Aridæus; The Hymn of Jesus; The Hymns of Hermes; The Gnosis of the Mind. By G. R. S. Mead. (The Theosophical Publishing Society. 1s. each net.)

"Love, Sacred and Profane." By F. E. Worland. (C. W. Daniel. 3s. 6d. net.)

"The Excursions of Henry Pringle Price: A Bachelor of Letters." (The Open Road Publishing Co. 2s. net.)

"Motives of Mankind." By F. U. Laycock, LL.B. (Open Road Publishing Co. 7s. 6d. net.)

"Alice's Adventures in Wonderland." By Lewis Carroll. (Books for the Bairns Office. 3d. net.)

"The Battle of the Books." By Swift. (Greening. 2s. net.)

"Pamphlets and Leaflets for 1907." (The Liberal Publication Department. 2s. 6d.)

"The Political History of England in 12 Vols" (Vol. XII.). By Sidney Low, B.A., and L. C. Sanders, B.A. (Longmans, Green and Co. 7s. 6d. net.)

"Ignaz Ian Paderewski." By A. E. Baughan. (Lane. 2s. 6d. net.)

"Hazell's Annual, 1908." (Hodder and Stoughton 3s. 6d. net.)

"The Comments of Bagshot." Ed. J. A. Spender. (Constable 3s. 6d.)

"The Child's Socialist Reader." (Twentieth Century Press. 1s. 6d.)

"From Sunset to Sunrise." By George Tinworth. (Elliot Stock. 1s.)

"The Turn of the Road. A Play." By Rutherford Mayne. (Maunsel. 1s.)

"Inclinations: Poems." By E. A. Storer. (Sisley's. 3s. 6d.)

"Studies in the Philosophy of Health." By G. E. Mellor. (Stead, Danby and Co. 2s. 6d. net.)

"The Land of Eternity." By Sri Agamya Guru Parama hamsa. (A. C. Fifield. No price.)

"Socialist Annual, 1908." Ed. by Th. Rothstein. (Twentieth Century Press. 3d.)

"Historical Essays and Studies." By Lord Acton. (Macmillan. 10s. net.)

"History of Freedom and Other Essays." By Lord Acton (Macmillan. 10s.)
"The Priest and the Acolyte." Ed. Stuart Mason. (Lotus Press. 5s. net.)
"Mother Earth." Montague Fordham. (Privately printed. Chiswick Press. 5s. net.)
"House Decoration and Repairs." By C. Orlando Law. (Murray. 6s. net.)
"Our Heritage of Thought." By Barclay Lewis Day. (J. M. Watkins. 6s. net.)
"Higher Aspects of Truth." By A Thinker. (J. M. Watkins. 6s. net.)
"The Arts and Crafts of Older Spain. By Leonard Williams. (T. N. Foulis. 3 vols. 5s. net per vol.)
"Housing Up-to-Date." By Alderman W. Thompson. (National Housing Reform Council. 3s. 6d. net.)

ART.

Waste in Art—and in Italy.

As an artist I am a Socialist because Socialism, as I understand it, is the only principle of government that harmonises with the principles of Art. I take the broadest definition of the Socialistic ideal to be Economy, and the Socialistic government the one that would be most efficient with the least possible waste of energy. Art at any rate is good or bad in exact relation to this principle of economy. The greatest artist is always the one who does most with least means and least effort. It follows that Art must thrive best in an atmosphere of economy, and I believe that no system of Government would be as economical as the intelligently Socialistic. Much of our life to-day is waste. Here in Italy the waste of energy is more apparent even than in England, but as exaggeration is often valuable in demonstration, I will, as an instance of what I mean, indicate the facts that started this train of thought.

It seems to me that it is useless to expect Art from a country where opportunities and energy are wasted as they are here and elsewhere. Under a wide and rather useless-looking archway three men have been engaged for about an hour in harnessing a small mule. The greater part of the harness consists of a heavy wooden collar further loaded with a score of jangling bells. To my right as I work is a green door which has over it under a large flag a cast of the Government arms—elaborately moulded and painted. The door is open, and the official of the place has been leaning there smoking and spitting and regarding me languidly all the morning. He has a uniform on, and I suppose he is paid for wearing it, for he does nothing else apparently.

The only efficiency seems to be evidenced in the olive woods that cover the steep hills above the roofs of the houses with the mean scratchy effect that is so typical of cultivated Italy. The representative of Government has wearied of watching any one so industrious as myself, and has gone indoors. He it is I suppose who is now making those inconsequent noises on a flute . . . He is not in the least musical, and I am sure he will never be able to play anything but tedious exercises . . . I suppose he is energetic, as men go here, and feels impelled to do something. His official designition is . . . Guardia di Finanza. That seems to me more than a little ironical. I think he would be better occupied in joining the group of men on the beach who are playing bowls; but perhaps that is his afternoon employment. In this tiny place—there are only half a dozen houses—I suppose all the rest of the inhabitants except those who keep an "Osteria," live on the little hotel.

Five men spent all last night fishing in the bay to catch the tunny we shall have for lunch. Occasionally a dull thud comes from over the wall. There is a garden there belonging to very poor people that is full of oranges that are no trouble to grow, and heavily-scented flowering shrubs that are quite useless and scarcely incline one to work.

At one of the houses they appear to take in washing, and of course it is the one with nineteen steps up to the door. On the ground level these economical people roost three hens, and carry all their wine, water, and clothes up the steps with quite depressing contentment. Why not? . . . there is no hurry, and there is nothing else to do. The whole place is lighted electrically, and there is an outside lamp at the corner of the Financial Guardian's abode and another just in front of the hotel. It is too much trouble, I suppose, to switch them on and off, so they burn all day long with their foolish pink glimmer. Underneath them the children play about in the mud. I have been told that they may leave school on passing the third standard; then the more energetic of them doubtless go to work the hotel lifts and clean the boots of the Germans at Sta. Margherita. As for the younger sons, they have been well brought up and all have a promising squint or some other avoidable deformity so that they will be able to earn a living by begging.

Italy seems of late to spend most of her time romantically cleaning the boots of the Germans, the Americans, and the English with oil and wine instead of Nuggins's brown Polishes . . . the English at any rate think it romantic. It seems to me merely waste . . . all this . . . but then I am an artist. And if human energy does not in England run quite so much to waste, our art is not quite so bad as Italian art. I hold it works either way round. MAXWELL ARMFIELD.

CORRESPONDENCE.

For the opinions expressed by correspondents, the Editor does not hold himself responsible.
Correspondence intended for publication should be addressed to the Editor and written on one side of the paper only.

WAGES BOARDS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

My attention has been called to a letter in your paper from D. Sanders, in which he refers to my opinions about Wages Boards. He is not quite correct in saying that I think the Liberal party "is not likely to leap into the establishment of Wages Boards." I have often said that if my horizon were limited by Radicalism I should clutch at Wages Boards as a drowning man clutches at a straw. The Liberal party may "leap" into them, because it has no principles to guide it. But having leapt, I do not think for a minute they will find sufficient money to even pretend to set up the huge machinery necessary to give a fair chance to an experiment which is bound to end in failure.

But what I was really looking for was that the Tories would be cute enough to take up Wages Boards as a preliminary, or rather as an adjunct to Protection, as they are in Australia. I have not had long to wait before Lord Milner comes out as one of the towers of strength of the Anti-Sweating League. I see by your article on the Parliamentary Recess that, if you were not Socialists, "it would be under Lord Milner's banner that we should prefer to serve," so we may quite hope to see a new "Tory Imperialist Fabian Party" trusting to Lord Milner, Wages Boards, and Protection to redeem society. When that happens, you may still find that the Wages Boards put wages up in the sweated industries no more than the 8d. or 11d. per week which is all that they have succeeded in accomplishing after 10 or 11 years in the tailoring and shirt-making trades in Victoria, and that the workers in time prefer to return to the method of strikes as they are beginning to do in Australasia. (By the by, when Mr. Sanders asks how many strikes there have been in Victoria since Wages Boards were established, he seems to mix up Victoria with New Zealand: Wages Boards have had practically nothing to do with Victoria's comparative immunity from strikes.) Above all, you will not have touched the evils of irregularity of work, child labour, labour of married women and old or infirm persons, and unemployment, which—though not always so much on the surface—are

even more disastrous to the sweated workers and to our industrial organisation than low wages, and which can be tackled directly on Socialist lines.

Finally, I am not "opposed to Boards of any kind." If well-organised trades like to have conciliation and arbitration Boards well and good; the Railway Boards are not objectionable in principle, but because, amongst other reasons, they are so planned as to divide instead of uniting the men. It is for unorganised trades, and especially those where there is much possibility of home work, that I think them a waste of time and energy, if not worse.

MARGARET E. MACDONALD.

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THE EVOLUTIONISTS AND MR. BELLOC.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

In Mr. Belloc's article in this week's number of THE NEW AGE there are some assertions and comments which no evolutionist or freethinker can allow to pass unchallenged.

In the first place, Mr. Belloc refers to the criticism offered to Collectivism by the Catholic opinion of the world. So far, good. Mr. Belloc must surely know more about Catholic opinion than can be possible in the case of one without the fold. But he goes on to add the phrase "in other words, it is the criticism offered by all that is healthy and permanent in the intellectual life of Europe." This amazing statement leads one to suppose that Mr. Belloc's horizon is somewhat circumscribed by the exigencies of the faith which he professes, as his sweeping generalization excludes almost all the front rank thinkers for the past three hundred years.

In the second place, Mr. Belloc refers to the Catholicism of the Middle Ages "forcing Capital on all men." How, When and Where? In support of a sweeping statement such as this, it is customary to at least make a show of offering evidence. In view of the assertion, one feels tempted to ask why the ecclesiastical bodies at the time of the Reformation were so extremely wealthy while the masses of the peasantry had in many cases not enough to live on, even on the less expensive basis of that day. Is it not a fact that Catholic Spain and Portugal are unmatched to-day in Europe for dense ignorance and gross superstition? Does not the record of history show that the priest has in all countries and in all centuries been the relentless enemy of all inquiry which did not bid fair to increase his prestige and his receipts?

ANGUS J. CAMERON.

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TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

It is not usual to find a man of Mr. Belloc's intellectual attainments coming down to speak with his enemies in the gate, and we must forgive him if he yawns. Perhaps it is to impress his own side, who generally prefer a more or less resentful silence in the presence of opinions they do not share.

The significant thing about his article is not that he refers to Scholasticism or Neo-Platonism for the form of his thinking, since form, as he suggests, is more or less recurrent, but that he leaves his philosophical scheme as empty of new matter as it was when Aristotle asserted that men had more teeth than women. When Mr. Belloc claims that France under Louis XI., or Rome under Urban or Borgia, were the enemies of the rich and of landlordism, he very nearly surpasses this almost perfect model.

The next noticeable thing about his article, passing over its extremely able and interesting critical quality as not at all an important quality, is the fact that it nowhere suggests any sort of constructive policy, any germinal idea, any new experiment. If the Socialist philosophy is anything, it is the latest and greatest application of the experimental method. He agrees that modern society must be transformed, and quickly, but only as Aristotle counted teeth, by means of the Pure Idea. At bottom, Mr. Belloc is a pure sceptic, and will not help much to reform either England or the Congo. That being so, it is not of much consequence even if he has a large crowd in his cathedrals.

H. C. ROWE.

* * *

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

I fear Mr. H. Croft Hiller's "word or two" does not tend to clear up matters between the evolutionists and Mr. Belloc. In the first place, Mr. Hiller cannot possibly understand the meaning of his own sentences. In one of the first, he tells us that he has had "a pretty prolonged and intimate acquaintance with that (sic) Cosmos" and, in the last, he writes of me that "he has plenty to do in rubbing off superfluous paint affording gaudy decoration to his own 'environment'." Beware of any study of "the metaphysic of causation" if it leads to this!

In the second place, Mr. Hiller's "fundamental and vital truth" that he, as Knower, must cause the Cosmos to exist, intended, forsooth, as a poser to the evolutionist, is, I expect, quite as great a poser to Mr. Belloc, whose side he (Mr. Hiller) claims to espouse.

The issue between Mr. Belloc and the evolutionists is straight and simple, Mr. Hiller surely merely confuses it and abuses me.

HENRY M. BERNARD.

* * *

THE ROTHSCHILDS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

Dr. M. D. Eder "asserts" too much in his attack on the Rothschilds. He begins by "asserting" that "the Rothschilds have not only been the despoilers of many nations, but that posing in public as the friends of their own race, they behave in private as their oppressors." The assertion is made against evidence. Only this week we read that one member of the family—Madame Adolphe de Rothschild has bequeathed £320,000 to charities, mostly of a Jewish character. That is surely not the act of an oppressor. "The Rothschilds cringe to Royalties not to help remove disabilities from the victims of Russian persecution," writes Dr. Eder. Have "the Royalties" communicated the exclusive news to Dr. Eder? Not even the best informed newspapers have any knowledge of the conversations between living Royalties and the Rothschilds. How has Dr. Eder become possessed of his exclusive information?

With your permission, I intend to follow the Socratic method of asking Dr. Eder a few more questions. I would like him to give evidence in support of each of his assertions, and not an ipse dixit. "Karl Marx remarked so long ago as 1844 that "the worst anti-Semites are capitalists of the Rothschild type." Karl Marx was not infallible. Even Socialists voted against his system at the International Congresses. Bakounine did not agree with Kark Marx. Hundreds of modern Socialist leaders do not agree with Karl Marx. What sanctity is there in any dictum of Karl Marx? But let me suppose that Marx had evidence in 1844 that "Capitalists of the Rothschild type" were "the worst anti-Semites," how can the evidence of 63 years ago be brought against the present generation of Rothschilds whom Dr. Eder arraigns before the Court of Public Opinion?

"The International career of the Rothschilds, preying upon every nation in turn, has not escaped the criticism of publicists across the Channel." What does that prove? If M. Dumont attacks the French Rothschilds, is it any justification for Dr. Eder to follow the bad example? "You will find fever-stricken rubber-hunters in Brazil, quicksilver miners with the shaking palsy in Spain, paying toll at New Court, St. Swithin's Lane." Does Dr. Eder mean to imply that the Rothschilds are responsible for the fever and palsy? Is a London printer, for instance, responsible for the compositors in his employ suffering from lead poisoning? Would the Almaden mines in Spain no longer be worked if the Rothschilds relinquished ownership? Would rubber-hunting in Brazil cease if the Rothschilds sold out their interests? Why then abuse the Rothschilds for gathering wealth from Spain or Brazil which enables them to give largely to the poor of London?

I pass over the Egyptian question and the incidental attack on Lord Rosebery. I also refrain from touching on the charges in connection with the London County Council Loan, until Dr. Eder has proved his ability to discuss calmly matters relating to finance. Meanwhile, he might read McLeod on Banking and the writings of Bagehot. Dr. Eder may be too busy a man to study Goschen, although he ought to know something about Goschen when he is writing about Egypt!

I wish to confine myself to the Jewish question raised by Dr. Eder. He writes: "Lord Rothschild objects to any active

practical measures that will aid his unfortunate brethren to find a refuge in this country. Through a wise statesmanship you may think. Not at all. His action is dictated by the most grotesque motives of personal vanity." Has Dr. Eder read the verbatim reports of the evidence taken by the Royal Commission on Immigration? Does the report show that Lord Rothschild is in principle an antagonist to Alien immigration? Do Lord Rothschild's speeches in the Upper Chamber disclose any antagonism to aliens?

Then Dr. Eder makes the serious charge that Lord Rothschild "betrayed" the contents of a confidential memorandum sent to him by the Executive of the Board of Deputies: "Without asking permission the noble lord betrayed the contents of the document to one of His Majesty's Ministers, and to a lady, presumably to put before the King." As Dr. Eder is evidently a courageous man, judging from his style of writing, why does he not mention names? Another question which suggests itself in connection with the "Memorandum" is: As the "memorandum embodying the alterations considered essential in the Act" is the basis on which the Government was to be asked for new legislation, was it not essential that Lord Rothschild should have sounded the Government as to the prospects of an amended Bill being introduced in Parliament?

There is also the story about Lord Rothschild sending for the editor of a Jewish newspaper who was admonished "for publishing any criticism of English administration. Such a course would, he said, promote anti-Semitism." What is the name of the paper? Much also depends on the tone of the criticism. If a stranger is invited to a private house and he immediately begins to find fault in an angry screeching voice with the host's menage, and upbraids him, in abusive language, for not inviting his old uncle and blind old grandmother, such conduct would naturally create an antagonistic feeling. Is it not possible that Lord Rothschild really knows what would create anti-Semitism amongst unthinking people? No truly cultured man who is a thinker is an anti-Semite. Even in Russia, Dr. Eder will admit, there are noble souls, cultured men, who are doing their utmost to help the Jews. But everybody is not a thinker, even in free England, and we are all judged, not so much for what we actually do, but for what we say, and how we say it. Is not Dr. Eder endeavouring to malign two men who in all English Jewry have proved themselves the greatest friends of the alien population? What is his justification?

One more and final question! There are about 6 millions of Jews in Russia and Roumania who would like to come to England, if they had the means, and if the Aliens Act were not in existence. Could England find occupation for 6 million Jews? Dr. Eder must admit that immigration would have to be checked at some period. Why, then, does Dr. Eder blame Lords Rothschild and Swaythling for counselling that the present condition of economic affairs in England is unfavourable for urging the Government to amend the Aliens Act? Every humanitarian feels sincere sympathy for the Russian and Roumanian Jews. Their miserable position is unique. But will Dr. Eder's attack on two of their best and most influential friends do any good to the cause?

MAURICE BRODZKY.

OUR PUBLISHER'S POINTERS.

OWING to the large number of letters which I receive from kindly readers of THE NEW AGE in all parts of the world I find it increasingly difficult to answer all these correspondents through the post. I have, therefore, prevailed upon our Editor to grant me a small portion of his valuable space to enable me to communicate not only with those readers who write to me but also to those whose services I am anxious to secure on behalf of THE NEW AGE.

Firstly, let me gratify the wish of the large number of my correspondents who "would be glad to hear occasionally how THE NEW AGE is going."

It is "going" splendidly; in fact, the circulation is increasing so rapidly that I have to express my regret that a large number of readers were disappointed last week, because they were unable to obtain their copies. By twelve o'clock last Thursday we were completely sold out, and though we had orders for over a thousand more copies we were unable to fill them. We have this week printed a very much larger edition, but I cannot too strongly impress upon our readers that if they wish to be certain of securing their copies they should place an order with their local newsagent or else subscribe direct to this office. I expect to secure a limited number of last week's issue, and if those of our readers who were unable to obtain a copy will write direct to the office enclosing 1½d. we will endeavour to fill all orders, but application should be made immediately.

Though our circulation is increasing so rapidly, it is not nearly large enough yet. Being the Publisher (for Publishers are never modest), I can safely speak of the merits of THE NEW AGE—yet is it necessary? they must be obvious to all who read the paper. Nevertheless, there are thousands of Socialists and would-be Socialists who have not yet succumbed to its attractions, and I want everyone of our friends to assist in pushing the sale of THE NEW AGE. There are many ways of doing this, and I venture to suggest a few:—

1. Send the names and addresses of those of your friends, interested in Socialism, who do not already read THE NEW AGE. We will post a specimen copy to them.

2. Apply for a parcel of specimen copies for distribution among your friends or at meetings. We will send a parcel by return, carriage paid. Please state how many copies you can use.

3. Ask every newsagent or bookstall clerk you come in contact with, if he stocks THE NEW AGE. Should he not have heard of such a paper, do not slay him, merely send us a card with his name and address. We will show him the error of his ways.

4. If your newsagent sells THE NEW AGE, but does not exhibit a poster, do not withdraw your custom, but threaten to do so unless he writes to the office to have one sent him weekly.

5. If you have any difficulty in securing your copy of THE NEW AGE, drop us a card giving the name and address of newsagent.

To Birmingham Readers.

Mr. Frank Knibb, honorary literary secretary of the Birmingham Labour Church, wishes me to state that THE NEW AGE can always be obtained at the Church (Bristol Street Council Schools) on Sunday evenings. (Many thanks, Mr. Knibb, others please copy.)

To Mr. W. Robson, Stoke Newington; Labour, Bromley; Mr. Ashley, Falkirk; Mr. Regan, Belfast; C. K. R. and Aged, Manchester, and many others: Very many thanks for kind wishes. Every individual effort helps the good cause, and we are very grateful.

Back Numbers.

There is still a limited supply of all the back numbers, New Series, and some of these can be obtained at the original price of one penny each and postage. However, as the number is very limited, we shall be compelled shortly to raise the price even of these numbers, but due notice will be given.

Have you sent for a Bernard Shaw Calendar yet? Price 1s. 2d. by post. THE PUBLISHER.

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