"NOT A REPLY": by HILAIRE BELLOC, M.P.

THE NEW AGE

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THE assassination of the King and Crown Prince of Portugal throws a flood of light on the political situation in that country. During the past few weeks there has been a vigorous campaign of letters and articles in the London press, upholding the régime of the dictator-premier, and asserting that the malcontents were merely a few corrupt and disappointed ex-bureaucrats who had been deprived of their sinecures by the "cleansing" policy of Senhor Franco. Saturday's tragedy, which was no inconsequent Anarchist outrage, is the reductio ad absurdum of these statements. Corrupt bureaucrats do not give their lives for their cause, as these assassins, whoever they were, deliberately did. The clear deduction is, that the revolutionary movement in Portugal is much more alive and determined than the English public have been allowed to know. We can only express the hope that the Portuguese Government will take their lesson to heart and realise the serious consequences which must inevitably follow any attempt to suppress Parliamentary institutions in the twentieth century. Senhor Franco's methods belong to a past age, and he alone is responsible for the present situation.

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The opening of Parliament has been accompanied both inside and outside St. Stephen's with the usual quantity of rather aimless discussion of all things under the sun. The in no wise remarkable proposals contained in the King's Speech are dealt with in some detail elsewhere. The first day's debate on the Address served no particular purpose but to reveal Mr. Asquith as the deputy-premier during the absence of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. That the choice on this occasion should have fallen upon Mr. Asquith was perhaps inevitable, but we hope it does not mean that he is to be the permanent successor of the present Premier, should the rumours of that gentleman's approaching retirement turn out to be true.

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We cannot imagine any likely event which would be a graver disaster for the country, and, incidentally for the Liberal party. Not only is Mr. Asquith a confirmed Whig of the most reactionary type but he is the most unpopular member of the Government both in the country and amongst his own party. He has no qualifications whatever for the position of Premier, except those of long and faithful service on one side of the House. And although these things may seem to give him some legitimate claim on the gratitude of his party, they ought not to be considered in the filling of so important a post. What is wanted is a man who can hold the present great majority together and wield it effectively to further the class of legislation which the larger and more vital section of the party desire. Mr. Asquith's best friends must admit that he is not in sympathy with the aims of most of his colleagues, nor with the views of the mass of Liberal members. He has only retained his present minor position with the aid of a certain amount of compromise and his accession to the leadership could only mean internal squabbling and wasted Sessions. If the present Premier should resign, which we are far from desiring, there is one man who is marked out by his special qualities and his general popularity to succeed to the leadership of the Lower House and the Government. We refer to Mr. Haldane, who although a comparatively new Minister is the only man who can command, at one and the same time, the respect of the House and of the country and the allegiance of the whole of his own party.

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The debate on Mr. Ramsay Macdonald's amendment to the Address dealing with the unemployed was made notable by the two speeches delivered from the Government benches by Dr. Macnamara and Mr. John Burns respectively. The "deep and sympathetic" attention which the former gentleman has given to the subject appears to have led him to the conclusion that there are three remedies. Technical education should be increased, mothers should stop at home to look after their children instead of helping to overcrowd the labour market and child labour should be further reduced. As regards the first we should like to know how further education is going to help us until it can be shown that there is a great and unsatisfied demand for highly skilled labour. The second is a hopelessly "chimerical" remedy until the wages of fathers are sufficient for the needs of a family. And as to the third, it is only necessary to remark that there is no mention in the King's Speech of any legislation raising the age-limit for half-time employment, unless the vague reference to the further "Protection of Children" is intended to convey something more than the proposed consolidation of previous Acts. All these reforms are eminently desirable in themselves, but as remedies for the unemployment of 500,000 able-bodied men they are merely childish and stupid. Give us rather Tariff Reform and "Work for All."

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The speech of the President of the Local Government Board was even worse. He has too intimate a knowledge of the serious nature of the problem to put

forward any such superficial and exploded suggestions as those of Dr. Macnamara, and so he defended his inactivity by a vague and ill-considered essay in optimism. We have refrained hitherto from adverse criticism of Mr. Burn's motives in accepting office under a Liberal Government. We were inclined, on the strength of his past record, to believe that his intentions were of the best and that, if he were given time, he would justify the confidence of those industrial outcasts with and for whom he had worked so long. But this speech of his in reply to the appeal of the Labour party has dispelled our illusion.

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It may be that he has been soured by the attacks which have been made upon him by his one-time friends or it may be that he resents the loss of his unique position as the only "able" working man in the House. Of the underlying causes we cannot judge. But the fact remains that the whole tone of his speech on Thursday evening was grossly offensive to the movers of the amendment, to the body of Labour members for whom they spoke, and to the armies of genuine unemployed workmen in the country. Unfortunately a verbatim report of the speech is not yet obtainable, but it is clear from the "Times" summary that the right honourable gentleman practically told Mr. Macdonald that he and his friends were making a great fuss about nothing, the amount of pauperism in the country was greatly exaggerated, and England was really a very nice place for unemployed workmen to live in. Beautiful parks to lounge in, bands to listen to, charitable people to beg from, and at night a fine Embankment to resort to and get soup and shelter. For his part he would do nothing to enlarge the field of pauperising employment or to create more state workshops or municipal industries "competing with regular trades." Nothing remains now for Mr. Burns to do but to complete his exit from the ranks of Labour and Social Reform by joining Lord Balfour of Burleigh and Mr. Harold Cox in the British Constitution Association.

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The news from the Transvaal that Mr. Gandhi and his fellow-prisoners have been released is very welcome. Intolerable as it was that any of His Majesty's subjects should be subjected to the indignities which the Transvaal Government imposed on all Indian residents, it was nothing less than a national disgrace that a man who had shown the devotion to the Empire which Mr. Gandhi showed in organising medical relief for our troops during the late war should be treated as he was treated. Now that the incident is closed on a basis which seems to be satisfactory to all parties, we hope the nation will take its moral to heart. If the Empire is to maintain any sort of harmony between its various members, there must be at the head of it a body more influential and more representative of Indian and Colonial interests than the English Cabinet can ever hope to be. Any forcible interference by Lord Elgin during the recent controversy would quite naturally have caused great resentment in the Transvaal, and any strong action by an English Colonial Secretary in the future will always be resented until he has at his back an Imperial Council with something more than advisory powers.

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Speaking at a meeting of the Income Tax Reduction League on Monday week, Lord St. Aldwyn made some remarks which, having regard to his past position as Chancellor of the Exchequer, are highly interesting. Referring to "certain persons" who openly advocate a great increase in direct taxation on incomes over £5,000 a year, he said that "in the first place there were very few persons so fortunate as to enjoy £5,000 a year and in the second place most of those fortunate persons were quite capable of taking care of themselves. In these days of international finance nothing could be easier than for such persons to evade the Income Tax, and he would venture to prophesy that if any Chancellor of the Exchequer should ever attempt that kind of Socialist taxation, he would very soon discover that the receipts from income-tax were very much less than he expected."

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Perhaps it is not worth while pointing out that such direct suggestions coming from a man in Lord St Aldwyn's position are in the last degree subversive of public morality. But we may at least say that we have never been foolish enough to base our proposals on the innate honesty of persons possessing over £5,000 a year. The deliberate evasion of the Income Tax at the present time by persons with incomes of all sizes is a very deplorable fact, which we fear can only be combatted by ever increasing vigilance on the part of the Inland Revenue authorities. Inquisitorial machinery, objectionable as it is, can easily be, and may have to be, enlarged and perfected. And after all it is only a certain class of foreign investments that can easily be concealed and these do not constitute a very important part of the national income. Lord St. Aldwyn's threats may increase the amount of evasion in the near future, but they can have no permanent effect except in arousing the disgust of the best elements in all political parties.

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Within a few hours of the reading of the King's Speech with its conspicuous avoidance of the subject of Sweating, there was held in Queen's Hall one of the largest and most impressive national demonstrations against Sweating ever witnessed in this country. Bishops, M.P.'s, Earls, and Ladies were there in crowds, not to mention mere authors and journalists. Probably no assembly like it has been held before. And there is no doubt that the meeting represented England if anything ever did. We may say emphatically that sweating is despised, loathed and detested universally over the three kingdoms. There is not a human being who does not wish to abolish it. Is not that universal wish mandate enough? Would not "Government of the People, etc., etc." cover such a demand? Even the King is desirous of abolishing Sweating. He could scarcely be otherwise. Why then does this Speech ignore the subject? Is it because Mr. Asquith is deputy-deputy-deputy Premier?

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The Trade Union deputation that waited on Mr. Burns with a request for the use of public buildings for Trade Union meetings should have the support of temperance reformers, as well as of craft-gild restorers. After all, a bar-parlour is not a place for business, and though, of course, it pays a publican to have such meetings on his premises, it does not pay the members. Further, we are pretty sure that the status of Trade Unions is rising rapidly. Before very long they may easily become responsible semi-public organizations with specific privileges granted in return for specific responsibilities. Suppose the Engineers, for example, undertook solemnly and publicly to turn out nothing but first-class work, their union would become an institution of enormous public importance and value. We hope the unions will get their rooms if only for the sake of what they may become.

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Mr. Asquith's reply to the Suffragettes was at least candid: the Government had no intention of extending the suffrage to women. His plea that there was no mandate is, of course, a mere excuse. We venture to say that mandate or no mandate, any Government would find a time for doing anything it particularly wanted to do. The fact is that in the blessed name of democracy, democracy is fast becoming an excuse for doing nothing at all. The whole theory of Mandates is totally false and thoroughly undemocratic to boot; since we are not living in Switzerland. The Suffragettes, fortunately, are not likely to be quelled by Mr. Asquith's flourish of democracy. They will continue to agitate, agitate, agitate, until somebody's temper gives way. Moreover, the expense they put the Government to is considerable. Eight thousand police were on duty at and around Westminster during the royal opening of Parliament. Rather a big muster for a dozen or so ladies!

[NEXT WEEK.—A six-column article by Bernard Shaw, "On Belloc and Chesterton"; "State Socialism in New Zealand," by Percy Alden, M.P.; "Drum-Taps," a Sketch, by Dr. M. D. Eder.]

The King's Speech.

WE cannot recall during recent years a duller programme of legislation than that which the Government proposes for the coming Session. There is nothing of the unexpected in it, and, apart from Old Age Pensions, little that is even interesting. The only things which have excited discussion are its omissions, which include all the most vital problems of the day. A visitor, unacquainted with the red-tapeism of British statesmanship and the devious ways of British party politics, could not avoid the conclusion that His Majesty's Government must be wholly unacquainted with the real needs of the people and the hard facts of the nation's condition.

We could not expect the present Government to tackle seriously the fundamental injustice of our present methods of distributing the nation's wealth. But we had every right to suppose that some remedy or palliative would be suggested for dealing with our armies of sweated workers and our 500,000 unemployed. These are matters to which the country is alive to an extent which at least exceeds the interest taken in the whole of the Government's present programme. Yet there is not even a platonic reference to them in the King's Speech, nor to woman's suffrage, nor to the better administration of the Poor Law, nor to the equalisation of rates.

For some of these omissions there may be excuses. The report of the Poor Law Commission cannot be expected to come in time for its recommendations to be the basis of new legislation this Session, and the Special Commissioner whom the Government have dispatched to study the anti-sweating methods which are at work in Australia and New Zealand has not yet returned. Further, it might be urged with some reason that everything cannot be done at once, and that some of these things must wait. But nothing can justify the failure of the Government to hold out any hope of legislation dealing with the unemployed. Things are to be allowed to go on as they are for at least another whole winter, without even one of those experiments which must necessarily precede the most partial solution of the question. This matter, however, we deal with elsewhere, and we will content ourselves here with the remark that if something is not attempted shortly, a considerable impetus to the Tariff Reform movement is likely to ensue.

The outstanding feature of the Government programme, such as it is, is, of course, the proposal to make a beginning this year with Old Age Pensions. Of the details of the scheme we know very little at present, but we are glad to note Mr. Asquith's definite statement, in reply to the Trades Union deputation, to the effect that the rumours of a contributory basis being adopted are false. There are, however, some other points on which we should like to be reassured, notably with regard to exclusions and to the incidence of the expense. In the course of the Debate on the Address, the President of the Local Government Board stated that about 1,000,000 persons would be benefited by the scheme. Since the amount of each pension cannot well be less than 5s. per week, the gross cost will be something like £14,000,000; a sum which Mr. Asquith can hardly find unless he proposes to make some very radical changes in the present method of raising revenue. It is, of course, possible that the evil day will be put off and the immediate cost reduced by postponing the operation of the scheme until the second half of the financial year, but that at best would only be a temporary expedient, and we suspect that Mr. Asquith has another plan up his sleeve. Bearing in mind his recent statement that all classes must contribute, it seems highly probable that at least half the cost of the Pensions will be thrown on local rates. Such a course would receive our heartiest opposition. The general question of the proportions which should exist between National and Local Taxation is at present a practical rather than a theoretical one; and until means are found for equalising rates, and levying them mainly upon ground values, anything which tends to increase local charges and the financial embarrassment of local authorities is to be strongly deprecated. As regards the question of exclusions, we do not think that there is reason to fear that the Government intends to make the past receipt of poor relief a disqualification for a pension. Apart from the injustice of such an ex post facto condition, its practical disadvantages are too obvious. But there are indications that past criminailty is to be treated as a disqualification. We sincerely hope that this is a false alarm. The only argument in support of a clause of this sort is that it would to a certain extent reduce the numbers of applicants, and therefore the cost of the scheme; while, on the other hand, it would be putting a premium on crime by depriving the youthful criminal of all hope of ever regaining his full rights of citizenship. We hesitate to believe, however, that a majority of the House will ever consent to this exclusion, even if Mr. Asquith should propose it.

After the Pension scheme, the Licensing Bill will probably attract the most public attention. Various classes of people are greatly interested in this measure for one reason or another. The brewers and the publicans are naturally concerned to get the best terms they can for themselves, and their friends in the two Houses will doubtless make a big fight over the question of the time limit. The cries of "Confiscation" and "Highway robbery" have already become familiar to us in this particular controversy, so familiar that it is difficult to see how the representatives of the Trade will find words to express their feelings adequately when their day of reckoning really comes; but there will certainly be some very lively discussion. Most temperance reformers as such, however, will probably regard the other provisions of the Bill as of greater importance for their cause. It appears likely that there will be clauses providing for Sunday and Saturday night closing, excluding children from public-houses, bringing clubs within the control of the law and the revenue authorities, and granting local option in regard to the issue of new licenses. To all these things the Temperance reformer looks for a reduction of drunkenness, and, however much he may be mistaken, they will all probably be insisted upon. From our point of view, of course, the main interest of the Bill lies in the fact that it will undoubtedly provide for the resumption by the State of the full monopoly value of all licenses, at the expiration of the time limit. The benefit which will thus accrue to the public will be somedelayed, but none the less valuable; and, incidentally, the way will have been considerably cleared for the eventual transference of the whole trade and industry into the hands of the State. Our chief concern, therefore, in this matter is to see that the time limit is made as short as possible.

As regards the Education Bill, it is difficult to speak with any certainty. But whatever it may turn out to be like, it seems quite certain that the Liberals will not be able to make much use of it as a stalking-horse for an attack on the Lords. The public have been steadily losing interest in the whole squabble ever since the present Government was returned to power. Almost everyone has realised by now that there is no possibility of compromise over the religious difficulty. The faithful followers of Lord Hugh Cecil and Dr. Clifford respectively are fewer in numbers, but as irreconcilable as ever, and the secular solution is inevitable sooner or later. The Liberals, of course, cannot adopt that solution this side of a General Election, and consequently anything which they attempt to do this Session is sure to be a failure, to stir up fresh sectarian rancour, and, worst, of all, to waste a lot of valuable time. It is unfortunate that they have not been able to swallow their pride and force their Nonconformist allies to accept defeat for the present, for this necessarily worthless measure will very much reduce the chances of other and more useful legislation getting past the two Houses during the Session.

In the proposed foundation of a Catholic University for Ireland we have another example of the waste in Education that is caused by religious rivalries. No one with any knowledge of the facts can doubt that, as long as the differences between Catholics and Protestants in Ireland remain as acute as they are at present, the former have every right to demand a special University, merely on grounds of civic equity. But, on the other hand, we cannot but recognise that the State endowment of religious education is alien to all modern principles of government, and that the necessity for adopting such a step is a disgrace to both the parties concerned. At least, Mr. Birrell should have been strong enough to resist the absurd demands of the extreme Protestant faction and make use of the existing machinery of Dublin University. As it is, we understand that he intends to disarm opposition by leaving Trinity College entirely outside his scheme, thus creating a further multiplication of educational authorities in Ireland.

The Bill "to regulate the hours of underground labour in coal mines"—known to the world for many a year as "The Miners' Eight Hours Bill" is to be introduced by Mr. Gladstone early in the Session. It has been a long time coming, but, unless the present high price of coal should induce the Government to so emasculate its provisions as to forfeit the support of the Labour Party, it ought to reach the Statute Book at last.

As to the Bill for the Better Housing of the Working Classes, it can hardly fail to be useful, if it only simplifies the machinery for putting its predecessors in force. We hope, however, that it will do more than this, and particularly that it will give the local authorities increased powers of developing new urban areas on a definite plan (as distinguished from mere slum clearing). At the same time it should create a new Department of the Local Government Board, with special instructions to interfere where the local authority neglects to make use of its powers.

The last Government Bill which we intend to mention is by no means the least important. Indeed, it may ultimately prove of greater value than all the rest put together, with the exception of the Old Age Pension Scheme. We refer, of course, to the Bill relating to the separate assessment of ground values throughout England and Wales. Provided it emerges from the ordeal of the House of Lords in a workable form, which is somewhat doubtful, it should serve as a basis for gaining control in the future of one of the largest and most fruitful sources of unearned increment.

So much for the Government Bills foreshadowed in the King's Speech. As we have remarked before, however, its omissions are of more importance than its positive proposals, and it is with an omission that we must conclude. There is one weak point which runs all through the Government's programme, one thing which stultifies the best intentions of Liberal legislators. And that is a lack of money and a lack of determination to get it. There are no indications whatever that the Government is going to propose any increase in the taxation of unearned incomes. Indeed, with Mr. Asquith at the head of affairs any such development is out of the question. His conservative temperament, his political faith, and his personal convictions make it impossible. Yet something must be done. The plain fact is that the traditional Liberal policy of retrenchment is incompatible with their more modern aspirations to be the party of social reform. Unless they are going to allow these measures to be starved and rendered useless by a lack of funds to work them, they must find without delay some new and rich sources of revenue. Import duties they object to on principle, the sugar tax must be reduced this year, the coal duty is already gone, the Territorial Army is as expensive at present as its predecessors, and public opinion will not tolerate any serious curtailment of naval expenditure. Hence there is no alternative open to a Liberal Government but an increase in direct taxation. Yet, as we said just now, Mr. Asquith will never sanction anything substantial in this direction. There is only one moral, and that is that Mr. Asquith will have to go.

The Do-Nothing-ism of Despair.

OUR English revolutions have a way of being peaceable. When we found it necessary to disembarrass ourselves of the last king who ever really ruled England, everything was done decently and in order. Even foolish and fanatical Charles the First would have been put away quietly and unharmed, as his son James was, had he not absolutely forced the country to take up arms against him. I have always refused in my own mind even to admit the remote probability of the long agony through which France passed, being ever repeated here. And yet as I sat in the House of Lords last Wednesday, and enjoyed the spectacular aspect of the opening of Parliament, I could not help thinking the situation was not unlike that in France at the opening of the Assembly of Notables in 1786, three years before the Bastille fell and brought crashing down with it a social system which had become a mere mockery of the needs of the time.

Perhaps that sounds stupid. Perhaps you think I am a foolish alarmist. So did the vast majority of well-fed people think foolish, and even insane, all who spoke of the danger of the situation in the France of 1786. If some far-sighted prophetic man had warned the gay and careless courtiers of Versailles to flee from the wrath to come, they would have shrugged their elegant shoulders. They would have proposed that the lunatic should be made acquainted with a whip and a dark room. Yet, a very few years afterwards they were fleeing for their lives.

Looking down from the Strangers' Gallery upon the House of Lords, filled with the more or less dignified figures of peers in scarlet and ermine, and with peeresses in rich and costly gowns, all befeathered and be-diamonded, wearing their silks and velvets and laces with the assured and elegant air of delicate creatures born to be served and to have the best of everything provided for them as by right—looking down upon this glowing and glittering assemblage gathered round the thrones set up for King and Queen, I felt that there was something crude and bizarre in the thought that anything colud happen to interfere with the system, rooted far back in the past, upon which all this elegance and opulence depended, and which all the elements combined in the brilliant scene were concerned in keeping up.

Yet it was just as hard for those who saw the splendour of the Court of Louis the Sixteenth to realise the volcano underneath; and we know what a rude awakening they had!

Nothing, I am persuaded, ever moved nations to bestir themselves but Hunger. Political wrongs only affect a few. Religious persecution passes by the great mass who have no political beliefs. Political and religious reforms, therefore, are effected from the top. A nation only demands them when it has been stirred up by the enthusiasm of its leaders.

But Hunger moves the heart of mankind as nothing else can. Upon those who are actually in want it has generally an effect the reverse of energizing. But the knowledge that men and women and children are habitually hungry must arouse in every man and woman who is capable of humane emotion a desperate sense of injustice and bitter wrong. And it is from such feelings of revolt against unjust and cruel conditions that Revolutions spring.

Exactly a week before the opening of Parliament I had spent a day marching with the Unemployed who were on their way from Manchester to London. As I thought of the hollow-cheeked faces and gaunt raggedly clad figures which surrounded me then—as I recollected their scanty meals of tea and bread-and-butter, and the bare rooms where they slept in their thin, tramp-stained clothes—and as I contrasted these memories with the gay and luxurious throng in the House of Lords, the contrast was so vivid as to be almost beyond belief.

No one realises more clearly than I the pathetic futility of such "marches"—particularly when the leaders are utterly lacking in the faculty of organisation. Yet it was impossible not to sympathise with these poor

trampers, most of whom had jumped at the chance of walking from Manchester to London simply because Society could find no better occupation for them, and they were tired of hanging about waiting for employment to come their way.

They were a decent lot of men. They faced the fatigues and privations of their march with cheery fortitude. I am sure that nine-tenths of them would have taken work if they could have got it, though whether they would have done it efficiently is another matter. That would be rather too much to expect of men who had been condemned to loaf and "clam" for weeks and months together. When a machine has been rusting unused for a time, no engineer would look to it to work properly all at once. Nor is it reasonable to suppose that a casual worker can ever be so capable as a man in a regular job.

However, that is a side issue. Here is the main point. These sixty were just a handful out of an immense number of Unemployed all over England: I have heard the number put as high as 500,000. Everyone can see that the problem presses for solution. In every town, in every district of the country, it is obvious that the difficulty is greater than it has ever been before. There is no difficulty facing us at present which is in any way comparable to this of the twelve millions on the verge of starvation and the 500,000 unemployed.

And yet the King's Speech—the programme of the Government for the Session—had not a word to say on this subject. Famine in India was deplored, but not famine in England. Yet at the time of the worst famine of this century in India there were not as many people in receipt of relief as there are to-day in Great Britain. The sufferings of the Macedonians were alluded to with sympathy, but there was no word of pity or hope for the suffering poor at home. Anxiety was expressed as to the treatment of the natives of the Congo State, but the treatment of the natives of the United Kingdom is evidently considered by the Government to be all that they can wish.

Education and Licensing—the old catch-words—these are what Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman has been persuaded to rely on. He reminds one of the old type of provincial theatre manager who, when he was gravelled for lack of matter, always fell back on some old favourite such as "East Lynne." "It used to fetch 'em years ago," he would say, "why shouldn't it do as well to-day?" Evidently politicians of the fossilised party type are as little able as theatrical managers to understand that the world moves, and that the centre of interest shifts, and that sons do not think exactly as their fathers thought before them.

Who cares about the religious squabble in the schools now? A few clergymen of the type of Carlyle's "four-surplices-at-Hallowmass" crew; a few Nonconformists who are afraid that children brought up in Church doctrine will not think it respectable to be Wesleyan or Congregationalists any more. Who cares about Licensing? No one who has studied the drink evil in connexion with other social plague-sores. All who have done that (first clearing their minds of cant) must have come to the conclusion that the only way to keep people out of the gin-palaces is to give them decent homes.

Ceremony is good if it stands for something real and helpful. The pomp of State processions is by no means to be despised so long as it represents a sound and progressive administration. But what can we say of a ceremony such as this which pretends to be an occasion for the sovereign to lay before Parliament all the grievances which call for redress, all the wrongs that should be righted, all the conditions which it is necessary to reform; and which nevertheless leaves out of account altogether the most growing canker of the time? How long shall we tolerate a pomp which is expressive of nothing save impotence, a hollow magnificence of scarlet and gold lace which merely serves to hide the barren minds of nerveless impostors, falsely tricked out in the semblance of governing men?

We have no specific for the cure of unemployment. It is an ill which can only be remedied by patient endeavour in many more directions than one. We should welcome sincere attempts of any description to lay the foundations of a better system than that which has brought us to so pitiful a plight. It is this despairing do-nothing attitude, this policy of pretending that the spectre is not there, which arouses the scorn of all honest men. It is this craven stupidity which will bring us, if it be persisted in much longer, into danger of a violent upheaval such as England has never yet known.

THORPE LEE.

John Bull as Knight Errant.

BROADSIDES of chaff are levelled from Continental privateers against the Quixotic ambitions of John Bull when he seeks to restore some measure of justice and liberty in lands that are not to be included in his "Dominions beyond the Seas." More than an echo is resounding on this side the Channel. We are asked what have Macedonia, Armenia, Albania, or the Congo done for us that we should go forth with lance and buckler to battle for them. Have we not our own oppressed, our unemployed, our sweated workers, our servile labourers to redeem from their bondage? This, we are told, is task enough; to scatter our forces over the world is bad generalship. If Macedonia cannot free herself of Turkish thraldom she must submit to the inevitable. It is true that our action at the Berlin Conference makes us largely responsible for the present state of affairs—but that was a long time ago, and we didn't then know what work of our own was at hand in the island. It is a vain thing to indulge in expressions of sorrow when you do not mean to back up your feeling by action. Everyone knows—Sultans at Constantinople and at Brussels—that we do not mean business. Money speaks, and we are not going to put up any money for them. We are not in politics for our health.

Mr. Shaw has just been assuring us that each country must work out its own salvation, and he has recently expressed his attitude with accustomed vigour and lucidity.

For a directly contrary view we turn to the resolutions passed at the meeting of the Balkans Committee on January 27th. On the motion of the Rev. J. Scott Lidgett, it was resolved:—

That this Conference, viewing the continuance of misrule in Macedonia as a disgrace to civilised Europe, affirms the direct responsibility of Great Britain in particular, and the other Great Powers, for the establishment of order in that country, and desires to call attention to the fact that since the introduction of the Austro-Russian Mürzsteg Reform Scheme four years ago, and in a period of nominal peace, there have been, along with uncounted outrages upon women and children and destruction of property, over 10,000 violent deaths in a population estimated at about 1½ million.

Mr. Masterman, M.P., who declared that he could almost wish that Lord Lansdowne had remained at the Foreign Office, moved:—

That this Conference declares that the immediate necessity of the situation is the transference of Executive control, both civil and military, to the European Financial Commission, which should be responsible only to the Great Powers. Further, it expresses its regret that his Majesty's Government has not hitherto publicly pressed this proposal, but has so far departed from the policy of its predecessor as to leave the initiation of reform proposals to Austria-Hungary and Russia, two Powers whose record of complete failure to check the increasing anarchy of Macedonia, now extends over a period of five years; and the Conference also calls upon his Majesty's Government to propose to the Great Powers the scheme of European control formulated by Lord Lansdowne in 1905.

What is the position of the Socialist in this matter—of one who views with unrelieved concern the condition of the people of England question, of one who does not find that the legislation of the last fifty years has made any improvement in their condition? Shall we side with the robust Irish sense of Mr. Shaw or with the romantic common sense of Mr. Masterman?

For ourselves we have not the slightest hesitation in throwing our weight into the romantic movement, and chiefly because it is neither sensible, nor logical! That

the enterprise is difficult, dangerous, nay, perhaps impossible of success, is the better reason for asking the support of all staunch Socialists.

Our own enterprise—to convert Britain to Socialism—is a plain, straightforward affair; so commonplace an adventure that without an occasional lilt from a foreign horn we should all perish by the wayside from stagnation. There is no objection to Socialism. There are possible objections to the independence of Macedonia. Our dull grey skies, our rheumy streets, our stygian tubes lend themselves with difficulty to adventure. Without an occasional madness all England will die of the sleeping sickness; the saintly Elizabethan warned us:—

> O England, full of sinne, but most of sloth,
> Spit out thy flegme, and fill thy breast with glory.
> Thy gentrie bleats, as if thy native cloth
> Transfus'd a sheepishnesse into thy storie.

To every nation, as to every individual, there comes an interval when the daily routine, the day's dress, must be changed if it would preserve sanity and health The sombrero, capa, and mandoline are ill adapted to pilot a Bill through the House of Commons, but we all like to adorn ourselves with this becoming attire, and, sailing in quest of some foreign enterprise, we can doff something of our stiff habit.

We present these as quite sufficient reasons why we should not abandon our protection of the world's oppressed smaller nationalities or savage peoples. The work lifts us out of our humdrum lives, and we can revel in a new sensation as we come in contact with something not ourselves making for like ends; the thrill of such sensations sends us back with renewed zest to work in the domestic circle of Bills and Amendments.

The policy of non-intervention is, as Mazzini said, "an irreligious and negative principle." He was right in claiming that merely from self-interest England should reflect that the struggling peoples when free would remember whether England stood by an inert spectator or helped to remove the chains.

We were surprised that the negative policy should have received the appreciation of the Editor of "Fabianism and the Empire." It was there laid down "that a nation has a right to do what it pleases with its own territory, without reference to the interests of the rest of the world, is no more tenable from the International Socialist point of view—that is, the point of view of the twentieth century—than the notion that a landlord has a right to do what he likes with his estate without reference to the interests of his neighbours." If we, as International Socialists, claim the right to interfere when the territory of a neighbour is being mismanaged, we surely have a still greater claim for interference when the welfare and lives of our neighbours themselves are at stake. After all, a badly-tilled country makes less outcry than the massacres of thousands of men. The mismanaged property can be restored; the outraged people cannot be brought back, and their dying cries for vengeance form ever-increasing circles of fresh blood-spilling.

Dealing ourselves with large negro populations, we are bound in our own interest to see order preserved in the Congo. Ourselves touched by everything European, disorder in the Balkans is a constant menace to our peace. None can foresee when a rising in the cock-pit of Europe may not pull us by the ears, involving us quite unpreparedly in some gigantic war. It is true that this has been long threatening, but the prudent man will not nowadays build his palace on the site of even an apparently extinct volcano, much less so when it is merely smouldering.

We want to see preserved those interesting, if somewhat anarchic, civilisations of Eastern Europe; we should hate to see each become the counterpart of some less picturesque great nation. We have societies for preserving ancient buildings; surely it is as desirable to preserve ancient customs, ancient dresses, ancient industries? On the ground, then, of International Socialism, self-interest, the preservation of some romance and imagination in our lives, we favour all John Bull's Quixotic adventures. We have quoted the Elizabethan saint's invocation to England to engage lustily in battle; let us conclude by recalling the little-known words of the Victorian martyr:—

> This mighty Empire hath but feet of clay;
> Of all its ancient chivalry and might
> Our little island is forsaken quite.
> Some enemy has stolen its crown of bay,
> And from its hills that voice hath passed away
> Which spake of Freedom.

M. D. EDER.

M. Hervé on Morocco.

The Speech delivered by M. Hervé at his trial before the Court of Assizes, Paris, on January 6th. Translated and summarised by W. R. T. for THE NEW AGE *with the cordial consent of M. Hervé.*

I ACCUSE the French Army of having landed in Morocco, contrary to the orders of the Government, of having bombarded without summons an undefended town, of having put its innocent inhabitants to the sword, of having killed the wounded, of having done all this in the interests—not of the public or the nation, but of a gang of financial pirates, and of having thus served, consciously or not, as an instrument of and accomplice in a piece of despicable brigandage . . .

Let me here express my regret that it is not a member of the French Nationalist Party that makes this accusation—regret for the sake of those patriots whose patriotism is not a mere matter of business, but a sentiment worthy of all respect . . .

Gentlemen of the jury, you know Morocco; you know that it is a country as large as France, as mountainous as the Auvergnes, as sunny as Provence, rich with pastures, orchards, and cornfields. The Moors, who are far from being savages, live there in a sort of loose confederation wherein land and wealth belong nominally to the tribe, but really to an aristocracy. They are united only by their common religion. They are Mussulmans—fanatical, if you will, but not appreciably more so than the Bretons of Lower Brittany, among whom I was brought up. Their religious chieftain is at present the Sultan Abd-el-Aziz.

This country, with a population variously estimated at anything from three to twenty millions, has been a standing temptation to Europeans. The first to succumb to it were the Spaniards. These established themselves on the shore opposite Spain. Unfortunately they wanted to convert the heathen by the good old Spanish logic of rifle bullets and piled-up faggots, and as they found themselves faced by a range of mountains with the heathen looking out of the crevices, they did not go far.

Then came the English, who landed cargoes all along the coast, cargoes which were peddled in the interior by peripatetic merchants mostly of the Jewish persuasion.

Finally, from the other direction across the inland frontier, came the conquerors of Algeria. Admit that the gentlemen you represent here, Mr. Attorney-General, are the descendants of the thieves who stole Algeria from its inhabitants, and you give them a perfect right to the neighbouring country—first to Tunis—then to Morocco—then to—? If I stole a watch from one of these gentlemen, my right to that of his neighbour would be indisputable. You had, then, an indisputable right to Morocco; but there were competitors to be got rid of. That was the great idea of M. Delcassé, for many years the official agent of the French capitalist class. To get rid of the competitors!

In 1904 M. Delcassé entered into a treaty with the official representatives of the capitalist classes of Spain and England. The French Republic was to stop helping to spread Republican ideas on the wrong side of the Pyrenees; England was to do as she pleased in Egypt; France was to do as she pleased in Morocco.

Then there were some English creditors who had lent the Sultan money, and had sent him bicycles, motor-cars, and mistresses, and there were English merchants at Tangiers growing wealthy as purveyors of costly luxuries and lenders of money at exorbitant rates—money which Abd-el-Aziz pocketed without counting in

the calm assurance that his people would pay it back for him. The English creditors had to be bought out. A combination of banks, at the head of which stood the Banks of Paris and of the Netherlands, was formed on the morrow of the Anglo-French Treaty of 1904 for the purpose of supplying the Sultan with funds to enable him to pay off all foreign creditors—that is, all except French ones. The Morocco Loan amounted to 60 millions. The Bank of Paris issued bonds at 475 francs, and as it got them from the Sultan at 400 francs, here was an initial net profit of 75 francs per share, or about 20 per cent. In a few days the shares had gone up to 536 francs, and as it is probable that the Bank had not at the first blush put all the shares upon the market, but kept back a part of them until they had risen to more than 500 francs (perhaps even to 520 francs), you can see about what was its total gain on the transaction.

Competitors had been evicted, English creditors paid off, "pacific permeation" was in process of undisturbed accomplishment when an unexpected competitor arrived on the scene: the German Emperor came to Tangiers and took the Sultan of Morocco under his wing in a voice of thunder.

This was in 1905. Your newspapers, you will remember, began to threaten Germany with the guns of the English fleet. Then one day there was a panic in the Chamber of Deputies; the rumour spread that mobilisation was about to be ordered; there was at least an apparent fear of war; and the Government entered into a liability of nearly 200 millions (to be exact 193 millions) without consulting the Chamber.

I have before me the report on the War Budget, wherein the use this sum was to be put to is made clear. Of the 193 millions, 137 millions were devoted to the artillery, and a large part of the order went to the firm of Schneider du Creusot. Says the report: "However loath we are to cast discredit on the honesty of those concerned, we cannot pass over in silence the following unpleasant transaction. The Government workshops not being in a position to deliver certain heavy artillery munition, it was found necessary to invite tenders, with the extraordinary result that the order for 500 gun carriages was given to that one of the two competing firms which submitted the higher tender. Upon being asked to explain the anomaly, the War Office stated that 'tenders were invited towards the end of 1905, when the gravity of the political situation abroad rendered the delivery of the carriages not later than the end of 1906 imperative. Only two tenders were received, that of Messrs. Schneider and Montgolfier (at a fixed price of 13,500 francs) and La Société Française de Construction Mécanique (at an initial price of 10,000 francs); the majority of the firms approached finding the time limit prohibitive, and even Messrs. Schneider declared their inability to guarantee prompt delivery without the co-operation of two other specifically-mentioned firms. In these circumstances, and in view of the technical and practical difficulties incident to this class of work, it appeared certain that the Société Française de Construction Mécanique (smaller and worse equipped) would find it impossible to comply with the time limit'."

Please note, gentlemen of the jury, that the smaller firm, which offered to supply the carriages for 10,000 francs would have been liable to heavy penalties for delay, while the successful tenderers expressly refused to bind themselves. Listen, moreover, to what the reporter on the War Budget thinks of the War Office:—

"We did not consider these reasons very plausible, and we think that the order could at least have been split up between the two firms. There is nothing to prove that had La Société Française been able to count upon a part of the order, they could not, equally with Messrs. Schneider's, have secured the co-operation of other firms. It appears to us essential that Parliament should be made aware of this regrettable and dubious transaction."

Thus from the first moment the Morocco adventure brings to a group of financiers a dividend of 20 per cent. on a loan of 60 millions; to M. Schneider a profitable order for guns and carriages; and to the patient taxpayer 200 millions of outlay.

But our piratical financiers and manufacturers had loftier ambitions. Morocco was to be marked out for dissection. Simultaneously with the issue of the Morocco Loan sprang up a crowd of companies having dealings with Morocco. I will give you a few particulars extracted from their statutes . . .

[The extracts go to show that, of the three principal companies formed at the period indicated, two (the Companie Marocaine and the Société Agadir) were really M. Schneider in masquerade, with the French Embassy in Morocco as assistant conspirators, and as third, M. Schneider in company with——]

. . . . whom think you?—with his rivals, the firm of Krupp, the famous makers of German guns!

It is true that the Conference of Algeciras brought a temporary reconciliation about between Paris and Berlin—Paris undertaking to maintain order in the Moorish ports by the aid of a native police force, and to assure to all foreigners equal rights with Frenchmen throughout the Empire of Abd-el-Aziz. Difficulties with Germany being smoothed over, the Moors had now only to be circumspect in their behaviour; but it was obvious that any pretext would serve as an excuse for intervention.

The pretext soon presented itself. On July 31 a brawl took place at Casablanca between some Moors and some European workmen. The workmen of whom? Of M. Schneider, of course!

What happened? The French newspapers will tell you: "Massacre of Frenchmen! Two French Workmen, Two Spanish, Two Italian Workmen Killed! Burst of Mussulman Fanaticism! No Other Possible Explanation!"

Happily there is a newspaper in France, beside the "Guerre Sociale," which when it knows anything insists upon saying it, heedless of whether it treads roughly upon the sensitive corns of Finance. I speak of "L'Humanité," the organ of the French Socialist Party. In this paper appeared an article giving the result of an enquiry made on the spot by the well-known Spanish paper, "El Pais," and tracing the causes of the disturbance to the infamous conduct of a number of French business men who had calmly worked a quarry upon an estate which did not belong to them, had laid down their railroad, without permission asked or granted, across private land and public roadways, and, worse than all, especially when one considers the particular form of the Mussulman belief in bodily resurrection, had profaned a Moorish cemetery, carelessly shovelling aside the bones laid bare in the course of the construction of the line.

This was the beginning of the trouble!

(To be continued.)

Divorce Law Extension.

By the Hon. Sir Hartley Williams.

DIVORCE Law may be too liberal, or it may be too rigid and limited, in the relief it affords. State Divorce Law in America serves to illustrate the former proposition; our English Divorce Law is an apt illustration of the latter. The one tends to make a burlesque of the contract of marriage; the other is the undoubted cause of untold torture, misery, and degradation.

We English, as has often been remarked, are slow to move; unduly hampered by tradition, custom, and conventionalities, we plod along in old and well-worn grooves and ruts, and complacently ignore the better tracks which are pointed out to us by others. In short, we are too conservative, too prejudiced, and too unprogressive. It has taken us, roughly speaking, a score of years to recognise and validate marriage with a deceased wife's sister. Other English-speaking countries, including portions of our own Empire, adopted vote by ballot, a free and compulsory system of education, legislative exclusion of undesirable aliens, and other remedial and progressive measures years before we in England made a move in the same directions.

We admit to the full the horrors of, and the physical and moral degradation and deterioration caused by sweating, but while our kinsmen beyond the seas have long since acted, and acted with exemplary effect, by means of anti-sweating legislation in the shape of advanced Factory Acts and the enforcement of a Minimum Working Wage in numerous branches of industry and trade, we are still only in the stage of discussion. For years there has been much and frequent discussion as to the necessity for the simplification of title to real estate: in remote parts of our Empire this has been effected scores of years ago by our children. Instances of the same inertia, of the same shrinking from moving forward, and from making new departures might be easily multiplied, but the above may suffice to justify the criticism we have made.

Turning now to the subject of this article, we find in relation to it the same apathy, the same reluctance to make a new departure, the same refusal to take the progressive steps which have been elsewhere taken with good and beneficial results. Bearing in mind the precise nature of our subject, and that we are not here concerned with the question of nullity of marriage, or with that of judicial separation, let us consider for a moment how the English Law stands at the present day in relation to the dissolution of marriage.

A husband may petition against his wife for a divorce decree on the ground of her having committed an act of adultery. A wife may petition against her husband for a similar decree on the ground of his having committed an act of adultery, *coupled* with cruelty, or with desertion of her for two years and upwards. Put shortly and baldly, these are the only grounds upon which in England a decree may be obtained for dissolution of marriage. This state of the law is, we venture to assert, cruel, unjust, and almost intolerable. Let us consider for a moment its consequential effects, and so testing the situation, see if the allegation we have made be substantiated.

(*a*) According to the law as it stands, a husband may commit the most abominable and hideous criminal offence (not being capital), and on conviction may receive a sentence of fifteen years, yet his wife is unable to obtain a dissolution of her marriage with him, and she and her children are tied to this monster for the term of his natural life. For that period he remains the husband of the wife and the father and natural custodian of the children.

(*b*) A man marries a young, pure-minded girl deliberately and solely for the purpose of physical gratification, lives with her for a month or less, and then wilfully deserts her, and goes off to South America or to some other remote portion of the world, never sending her a farthing or a line, and leaving her without a home. As long as he lives she remains his wife! Hundreds of such cases have occurred, and beyond doubt they will continue to occur. The woman is debarred during the man's life from seeking an honest mate and protector.

(*c*) A husband has been for years an *habitual* drunkard, and has *habitually* left his wife without the means of support, or has been *habitually* guilty of cruelty to her (the conditions, it will be observed, are habitual drunkenness plus leaving the wife habitually without means of support, or habitual drunkenness plus habitual cruelty). Under English Law the wife must during his life remain his wife.

(*d*) The wife has been for years an *habitual* drunkard, and has in consequence habitually neglected her domestic duties; the relation of husband and wife must continue as long as they both live.

(*e*) The husband deliberately attempts to murder the wife, and, being tried for the offence, is convicted, or has assaulted her with intent to do her grievous bodily harm, and, being put upon his trial, is convicted. In neither of these cases is the wife enabled to put an end to the matrimonial relation.

(*f*) The commission of adultery by the husband even in the *conjugal* residence is *per se* no ground under English Law upon which the wife may obtain a divorce.

(*g*) A husband may commit scores of acts of adultery with scores of women, and yet under English Law the wife cannot obtain a divorce.

(*h*) The commission of *incestuous* adultery by the husband, or of bigamy with adultery, are neither of them grounds upon which a decree for divorce may be obtained by the wife.

Now, let any fair-minded man or woman who is able to bring a calm and unprejudiced mind to bear upon the subject consider the injustice, the cruelty, and the degradation of keeping alive, against the will of the aggrieved party, the marriage tie under conditions such as those set forth in *a*, *b*, *e*, *f*, *g*, and *h*. Surely, after very little reflection, such a person's state of mind must be one of horror and astonishment that in the twentieth century under English Law the miserable, unhappy, outraged, and aggrieved party has not the option of putting an end to the matrimonial relation. For that is all that is asked for, viz., that the aggrieved party may upon the grounds set forth in *a*, *b*, *e*, *f*, *g*, and *h*, have the *option* of presenting a petition.

There may exist a difference of opinion possibly as to the advisability of grounds *c* and *d*, but it is difficult to find any good reason why, if the husband has been for years an *habitual* drunkard, *and* has during that period habitually left his wife without the means of support, or has been such habitual drunkard and has been habitually guilty of cruelty to her, the wife should not under these conditions have the option of presenting a petition for dissolution of the marriage, and the same observation applies to the position of the husband when the wife's conduct satisfies the conditions stated in *d*.

In legislating upon a subject like the one we are considering, we legislate for *all* classes, and not for any special class, or for particular classes.

In the State of Victoria, in Australia, and we think also in the State of New South Wales, there has existed for the last seventeen years a Divorce Law, which will be found embodied in the "Marriage Act, 1890," of the State of Victoria. This law gives the petitioner leave to present a petition for divorce on any of the abovementioned grounds, and also on some others which need not be here specified. This liberal, but not too liberal, this just, wise, and humane law has on the whole worked well, and in a distinctly satisfactory manner. Of course, it contains the usual provisions against connivance, collusion, conducing to the act complained of, etc., and for the intervention of the Law Officers of the Crown. There is also a very useful and necessary clause inserted in the same Act for the purpose of supplying an impecunious wife, whether she be Petitioner or Respondent, with the means of establishing her cause of action, or defence, which runs somewhat to this effect: "If the wife has not sufficient separate estate, the Court may order the husband to pay into Court a sum of money sufficient to enable her to have the merits of her case investigated by a Proctor, and if the wife's Proctor certify that she has a good cause of action, or defence, on the merits, the husband may be ordered to pay into Court a further sum of money to be fixed by the Taxing Master, etc."

Enough has now been said to enable those who may read this article to grasp the lamentable deficiencies and limitations of the English Law in regard to obtaining a dissolution of the marriage contract, to form some appreciation of the cruel wrong and injustice which these deficiencies and limitations inflict upon hundreds of unhappy and wretched homes, to rouse, perhaps, public opinion to express itself strongly in favour of a speedy and liberal amendment of our Divorce Law, to awaken the public conscience, so that it may with no uncertain voice insist upon some measure of relief in the directions indicated. Justice, commonsense, and reason combine in making this demand which cannot fail to receive the support of every right-thinking man and woman in the community. Naturally, we must expect opposition and hostile criticism; probably the strongest opposition will be found to emanate from the quarter which for years blocked the passing into law of the Deceased Wife's Sister Act. Let us hope that the result will be the same, but that it may be achieved more speedily. To compare the relief which will be afforded by the proposed enlargement of the

Divorce Law with that afforded by the Act just mentioned is not unlike comparing a mountain to a mouse, and the numbers affected by the one are as a drop in the ocean compared with the numbers injuriously affected by the unrighteous condition of our present Divorce Law. It may seem to be a hazardous statement, but one perhaps not wide of the mark, when we say that the three most important legislative measures, immediately necessary for the amelioration of the social conditions of the people of England are measures which will furnish the machinery for fixing a Minimum Working Wage in all branches of trade and industry, in piece work as well as in day work, which will enlarge the scope and operation of the Divorce Law, and which will more strictly regulate and limit the drink traffic, and thus diminish its consequential evil and destructive effects.

It is not an irrational belief to hold that, by the extension of the franchise to women, the passing into law of the measures here suggested would be greatly expedited and a tremendous impetus given to those movements which have for their raison d'être the amelioration of the social conditions of the people. In making this prophecy, it cannot be laid to our charge that we are guilty of vague and blind speculation, for in remote portions of our Empire where women enjoy the franchise the marked tendency of their influence has been in the direction indicated.

"Not a Reply."

By Hilaire Belloc, M.P.

THE Editor of THE NEW AGE has pointed out to me that Wells has been writing upon Chesterton and me and that to the remarks I made some weeks ago various answers more or less violent have appeared; and he also points out to me that Chesterton in turn has written in answer to Wells. He wants to know whether I have any "answer" ready. I don't think I have; but THE NEW AGE being the one really interesting paper now published (because it seems to me to be the only one with some idea of intellectual freedom), it seems a shame to keep out of its columns. I don't think any other paper would have had the courage to publish even the very simple remarks upon the Congo Reform business which were kindly printed for me the other day. And courage always makes things interesting. So let me attempt, by way of gratitude, to say something in THE NEW AGE, though upon my soul I do not see what it is I have to say.

I cannot "reply" to the numerous comments which my article of December 7 called forth, because none of them so far as I can see concern my points.

I said, for instance, that the chief test of error in modern evolutionary trash was the lack of appreciation of "*a thing*." If somebody will write a letter maintaining that the universe, though one, is not also complex, and that this complexity is not a congeries of distinct and highly definable *things*, there will be something to reply to; and a very interesting discussion it will make; for whoever writes that letter will have proved himself the author of a novel philosophy, and we have had no really novel philosophy since Europe was Europe. Perhaps there isn't one.

If someone will write a letter showing that mankind is not so much concerned with oak, sand, coal, hands, feet, eyes, top hats, wheat, bricks, etc. (which are *things*) as with that other undoubted truth that they do all merge and pass into one another, then I say that letter would be very interesting. But until such a letter is written, I shall maintain my opinion that the modern insistence upon transformation and general unity is just a bit of academic disassociation from life and, pushed to the point to which it has been pushed, a disease.

As to what I said about the Modernists, no one has denied it; so there is nothing to reply to. I said that if you wanted an empirical test of the presence of true Catholic feeling, your best test was a devotion to our Blessed Lady, and I pointed out that the Modernists have got no more of that than a railway porter has of Theocritus, or a precocious boy in a preparatory school of the sentiment of paternity. The test so suggested is a sound one, it is historically accurate, and it applies to the contemporary case in question; until someone will write a letter to show that either (*a*) the Catholic Church, since its first emergence into the light of history, has not in every crisis and in every profoundly Catholic character shone with devotion to our Blessed Lady, or (*b*) that this devotion is normally present in Modernist writings, what I have said stands and has not been attacked.

As to the considerable irritation caused by my taking it for granted that Jews and Europeans were two different types of men, I simply cannot understand it. If I were a Jew I would not try to appear anything else. Jews are just now very powerful, especially in this country; but I do not go about on that account pretending that I am a Jew. Why should Jews, who have a disproportionate amount of power, try to make out that they are not of their own race, but of ours? No possible purpose, it seems to me, can be served by trying to maintain two contradictory things. You cannot be proud of the power, greatness, and success of the Jewish race, and at the same time deny the separate existence of that race. You cannot have it both ways. If it is the mere word "European" that has given offence, I shall be delighted to substitute for it any other—Abracadabra or Mumbo-Jumbo—so long as my meaning is clear. The tuppenny ha'penny Donnish way of talking, now pretty fairly mildewed, was to talk about an "Aryan" race. But those pseudo-scientific terms are very repellent to me. We have no proof of the existence of an "Aryan" race. It does not form a real part of real history. We *do* know all about a real historical phenomenon called European civilisation; we are acquainted with its corporate tradition; we who belong to it feel its religion in our blood; its military qualities are native to us; and it is historically true that for the 2,000 years during which the Israelites have been scattered amongst us they have been present as a foreign people. Where is the shame or insult in that? Or where is the advantage to them or to us of hiding or confusing a patent and a valuable piece of historical truth—perhaps the most important permanent feature in the real history of Europe?

What I said about the Congo has again not been met, and therefore I cannot "reply." There is nothing to "reply" to. I said that when an agitation of this kind originated secretly, it behoved men whose judgment was not yet fully informed to enquire upon the motives of that secrecy; or better still, to discover the names, careers, and interests of the originators of the movement (those who adhere to any agitation when it is well launched are a different matter); and to ascertain especially who paid the original moneys for the inception of the agitation. That rule is perfectly clear, moral, and plain. It does not make any man decide until the information is supplied to him; but, on the other hand, until he and the public get the information, he and they must necessarily suspect the whole business. Secrecy is always suspicious.

I have wasted a great deal of space in talking about points to which no "reply" could attach, because no just comment had been made upon them. And that leaves me but little space to deal with the one definite challenge which I have met with in these various controversies; that challenge came, of course, from the lucid, sincere, and direct mind of Wells. His point, as put to Chesterton and to me, is this: "You say that the ideal of collective ownership in the means of production is inhuman. Very well, what is your alternative as a remedy for a state of society which you and I alike believe to be intolerable?"

My answer to that is that no remedy of a defined, immediate sort, applicable by the legislature, is comparable in its efficacy to the proposal of the Collectivists. Industrial society (in those few parts of the world which happen to be cursed with it) is like a man suffering from a toothache in all his jaw, but very reluctant to have all his teeth pulled out. There comes another man, who says, "Have all your teeth pulled out, and be out of your misery." To this adviser (and, by the way, he has

the toothache, too, which adds singularly to his zeal) the remedy is so simple that he cannot understand the patient's reluctance. He begins arguing, now too crudely, now extravagantly with the patient. Sometimes he thinks that the patient is not yet "educated up" to the idea of having no teeth—that is the Collectivist when he says that we must "educate" people to feel intimate personal possession in communal capital and land. Again, he points out the ease with which modern science can provide artificial teeth, and hopes for their indefinite future improvement—that is the Collectivist when he points out the increasing facilities of a modern Government for managing the business of the community; and he is quite right. Again, he shows that the human mouth is not a "thing" capable of definition, but in mere form of universal change like all other organisms; again, he proves conclusively that protaplasm had no teeth—that is your Collectivist appealing to the hypothetical primitive customs; again, he shows how our teeth are renewed, so that having teeth at all may be regarded as a passing stage in human development—that is your Collectivist appealing to the historic changes in the legal aspect of private property.

But the patient continues reluctant; he hates the toothache, but he remembers thirty or forty years of happy life during which he had good healthy teeth, and he thinks his mouth would feel lonely without them. He loves to chew; and when he is told that chewing with artificial teeth is precisely the same as chewing with real teeth, he flatly contradicts it; he says it isn't! Then, says his adviser, who is for pulling out the teeth, "Well, then, what alternative do you propose?" And it is a stumper.

Now, to drop the metaphor, I meet that question in the following way:—

I premise that man, in order to be normally happy, tolerably happy, must own. I premise that no family or other sub-unit of the State can live a tolerable life unless it is possessed in private possession of a minimum of the means of production. Anyone not so possessed is in effect not a citizen, but a slave. I premise that the economic evil from which we are now suffering, especially in England, in North Germany, and in the old Puritan centres of the United States, though it is the effect of a vile philosophy and not the cause of it, is, in its effect, most evil, precisely because so large a proportion of men who are nominally citizens do not own.

It is not only, nor even mainly, the disproportion in effective demand which constitutes our modern economic trouble: it is the disproportion in control of the means of production; for with the means of production in few hands, no one is secure except those few who own. The whole economic direction of the State, its type of building, its daily hours of work, the kinds of ornament which it endures, its manners, its teaching—everything—is out of joint because the general will of the citizens cannot be felt.

I deny that the expression of this will through elected bodies is a process sufficiently organic and true to reflect the national life in the intimate details of production and of consumption. I say that the powers which a man or a family desires to delegate to a political assembly are few, and that those he can delegate are fewer still. And among them I am quite certain is not that result of ownership which we call independence.

Confident of these things, I would far rather (and I have with me all history and even the great majority of those now tortured by our industrial system) return to a state of society less complex, than maintain our present material conquests at the expense of anything so inhuman as either a Collectivist system or a system under which the means of production are owned by the few.

But I see no necessity for such a return. No one has convinced me that a society in which the means of production were highly divided, might not remain a stable society, even under the action of our modern rapid communication of commodities, information, and persons.

The argument against my contention, like nearly all Collectivist arguments, is ludicrously and childishly obvious. Where the area of economic activity is enlarged, the direction of that activity must concentrate; and the advantages possessed by superior cunning or an accidental priority of information are proportionately enlarged. It is easy to show upon paper and in a mechanical or arithmetical way, that where your cheat or bully could once monopolise the trade of a parish, he can now monopolise the trade of the world. What those who advance such obvious arguments forget is that the mechanical and arithmetical plan does not hold where human beings are concerned. It has been invariably true in the past that where the means of production were highly divided, your cheat or your bully did *not* control even the parish. Citizens economically free, by the mere force of humanity organise co-operatively. The barriers which indirectly but effectually prevent ill-balanced accumulation grow of themselves, they are customs rather than laws, they endure for centuries. Try to accumulate land in Ireland to-day. You will be astonished. If I am asked why then has such a system of divided capital, once stable, broken down in our particular case, I should say that the breakdown was not an inevitable thing, still less that it was due to the growth of something without will and without true existence, called in the modern jargon, "economic development," but that it was due to a false philosophical theory backed by convinced persuasion, by ardent missionary work, and by not a few acts of despotism, wicked and in their time publicly condemned, which between them destroyed the common religion that was the salt and conservative vital principle of the whole European machine. Moreover, I should add that if you could create again (or rather, when the breakdown of our time *has* created again) a society of owners, such a vital bond among them will re-arise.

I know that some men deliberately support the Collectivist campaign upon the plea that the means of production once socialised in theory will very soon in practice be distributed among individuals. It is not impossible that this calculation is just; but no one who respects his honour can pursue such a method of arriving at the proper distribution of capital; no one can decently call that true which he believes to be false in the hope that, by his lie, a good result shall arrive in a roundabout fashion. I know others, and they are many, by whom the Collectivist idea, though abhorrent, is accepted as a counsel of despair. "It would be no worse," they say, "than our modern society." Yes, it would be worse; because our modern society, though it has gone wrong, does not openly profess a false philosophy. It still in theory reveres things normal to mankind, and notably the independence of the private owner; though in practice it has so grievously encroached upon those normal arrangements, and though it protects men like Joel, Carnegie, Morgan, and the rest who are the incarnate negations of Property.

The Collectivist is fond of prophesying. The man in touch with his fellow-men is very chary of prophecy. Nevertheless, those of us who know more or less what the body of Europe is, can venture so much with regard to the future: You will never establish a Collectivist State among us. You may just possibly arrive, after a bungling and inartistic experiment parallel to all the other inartistic bungling of modern physical science, at a sort of slavery, in which a few privileged men, thoroughly contented and possessed of enormous power, will order the rest of the community at their bidding. Even this detestable result you will only achieve in the unhappy centres where the old tradition of Europe has weakened almost to vanishing. You will not impose it upon the bulk of our society, and I very gravely doubt whether even so partial and momentary a success is before you. I am rather convinced that the growth of co-operative endeavour, especially among the healthy peasantries upon which Europe still reposes, will rob you of your machine long before it is ready for working.

Can, then, the diseased parts of Europe be saved at all? I cannot tell. But certainly Collectivism will not save them. It is but a reflection of or an aggravation of their disease.

The Dog-Dream.

By E. Nesbit.

HE had come out of school with the rest; the big, airy school, with pictures on the white walls and windows large enough to show the changing shapes of clouds. It had been a good day. Lessons had been easier than usual, and teacher had read them a story of some naughty little boys who had thrown a dog into the water and aimed stones at it, and a good little boy had saved its life. And the dog had then loved him ever after. The other boys came out of school, and went down the road shouting and larking. To Alf it seemed better to go home the longer way, by the high-railed tarry path through the gasworks, and to be, all the way, the hero of that story. He saw himself, proud and defiant, standing up to those other boys —six at least; there must have been six. Teacher had said "a number of boys." Standing up to them "determined," so the story had run, "to put an end to their cruel sport." He saw the "number of boys" "cowed by his brave demeanour." He saw the pond on the heath—he had instantly visualised that as the scene of the heroic act—the pond by the Hare and Billet, saw himself wading into the water ankle-deep, knee-deep, then swimming: he must learn to swim. He felt in a sudden thrill the rapture of the moment when he caught the dog—he pictured it acquiescing gratefully in the rescue —and swam back to shore with it in his arms. He heard the approving shouts of the crowd on the bank, even the lot of bad boys "applauding the noble bravery of their late enemy." The words stuck in his head. Perhaps because he had not words of his own. He was a timid, silent mouse of a child.

The contemplation of this imagined heroism stirred him to the core. And the dog "loving him ever after"— that opened a new heaven. He felt the warm, shaggy body between shirt and jacket; he would carry the dog about with him as Abe Toovey's father carried the bull-pup. He felt the cold, damp nose snuggled against his neck, the warm tongue licking his ears. The dog would love him ever after. And here he lost himself in a higher heaven still. How he would love the dog! How he would teach it tricks, patiently, kindly. No beatings. He would save half his dinner for it—the half of breakfast and supper, too, if such were the needs of the beloved. The dream lasted till the end of the gasworks, there to break suddenly, like a soap-bubble.

His aunt would never let him keep a dog—never. But suppose he saw the dog drowning, what could he do? Save it, and desert it? Never. The problem routed the dream.

He got home late for tea, and his aunt "warmed his ears for him," a customary ritual involving but slight and fleeting emotion on either side.

"Where you been, eh? Don't come no falsehoods over me, my man. Out with it. Playing along of them dirty Board school boys, I'll be bound. Which way did you come home?"

"Gas works," said the child.

"What was you doing?"

"Nothink!"

"There you go," said the aunt, pushing his bread and butter across the clean brown and mauve of the oil-cloth covered table. "Nothing! That's you all over, that is! If you can't do nothing else, I should think you'd think about your blessings. Many a orphan hasn't got a kind aunt to come home to, nor yet a tea. How'd you like to be a workus boy?"

Alf knew that his aunt kept a clean house and a clean name in a world where both were rare. He was grateful, because he was not, as he well might have been but for her, a workus boy. Yet all he found to say was:

"I dunno."

"There's gratitude," said the aunt, and sniffed.

Alf, silent, munched; drank gurglingly from a blue and white mug; put his arm across his chest in the place where in the dream the dog had lain. Speech was always difficult to him. He spoke when he was spoken to; not otherwise. And not then if speaking could be avoided. But now spurred by the dream, he spoke.

"I say, aunt?" he said heavily.

"Well, what d'you say?" the aunt's amazement was complicated by a feeling that perhaps Alf was "coming out."

"I wish I'd got a dawg."

"Bless and save us!" She looked round the kitchen —the cleanest, one supposes, in that street, probably in that district—"a dog? Anyone offered to give you a dog?"

"No," said Alf.

"That's all right. Where'd you get the seven and six for the licence."

"*I* dunno," said Alf; and indeed he did not. The idea was new and unpleasant. How had he managed about that in the dream?

He spoke again, and still with effort:

"But s'pose I'd got the seven and six?"

"Then it 'ud go to buy your new boots."

"I should like to 'ave a dawg."

"I dessay. And what about me? An' my clean floors and jumping up on the furniture. Like it to sleep with you perhaps?"

Alf made no answer to this bitter sarcasm. In point of fact, the idea had visited him as a beautiful possibility.

"If I 'ad a dawg," the child went on, trembling with the agitation of a conversation begun by himself, and with this new insistence of desire, "I'd never want no more pennies; never no more, if I'd got a dawg."

"Go along with your dogs," said the aunt briskly. "You get your lesson against to-morrow. That's what you better do. And then go up the heath and run about a bit. You're as white as paper an' as thin as a rat in an ironmonger's. You don't never answer to your food, like some boys."

Something in the child's face and large eyes caught at her as she took up the tea-tray, and she paused a moment.

"If we was in the country," she admitted, "I'd as lief as not you kep' a dog. It could live in a bar'l in the yard. But in this bit of a place—it 'ud turrify us no bounds to it."

Alf knew that to turrify means to annoy; "in the country," where dogs were possible. He had always had dreams ever since he could remember—dreams of the farm in Kent that his aunt talked of, where the cherry orchards were, and the pears on the sides of the house, "so you could pick 'em outer window." He had dreamed of being King of England, with ermine robes, so jolly for the winter, and a gold crown, less convenient perhaps. But now the dog-dream drove all other dreams away. The country—well, the central figure there was comfortable, not heroic. Kings often did wrong—more often than not, the history books seemed to think. But the boy who rescued a dog in distress, this was the real hero, the boy who did the Really Right Thing— did it bravely, and was rewarded by love, given and returned.

He had not found it possible to love his aunt. And there was no one else in his world. In books boys loved their teachers. Alf was not in a book.

He took the dream to bed with him. Oh! if he could only have taken the dog, alive, warm, responsive, loving and beloved!

The dream was there when he awoke. He took it with him to school; and, out of school, played with it near all the water he could find. By the Ravensbourne and the Quaggy, by the ponds on the Heath, dogs he saw a plenty, and boys. But the boys were just boys that played and the dogs were happy, barking and splashing, bounding into the water of their own free, gay will, climbing out again with agile blunt-clawed feet, to bedew the bank and the onlookers with the scattered spray of their shakings.

"If only I could have a chance," he said. Then the boys at school should see. "Cowardy Custard," they called him because he was appalled by the giant-stride, and "Miss Mum" because he had no words, and the swings made him sick. "I'd like them to be there

when I pulled the dog out," he said, and pictured their faces. He had not learned to swim—the water did not seem deep enough to make that worth while. The chance to save the dog was what he longed for. And the chance came. Not exactly as he had pictured it. But then our chances seldom do.

It came one day by the little river, running full now and swollen with two weeks of heavy summer rain. The child, haunting the waterside as usual, saw a boy, a well-dressed, disagreeable-looking boy, dragging a rough brown dog by a string. The dog's long hair fell over eyes that looked wild terror and appeal.

"Go along in then," cried the boy, and threw a stone. "In; fetch it!"

The little dog cowered and pulled the string taut.

"Go in. Fetch it, then!" the boy repeated. And still the dog cowered resistant.

"You little beast," said the dog's master between set teeth, drew in the string, caught up the dog, and flung it far into the water.

Alf thrilled, made a step, stopped. The dog was swimming. Had the dog in the story been able to swim? It dragged itself ashore.

"Come here, sir!" shouted its master.

The little shrinking slave cowered and retreated.

"Come here, sir!" The master got his foot on the end of the string.

"I'll teach you to come when you're called," said the slave-driver. He shortened the string, caught the dog by the neck; and Alf's heart thrilled to the anguished cries of the helpless little slave. It was a swagger-stick such as soldiers carry—a horrible stick, with knobs on it.

"Stop it," said a voice Alf did not know.

"Mind. Your. Own. Business," said the other, with, between the words, full-stops that the blows made.

"Stop it, I say," said Alf in that new voice.

Only the sound of the stick against soft flesh and bones answered. And at each blow the dog cried out anew.

Then Alf snatched at the dog—got it—held it tight. The other boy was coming at him; he would take the dog away, would beat it again. Alf pushed, there was a cry and splash, and Alf ran. He paused under the railway arch—there was no pursuit. What was he to do? He dared not take the dog home to his aunt. Perhaps Abe Toovey's father would keep it till he could think of a way to make his aunt see how much he wanted it. He buttoned the dog inside his coat—the dream-detail he had loved best. The dog resisted till it felt the warmth of his breast; then it ceased to struggle, and presently, as he walked, the cold nose was laid against his neck, the warm tongue caressed his ear.

The moment was the dearest the child had ever known, the first-fruits of the love, given and returned, that was to light the lamp of joy. A dream-jewel to be paid for by the whole dream-treasures of a life.

* * * * * *

Before the magistrate next day Alf, confused and dizzy with horror, heard how he had stolen a valuable Aberdeen terrier, had made a murderous assault on a harmless little boy, the son of an eminent solicitor, had tried to drown him, had induced a school-fellow to hide the stolen property—this a very damning clause—with other offences.

He tried to say that the harmless little boy was cruel—was beating the dog. All sorts of people sprang up to say how gentle, how noble, how truthful, how good to dumb animals the harmless little boy was.

"The dog is very much attached to my son," said the eminent solicitor. "If it could be produced in court—?"

The dog, at least, would bear witness for him. Alf's wide, horror-filled eyes fixed on the door by which the copper had gone out to fetch it. The dog would show before all the world that love which had thrilled through them both when the wet body had lain against the child's breast, the loving tongue had licked his ears.

Someone said, "Let the dog loose."

Alf leaned forward, breathless. The solicitor's little boy whistled, and the dog sprang to fawn, in this safe dry place, where was no river and no swagger-stick, on the hand that had hurt so hardly.

"You see," said the solicitor, waving a large pink hand.

Then indeed the child saw that he was alone. Even the dog . . . Face to face with this mighty unexplained machinery of policemen and angry grown-up people, he was dumb as any driven beast at the gate of the slaughter-house. He fought for words. There must be something he could say to make them understand. He was struggling in despair's deep waters, where words float out of reach before one can grasp them. He clutched at a spar:

"I wanted a dawg," he said, scowling to keep back the tears.

"Callous little ruffian," said the solicitor's wife.

"I wanted a dawg," he said again. "I told aunt I wanted a dawg."

Evidence of premeditation.

People told each other that this sort of child was a menace to society.

The Court was a sea of white and pink faces—waves of blackness surged across it. "Reformatory" was the word that struck like a heavy club in a dark night.

The aunt says that the disgrace has broken her heart.

Something else was broken, too. Alf dreamed no more dreams.

Nobody's fault, of course—least of all the fault of the Majesty of the Law. Yet . . . that little, pitiful, dumb child; that irresistible, tremendous, imperturbable Majesty. And under Majesty's triumphant chariot wheels, the poor dreams, faded, crushed for ever in the filthy dust!

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

Irish Poetry for the British.

The Gilly of Christ. By Seosamh MacCathmhaoil. With Three Symbols by Ada Wentworth Shields.
The Awakening. By James H. Cousins. With designs by T. Scott.
Wild Earth. By Padraic Colum. (Maunsel. 1s. net each.)

The distribution of poetry is one of the most difficult problems the publisher has to face. Good poetry, of course, should be able to distribute itself. It should pervade the land unconsciously by the magic of its own power. But in the present stage of the growth of consciousness it is far otherwise, and the careful publisher walks warily. So wary indeed is he that, until he hears the chink of the poet's cash, he is almost quiescent. This is regrettable, as even poetry may be made to pay, if one dare say so, or at least to pay its way. Obviously publishers are not philanthropists; they work not for the joy of the working, but like most people, they needs must work because they must. But that is no reason why they should not be business men. Any effort to alter this state of things is worthy of encouragement. Therefore I hail with delight Messrs. Maunsel's promising attempt at the distribution of poetry in a form which is at once readable, attractive, and accessible to the slenderest purse. The form and printing of the above three volumes are altogether admirable. The poems themselves are also noteworthy. They have distinction as English verse, apart from that which is theirs as belonging to the Irish Literary movement; a movement

which by its intense nationalism, is not only vitalising the mind and imagination of its own people, but has actually succeeded in contributing something to the treasury of the language which is the heritage of all dwellers in these islands, whether they be Teuton or Celt, and also, whether they like it or not. I am reminded of this by the attitude of the Gaelic revivalists; that is, of those enthusiasts who aim at rehabilitating the ancient language of Ireland. Surely the business of literary nationalists is to imbue the alien language within their gates with the colour and fragrance of their own land, rather than attempt to give currency, which can never hope to be more than a conceit, or at best an accomplishment like Latin or Greek, to a language that has been superseded by the language of Milton and Shakespeare. Lady Gregory, Dr. Hyde, and Mr. W. B. Yeats have shown us what can be done in a better way. They have gone back to the ancient lore, dug it out of its out-moded words, and enshrined it in the great language which is common to the British and those of British descent all over the world. And in doing this, what is peculiar and individual to Ireland has not been lost, it has been emphasised and made known. This being so, why should the author of "The Gilly of Christ" inflict upon the harmless and well-disposed Saxon, who presumably is invited to read the volume, for the rest of it is in English, such an impossible name as that immediately following the title? I shall be merciful to both reader and compositor, and not write it again. Such a name means absolutely nothing to English readers, it looks ugly, it is absurd from the point of view of phonetics, and it does not convey whether the author is man, woman, god, or devil. And the aggravating thing is that probably the author has some quite simple name, such as Connel, Connor, or, better still, Smith. The poems themselves are very good examples of symbolical verse. They are not too mysterious, and here and there rise to genuine heights of simple poetic expression :—

When rooks fly homeward
And shadows fall,
When roses fold
On the hay-yard wall,
When blind moths flutter
By door and tree,
Then comes the quiet
Of Christ to me.

At the same time a few explanatory notes would seem to be necessary for readers unacquainted with Gaelic phrases and Christian-mystic terms. The book is marred by one or two ill-chosen words quite out of key with the rest of the lines, and by Miss Shields' three symbols which look like exceedingly bad designs for modern handicraft jewellery.

Mr. James H. Cousins's volume, with its charming border decorations, savours rather of English than of Irish verse. It is Wordsworthian in texture. Mr. Cousins is reflective and transcendental rather than passionate and direct. His poems dream pleasantly of better things and more joyous moments. At times one feels that his aspiration is too constant, in spite of its delicate expression. One cannot live for long upon the desire of to-morrow, no matter how glorious it promises to be, nor out of such things as wings for "the soul to soar, and leave behind life's inessentials." One begins to long for those same inessentials in very self-defence. But Mr. Cousins's sonnets are well worth reading.

The best volume of the three, however, is Mr. Padraic Colum's "Wild Earth," in its pleasing brown boards and buff back. Mr. Colum has managed to put into verse that fine sense of character which was so conspicuous a feature of his play, "The Land." At the same time he has retained the poetry. There is an insinuating charm about the simple poems in this little volume. They are so fresh, yet so obvious. There is no striving after those innumerable and wearisome little conceits which so often cloak the meagre emotions of the minor poet, but instead there is that most satisfying of all poetic qualities, an air of spontaneity and a suggestion of the inevitable :—

Ah, strange were the dim, wide meadows,
And strange was the cloud-strewn sky,
And strange in the meadows the corncrakes,
And they making cry!

The poems are chiefly about peasant folk and happenings upon the highway and the countryside. Mr. Colum has a nice sympathy with such things which is not devoid of a sly humour. There are two poems singing the desire of the people of the road for the comforts of home, which show a very clear insight into human nature, especially "The Suilier" who yearns for the "good red gold," which would provide such pleasantly selfish cosiness after being "dazed with the wind, the rain, and the cold" :—

I'd live my lone without clan or care,
And none about me to crave a share.
The young have mocking, impudent ways,
And I'd never let them anigh my place,
And a child has often a pitiful face.

Mr. Colum has caught the resigned longing of the Irish peasant; but he has revealed it in his poems, not as a weakly trait, but as something, compact of joy and carelessness, which is a kind of strength. Each poem in the little book has a peculiar and refreshing distinction, and I can safely say that Mr. Padraic Colum is a young poet worth watching.

HOLBROOK JACKSON.

REVIEWS.

The Growth of English Industry and Commerce.

By W. Cunningham, D.D. (Cambridge University Press. 2 Vols. 10s. and 7s. 6d. net.)

The first edition of Dr. Cunningham's now classical work was published in 1882, so that the fourth edition just issued by the Cambridge University Press embodies the results of 25 years additional research. The well-established position of the book renders criticism, or even appreciation, superfluous at this date, but it may be perhaps said that its chief merit lies in the broad and truly scholarly spirit in which the subject is approached. The author surveys an immense mass of historical material, selecting here and rejecting there, without ever giving the reader an excuse to suspect him of having any pet theories to defend or any economic axe to grind. With a wonderful clearness and a never failing sense of proportion, he traces amidst a wealth of detail the real lines along which English industry and commerce have developed. Regarded merely as a collection of thoroughly authenticated and detailed facts, the value of his work to the student of social history can hardly be overestimated, but it is only possible here to give a general outline indicative of its scope.

The first volume deals with the period from the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth down to the secession of the American colonies, and the second volume carries on the history through the "laissez faire" period to the year 1850.

The main feature of the first period was the national regulation of industry. Up to the year 1550 industry had been in the hands of the craft gilds, which were independent and strictly local authorities. But with the decay of feudalism and the growth of a professional soldiery, the control of wealth became a matter of supreme importance to the State, and industry became a national concern. And so there appeared a system of national regulation, initiated by Lord Burleigh, which survived with little modification for 250 years.

Lord Burleigh's policy was apparently designed in the first place to ensure contentment and efficiency at home, and in the second place to increase foreign trade and encourage the importation of gold and silver bullion. The ideal at which he aimed was one of national power; a healthy, self-sufficient, industrial population and a large and expansive source of revenue in case of war. Acts were passed removing the legal maximum wage which had hitherto obtained and giving the justices directions to assess the wages of all labourers and artisans throughout England on the basis of the cost of living. At a somewhat later date public officials were appointed to inspect the quality of goods produced, whether for export or home consumption, and cheap, inefficient processes of manufacture were made illegal. The ship-building industry was encouraged by a system of bounties which laid the foundations of English maritime power. At the same time a new impulse was given to the improvement of native industries and the introduction of new ones by Burleigh's policy of granting to foreign religious refugees full rights to practise their trades in competition with natural-born subjects.

This idea of the importance of controlling commerce and industry in the interests of the State was retained and developed by the various politicians who succeeded Burleigh throughout the seventeenth century; and out of these arose a policy which Dr. Cunningham terms Parliamentary Colbertism. This was the policy of deliberately regulating foreign trade, subsidising important industries, and controlling the development of all territories under British rule in such a way as to react on the prosperity of British industry. The Tories were inclined to allow considerable freedom of trade, but the Whigs insisted on the practically complete exclusion of all foreign goods which could be manufactured in England. The agricultural industry was fostered not only by high protective duties on imported corn, but also by giving bounties on its export. Ireland, with her agriculture and her industries, was sacrificed ruthlessly for the benefit of the English producer. She was practically excluded from the English market, and measures were taken to kill her export trade with the colonies and other parts of the world, wherever she seemed likely to become a dangerous competitor. It was the pursuance of the same policy in the American colonies which apparently led to their secession and thus finally discredited Parliamentary Colbertism. The immediate effect of the Declaration of Independence was to induce British statesmen to treat Ireland more favourably. In 1779 Lord North endeavoured to remove the main commercial disabilities of Ireland, and from 1782 onwards definite efforts were made to foster Irish agriculture and industry.

This breaking up of all the traditions of British economic statesmanship synchronised in an extraordinary manner with two other events of supreme importance; the beginning of the Industrial Revolution and the publication of Adam Smith's epoch-making book on the "Wealth of Nations." Up to that time the requirements of the State had been the first consideration of economic writers. "Adam Smith approached the subject from the other end. The first object of political economy as he understood it was 'to provide a plentiful revenue or subsistence for the people;' the second was 'to supply the State or Commonwealth with a revenue sufficient for the public services.' He simply discussed the subject of Wealth; its bearing on the condition of the State appeared an afterthought." He held that if each individual were free to seek his own wealth the national wealth would increase, and that special encouragements were needless and costly. And he showed unmistakably that "interference with any individual in the way he conducts his business can scarcely ever be justified on strictly economic grounds, and that costly attempts to foster exotic trades or to stimulate native industries are on the face of it absurd."

Adam Smith's theories were readily adopted by both Whigs and Tories, and thus was born the system of economic individualism, or laissez faire, of which Dr. Cunningham's second volume treats. The story which he tells of the Industrial Revolution, the introduction of machinery, the growth of large factories, and the progress of Capitalism is more or less familiar to all who have studied the origins of modern economic conditions. But his detailed study of the terrible evils of the transition period, aggravated as they were by the hopeless attitude of the economists with their "wages fund" theory and their obstinate ridicule of all efforts at improvement, whether by legislation or private philanthropy, is probably at once the most impartial and the most crushing indictment of economic individualism which has ever been written. Whilst apparently retaining some sort of belief in the efficacy of laissez-faire doctrines, the author does not hesitate to expose the evil record of the Manchester economists. He not only shows that all their pessimistic predictions regarding the effects of ameliorative legislation on commerce were falsified, but he also informs us that these same persons vehemently denounced all interference with child-labour and all factory legislation, even when evil consequences to trade, from foreign competition or otherwise, were clearly impossible.

Dr. Cunningham's masterly work ends at the year 1850, and it cannot be doubted that the date is a well-chosen one. He has given us the history of laissez faire from its birth and through its prime, up to the time when its eternal validity began to be doubted by the leaders of economic and political thought. The history of its decline and fall will be the history of Socialism triumphant, and that cannot be written yet.

Napoleon's Men and Methods. By Alexander L. Kielland. (A. Owen and Co., Regent Street. 10s. net.)

Lord Beaconsfield used to say "read all you can about Napoleon," and surely enough literature has sprung up around that tremendous subject to gorge the most insatiable and curious in that direction. As the prejudice caused by the misery and devastation that Napoleon spread in great waves wherever he went, and the rivers of blood and tears that ran because of him, become dimmed and forgotten, the concrete figure of Napoleon stands out in better relief, and gains vastly by the process. Napoleon as a bloodthirsty monster "wading through slaughter to a throne," is a picture grossly distorted. This swan among the royal ducks of Europe was, morally,—albeit he said morals were not for such as he—no worse than the average monarch of the period; but he was enormously more powerful, and, consequently, hated by the hate which springs from impotence. On the other hand, he was also adored with the splendid adoration that found life joyous in his service, and death in it, euthanasia. As some of these heroic figures pass before us in this book, one almost sighs for the great days and great deeds of 1795-1815. Such events, and such careers, are not likely to occur again. Perhaps that is their great interest. Warfare, nowadays conducted by machinery, is a game so unheroic and ridiculous, that sensible nations will not play at it for long.

About this book, which is written by a Norwegian, and translated by Joseph McCabe, there is a calm, serene impartiality which gives the reader a feeling of security and confidence that is never ruffled except when he speaks of Bernadotte, and then we know that he approaches nearer home, without the charity which is said to begin there. Bernadotte, who rose from the

ranks and became one of Napoleon's inferior generals, married Joseph Bonaparte's wife's sister, who had been Napoleon's first love. His continuous rise, until he became King of Sweden, was not due to his special merit, but to his marriage with Napoleon's friend; for Napoleon, in the words of M. Kielland, "was pleased to make his early love a princess and a queen." Bernadotte was hardly fit for such an elevation as a throne, being somewhat of a braggart, and incompetent. He repaid Napoleon with the blackest ingratitude and treachery. No wonder M. Kielland "was rather amazed to hear King Oscar II say in 1896: 'The one man who could have taken Napoleon's place was my grandfather.' He said it so quietly and unhesitatingly that one could see this was the way he had been taught history."

Napoleon was never alarmed or put out by treachery. He could be treacherous himself, when it suited his purpose. But he was neither vindictive nor cruel. Josephine and Marie Louise were both unfaithful to him; and for the former he had a real regard and great patience. "Marie Louise said in 1815, 'Lord Wellington does not know how much he did for me when he won the battle of Waterloo.' Lord Wellington did know, however. He has himself said: 'It is a fact that she was already expecting a child by the Austrian Baron Neippberg, whom she afterwards married'."

Napoleon was the most selfish of men. The generosity of his great gifts and rewards to his family, and his generals, as M. Kielland justly observes, had nothing in the nature of sacrifice in it, but they were the outpourings of a splendid opulence, as of that of Nature herself. It was only when his enormous natural forces began to wane that it was possible for the combination of the nations of Europe to crush him. And crush him they did. He took it with as bad a grace as that with which England treated him. Not all of his friends deserted him, even when honours and place were offered them to do so. Las Casas, after his return from St. Helena, "was urged to accept a position at Court in consonance with his rank, but he refused. 'We have served the great lord of the earth,' he said. 'When he sent us to foreign courts we were treated as the equals of princes because we wore his uniform, and we felt ourselves to be their equals. We have seen seven kings waiting in his antechambers like ourselves'."

Napoleon, speaking in 1813 of the officers who deserted in the Saxon campaign drew a distinction between a conscientious man and a man of honour. "Turning to Marmont, he said, 'If, for instance, the enemy had taken France and were in possession of the heights of Montmartre, and you thought—perhaps rightly—that the good of the country demanded that you should abandon me, you might be a good Frenchman and a brave and conscientious man, if you did it, but you would not be a man of honour'."

For those who want a concise account of Napoleon in his greatness and his littleness, we may say that it is to be found in this book. There is a preface by Professor Oscar Browning, from which we learn that the book has had a large circulation on the Continent. It is worthy of it here, for M. Kielland is far above the ruck of the ordinary writer.

The Boats of the "Glen Carrig." By William Hope Hodgson. (Chapman and Hall. 6s.)

"Being an account of their adventures in the strange places of the earth, after the foundering of the good ship 'Glen Carrig' through striking upon a hidden rock in the unkown seas to the Southward. As told by John Winterstraw, Gent., to his son James Winterstraw, in the year 1757, and by him committed very properly and legibly to manuscript." So runs the sub-title.

We are glad to welcome this fascinating yarn of the sea by a new author, one who evidently loves the sea, and who succeeds in getting into his work that almost undefinable quality we call atmosphere, in this instance, an atmosphere with salt in it, free and open. In language simple and quaint a highly imaginative story is developed, and when the book is finished, we feel that we have accompanied the wanderers in many of their experiences. From the many suggestive word pictures we quote the following, descriptive of a storm:—

As each huge sea came towards us, the boat shot up to meet it, right up to its very crest, and there, for the space of some instants, we would seem to be swamped in a very ocean of foam, boiling up on each side of the boat to a height of many feet. Then, the sea passing from under us, we would go swooping dizzily down the great black froth-splotched back of the wave until the oncoming sea caught us up most mightily. Odd whiles, the crest of a sea would hurl forward before we had reached the top, and though the boat shot up-

ward like a veritable feather, yet the water would swirl right over us, and we should have to draw in our heads most suddenly; in such cases the wind flapping the cover down so soon as our hands were removed. And, apart from the way in which the boat met the seas, there was a very sense of terror in the air: the continuous roaring and howling of the storm; the *screaming* of the foam, as the frothy summits of the briny mountains hurled past us, and the wind that tore the breath out of our weak human throats, are things scarce to be conceived. . . . . Towards midnight, as I should judge, there came some mighty flames of lightning, so bright that they lit up the boat through the double covering of the canvas; yet no man of us heard aught of the thunder; for the roaring of the storm made all else a silence.

The book we heartily recommend as a recreation, it points no moral, but suggests valour. Its workmanship is good, and it shows an imagination of interesting and exceptional character. We especially enjoy the author's beautiful dedication to his mother, and we look forward with pleasure to the next work from the same hand.

The Unpardonable Sin. A Novel. By James Douglas. (E. Grant Richards. 6s.)

In the ocean of mercantile fiction which floods the bookstalls and the libraries, and laps idly round the turgid imaginations of suburbia, it is sometimes the lot of the reviewer to happen upon a book which, if not exactly of the colour of the wine-dark sea, partakes at least of its invigorating elements. Of such as this is "The Unpardonable Sin." Mr. James Douglas has written a novel which neither insults the intelligence nor the imagination. We would not suggest that the book is a masterpiece, but that it is alive. Its atmosphere is living plainly amid actual pictures and real desires: the hot strife of creeds and the fundamental desires of love and power and peace. Mr. Douglas can engage our interest in these things in spite of a style over lavish of adjectives, and often suggestive of a book-fed imagination. He gains most of his effects by a skilful use of contrast. For instance, we have the admirable pictures of religious stress in the riots at Bigotsborough (a transparent disguise for that Mecca of the intolerant, Belfast), and the wild dream (realised in the novel) of a Church of Man embracing all the religions, aye, and all the sciences, sociologies, and dreams of humanity, not only in an all embracing tolerance, but in a New Vatican which puts St. Peter's out of court, and makes a toy of St. Paul's. Again, there is the contrast between the love of Aideen, which has nought of flesh in it, and that of Fionula, which can only realise itself in a colossal sensuousness which staggers the world. It is Fionula who builds the New Vatican out of her love for Gabriel Gordon, the young Protestant parson who nearly suffers martyrdom in one of the chronic riots of holy Bigotsborough. Gabriel is the hero. He becomes Pope of the New Vatican, and commits the unpardonable sin, the sin against the Holy Ghost, which is Love. As to how and why he does these things we must commend the reader to the book. Before closing, however, we must say one word in recognition of the consummate art with which the incidents in Bigotsborough are drawn; the humble birth of Gabriel is excellently done; whilst the descriptions of the religious riots stand with the best of their kind, particularly the passage in which the march of the Orangemen on "The Twelfth" is described; the figure of Tom, "The Drum King," drunk with beer and bigotry, plying his drumsticks in a frenzy that becomes heroic as he bellows, "To hell with the Pope!" is worthy of Felix Gras.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

"Konx on Pax." By Aleister Crowley. (Walter Scott. 5s. net)
"Signposts for Children." By A Grandmother. (Elliot Stock. 5s.)
"Town Planning." (Garden City Association. 1s. net.)
"Love Poems." By W. R. Titterton. (New Age Press. 1s. net)
"Pilgrim Songs." By Margaret T. Wedmore. (Headley Bros. 2s. net.)
"Poems." By M. Compton Mackenzie. (Simpkin, Marshall, and B. H. Blackwell. No price.)
"James Thomson." (English Men of Letters.) By G. C. Macaulay. (Macmillan. 2s. net.)
"The Egyptian Pillar." By Eva Gore-Booth. (Maunsel. 1s.)
"Deirdre." By A. E. (Maunsel. 1s.)
"Some Arguments for Home Rule." Speeches by J. E. Redmond, M.P. (Sealy, Bryers and Walker. 6d.)
"The Fallen Temple." By H. W. Schloesser. (The Bookshops. 1s.)
"Riches and Poverty." By L. G. Chiozza Money, M.P. People's Edition. (Methuen. 1s. net.)
"Christianity and the Social Order." By Rev. R. J. Campbell. (Chapman and Hall. 6s.)
"Thyrsis and Fausta." By Rosalind Travers. (Mathews. 3s. 6d. net.)
"The History of Aythan Waring." By Violet Jacob. (Heinemann. 6s.)
"Papers for Thinking Welshmen." By A. W. Wade Evans. (Gray, East Acton, W. 1s. net.)
"Ireland and the Home Rule Movement." By Michael F. J. McDonnell. (Maunsel. 1s. and 2s.)
"The Causes of Present Discontents in India." By C. J. O'Donnell, M.P. (Unwin. 2s. 6d. net.)
"Tales from the Derbyshire Hills." By Katherine Bruce Glasier. (I.L.P. 2s. 6d.)
"Factory and Shop Acts of the British Dominions." (Eyre and Spottiswoode. 2s. 6d. net.)
"Wayfarers." By A. K. Sabin. (Samurai Press. 2s. net.)
"Judas." By Harold Monro. (Samurai Press. 2s. net.)
"Eve's Apple." By Alphonse Courlander. (Unwin. 6s.)
"Age of the Earth." By W. T. Sollas. (Unwin. 6s. net.)
"The Swiss Democracy." By H. D. Lloyd. Edited by J. A. Hobson. (Unwin. 6s. net.)
"Modernism and Romance." By R. A. Scott-James. (Lane. 7s. 6d. net.)

DRAMA.

Cupid, Commonsense and Parliament.

IT is to be hoped that "Cupid and Commonsense" will soon find its place in the ordinary theatre; the performance at the Stage Society ought to be only the prelude to that. In Mr. Arnold Bennett's play there is a great deal of ordinary "commonsense" (commercial variety) and precious little Cupid. That in itself is an advantage, but the positive virtue of the play lies in its study of the manners and customs of the "five-towns" population. Mr. Bennett has dared to go thus far in search of his subject, but has not made the play predominantly one of ideas; in consequence I am afraid a London production would be very risky, although there should be an audience for the play in every northern and midland manufacturing district. As an instance of the decentralising of the drama, "Cupid and Commonsense" is to be cordially welcomed. A decentralised, local and provincial drama is one of the first necessities of a healthy dramatic life, and a healthy dramatic life one of the signs of a healthy self-conscious local life. Our metropolitanism is sheer decadence. But the local drama will demand the local school of actors; excellent as the cast of the Stage Society production was, they all of them failed from time to time in their grasp of the dialect, and of the idiosyncracy of the play's manners and customs. Metropolitan manners tend to be, like metropolitan good looks, mere unmeaning smoothness due to the massaging out of all lines and curves of expression, and it is difficult for our actors to convey, unless with gross exaggeration, the individuality of a definite locality. This is merely one more instance of the levelling-down and uniformity-compelling nature of our present system of society. Even our present system cannot in fact stamp out individuality, but it can and does promulgate the idea that local and provincial differences are vulgar and unseemly, particularly in the drama. All the usual run of plays are acted in the provinces by ladies and gentlemen who painfully aspire never to lapse from the high-toned accents and gestures of Vere-de-Vere. And all the usual run of dramatists endeavour painfully to conceal the fact that they have any experience of life outside Mayfair, Scotland and fashionable continental resorts. The time will come I hope when the Cockney will drop his h's with ostentation, and the Oldhamite speak crude words which shall be to Londoners as a foreign tongue. When individuality is more insistent we shall be compelled to study it more accurately, and be nearer a complete socialism, and a localised drama can help us to this more than any amount of localised literature. Too often a localised literature hails from kail-yards which never were on land or sea: that is from the good old country of the Family Herald novelette.

Mr. Bennett's theme, apart from the local character of the play, might be described as the economics of the Manchester School in operation. And this theme Mr. Bennett has not treated ruthlessly enough. I am aware that old Elie Boothroyd (wonderfully played by Mr. Fisher White) behaves in a ruthless manner in insisting on getting his rent out of his tenant of the factory, and does actually drive this unseen character to suicide "off," yet this is a mere parade of ruthlessness, it is not made intimately realisable. It is money trampling on money; for the life of the unseen tenant, another struggling manufacturer, can hardly be said to count. We ought to have seen old Elie visibly grinding the faces of the poor, denying elementary rights to his employees, or driving some woman-worker out of a job on to the streets.

It ought to have been money trampling on life. The intervention of Cupid might then have been more effective. As it is he gets very little show at all, and his poison is indeed of a very attenuated virus. Mr. Bennett no doubt meant Alice Boothroyd (Elie's daughter) to be in love with Willie Beach (the son of Boothroyd's tenant), or half in love, but this has got to be taken almost entirely for granted. If in love with Willie Beach, why did she marry the other man? If not in love, why help Willie out of a big scrape with a forged bill? There is not enough motive displayed for either course, and the dilemma put the actress (Miss Lucy Wilson) at a considerable disadvantage. Not only here, but nowhere was the drama quite definite and explicit enough; it was more of a study than a play, more of a presentment of characters than a drama.

The second drama of the week was the State opening of Parliament by his Majesty King Edward the Seventh, and it was one of which I had considerable expectations. There is always nowadays the pleasing possibility of the reality of life surging athwart our processions and spectacles in the rush of a real crowd. Some one might have invited his Majesty to drive his State Coach over Westminster Bridge and explore a few acres of his slum kingdom in Lambeth. But there were too many precautions against this. The streets were lined with Yeomen and with Guards, and squads upon squads of large policemen were unobtrusively disposed at convenient points. It is obviously necessary to keep the loyalty of London at a very respectful distance, and be ready to jump on it and arrest it on the slightest provocation. In order to catch a glimpse of the procession I stood for some three-quarters of an hour near the Houses of Parliament noting the other spectators. There was hardly one not shabbily dressed, and there were a great many dressed in very old and ragged clothes; the contrast between us on the pavement and the King and Queen in their glass and gold chariot (with very saturninely grinning lions on the back), their retinues, and the gorgeously attired peeresses in exquisite motors and carriages, was quite a daring effect; the soldiers between us were perhaps requisite—our loyalty was not extreme. As a matter of mere historical fact I must labour this point; nearly all the papers in their description of the show laid so much stress of the loyal cheers. Where I stood, and up Whitehall and to the door of Parliament, there was a wave of one faint cheer and no more. It was a cheer any organiser of a Socialist demonstration would be heartily ashamed of; it was the kind of cheer you would get from the Fabian Society in response to an invitation to cheer for the social revolution. Another point was the respect paid to the National Anthem. Men hardly waited for the band of gaudy gentlemen in jockey caps to finish before putting on their hats, while the few bars allotted, by a delicious grading of privilege, to the Prince of Wales, hardly kept the sea of bowlers in my view an inch away from their owners' heads. No, the motif of loyalty was not marked. There was only wonder, curiosity, and an indefinable sense of brooding, a thunder-feeling as of something about to happen. Parliament is a sham fight, no doubt. But how long will the crowds that see the parade of force guarding the King and that assembly from their contact, be content to let that sham fight go on? One felt that this flaunting of tinsel against shabby poverty, this parade of disciplined arms against the undisciplined hopes and fears of the crowd, if not a drama in itself, was the prologue to a great drama. The streets were cleared, the movements of the crowd were stilled, the King himself rode by in his gold and glass chariot. Line on line of soldiers stretched up and down all the streets one could see. Here was force and power, and there in the middle the House of Commons

from which that power and force is wielded. How and when will that power be used? The question brooded over the crowd almost visibly. It is a theme of possibilities.

L. HADEN GUEST.

MUSIC.

Magic-Lantern.

I SUPPOSE when a carping critic is thoroughly angry and disgusted his opinion isn't worth a rap; at any rate, it is qualified by his ungenial state of mind. It is nearly a week, however, since I heard Mr. Joseph Holbrooke's last performance, and I haven't yet got over my feeling of utter impatience and irritation. It was his setting of "Apollo and the Seaman" (by the latest Society poet, Mr. Herbert Trench), a poem that has been "run" and advertised beyond all good taste and dignity. In accordance with somebody's ridiculous notion, the Queen's Hall was darkened, and the words of the poem were thrown by limelight upon a large screen which was erected on the platform, hiding chorus and orchestra and (benevolently) the conductor. Mr. Holbrooke's music was, ostensibly, intended to illustrate the poem, to enlighten the audience as to Mr. Trench's philosophy, to add something to the beauty of his verse. I think it did nothing of the kind. The poem is perfectly obvious, and requires no elucidation; the philosophy is perfectly middle-class, and requires no apology; the beauty of the verse is a question of opinion, and Mr. Holbrooke's music went its own ugly and horrid way without apparently the faintest reference to the text. There were moments when a phrase or a cadence would arrest the ear with a promise of some beauty, but to wait for these was like playing the game of Dorcas Society for the first time. Mr. Holbrooke is probably the cleverest musician in England. I make this remark so that I may be understood when I say also that he has written some of the worst music I have ever listened to. His idea of setting verse is perfectly monstrous; his accents occur in the wrong place, his rhythms are his own and not the poet's, and he slashes the metres about in the most bad-tempered way, just like a naughty child knocking down a house of blocks in the nursery—out of sheer devilish ill-feeling. In his setting of "The Bells" his temper was evidently serene and kindly disposed towards the poet, and his music to that excellent poem will go down to posterity with all the best that is of our time. But how he can perpetrate such work as his setting of a song called "Come, let us make love deathless" (performed the other evening) is quite beyond my ordinary comprehension, unless it be just this "devilish ill-feeling" towards the actual construction of the poem. Once upon a time I heard somebody sing his "Annabel Lee," which is an equally violent repudiation of verse form, and one of the most outrageous "ballads" ever composed by mortal Englishman. The only redeeming feature in the programme of this over-patronised Trench-Holbrooke concert was a Symphonic Poem called "The Shepherd," by Mr. W. H. Bell. This is not the work of a charlatan; it is sincere and occasionally very beautiful indeed. It is youthful work and promising, but Mr. Bell does not feel intensely enough yet to make immemorial music. The intention throughout is good and quite interesting; but it is not sufficient to use certain fashionable combinations of instruments in order to strike atmosphere and local colour and so forth. The test is to make us feel these things, to make us believe that the Queen's Hall is sky-blue instead of the hideous coffee-cake colour it is, and that Mr. Henry J. Wood is gracefully waltzing off the platform with vine leaves in his hair when he isn't.

A whispered rumour has come to my ears to the effect that Mr. Holbrooke's music heard the other evening is to some extent an adaptation of music he wrote some years ago to something very different: Edgar Allan Poe's "Masque of the Red Death." I repeat it here for what it is worth and with all due reservations. It may be true, or it may not; but I should not be surprised at anything Mr. Holbrooke would do.

HERBERT HUGHES.

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.

AGAINST THE LIVING-IN SYSTEM.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

The members of our Union are anxious to make a success of the Great Meeting on the Living-in System which we are organising at the Queen's Hall, Langham Place, on February 11th.

We have had some remarkable meetings on this question in the Provinces at which we had the presence, in large numbers, of our Labour and Socialist friends. We make a direct appeal for your assistance to ensure the same success in London.

While we write, we learn that a large firm in the West End of London, *i.e.*, Messrs. Swan and Edgar, Regent Street, have decided to abolish the system for their staff.

We want to demonstrate in an unmistakable way that we have public opinion on our side; no firm in our trade can afford to resist that influence, when expressed in an emphatic manner,

JAS. MACPHERSON, General Secretary.
MARGARET E. BONDFIELD, Assist. Sec.

* * *

IRELAND AND MR. CHESTERTON.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

When Mr. Chesterton writes about beer I receive what he says with attention and respect, but when he writes about Ireland I am tempted to put down my pint-pot and take up my pen. Mr. Chesterton refers to the equalisation of property as "triumphant in France and gradually triumphing in Ireland." Pray what does he mean by that? Who has told him that the equalisation of property is triumphing in Ireland? Mr. Birrell? Mr. Redmond? Or has he observed it for himself, and if so when, and in what way?

Lest any of your readers who do not know Ireland should be tempted to believe this very definite statement of Mr. Chesterton's, I wish to contradict it with equal definiteness. The equalisation of property is not triumphing in Ireland, and I do not honestly believe that any political or social scheme is "triumphing" there. The only thing that is triumphing in Ireland is temperament, powerfully backed by a religion that exactly suits it. Ireland is like a wretched patient in a hospital bed, on whom a succession of inexperienced doctors are permitted to experiment with a succession of drugs of their own concoction; she is always swallowing medicine, and, like the people who write those picturesque testimonials to the patent-medicine people, she has got into a state in which drug-taking has become a bad habit. If the drug contains a strong opiate, and keeps her quiet for a few months, one section of our wise politicians calls it a success; if it contains a strong stimulant, and stirs up her latent activities, another and more robust section regards it as a triumph.

What nobody seems to understand is that Ireland is the only really religious Christian country in the modern world, and that you cannot build with either Liberal, Tory, or Socialist bricks on a foundation of temperament and religion. Ireland can never be happy or prosperous from an English point of view until her religion has been destroyed; and even then you would have to deal with a temperament, idle, lackadaisical, feeble, that will wear a whole nation of Chestertons to a nervous shadow, and still remain idle, lackadaisical, feeble, and smiling.

FILSON YOUNG.

* * *

ON CHESTERTON AND WELLS—AND BEER.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

"It has taken me a long time to get to the point," says Mr. Chesterton in his reply to Mr. Wells. The point, when examined, has rather the appearance of two points,—horn-points of a dilemma.

"If," says Mr. Chesterton, "Jones and Brown were both well-paid State servants drinking in a . . . State restaurant, there would still be no law to prevent Brown cadging for drinks . . . therefore . . . to cure Brown of cadging . . . Brown must be a citizen and have a certain spirit . . . What influences will give him this spirit? There are many reasonable answers . . . one . . . is . . . property."

Here, then, is the dilemma. If "property" tends to destroy this cadging spirit by virtue of the fact that possession of property renders Brown economically independent of Jones, then obviously the being a well-paid State servant, having the same economic effect, must also have the same spiritual influence. But this is just what Mr. Chesterton denies. His point is that modern evil, typified by the cadging of drinks, "could not even feebly be attacked by Socialism." Yet his own example of the kind of influence required is nothing more than an influence (property) operating now upon a small minority only, which is essentially the same as the influence which Socialism ("State servants well-paid") would bring to bear upon all men.

The alternative is to assume that property under Individualism tends to destroy the cadging spirit, not by virtue of its rendering Brown economically independent of Jones, but by virtue of some other characteristic. If this alternative be chosen, then—what is that other characteristic?

RUSSELL THOMPSON.

* * *

MR. BLAND'S FAITH.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

I have just read with mixed emotions the concluding instalment of Mr. Bland's paper "The Faith I Hold." I was unable to attend the meeting to which that paper was read, but I have been living in the pleasant delusion that he had accepted the amended Basis and was prepared to follow out the assertion of the equal citizenship of men and women to its logical conclusions. But here I find him back in that queer position of his that Socialism aims merely at an economic change that will increase the earnings of men, and that, as for the women, a man will be free to keep a wife and children, or a wife without children, or dogs, or rabbits, or any other pets just as he fancies. Mr. Bland, it seems, is still hankering for the dependence of women, still insisting that the mother and unmarried daughter must be supported by, or at any rate be dependent upon, the father in the good old unconditional style. We men are going to pick over the women, and such of us as feel disposed to do so may, out of the wages the State will pay us, support wives and daughters—the rest does not interest him. Now I do not think that this represents the view of any considerable section of the Fabian Society. Our aim is the equal citizenship, the personal independence of women, "the abolition of property in women and children." Mr. Bland in his flourishing way calls that a rhetorical flourish. It is not; it is the very core of modern Socialism.

It seems to me very desirable that this issue should be debated by the Fabian Society at the present time. Hitherto, it has arisen only as a collateral question in such discussions as that on Mr. Bland's paper, or on the proposed revision of the Basis. It deserves, I think, a more straightforward treatment.

H. G. WELLS.

* * *

SOCIALISM AND THE BAR.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

With regard to solicitors, it is almost an impossibility for them to take an active part in the Socialist cause and at the same time make a living by private practice. Of all men they are the least free to advocate unorthodox views. It is a matter of a living with them. How then can you expect to convert them? Up to now there has been no room for them in the Socialist or Labour ranks. Labour is peculiarly suspicious of lawyers. Even if they were paid for lecturing or organising, they would have little chance of being selected as a candidate for a constituency against a trade union secretary. How then can you expect to gain their sympathy? Labour requires to be a little more democratic; when she is prepared to stand by any candidate supporting her views although not of her class, then the movement will be strong indeed.

A SOLICITOR.

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