

IN PRAISE OF ZOLA: by ANATOLE FRANCE.

THE NEW AGE

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

WHEN we said last week that the Government was growing stronger we had not reckoned without our Peckham. The strength of the Government in the House of Commons has more than once been independent of the strength of the party in the country at large. Thus it happened during the Unionist Parliament that sat after the termination of the Boer War. The country was sick of them; but until the General Election nobody could claim that the Government had been actually defeated. Similarly the present Cabinet increases in strength in the House itself, while all over the country, as bye-election after bye-election demonstrates, the party as a whole is losing ground. Sooner or later, of course, the wave of discontent will reach the compact majority, which will then begin to dissolve as rapidly as it was formed. But that time has not come; the seventh wave has not risen; and meantime, with a rout for an opposition and the indifferent support of the Irish and Labour parties, the Cabinet is safe enough in its island of refuge. If Mr. Asquith can be made Premier without involving the descent of the House of Cards, the building must be pretty solid.

The extraordinary turn-over of so many votes at Peckham is by no means so important as either the Liberals or the Conservatives imagine. Six weeks hence the event will be forgotten except by magazine writers in their paid polemics. Everybody knows what won Peckham and what lost Peckham. On one side was a shockingly weak candidate, with a weak case. On the other were, first, a good and popular candidate; secondly, the influence of the Suffragettes; third, a completely unscrupulous use of Tariff Reformed statistics; and lastly and chiefly, rivers of beer. If it was not coffee that won the battle of Tel-el-Kebir, it was certainly beer that won the battle of Peckham. Peckham is the first engagement in the Great Beer War, and Liberalism has undoubtedly sustained a severe reverse. Both Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Burns have stood on the trenches since the battle, and defied their enemies; and, we may add, Liberals generally show no

signs of being overwhelmed. All the same, the reverse is a commentary on Mr. Asquith's Licensing Bill, and may as well be seriously looked in the face.

There is no doubt whatever that the average Englishman, as Mr. G. K. Chesterton has recently shown, regards Beer as in some way a symbol of Liberty. A mug of beer might very well, in fact, stand as one of the insignia of the royal house of British democracy. His right to get drunk at his own expense when and where and as often as he pleases is a right that millions of our countrymen would die to defend. Even Temperance advocates—we do not mean teetotalers—defend the right though they have no intention of using it; and it is striking that so many opponents of Mr. Asquith's Bill are perfectly moderate drinkers who have probably never been drunk in their lives.

No wonder, if these misunderstand the meaning of the Bill, that the sworn hired bodyguards of the Brewers and Publicans should misunderstand. As a matter of fact, excepting for the quite unnecessary extension of the bona-fide traveller's walk to six miles, and the reduction of the open hours on Sundays, the Bill will and can have no possible effect on the total amount drunk. In other words, the Bill is exactly, but for these clauses, what it professes to be by title, namely, a Licensing Bill; and three-fourths of the opposition is misdirected on the assumption that the Bill is a Temperance measure got up by the rabid teetotalers. Strangely enough, none of the teetotalers are really enthusiastic about the Bill. Nobody is, and that is the worst that can be said of it. Socialists, like ourselves, would be glad enough to see the political power of the Brewers reduced; the principle of the State resumption of monopoly is also in our direction. But once we have admitted these things as probably involved in the Bill our praise of it is ended. Local option, for example, is not at all to our taste; the fact that virtual monopoly will still remain even after 14 or 21 years is disconcerting; and, finally, we should have preferred a vast extension of the meaning of Government control. Why should not the municipalities or even the State, make and sell beer? Failing such heroic measures, all licences ought to be granted only on condition that such houses are public-houses in the real sense, that is, houses designed and maintained for the public at large. At present public-houses are houses intended solely for male drinkers, a comparatively small proportion of the community. The State might in future see that they cater for everybody—teetotalers included. But then the teetotalers would object to that.

The point is, however, that the Bill even in its present form is like the curate's egg, good in parts. We cannot be as enthusiastic about it as the Labour Party appears to be. The Labour Party, we fancy, has gone into needless ecstasies over a comparative trifle—ecstasies, too, that may prove costly at the next election. On the other hand, we deprecate such obviously uninformed and misinformed opposition as Peckham reveals. It is neither fair-play nor good politics; and if the Peckham mood spreads over England the cause of the Social Reformer, any one of whose major measures will be open to giant misrepresentation—is already lost.

Incidentally it is worth asking the question whether either the Liberal or the Labour Party has at this moment any clear idea of what it is doing. We purposely omit to consider the Unionists after their own declared intention of having no policy at all. Liberalism, however, is in a different case, as is also Labour. Anybody who recalls the threats as well as the promises made by and on behalf of Liberals at the last election, remembers the air with which the party was started on its present Parliamentary career. It was as if the country had said: Here is a majority sufficient for anything you desire; here is an opposition enfeebled and divided beyond your fear; here is a programme of unexampled attraction for the mass of electors with a strong gale of social enthusiasm blowing in the same direction from the Socialist quarters; here, finally, is a country willing to back you in any courageous attempt to settle the insistent problems of modern society. Fail after all this, and understand you fail for ever. Liberalism is on its trial, on its final trial in England.

Everybody, we say, remembers who remembers at all, that this was the atmosphere that hung about the cradle of the present Cabinet. The files, at any rate, of the "Daily News" will refresh a treacherous memory. Well, what has been done to justify that change or to fulfil that hope? Need we enumerate the omissions in the legislation of the last three Sessions; or review the sins of commission of which the Cabinet has been guilty? Our conviction that the present Opposition would be worse is no admission that the present Government is anything but bad. We seek in vain outside the bright administration of Mr. Birrell—the greatest Liberal of them all—for any signs, we will not say, of Socialism, but of Liberalism. After all, we are not so foolish as to expect grapes of thorns or figs of thistles. But we do expect of thorns and thistles fruit each after its kind. In plain words, we expect Liberalism of the Liberal Party exactly as we expect Socialism of a Socialist Party, and Trade Unionism of a Labour Party. But is there anything unmistakably Liberal in the Cabinet's administration of a single department (once more, excepting Ireland, where negative Liberalism in the form of an absence of coercion has been maintained)? Let India speak. Let Egypt lift up its voice. Ask the foreign chancelleries. Ask the working-men of this country in their organised capacity. Ask business men. Ask, in short, anybody—including the Opposition. All agree that except in opinion the Liberals of the Cabinet are not disagreeing with their Conservative predecessors. No single Liberal principle has stood plainly before the country in the present Parliament. We might almost believe that Liberal principles are dead, and that the present Government is battering on their corpses.

But stay, there are a few bright spots. South Africa has been liberally treated; the Passive Resisters are promised a Compensation Bill, miscalled an Education Bill (it has as much to do with Education as the Licensing Bill has to do with Temperance); a Miners' Eight Hours Day is to be carried; there is a Small Holdings Bill; a Valuation Bill for Scotland; and an Army Bill for the Empire. Also the Free Trade flag has been kept flying over an army of unemployed. What of these? We are disposed to grant that several of these measures were and are necessary and good. Even a Liberal Government cannot, of course, do everything

wrong. What we maintain, however, is that the work accomplished falls ridiculously short of the promises made, and that with the possible exception of South African legislation, there is nothing specifically Liberal in it all.

* * *

Even the Chinese Labour question, on whose innumerable pigtailed the Liberal majority were carried into power, has been hopelessly abandoned by the Liberal Cabinet, who are thereby exposed to the just derision of honest men. It is true, of course, that the Chinese are going, as Mr. Churchill stoutly maintains; but only at the mine-owner's leisure. Moreover, what is infinitely worse than the delay in their going is the consummate cant with which in indecent haste slaves of the Kaffir race are being allowed to fill the place of the Chinese under worse than the Chinese conditions. Everybody knows now why the Chinese were wanted. They were wanted because the mine-owners refused to keep their promises made to Kaffirs during the war to pay three pounds a month. The devil being well, the devil a monk was he; and when the war was over, the mineowners preferred to break their promise and to import Chinese at thirty shillings a month. Then came the British outcry, humane enough in its way. On the indignant wave swam to power the Liberal majority. The Chinese begin to go; but the Kaffirs begin to come; and, as we have week after week observed, black labour, black "forced" indentured labour, is now substituting yellow. White labour alone is growing less. Thus the case against the Liberals grows actually and metaphorically blacker daily. They have removed the Chinese and kept thus the letter of their promise; but they have left untouched the conditions of labour, and thus contradicted, nay outraged, the spirit of their promise.

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We cannot endure to examine further the remains of Liberal principles in the present Cabinet. It was on Chinese Labour that Liberalism largely came to power; and by its treatment of the question it deserves to be judged. In that case, it must be judged guilty of neglecting the major half of the problem. "Chinese" have been removed, but the more important problem of "Labour" has been left unsolved.

* * *

But what of the Labour Party? We are going to ask a frank question, and we shall expect a frank answer. Has the Labour Party a plan of campaign? For the life of us we cannot discover any method in the procedure of its members. Week after week of the Session passes, and except at odd intervals, the Labour Party remains obscure. Now this is not the thing. Even supposing useful work were being done in committees and in unreported ways, the party is not absolved from the duty of making its presence known as well as felt. The picturesque personality of Keir Hardie was never more needed in Parliament than now. Apparently there is no leader with the courage to be rash or the enthusiasm to be the cause of rashness in others. Considering the incredibly slow pace of the social transformation, a little indecent haste would be a godsend. Once the I.L.P. was described as consisting of "young men in a hurry." The Labour Party needs more of those young men. This week the party has issued a leaflet containing the names of the supporters and opposers of the Right to Work Bill. The latter number 267, of whom 181 are Liberals. Everybody knows what the Suffragettes would do with these Liberals. What will the Labour Party do with them? Merely to print their names on a black list is to be ridiculously futile. The Right to Work Bill was one of the two first-class measures on which the Labour Party stumped the country during the recess. It was opposed openly, and finally kicked downstairs by 181 Liberals, every one of whom probably (with the exception of people like Mr. Harold Cox) knew precisely what he was doing. In short, it was a declaration of war. Now what, we ask, is the Labour Party going to do? What is its plan of campaign? How is it going

to improve the chances of such a Bill when next it is introduced?

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We hope we shall not be told that it is disloyal of Socialists to ask these questions. But disloyal or not disloyal, we must ask them. Everybody is complaining that the Labour Party is ineffective, badly led, and apparently without a plan at all. We know very well that the House of Commons is the last place in the world for enthusiasm, that the life of the Parliamentary Labour representative is often enough a dog's life of ceaseless worry and vexation, that the whole institution of Parliamentary procedure is designed to thwart precisely the measures the Labour Party desires to carry. But we also knew that long ago. The Trade Union movement has quite deliberately abandoned the older methods of labour—the strike with its picketing and intimidation—in favour of political action. Of course, political action for a handful of a minority is difficult and trying. But we do ask for a sign of some coherent and steadfast plan. We would like to see progress if only in the spirit of the party. On the Right to Work Bill Mr. Macdonald was, for once, his old uncompromising self; but, else, the Labour Party appears merely a rather more vivid segment of the Liberal body, its antennae, shall we say? Where is the picturesque exaggeration of Mr. Grayson? More of that is needed. Not a single element of the Socialist movement, and particularly its extravagance, can be spared from the political life of the Labour Party. We deplore the need for extravagance, but we refuse on that account to deny it.

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The death of the Duke of Devonshire has removed from political life a great Englishman, but not a great man. In a community with first-rate political intelligence the Duke of Devonshire would have been superannuated twenty years ago when he failed Mr. Gladstone, Ireland and the Empire on the question of Home Rule. Unfortunately there are still people who regard his opposition to Home Rule as a proof of statesmanship; but the subsequent history of Ireland, its present condition and its prospects, are eloquent to the contrary. As a survival of the landlord in the grand style the Duke of Devonshire was interesting pictorially; as a man of transparent honesty he was formidable politically; but as a man of intellect he was always negligible. His character, however, made an excellent substitute for intellect—in England.

* * *

By the way, one argument for a Second Chamber vanishes on contemplating the ages of our leading statesmen. If, as Mr. Shaw somewhere says, every man over forty is a rascal, how much more true is it that every statesman over sixty is virtually a member of the House of Lords. So long as the average age of the Cabinet remains apparently fixed at over sixty, so long may we stay in our beds safe from the fear or hope of revolution. Consider the ages of those young hopefuls, Mr. Balfour, Mr. Asquith, and the rest. Old men that they are—like the Duke of Devonshire aged seventy-five—theirs are not the brains or the will to transform our chaotic industry into an industrial democracy. Government by Methusalehs may have been well enough in patriarchal days; but we wish a few hundred constituencies at the next election would fix an age-limit for their candidates, and fix it low.

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The fate of the Labour Party's Eight Hours Bill is more intelligible in view of the general opposition to even the Government's modest Eight Hours for Miners Bill. A deputation of the Coal Consumers Association (no relations with domestic consumers of course) has waited upon Mr. Asquith and waited in his ear. But Mr. Lever's bold offer to the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce has made mincemeat of the egregious Association's case. "I shall be pleased," he wrote, "to introduce any member of your chamber to colliery proprietors who are willing to sell coal such collieries raise for 1909, notwithstanding the passing of the

Mines Eight Hours Bill, at the same prices that are prevailing to-day. Colliery proprietors would be very pleased, indeed, to have contracts for many years in advance at to-day's prices." That settles the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, and simultaneously all the people who declare that ruin stares England in the face if miners work half-an-hour less per day. As for Sir George Livesey, we again marvel at his inconsistency. Six years ago his coal contracts were raised quite arbitrarily by the colliery proprietors eight shillings a ton. He paid without a murmur audible in public. Now because possibly, only possibly, the men may get the advantage, he cries Red Ruin at a possible, a barely possible, rise of sixpence. Surely Sir George should be thinking of retiring.

* * *

We are glad to see that Mr. Keir Hardie is back from his globe trotting and ready for work. There is plenty for him to do. Judging by the excellent interview with him reported by the "Daily Mail," of Wednesday, March 25, Mr. Hardie has come back with ideas, and a few disillusiones. Colonial loyalty, for example, strikes him as being "merely a surface sentiment." South Africa, he found, was thankful to be rid of Lord Milner, and in the hands of the sensible level-headed Dutch. In Australia his experience of Wages-boards—the nostrum so dear to tremendously advanced Liberals to-day—is that they are "mere make-shifts." As to India, we gather he was struck by the superior condition of the people in the Native States compared with those under direct British rule. He intends to move for a commission to study the reasons at first hand. In one respect Mr. Hardie was scarcely up-to-date. Hearing that Mr. Asquith was Premier-elect, he said: "that will split the Liberal Party." But he forgot that those 150 bold Liberals who threatened resignation were—Liberals. In another respect, however, he was in advance of most of the Labour Party; since he included whisky among the three good things Scotland had given the world.

* * *

The report on the L.C.C. tramways, prepared under the direction of the Moderates in fulfilment of their election promises, turns out to be in one respect a grossly partisan document. We have no love for the bad habit of municipalities of relieving rates out of tramway or other profits on municipal trading. Such profits ought not to be made at all; and hence that part of the report condemning the L.C.C. for its too generous relief of rates out of tramway profits leaves our withers unwrung.

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But what strikes us as a piece of culpable misrepresentation is Mr. Peat's extraordinary statement that when the conversion of the horse traction to the electric traction system was made by the L.C.C. the original cost of the former should be written off as loss. Their complaint is that in the L.C.C. estimates the outlays on both the horse traction and the electric traction tramways were included. Of course they were. What else could be done? Strangely enough, this same Mr. Peat is senior auditor of the Metropolitan District Railway, which recently made a conversion of steam into electric traction. Did the M.D.R. in its estimates write off the original outlay on steam traction as loss? Not at all. Did Mr. Peat condemn them for not doing so? Not a bit of it. On the contrary, his report contains the following: "We do hereby certify that the foregoing accounts contain a full and true statement of the company, after charging the revenue of the half-year with all the expenses which, in our judgment, ought to be paid thereout." On this, therefore, the most serious charge the Moderates can discover against the Progressive administration of the tramways we may, as the "Financial News" observes, appeal from Mr. Peat the inexorable (moderately so) expert to Mr. Peat, the auditor of the District Railway.

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[NEXT WEEK.—Articles by Havelock Ellis on "Eugenics and Race-Breeding"; Conrad Noel on "The Dead Philanthropist,"

The Shadow-Show at Peckham.

FOR one proud, fitting moment the British Constitution lay helpless in the hands of Peckham. Such, at least, is the impression I gathered from the Conservative and Liberal papers during the week before the poll. The Tory editors besought Peckham to stand firm for Justice; the Radicals prayed Peckham to make all the remaining virtues its special charge. The issue certainly seemed somewhat momentous; it is not surprising to learn that excitement ran high. Earnest electors are reported to have developed the capacity for listening intelligently to Liberals, Conservatives, and suffragists all speaking at the same street corner at the same time. Now it is all over. Peckham has resigned its power to the King, Lords, and Commons; and once more is plain, simple Peckham. And what has it all come to?

The victors tell us that Peckham has spoken for the Nation: the vanquished say that it was not an election so much as a bacchanalian festival. Both estimates are a thousand miles from the truth. All that has come of this noisy tumult is that Mr. Gooch and Toryism have got in, while Mr. Gautrey and Liberalism have gone out. To seriously-minded people it is not a more important event than if Peckham had won the Football Cup. It was not a serious political battle between the right and the wrong ways of governing this country. The whole election was but another exhibition of the shadow-shows with which our two great political parties see fit to entertain the electors. They could vote for the Tory shadow thrown on the screen by Mr. Gooch or the Radical shadow thrown by Mr. Gautrey. I have considered carefully the respective allurements held out by either side; and had I been an elector, I would, candidly, have tossed up. There was nothing offered but an undignified choice between Scylla and Charybdis; and I object to being made the sport of political whirlpools and sharp-edged rocks, even if I have the abstract pleasure of choosing one or the other by my own vote. Which, after all, is somewhat like the choice between a pistol or a glass of poison; which, I understand, is the right of every member of any respectable suicide club. There is so little scope for intelligence when one is faced by the inevitable.

But the sad fact remains that Peckham took its shadow-shows very seriously. There was a record poll, and the stupendous turn-over of votes from one political party to the other demonstrates quite clearly that the electors had a very definite notion which they considered the better man for their purpose. It was obviously not the result of tossing up in their case, unless all the Peckham pennies have two heads or two tails. It was an overwhelming victory for the Conservatives; and Mr. Gautrey apparently was more than surprised that he received so many votes as he did; for, in explaining his defeat, he said: "We pulled up wonderfully during the last two or three days." A sense of decency prevents me suggesting any figures sufficiently modest to represent the Liberal hopes if the poll had been taken a few days earlier. The election which has just finished in this constituency is the type of election which will take place in other constituencies for some time to come; and, indeed, sets the rules of the struggle which the Liberals have challenged the Conservatives to fight out with them during the remainder of this Parliament. It is only during the last few weeks that the Government policy has been definitely stated, and Peckham has been the first opportunity of hearing the opinion of the people thereon.

The Liberals went to the poll with three main items on their programme. First, the Licensing Bill, secondly the Education Bill, thirdly Free Trade. The Tories replied by putting up a candidate who was practically

an abrupt negative to the Liberal policy. This is, briefly, the summary of the battle between the two parties which will form English politics for this session. If the items are examined without sentimental bias, I think it will be obvious that such a struggle is nothing more than a sham fight. Whether they are all won or all lost will make scarcely a shade of difference to ninety-nine in every hundred of the citizens of this country. To prove the case would require an article for each of the three points; but there are some objections which appear on the surface. Take the matter of the control of the liquor traffic and the public-house. In the mind of the reasonable person, that is, the Socialist, the public-house is at present the working man's club; the working man is, further, a drinker of beer. (He is driven to this evil course by such revelations as were contained in the Local Government Board's report of last week, which tabulated some ginger beers as indulging in 8½ per cent. of alcohol.) The Socialist is mainly concerned in providing the best possible club and the best possible beer. Being a hard thinker and not a sentimentalist, he also realises that the suppression of intemperance by attempted prohibition or restriction has been proved a failure. There are total prohibition States in America where the arrests for drunkenness exceed the average in London. There are prohibition States where alcohol is sold as "cough-mixture." But that is not real temperance. The best way of preventing a man drinking to excess is to suggest something better to do. Fill the club with amusements and literature; make it a place where there are all kinds of things to be done besides drinking; make it a place where the intoxicated man will feel thoroughly uncomfortable. Does this new Licensing Bill tend to these ends? I can find nothing in it which will make fewer men get drunk. I can see the probability that there will be fewer houses, which will be still more overcrowded; but I refuse to believe that bad atmosphere will lead to sobriety. In short, the Licensing Bill, although it may tend to disorganise the Trade, does little or nothing to organise something better to take its place. Socialism is constructive, not destructive. And, after all, it was the Tories who introduced the principle of getting compensation out of the Trade, and the still more important principle of allowing the State to impose conditions on the license which would absorb the monopoly value.

In the matter of the Education Bill there is little to detain the serious reformer; for the very simple reason that it does not concern education at all. It merely proposes to make the Churchman go to prison as a passive resister instead of the Nonconformist. That is spite, not statesmanship.

But why should the people of Peckham take the trouble to go to the poll to decide such questions as these? Quite an infinitesimal proportion of them have the slightest desire to get drunk, even if the Licensing Bill will prevent them; a mere fraction of them have taken the pains to decide whether the Archbishop of Canterbury or Dr. Clifford is the safer guide to heaven. They have not had real politics talked to them at all; they have fought a sham fight. They must get to realise that the difference between good and bad government is the difference between happiness and misery. For the mass of the people the election result has made not the slightest difference. They will have no higher wages, no better houses, no shorter hours, no more of the things which make life worth living. Once more it is driven home to us Socialists that our main business is to teach the people that Peckham, with all its turmoil and hubbub, did not touch real politics at all. It merely looked on at a shadow-show. It was neither a victory for Beer nor a defeat for Temperance: it was the victory of noisy clamour over dull incapacity to put forward a policy that would arouse intelligent interest. The average elector is neither a fool nor a knave; but he must be led, for he is not skilled in political affairs. So, in the case of Peckham, he drifted into Toryism; which had the negative virtue of avoiding Liberalism. But the future is for the sheer common sense of positive Socialism.

G. R. S. TAYLOR.

G. B. S. as M.P.

ASKED on Tuesday evening at the Queen's Hall meeting whether he would stand for Parliament, Mr. Bernard Shaw is reported to have replied: "That depends on the support you give me." That should be enough to encourage twenty thousand Britishers to know the reason why Mr. Shaw has not long ago been in Parliament, and why, now, he should not be in after the next election. We do not quite understand the nature of the support Mr. Shaw referred to. But whether it was moral or financial—intellectual support he scarcely needs—we think we might promise him on behalf of readers of THE NEW AGE plenty of both. It only remains now for some constituency with enterprise and intelligence enough to invite Mr. Shaw to stand. Where is the constituency?

We are not disposed to argue the point whether Mr. Shaw would make a good Parliamentarian. Anybody who has heard him in debate, done any business with him, sat with him on committees, or watched with amazement the circulation of his works among a nation of people who mostly misunderstand or hate them, anybody, we say, who has understood in any degree the personality of Mr. Shaw knows certainly that Mr. Shaw was made for Parliament as surely as Parliament has not yet been made for him. As a journalist, let us admit, Mr. Shaw has been, in spite of his success, a gorgeous failure. No Fleet Street professional would compare him qua journalist with Mr. Stead, "T. P." or the rest of the crowned heads of the Press. Mr. Shaw has been wilful, personal, brilliant, truthful, and witty—everything, in short, that a journalist may not be. He has always said what he thought, and never what the paper he was writing for thought. He would deny personality to a paper altogether, deny it as vehemently as he denies personality to the State or any other abstraction. But that is not the journalist's point of view. The journalist is a devotee at the shrine of his paper. His paper is his god. Nobody who refuses to do obeisance before the superpersonal editorial "we" is a journalist. Mr. Shaw is not a journalist.

But, also, Mr. Shaw is not a dramatist. Twenty years hence nobody will think of Mr. Shaw as a dramatist. True, he has written excellent dramas; but writing excellent dramas does not make a man a dramatist.

No, despite his eminence, both in journalism and in drama, Mr. Shaw's genius lies in neither of these directions. Where his genius does reveal itself in all its plenitude is in precisely the directions for which the House of Commons affords the amplest scope in Europe. We mean in debate. Mr. Shaw is a past-master in the science and art of debate.

This is obvious enough even in his journalism; it is still more obvious in his dramas. But for those who, like ourselves, have listened to him at the Fabian Society's meetings or at question time after his public lectures it is most unmistakably clear in his oratory. Nothing pleases Mr. Shaw so much as to disentangle a knotty question; nothing gives his bent such welcome altitudes to climb as a thoroughly difficult case to defend. At defence he is marvellous, and especially if the attack be vigorous and sustained. Consider, for example, his journalistic writings; is there one in which he has not brilliantly defended or attacked somebody or something? Magnificent polemics, the whole of them. Or his dramas: what is their one unflinching characteristic? The persistency with which he shelves the scene in favour of the discussion. Everything in his dramas is discussion; his dramas are as much polemics as his letters to the "Times."

But Mr. Shaw is even better in spoken than in written discussion. Writing, after all, is a second-rate art in countries, at least, where speaking and conversation are arts at all: in France and Ireland, for example. Mr. Shaw would have shone in ancient Athens or in modern France as a publicist of the dimensions of Socrates. Doubtless on Mars' Hill the figure of G. B. S. would have been quite familiar. . . . It is this that plainly points to Parliament as his natural sphere, the House of Commons being at present the only place in

the British Empire where discussion is taken seriously and carried on with the necessary glare of publicity. The daily reports of Mr. Shaw's speeches in the House, of his sayings and questions, his interpellations and comments, his cross-examinations and his orations would afford the Empire a daily delight comparable only to the delight that must have been felt by the young Athenian lions when they followed Plato's master from the barber's shop to the gymnasium and from the gymnasium to the house where Callicles displayed, listening and laughing in each place as the bright intellects of the day crossed swords with Socrates and one by one fell merrily or angrily, as the case may be, victims to that incomparable fence.

So, we might conceive, would the not overbright intellects of the House of Commons fall victims to the unrivalled skill of the greatest of living debaters. Irish by birth, Irish by endowment of mind, Irish still in wit, in readiness, and crystal fluidity of mind, Mr. Shaw's unique genius, as we have said, would find its happiest pastures in Parliament to-day. That, in short, is where we would see him, if only for the pleasure of the spectacle. That also is where he would be if all men had their rights. That, finally, is where Mr. Shaw must be if the Empire is, to make the greatest use of her chiefest intellectual asset.

But it must be added that Mr. Shaw's entry into Parliament could not be regarded as involving nothing more than a promise of brilliant debate. Everybody knows that Mr. Shaw is a Socialist, but few know what his profession as Socialist has involved: the long and conscientious self-training in the science of economics, the careful mastery of the meaning, practical and theoretical, of modern society and its problems, the examination and testing of all the solutions for those problems that sociologists of all schools have propounded. Nobody has taken his Socialism more seriously than Mr. Shaw. Nobody realises more clearly how much study, reflection, and experience are necessary to the profession of Socialism.

And all these acquired qualities which give Mr. Shaw's Socialism its supereminence among Socialists would hardly find expression in Parliamentary debates without considerable influence, not only on the Liberal and Conservative Parties, but also, and still more, on the Labour Party. We almost tremble for the fate of the Labour Party if Mr. Shaw enters Parliament. The Liberals would blaspheme and the Conservatives clap their hands in amazement; but the Labour Party would cry aloud to be delivered from its most powerful friend. Except its programme, everything in the Labour Party is at this moment inimical to Mr. Shaw; its personnel, its methods, its atmosphere, its lack of vivid courage, its definite fear of becoming extreme. Mr. Shaw would disconcert its members by alternating speeches at which they would collectively be horrified with speeches in which they individually might glory. Yes, the Labour Party would find Mr. Shaw an enigma—an enigma, however, which we thoroughly believe would prove in the solution their salvation from the dreary fate that apparently awaits them.

What of the Liberal and Conservative Parties? Is there the slightest doubt that there are members in both who would agree more nearly with Mr. Shaw than with any of their own leaders? What intelligent Liberal or Conservative member (and there are such) would hesitate for a moment to choose on occasion Mr. Shaw before Mr. Asquith or before Mr. Balfour? Infinitely more experienced in the real sense than either, Mr. Shaw is also more practical, more constructive, more courageous than both of them put together.

If ever there was a time when England was needing a new spirit in politics it is now. Social reform has been preached in words vehemently and passionately for fifty years. The question is: who will begin to put it into deeds? The return of Mr. Shaw to Parliament would not, we are willing to concede, involve in itself a revolution; but who can doubt that it would be a symbol that intelligence—yes, and constructive intelligence—was at last definitely entering with practical intentions the field of political life?

Lord Curzon's Legacy.

The Story of the Bengal Partition.

I AGREE in advance with the reader who says that this is a dreary subject. It is. Every Anglo-Indian journalist who has had to discuss it from day to day is mortally tired of the arguments and the conflicting statement of fact. No home-staying Briton can see why a tract of country, if it is inconveniently large for the authorities to manage, should not be divided; nor can he understand why two lieutenant-governors should be so much worse than one—though even one, he suspects, might be something of a trial. The question, however, is coming up in Parliament again next week, and I accede to the editorial request for a brief explanation of the points at issue.

I premise that there is not much use in anyone's going through this article unless he has a map at hand—a fairly clear one, showing the divisions of Northern India. Having got hold of such a map, the reader will perhaps be good enough to remark the province of Bengal, with its sub-provinces—Assam on the east, Behar and Chota Nagpur on the west, Orissa on the south. Assam was detached in 1874, leaving Bengal with an area of 189,000 square miles and a population, according to the 1901 census, of close upon 80 millions. This vast country was administered by a lieutenant-governor, always chosen from the senior ranks of the Indian Civil Service, assisted by a legislative council. The official complaint had long been that Bengal was too great a charge for one lieutenant-governor. Lord Dalhousie, in 1853, described it as "a burden more than mortal man can fitly bear." That was before the establishment of modern communications, but the accuracy of the statement fifty years later need not be impugned. Between Lord Dalhousie's day and Lord Curzon's several projects for dividing the province had been prepared in the Secretariat. These were inspired simply by administrative convenience; it remained for Lord Curzon and his advisers to discover the political possibilities of partition.

On December 3, 1903, the Government of India addressed to the Bengal Government a letter in which they laid it down that the time had come for relieving the lieutenant-governor, and they proposed, among certain minor changes, that the Chittagong division and the districts of Dacca and Mymensingh should be separated from Bengal and added on to Assam. The outcry, however, was so furious that the Government admitted defeat, and in February, 1904, Lord Curzon visited the threatened districts for the purpose of persuading the people to accept a more comprehensive scheme, involving the union of Assam with the eastern half of Bengal.

This was a much subtler device than the other. It meant a splitting up, under two separate and self-contained administrations, of the Bengali Hindus, the creation of a new province in which the Mahomedan population would predominate, and the balancing, in Bengal proper, of the intelligent and educated Hindu community by large numbers of aboriginal and otherwise backward tribes. The province thus carved out—known as Eastern Bengal and Assam—is 106,540 square miles in extent, and has a population of 31 millions—of whom 18 millions are Mahomedans and 12 millions Hindus. Bengal proper has an area of 141,580 square miles, and a population of 54 millions—42 million Hindus and nine million Mahomedans. The Government claimed that all reasonable objections were met by the revised scheme. They declined to consider alterna-

tive suggestions, of which the most practicable were (a) the making of Behar and Chota Nagpur (with perhaps Orissa) into a separate lieutenant-governorship; (b) the raising of Bengal and Assam to the status of a presidency governorship, under a governor appointed from England and an executive council, on the model of Bombay and Madras, and with civilian commissioners at the head of the sub-provinces.

The case of the anti-partitionists was briefly this: That the line of division between the two provinces was arbitrary, and could only be explained on a political hypothesis; that it took little or no account of ethnic, linguistic, or geographical conditions, but drove straight through the community which was at once the strongest and the most homogeneous, creating a social and economic gulf between the two halves of the Bengali-speaking people; that it joined advanced and long-settled districts with others of a more primitive character; that it duplicated a form of administration which was already too costly and was becoming obsolete; that it imperilled the power of the Calcutta High Court, which to Indian and European alike is the only effective bulwark against an all-powerful Executive; that it was calculated to revive between Hindu and Mahomedan a religious antagonism which was rapidly disappearing under present-day influences.

In Simla they know little of public movements, and are far removed from the currents of popular opinion. Consequently the Government persisted in treating the extraordinary and sustained agitation as nothing more than the interested clamour of landlord and lawyer, skilfully distributed from Calcutta. Mr. Morley, when he came to look into it, declined to accept this view, declaring that, in his opinion, the partition "was, and remains, undoubtedly an administrative operation which went wholly and decisively against the wishes of most of the people concerned." He might have added that it was carried through when Parliament was not sitting, when Lord Curzon was on the eve of leaving India, and in despite of Mr. Brodrick's promise to furnish the House with further information before the Bill became law.

It is possible to hold that the evils alleged to be involved in the change are largely illusory, that what has been styled the "so-called partition" could never be more than a sentimental grievance. Perhaps so; but a step of this kind must be judged by its actual results. Those who stood nearer to the popular movement than the Simla officials believed that the measure was thoroughly bad policy, and that the circumstances of its inception and consummation could never be explained away. They saw that, besides alienating whole classes which had hitherto been outside the range of political excitement, it would greatly strengthen the merely destructive agitators, who made no secret of their wish to keep the sore open. This forecast has been only too fully justified. The political leaders in other parts of India made common cause with Bengal. Throughout the country the partition was cited as a crowning proof of the Government's indifference to Indian opinion. In Eastern Bengal, where, as elsewhere in India, the English civil officers had carried on the administration in constant and friendly association with the leaders of the people, the local Government was systematically boycotted. The Swadeshi-boycott movement, started as a protest against partition, became a battle-ground of the officials and the educated classes. The antagonism of Hindu and Mahomedan revived—some would say was deliberately provoked. Every form of anti-British feeling was intensified, and, reinforced by the Bengali sense of wrong, the Nationalist agitation has spread from province to province.

Lord Curzon's supporters are in the habit of saying that the recent political agitation is the strongest possible proof of the rightness of his view that it was necessary to strike at the roots of Babudom. The answer is that everything that has happened during the past three years goes to show how completely, considered as an attack on Babudom, the partition of Bengal has failed.

S. K. RATCLIFFE.

In Brief.

THERE were 13,000 political and agrarian prisoners in the prisons of Russia in February last.

Sir Sydney Olivier, K.C.M.G. (Governor of Jamaica), is returning to England on a short visit. During his stay he will lecture to the Fabian Society on "The Faith I Hold."

The St. Pancras Borough Council is providing a number of child-bearing women, who are unable to procure sufficient nourishment, with one meal a day.

Dr. Hall Edwards, of Birmingham, the pioneer of X-Rays, who lost one of his hands as a consequence of the use of the rays, has received a Civil List pension of £120.

The 14th March was the 25th anniversary of the death of Karl Marx; Karl Kautsky has written a booklet for the occasion; it deals with the historic achievement of the theories of Marx.

A central governmental institution for all the British Administrations in West Africa is about to be established at Lagos, for researches in, and the prevention of, tropical disease.

At the Sweated Industries Exhibition at Bristol, Dr. Cook, Chairman of the Education Committee, suggested that some of the evils of sweating might be prevented by committees being established in centres of sweated industries, consisting of workers, employers, and members of the Town Councils as representing the public.

In view of the difficulty experienced by trade unions, friendly societies, and other similar bodies in finding accommodation for meetings except in public houses, the Local Government Board have issued circulars to local authorities suggesting that they should allow the use of their buildings—such as town halls or offices—for the purpose of such meetings.

Mrs. Pankhurst says that Mr. John Burns's proposal to exclude married women from factories is a tyranny unequalled in this country. It was not proposed to alter the law so as to give a married woman a claim to a definite proportion of her husband's income, but to deprive her of the right to decide when it was necessary to go out to earn something for the home.

The gradual depopulation of Ireland through emigration is revealed in the Annual Report on Irish Emigration just issued as a Parliamentary Paper. During 1907 the number of persons who emigrated from Ireland was 39,082, showing an increase of 3,738 on the previous year. The emigrants comprised 21,124 males and 17,958 females. As many as 83.9 per cent. of the emigrants were between the ages of 15 and 35. Since 1851, the number of people who have emigrated from Ireland is, 4,103,015, or only 274,041 less than the present population of the island.

The incorporation of the six towns of the Potteries under the one denomination of Stoke-on-Trent makes possible the reversion of a beautiful tract of England from private to its rightful ownership. Trentham Park, which borders on the Potteries, was offered by the Duke of Sutherland to the public for ever, if the six towns agreed to federate.

The proposed Law of Association in Germany provides that no one shall address public meetings in a foreign language except in districts where over 60 per cent. speak another language than German. There is a further clause making it illegal for youths of under 18 to belong to political organisations. This last is aimed at the popular organisations of Young Socialists.

The idea of producing a race of beings by crossing apes with negroes sounds like a quotation from the scientific romances of H. G. Wells; but that is not the case. An eminent Dutch biologist has not only conceived this idea, but according to "Le Matin," he has got necessary financial support, and is about to leave for the Congo, where experiments in the creation of this new social unit will take place.

The Port of London Bill is an interesting example of the community (alias the State) coming to the aid of private enterprise (alias the Dock Companies). These last, by allowing Antwerp and Hamburg to capture London's shipping, have prevented capital coming into the country, which is the same thing as driving capital out of the country.

The infantile mortality of England is 132 per 1,000, of France 137, Belgium, 155, Italy 172, and Germany 204. Referring to these figures, Mr. John Burns said that we need not despair, but "that a country which took the lead in general sanitation should show even better figures than these." For "should" the right hon gentleman ought to have said "must."

Mr. Percy Alden, M.P., writing in the "Daily Chronicle" on "Child Criminals," gives the following details of the enlightened method of treating juvenile offenders in Hungary. "The inmates are termed 'pensionnaires,' or boarders. They are established in homes containing about twenty or thirty, each home with its foster-parent. The edu-

catational and industrial work is suited to the children, and so far as the boys at any rate are concerned, an attempt is made to teach every boy a trade (which he himself is allowed to choose) before he leaves the institution."

The dispute over the memorial to the Bard of Avon may lead to the establishment of a National Theatre—for this we shall have to thank Shakespeare and not Socialism. One of the most fruitful suggestions made in the "Daily Chronicle," which paper has taken up the idea of reconsidering the whole scheme with commendable vigour, is that a 5s. subscription should be organised for Great Britain and the Colonies—1,200,000 of these subscriptions would produce the £300,000 calculated, in Messrs. William Archer's and Granville Barker's book, as the probable cost of a National Theatre.

There are 34 local authorities in England and five in Wales which have adopted the Provision of Meals Act. Among the leading local education authorities who have been authorised by the Education Board to spend money from the rates upon the purchase of food for school children are Bath, Birmingham, Bradford, Brighton, Crewe, Durham, Halifax, Hartlepool, Hastings, Huddersfield, Manchester, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Norwich, Nottingham, Sheffield, Swindon, and York. In the Metropolitan area are Tottenham and Walthamstow, and adjoining it is Erith. Among the Welsh local authorities are those of Cardiff, Newport, and Swansea.

A deputation representing the principal match manufacturers of Great Britain and Ireland waited on the Home Secretary last week, and asked for legislation to prohibit entirely the use of white or yellow phosphorus in the manufacture of matches. It was pointed out as a curious anomaly that while countries like Norway and Sweden prevented the sale of white phosphorus matches in their own territories, they allowed the export of such matches to other countries, including England. Of course, a corollary of the prohibition of the manufacture of white phosphorus matches in Great Britain would be the prohibition of the importation of any such matches from other countries, not as a matter of Protection, but simply as a matter of health.

The importance of forestry has only been recognised by agriculturists in recent years, and sociologists will be interested to know that there will be sections devoted to this branch of production at the Royal Agricultural Society's Show at Newcastle-on-Tyne in July next. It has been decided to offer for competition special medals in silver and bronze in upwards of a dozen different sections, including classes for specimen boards of various sorts of timber, specimens showing the damage done by insect pests, the comparative quality of timber grown on different soils, and the respective ages at which it reaches marketable size, the beneficial effects of pruning when well done, and the injurious effects when badly done. There will also be classes for different descriptions of gates for farm or estate use.

Mr. James Buckland has drafted a Bill which will shortly be brought before Parliament providing for restriction of the importation of the skins of birds, so as in some measure to prevent the rapid extermination of such beautiful creatures as the egret and the bird of paradise. The Selborne, Linnaean, Royal, Zoological, and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, are unanimously in favour of legislation in this direction. The Selborne Society considers the actual retail sale of birds' feathers should be dealt with.

Mr. John Burns announced to a deputation from the Public Health Committees of Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, and Sheffield, that the Government hoped to produce a sane, practical, and operative Bill, to deal with the eradication of tuberculosis in the milk supply. It was stated by the deputation that "it had been found that 10 per cent. of the churns sent into the five towns represented contained the living infection of tuberculosis."

The older and insanitary parts of Paris are to be translated. The Prefect of the Seine has laid before the Municipal Council a magnificent scheme for the improvement of the city. Over £24,000,000 is to be spent in abolishing slums and replacing the decayed areas with hygienic dwellings, public parks, boulevards, and gardens. Nearly two-thirds of the work will be occupied in the demolition of property round about the Central Markets, the Carnavalet Museum, Pere la Chaise, and the Quartier Latin. The report shows that the scheme can be carried out without any new tax, by extending to 1945 the sinking fund payments, which will soon extinguish the municipal debts of 1865 and 1869.

It is not generally understood that women have full and equal suffrage with men in many parts of the world. As far back as 1869 the suffrage was granted to the women of Wyoming (U.S.A.). It is also held by them in the states of Utah, Idaho, and Colorado. Women were enfranchised in New Zealand in 1893, South Australia, 1894, Western Australia, 1900; and in 1902, full suffrage was granted to the women of Australia for the Federal Parliament. In Europe the suffrage was granted to women in Finland, 1906; and in Norway, 1907. Whilst even in the British Isles the women of the Isle of Man have enjoyed this privilege since 1881.

In Praise of Zola.

By M. Anatole France.

A Discourse delivered at the funeral of Emile Zola, Oct. 5, 1902, on the occasion of the transfer by the vote of the Senate of Zola's remains to the French Pantheon. Specially translated for THE NEW AGE with the permission of M. France.

RENDERING to Emile Zola, in the name of his friends, the honours which are due to him, I shall preserve silence on my grief and theirs. It is not with mourning and lamentation that it is fitting to celebrate those who leave a great memory; it is by manly praises and by the faithful presentation of their work and of their life.

The literary work of Zola is immense. You have just heard the President of the Society of Men of Letters define its character with admirable exactitude. Permit me in turn to consider it for a moment before you.

Gentlemen, when one saw it raised, this immense work, stone by stone, one measured the greatness of it with astonishment. One admired, one marvelled, one praised, one blamed. Praise and blame were expressed with equal vehemence. There were made sometimes against the powerful writer (I know it from myself) sincere, yet nevertheless unjust, reproaches. Invective and apology were intermingled. And all the time the work continued to grow.

To-day, when one discovers in all its fulness the colossal form of it, one realises also the spirit with which it is fulfilled. It is a spirit of goodwill. Zola was a man of goodwill. He had the greatness and the simplicity of great souls. He was profoundly moral. He has painted vice with a rude but virtuous hand. His apparent pessimism, that sombre humour brooding over more than one of his pages, ill conceals his real optimism, his immovable faith in the progress of intelligence and justice. In his romances, which are social studies, he pursued with a robust hatred an idle frivolous society, a base and mischievous aristocracy; he combated the evil of our day, the power of money. A democrat, he never flattered the people; he endeavoured to show them the slavery of ignorance, the dangers of alcohol, which delivers them besotted and defenceless over to oppression, misery, and shame. He fought the social evil everywhere he met it. Such were his hatreds. In his later books he showed quite completely his burning love of humanity. He endeavoured to divine and forecast a better society . . .

This sincere realist was also an ardent idealist. His work is comparable in grandeur only to that of Tolstoy. They are two vast ideal cities, rising to the playing of the lyre, at the two extremities of European thought. But the city of Tolstoy is the city of resignation. The city of Zola is the city of work.

Zola, while still young, had established his fame. Peaceful and famous, he was enjoying the fruit of his labour when at a bound he tore himself hastily away from his repose, from the work he loved, and from the pleasant comforts of his life. It is necessary to utter over a tomb only grave and serene words, and to manifest only the signs of calm and harmony. But you know, Gentlemen, that there is no peace but in justice, no rest but in truth. I do not speak of philosophic truth, object of our eternal disputes, but of that moral truth which we can all seize, because it is relative, sensible, conformable to our nature, and so near us that a child can touch it with its hand. I will not betray the justice which commands me to praise what is praiseworthy. I will not hide the truth in a cowardly silence. And why should one be silent? Are they silent, they, his calumniators? I will only say what must be said over this grave, and I will say all that need be said.

Before recalling the struggle undertaken by Zola for justice and truth, is it possible for me to say nothing of those men madly intent on the ruin of an innocent man, and who, feeling themselves lost if he was saved, overwhelmed him with the desperate courage of fear? How dismiss them from your sight now when I must show you Zola standing erect, weak and unarmed, before them? Shall I say nothing of their lies? That would be to conceal his heroic uprightness. Can I

be silent about their crimes? That would be to be silent about his virtue. Can I conceal the outrages and calumnies with which they pursued him? That would be to pass over in silence his reward and his honours. Can I say nothing of their shame? That would be to say nothing of his glory. No! I will speak.

With the deliberate calm which the spectacle of death gives, I will recall the dark days in which selfishness and fear were seated in the Government Council. The iniquity began to be known, but it was felt to be sustained and defended by such forces, public and private, that the very stoutest hearts hesitated. Those whose duty it was to speak kept silence. The better sort, who feared not for themselves, feared to involve their party in terrific dangers. Misled by monstrous lies, excited by detestable speeches, the populace, believing itself betrayed, grew furious. The leaders of opinion too often embraced the error which they despaired of destroying. The darkness spread. A sinister silence reigned. It was then that Zola wrote to the President of the Republic that calculated and terrible letter which denounced the forgery and the forfeiture.

With what fury he was at once assailed by the criminals, by their interested defenders, by their involuntary accomplices, by the party composed of all the reactionaries, by the deluded mob, you know, and you have seen innocent souls join with pious simplicity the hideous procession of the hired traducers. You have heard the yells of rage and the cries of death with which Zola was pursued, even in the Palace of Justice, during that long trial held in culpable ignorance of the cause, with false witnesses, to the clanking of swords.

I see here a few of those who, standing by his side, shared his dangers. Let them tell us if ever more outrages were cast upon a just man! Let them bear witness how unflinchingly he endured them! Let them say if his robust goodwill, his manly sense of pity, his gentleness, gave way a single moment, or if his constancy was broken.

In those sinister days more than one good patriot despaired of the safety of his country and the moral life of France. The Republican defenders of the existing régime were not alone in their despair. There was heard one of the most resolute enemies of that régime, an irreconcilable Socialist, exclaim bitterly: "If this society is so corrupt, its ruins cannot even serve as a foundation for a new society." Justice, honour, intelligence, everything, seemed lost.

Everything was saved. Zola had not merely revealed a judicial error, he had disclosed the conspiracy of all the forces of violence and oppression united to slay in France social justice, Republicanism, and free thought. His bold word had awakened France.

The effects of this act are incalculable. They are unrolling themselves before us to-day with majestic power and plenitude; they are spreading everywhere; they have produced a movement towards social equity which will never be arrested. There issues a new order of things based on a higher justice and on a profounder recognition of the rights of all.

Gentlemen, there is only one country in the world in which these great things could have been accomplished. How admirable is the genius of our nation! How beautiful is this soul of France, which in past ages taught the meaning of Right to Europe and to the world! France is the land of gracious reason and of benevolent thought, the land of just judges, and of humane philosophers, the land of Turgot, of Montesquieu, of Voltaire, and of Malesherbes. Zola has deserved well of his country in that he did not despair of justice in France.

Let us not pity him that he endured and suffered. Let us, rather, envy him. Raised upon the most prodigious pile of calumnies which folly, ignorance, and wickedness has ever erected, his glory attains an unsurpassable height.

Let us envy him: he has honoured his country and the whole world by a gigantic work and a great act. Let us envy him: his fate and his spirit created for him the grandest destiny. *Il fut un moment de la conscience humaine.*

A Challenge to Mr. Mallock.

It would be hard to imagine two more diverse personalities than those of Mr. Mallock and Mr. Arnold Forster, and no one would have dreamt of mentioning the two men in the same breath until they recently appeared as brothers-in-arms under the flag of anti-Socialism.*

Mr. Mallock is, of course, by far the abler thinker and the cleverer dialectician of the two, and he has written a book which cannot be dismissed with the contempt which most anti-Socialist literature deserves. He has not condescended to skirmishing tactics, he has attempted a frontal assault on the whole Socialist position.

The case for Socialism, he points out, was originally based upon the theory that all wealth is produced by labour, and that therefore to the labourer all wealth is due; and although the more intellectual of modern Socialists have now abandoned this extreme dogma, yet they still hold that the labourer is defrauded of a considerable portion of the wealth which he produces.

Even this more moderate view is, according to Mr. Mallock, untenable. In modern production, he argues, there are two factors, labour and directive ability.

"Thus a great ocean liner could not be produced without the labour of several thousand labourers; and it is equally true that it could not be produced at all unless the masters of various sciences, designers, inventors, and organisers, directed the labour of the labourers in certain specific ways."

Both factors are essential, and therefore it might seem impossible to estimate how much of the result is due to each. But the solution may be arrived at by considering what the one would produce without the other. Unless labour had been directed by the abler members of society, its productivity must always have remained stationary, and therefore all the difference between the amount of wealth produced per head to-day and the amount produced per head in primitive times is clearly due to ability. On the other hand, it cannot be claimed in any similar sense that labour has a right to all that wealth which exceeds what would be produced by the action of directive ability alone if no labour existed for such ability to direct.

"The reason why labour, in this respect, differs from ability is as follows: Whether directive ability shall or shall not exert itself depends upon human volitions which are alterable. . . . But whether ordinary manual labour shall or shall not exert itself is not similarly dependent on human volition at all. Let a nation be organised, no matter on what principles, the majority of citizens will have to labour."

Consequently, the hypothesis of labour without directive ability is the only conceivable alternative to the present state of affairs, and may be accepted as the true test of how much of the wealth we produce is due to ability. Applying this test, we find that labour, inasmuch as it is better off than it was even a hundred years ago, has already obtained more than its fair share.

One flaw in this argument of Mr. Mallock's I must point out here, because it is typical of the sort of subtle gloss with which his book abounds. He conceals the distinction between the force which compels the majority of citizens to work and the force which compels them to submit themselves to the control of directive ability. It is certainly inconceivable that workers should cease to work, but it is by no means inconceivable that they should refuse to submit themselves to the control of anyone. And in that case, what would directive ability as such produce? Nothing. Hence, following Mr. Mallock's method, no part of the nation's wealth can justly be claimed by ability.

This, however, is only by the way. Having shown to his own satisfaction that ability has a just claim to an even greater share of the national wealth than it now

obtains, Mr. Mallock proceeds to anticipate the objection that the present possessors of wealth are to a large extent merely the descendants of able men, and have themselves produced nothing. This objection, he says, is based on the abstract principle that no one has a right to enjoy that which he has not himself produced. But if the heirs of an inventor have no right to enjoy the wealth which their ancestor produced, who has?

"For if this interest is not produced by the heir, it is certainly not produced by any of the heir's contemporaries."

Hence no one has a right to benefit by the efforts of past generations at all. Which is the *reductio ad absurdum* of the principle that production alone gives a valid right to possession.

Again, the argument depends upon a gloss, a deliberate misunderstanding of the nature of property. Property, as Mr. Mallock is fully aware, consists not in the mere enjoyment of a given article, but in the right to the *sole* enjoyment of that article. In so far as Socialists base their objection to inheritance upon any abstract principle of justice, they base it upon the principle that production alone gives a valid right to possession in the sense of monopoly. When the producer dies all rights to the sole enjoyment of his wealth die also, and the fruits of his labour should become the common possession of the whole community.

But, to be fair to Mr. Mallock, he does not confine himself to abstract considerations any more than do Socialists. One of his chief contentions is the purely practical one that if you wish for efficiency and progress you must allow the abler members of society to control the distribution of wage-capital.

"The machinery of the modern world owes its existence to the fact that men of exceptional talent, by possessing the control of goods [*i.e.*, the means of life] which other men require, are able in return for the goods to make these other men exert themselves in a variety of elaborately co-ordinated ways."

Under the present system, Mr. Mallock asserts, the able persons obtain control by the automatic process of competition, but under any system of even approximately equal rewards there would be no way of discovering these persons or, if you could discover them, of making them exert their distinctive powers. It is utterly unsafe to rely upon a universal altruism. Society must offer them "an exceptional share of the wealth to the production of which their efforts have exceptionally contributed." In short, they must be allowed to make their own terms.

Throughout the argument Mr. Mallock relies on the extraordinarily unjustifiable assumption that directive ability always coincides with ownership of capital. True, he admits the possibility of this not invariably being so, but he only admits it as a rare and unimportant exception, and continues his argument as if our present automatic selective system were practically perfect. He has indeed a favourite trick of disarming criticism by admitting weak points like this, and then cleverly inducing his reader to forget their existence.

The most important fact, however, which he has overlooked, intentionally or otherwise, is that most of the directive ability upon which "the distinguishing productivity of industry in the modern world depends" obtains its reward in the form of salaries. Occasionally the owner of capital possesses exceptional ability, but in general he employs a staff of engineers, managers, organisers, and inventors to do the work for him; and no one who has any personal acquaintance with the internal arrangements of modern industry would say that these people exert their abilities any the less because their reward is limited. Of course, there is a certain competition amongst them for higher salaries, but all modern Socialists, from Sidney Webb the Fabian to Karl Kautsky the Marxist, admit that this sort of competition will necessarily continue under Socialism—until we reach Utopia.

Again, in urging the necessity for the control of wage capital remaining in the hands of the able class, Mr. Mallock takes no account whatever of the enormous

* "A Critical Examination of Socialism." By W. H. Mallock. (John Murray.)

"English Socialism of To-day." By H. O. Arnold Forster. (Smith Elder and Co.)

portion of this capital which under present conditions is directed towards wasteful production or is consumed in entirely unproductive labour. What, I wonder, has he to say about the money which is devoted by "directive ability" to the advertisement of pills and soaps and competing railways and to the maintenance of our ever increasing army of travellers, advertisement touts, gamekeepers, jockeys, footmen, and idle gentlemen? Also, one would like to know how he would defend the private monopoly of Rent, a subject upon which he does not touch, and to which none of his arguments apply.

But the fundamental weakness of Mr. Mallock's whole case still remains to be mentioned. He has attempted to discuss the question of what share may justly be claimed as due to each of the two main factors in the production of value without enunciating any theory of value. He has discarded the labour-time doctrine of Marx, and is therefore presumably bound to fall back on the Jevonian or some other theory based upon utility. But utility itself is largely dependent upon the evolution of society. Thus the invention of the linotype machine would not only have been impossible, but practically valueless, but for the previous development of the art of printing and of a highly organised political community. This social origin of value was recognised by Mr. Balfour when he said in the House of Commons last summer: "In a civilised community nothing is of value to the owner except through the exertions of the society in which he lives or of the predecessors of that society." Few economists might care to commit themselves to such an extreme statement as this, but it is certainly true to say that every fresh development of society and every new elaboration of life alters the values of things already in existence. In other words, no theory of value can be complete unless it takes account of the social factor in the creation of wealth; yet to introduce the social factor would be to destroy the basis of Mr. Mallock's book. I challenge Mr. Mallock to lay down a reasonable theory of value, and then to defend the present mode of distributing wealth.

When all this has been said, however, it is due to Mr. Mallock to add that he has made a most able contribution to the general controversy. His criticisms are in many cases both just and useful, and he deserves to be answered more fully than is possible in this article. There is no reason to deny that Socialism has suffered in the past, and still suffers, from a lack of either fair or intelligent opposition, and we shall owe Mr. Mallock thanks if his book should influence future anti-Socialists towards saner and more logical methods of controversy.

Unfortunately, Mr. Arnold Forster's treatise is of the other sort. It is a piece of cheap and nasty journalism, and from cover to cover is full of glaringly deliberate misrepresentations. The reader is asked to believe that the main points in the Socialist programme are the destruction of the Empire, the abolition of the Monarchy, the repudiation of the National Debt, and an all-round uniform wage of £78 per annum. A quotation or two will complete the picture:—

"Nowhere throughout the whole of Socialist literature is it suggested that these changes can be effected without the use of force." "Socialism means that the whole of the expenses of the country should be paid by taxes to be levied on incomes which have ceased to exist." "This country would be invaded and occupied within six months, and that though a Socialist orator were stationed at every landing-place round the coast and orated his full eight hours a day at the public expense." "Others (*i.e.*, of Socialist leaders) there are who are well aware that the promises which they make to their dupes will never be made good, but are content with the reflection that, whatever happens, the anarchy and the breaking up of laws which are so congenial to their minds will inevitably result."

Comment is needless; but the mere fact that Mr. Forster could hope to rehabilitate his reputation in the eyes of his party by work of this sort is a most unpleasant reminder of the quality of much English politics to-day.

CLIFFORD SHARP.

The Two Gawds.

Ye lords, ye noble knights and squires,
Who own our beauteous English shires,
Who work yer little rig so well
That you 'ave collar'd every ell
Of English ground—
List w'ile a 'umble bard aspires
To muse profound.

Alarse! it is this poet's loss
To be unblest by worldly dross,
An' all 'is land is one backyard
Belov'd by cats; 'e dwelleth 'ard
By that lone spot
At Kennington yclept the Cross—
An' cross 'is lot.

It mykes 'im dazy in the 'ead,
W'en lyin' weary in 'is bed,
An' wond'rin' 'ow 'e'll live nex' dy,
To think some folks need never sigh
For Nature's wealth:
'Ow would they lyke bad air instead,
An' wretched 'ealth?

Wot 'ave they done to be so blest
That they can shut out all the rest?
Wot 'ave we done that we must work
At beggar's wage, w'ile they can shirk,
From care beguiled?
Creashun seems a rotten jest—
It mykes me wild!

If Providence ordain'd them fat
An' me the lean, I'll answer that!
If that is true, then Gawd's a cheat!
'Ave they the right to drink an' eat
At my expense?
Wot's Providence a-playin' at?
Ain't 'E no sense?

I'd be a better Gawd meself!
I'd chuck no man upon the shelf
Who 'ad an ounce o' manly grit,
Or 'alf an' ounce o' manly wit
To earn 'is keep,
An' save a modest store o' pelf
Ere 'is larst sleep.

That Gawd, 'E ain't no Gawd at all!
I wouldn't 'ear the babies call
Fer grub, or see their muvvers pine,
Then style meself a Power Divine!
Fer if 'E bids
No sooty London sparrer fall—
Wot price the kids?

The Gawd o' Dooks, an' Squires, an' Knights
Won't never put this wurd to rights;
We want, an' want 'Im more an' more,
The Gawd o' the deservin' pore:
'Ath 'E got lost
Among the giddy, starry 'eights,
W'en wanted most?

Well, w'en 'E's found, just tell 'Im this:
To 'urry from celestial bliss,
An' give the wives an' kiddies fust
Clean air, good grub, as 'E is just;
An' myke each one
Rosy an' 'appy, sweet to kiss,
An' full o' fun.

The golden streets, beyond the grave,
We do not very greatly crave;
We'd rather in a 'Eaven abide
Jest lyke our English countryside—
So drat the 'arp
An' all that gag; but, O! to save—
Dear Gawd, look sharp!

KENNINGTON CROSS.

A Politician.

By W. R. Titterton.

HE burst buoyantly into the room and shut the door with a bang; turned on the light; walked to the mirror.

His face looked white and strained, but his eyes danced.

He was drunk.

Automatically he bowed and smiled to an invisible crowd that roared and clapped around him. His mouth opened to dumb sound, his arms moved like those of a clockwork figure. Success fizzed and sparkled in his veins, danced in his eyes, itched at his finger tips. He breathed great free breaths. He could have jumped over the table.

And yet he felt weak—deliciously—he yawned.

Doubt seized the moment of suspension, and struck cold to his heart.

He was elected. As what?

Labels he cared little for. But what had he promised? What had he foresworn? . . . The bubbles died down in the champagne. What had he said? . . . He could not remember. He could only hear (like snatches of just-caught voices in a wind) odd, meaningless scraps of bombast, mouthed theatrically, flying on the breath of applause.

But he remembered that horrible thin hiss that had cut clean through the clapping at the end of his speech. The hissing had been overwhelming; the thought of it had lain since then coiled like a snake in his brain. . . .

All candidates got hissed,—they had been supporters of the other man, he told himself, and knew it was a lie. He knew whence that sharp cut had come. He had seen that little knot of familiar faces. And turned his eyes from it. And shut his thoughts to it till the hiss had struck him. But it couldn't possibly have been Some other people like them. When he had last heard, one of them had been miles and miles away. And the others—wouldn't come—he was sure. But they had been very like. It was fancy, probably. Of course it was.

What did they think of him? Who had hissed? He was in another world now. A practical, busy world, where men did things, where one was not content to spend whole weeks, months, years discussing a fantastical idea. But what would they say? The grave-philosopher, the impetuous idealist, the paradoxical humorist, the clear analyser! What did they think of him? Who had hissed? He could not bear to think it had been Rot! what did it matter?

He took hold of himself vigorously, and shook the incident aside.

On the table was a bundle of telegrams, letters, and cards. He opened a telegram. Congratulations from . . . ! "Goodness, we *are* mounting!" . . . From a minister—from another—another—from the President of the League—from great personage after great personage! He began to glow in the warmth of public approval. And names not great merely. Names that stood for courageous thought, clear vision, wise humaneness. The world was with him. He was right. "Yes!" He raised his head. His face took on a rapt ecstatic expression. He was right.

And then he turned up an envelope superscribed in a writing he knew. Unstamped. Delivered by hand. With a gulp he tore it open, and took out a card. There was one word on it.

One word!

He stared at the word with wide, ghastly eyes,—blushing hotly,—turning deadly cold. Sick. That was what he was.

From him too!

It hurt horribly. Hurt like a tooth being stopped. Yes! Just that. Something to be gone through with. Something inevitable. The word pricked relentlessly into the nerve. (That's what he was.) It hurt horribly. But it couldn't be helped.

Yet, curiously, all the while, at the back of his consciousness, he felt himself listening to the intoxicating plaudits of the hustings crowd.

It made no sort of difference. It couldn't be helped. He couldn't go back. He didn't want to. ("Hurrah! hurrah!") No, he didn't want to. But this shut him off from his past. Henceforth he was alone. He pitied himself. It was hard. To be so misunderstood. Well, he would show them he had been right. He would get that Bill through. All sorts of Bills (vague processions of indefinite perfect reforms swept across the perspective). Then they would see how they had wronged him. He would work. Work like the very

—
A knock at the door. A servant entered and announced a visitor.

"Show him up, Evans."

Like the very devil he tore the card into a thousand pieces, and dropped the pieces in the fire; the fire caught them eagerly; they were gone in an instant. But the word was black upon the glowing coals.

"My dear Sir, allow me to offer you my sincerest congratulations! It was glorious, glorious. Never such a triumph for free opinions in the town. We are proud of you, Sir, proud of you!"

"I am going to resign."

"Resign?"

"Yes."

The words were out before he knew he was going to say them. It was this fussy little fool had done it. He could almost have laughed at the effect he had produced. The little man stared at him like a shocked fish.

"Resign!" *What* do you mean? Nonsense! Resign? You couldn't. It's absolute madness. I don't understand. What are your reasons? Just after the election. It would be absurd—terrible. Why are you going to resign?"

He could not think of a lie. He jammed his lips together and looked iron.

"Of course you won't. You're simply overwrought. Quite natural. I'm sure we all feel—Amount of work—Got through—Simply marvellous. But, my dear sir! my dear sir! Resign? We couldn't hear of it. We really can't do without you. Quite impossible. There are at least three things that only you can possibly introduce. I've got a draft suggestion here. Perhaps you would like to run over it to-morrow. When you're fresher. But now you must sleep. Twelve hours. Not a minute less. Good night, my dear sir, good night!" He was gone.

"The little idiot!"

He looked at the foolscap sheet with a vacant eye. Broadly across it, in letters of flame, ran that word.

But could he resign?

How should he explain it? Wouldn't it do more harm than good? It was quite true. He could really be of use there. Much more than outside. One must compromise. That was life. No, he could not Could he? But!

He rang the bell, and stirred the fire into a blaze as he waited.

"Some whisky, Evans!"

"Yes, sir, with Apollinaris, sir?"

"What you like—yes—Apollinaris."

"Yes, sir."

When Evans came with his tray a voice from behind the thick window-curtains told him to put the whisky on the little table beside the arm-chair by the fire.

The night was black. Distant shouting and song spoke of victorious electors still in jubilation. Now and then a thin serpent of fire crawled up in the dark. He stepped from the window and drew the curtains together with a sigh.

Then he filled and lit his pipe, and settled himself in the big arm-chair by the fire to the draft suggestion.

Extract from Birthday Honours List: "The Right Hon. ——— to be ———."

Books and Persons.

(AN OCCASIONAL CAUSERIE.)

An important book on an important town is to be issued by Messrs. Methuen. The town is London, and the author Mr. Wilfred Whitten, known to journalism as John o' London. Considering that he comes from Newcastle-on-Tyne (or thereabouts), his pseudonym seems to stretch a point. However, Mr. Whitten is now acknowledged as one of the foremost experts in London topography. He is not an archæologist, he is a humanist—in a good dry sense; not the University sense, nor the silly sense. The word human is a dangerous word; I am rather inclined to handle it with antiseptic precautions. When a critic who has risen high enough to be allowed to sign his reviews in a daily paper calls a new book "a great human novel," you may be absolutely sure that the said novel consists chiefly of ridiculous twaddle. Mr. Whitten is not a humanist in that sense. He has no sentimentality, and a very great deal of both wit and humour.

* * *

He is also a critic admirably sane. Not long ago he gave a highly diverting exhibition of sanity in a short, shattering pronouncement upon the works of Mr Arthur Christopher Benson and the school which has acquired celebrity by holding the mirror up to its own nature. The wonder was that Mr. Benson did not, following his precedent, write to the papers to say that Mr. Whitten was no gentleman. In the days before the "Academy" blended the characteristic of a comic paper with a journal of dogmatic theology, before it took to disowning its own reviewers, Mr. Whitten was the solid foundation of that paper's staff. He furnished the substance, which was embroidered by the dark grace of the personality of Mr. Lewis Hind, whose new volume of divagations is, by the way, just out.

* * *

But my main object in referring to Mr. Whitten is to state formally, and with a due sense of responsibility, that he is one of the very finest prose writers now writing in English. His name is on the title-pages of several books, but no book of his will yet bear out my statement. The proof of it lies in weekly papers. No living Englishman can do "the grand manner"—combining majestic dignity with a genuine lyrical inspiration—better than Mr. Whitten. These are proud words of mine, but I am not going to disguise my conviction that I know what I am talking about. Some day some publisher will wake up out of the coma in which publishers exist, and publish in volume form—probably with coloured pictures as jam for children—Mr. Whitten's descriptions of English towns. Then I shall be justified. I might have waited till that august moment. But I want to be beforehand with Mr. Robertson Nicoll. I see that Mr. Robertson Nicoll has just added to his list of patents by inventing Leonard Merrick, whom I used to admire in print long before Mr. Nicoll had ever heard that Mr. J. M. Barrie regarded Leonard Merrick as the foremost English novelist. Mr. Nicoll has already got Mr. Whitten on to the reviewing staff of the "Bookman." But I am determined that he shall not invent Mr. Whitten's prose style. I am the inventor of that.

* * *

Speaking of prose, a few words of sharp censure should be administered to the writer who composed the full-page advertisement of the Piccadilly Hotel that appeared in the principal daily papers last week. A writer with a proper appreciation of the terrific interests entrusted to him would not have fallen into the sad infelicities which disfigured a noble advertisement. There

was even a mistake of grammar! What shall be thought of an advertisement stylist who cannot be more original than: "The result achieved may be described as dignity combined with simplicity"? Especially when he says, in another paragraph: "The foyer and hall combine both simplicity and dignity"! That "both" is enormous. Discussing the grill-room, he says: "Due prominence has been given to the grill, from which the room derives its name." And what of this: "Cranham partitions between all apartments render every sound inaudible in those adjoining"? This sentence combines both complexity and nonsense. The man's crowning clumsiness runs thus: Carpets and furniture have been chosen with scrupulous care and taste, *modern requirements being at the same time consistently kept in view.* The shareholders of the Piccadilly Hotel ought to enquire into this grave matter; for surely the standard of advertisement writing has risen of late years! Surely the great artists who sing the destinies of Eno's Fruit Salt and the "Historians' History of the World" have not lived in vain! The "Daily Telegraph's" leader on the morning after Peckham was markedly superior to the style of its advertisement columns. I fancy the Piccadilly Hotel specialist must be a descriptive reporter on the "Daily Mail." Only he could have written, in "doing" the Drury Lane fire: "The balconies and windows of the Waldorf Hotel were soon filled with *wealthy* guests and with hotel servants."

JACOB TONSON.

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

The Romance of Egypt.*

LORD CROMER has spent a long life in the service of his country in India and Egypt. In these volumes he invites us to examine his record of his trust. His story of the administration of Egypt during the past thirty odd years has produced a book that will live; he has been the fashioner of his own monument.

These two volumes are too bulky to be analysed in detail here. They are mines of information; in fact, they are Lord Cromer's history of Egypt. The first question to be asked, in considering the intricate problems discussed by Lord Cromer, is: what has been the motive of England in going to Egypt? The Government of England had no motive. Financial England desired the security of its loans, and excessive interest, to be certain. Political England believed that the existing disorder in Egypt should be remedied by some form of European administration and control. Military and naval England regarded Egypt as a key to India, and warned the Ministers that if that key fell into non-British hands, it would unlock one of the gates to India. Imperialist England gloried that the oldest civilisation in the world should be subject to the youngest Empire. The vibrating of these numerous springs produced a Jack-in-the-box effect on Mr. Gladstone's Government, which, after dodging here, there, and everywhere, eventually jumped into Egypt.

Lord Cromer was appointed British Agent and Consul-General in Egypt on September 11, 1883, and left Egypt on May 6, 1907. What has Lord Cromer held in view throughout the whole of this period as being the destiny for which he would shape Egypt? There were three possible policies. Incorporation into the British Empire; autonomy; neutralisation. Lord Cromer rejected the last policy as an impossible one. The Italians have favoured it, as witness the powerful appeal to England written by an Italian statesman in a

* "Modern Egypt." By the Earl of Cromer. (Macmillan and Co. 2 vols.: 1, 194 pp. 24s. net.)

Neptune



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work entitled "The Emancipation of Egypt." The first policy—annexation—is dismissed by Lord Cromer with these words: "Egypt must eventually either become autonomous or it must be incorporated into the British Empire. Personally, I am decidedly in favour of moving in the direction of the former of these alternatives. As a mere academic question, I never have been, neither am I now, in favour of the British occupation of Egypt." So we are bound to discuss Lord Cromer's policy in Egypt as a policy which has aimed at the autonomy of Egypt—"Egypt for the Egyptians!" In the early days of the Egyptian Question, Sir Auckland Colvin wrote a Memorandum on the National movement, in which he laid down the principles on which this movement should be dealt with by English statesmen: "I do not think it is my duty at all to oppose myself to the popular movement, but to try rather to guide and give it definite shape." Lord Cromer has lent the weight of his testimony in support of the theory that there was a National Party in 1882 struggling for recognition. "One main point should surely have been borne in mind before the Joint Note was delivered. It was that a National Party existed in Egypt . . . nothing can be more certain than at that time there existed in Egypt a National Party." After that admission, it is astonishing to read, in the closing passages, after a considerable display of sympathy with the National Party: "It may be that at some future period the Egyptians may be rendered capable of governing themselves . . . but that period is far distant. One or more generations must, in my opinion, pass away before the question can be even usefully discussed." Sir Auckland Colvin's "guiding" recommendation was very vague, but it was more hopeful than Lord Cromer's opinion, arrived at after "guiding" the National Party for nearly a quarter of a century. We are faced with the unpleasant necessity of inquiring whether the professions of those gentlemen are quite genuine. There is a remarkable piece of evidence as to Sir Auckland Colvin's candour in sending his sympathetic memorandum to the Home Government. This is the comment of Mr. Hulme Beaman, a subordinate of Sir A. Colvin's, on the latter's attitude towards Arabi, who represented the Nationalist movement: "So far as our line was directed at all from Egypt, it was dictated by Sir A. Colvin, the masterful representative of England in the dual control. Sir Auckland had long since irrevocably made up his mind that armed intervention was necessary, and left no stone unturned to bring it about . . . Sir Auckland's campaign was carried on always with one and the same inflexible purpose, to crush Arabi" ("Twenty Years in the Near East," p. 44). Sir Auckland Colvin, in modern times, receded considerably from the pious aspirations already cited: "The part which can be most usefully taken by the more enlightened sons of Egypt at present, and for years to come, is to endeavour to assimilate new ideas, to reconcile if possible the conditions which regulate their social life with the new order which has arisen amongst them" ("The Making of Modern Egypt," p. 414). This string of platitudes was written in 1907, twenty-five years after the Memorandum on the National Party!

A contemporary politician of weight, Mr. Edward Dicey, has felt the same difficulty in reconciling the statements of Lord Cromer with his practices: "I find it difficult to comprehend how autonomy is compatible with absolute personal autocracy. I learn from Lord Cromer's two last reports that the aim of his policy is to prepare Egypt for autonomy . . . My intelligence is too limited to enable me to understand how the absolute autocracy of the ruler can be the way to prepare the ruled for autonomy" ("The Egypt of the Future," p. 207). We must deduce from these strange inconsistencies that Lord Cromer has carefully weighed his words in his expressions relating to the Egyptian National Party. He was the representative of a democracy and a Liberal. Superior to both his democracy and his Liberalism were his bureaucrat leanings and training. He was an efficient administrator; therefore, he was a bureaucrat, and he rapidly lost his Liberalism.

A Liberal must be a democrat; he can never be an insane Imperialist. Lord Cromer was converted to insane Imperialism, and his hatred of Egyptian democracy grew as the years rolled on. Still, as he represented a democracy, he had to pretend he liked democracy and National Parties. Lord Cromer pretended so well that we may really believe that he is a democrat. But the National Party knew he was their bitterest enemy, and that the executions at Denshawai were his parting revenge. Neither Moustapha Kamel Pasha, who was followed to his grave by a concourse of 50,000 mourners, nor the Denshawai incident is mentioned by Lord Cromer. The Lambert-Dunlop scandal, the quail shooting case at Ghizeh, the murder of Ismail Sadyk Pasha, the Montaza and fox shooting incidents are passed over lightly or without reference. The Moukálaba law is dealt with very inadequately. The Gordon tragedy is too complicated a question to consider at the end of an article. Lord Cromer states that he does not know Arabic, though he was snob enough to correct the defects of his education by learning Greek verse, so that he might equal Lord Milner, who acquired the dead languages at Oxford. After twenty-five years' government, Lord Cromer had not condescended to learn the language of the people whom he was governing. No wonder he hated Egyptian democracy; it dared to speak in a tongue which he could not learn. Sir Thomas Munro knew his business when he said a century ago: "Nothing is more essential than a thorough intimate knowledge of the common people, and that is only to be acquired by an early and free intercourse with them. We can never be qualified to govern men against whom we are prejudiced." Lord Cromer never heeded this counsel, and he left Egypt unregretted and unmourned by the fellaheen.

"STANHOPE OF CHESTER."

REVIEWS.

The Duchess of Padua. By Oscar Wilde. (Methuen and Co. 12s. 6d. net.)

Except to the complete collector of Oscar Wilde's work, the sumptuous volume under consideration offers few points of interest.

It is a specimen of Wilde's earliest work, being written in the early eighties, and belongs to his most imitative period. All that he wrote at this time, whether in verse or in prose, reminds one of the characteristic remark concerning Mrs. Cheveley in "The Ideal Husband." It "shows the influence of too many schools." The intrinsic merits of "The Duchess of Padua" are not remarkable. Presenting as it does a stirring dramatic tale in the framework of the Jacobean drama, we feel that the outcome should have been a vital and interesting piece of work. How is it, then, that the play possesses so little grip?

No doubt it is a dangerous thing for a writer to experiment with dramatic styles of a bygone age, but there are writers, such as Mr. Swinburne, who have so imbued themselves with the spirit of the Jacobean age as to impart a vigour and vitality to their experiments. Oscar Wilde had the true artist's affection for

A Wrinkle about Clothes.

Always have them washed with **Hudson's Soap**, and then you can be sure they are as well washed as they possibly can be, and it is a washing that doesn't wear them. All the wear is left for yourself.

the rich pageantry of words, but he cared too little for the concrete humanity which underlay the splendid rhetoric of Shakespeare and his immediate successors.

Mr. Robert Sherard, in his "Life of Wilde," has told us that Oscar Wilde was "agreeably taken with the sound of the words:

'Am I not Duchess here in Padua?'

from his play, and he often quoted them."

Had he paid more attention to the psychology of his personages and less attention to the sound of the lines, it would have been better for the play. As it is, the play at its best is like a clever imitation of that multi-coloured, flat-surfaced world which painters in an age which knew nothing of perspective brought into pictures. Certainly it is not Jacobean.

One has only to turn to Webster and Massinger, let alone Shakespeare, to realise how superficial a thing is this experiment in verse-drama. Oscar Wilde might have made of this stirring tale of love and vengeance—one of those violent and essentially southern tragedies which appealed so strongly to Wilde's sense of the theatre—a really dramatic drama. All that he has given us is a wordy play which never pierces beyond externals and is even at crucial moments theatrical rather than dramatic.

It is fortunate that never again did he return to this form of drama. His next experiment, some ten years later, "Lady Windermere's Fan," was a revelation of the true genius of the man. By the student, however, who is interested in the development of Wilde's powers as a writer, the present work should not be neglected. Its very faults are characteristic of the man: its audacious borrowing of Shakespearean phrases—its clever imitation of the Jacobean mannerisms—its predilection for violent colouring. He was ever a borrower, ever an imitator, though this was not due, as some have alleged, to poverty of thought and invention, but to sheer indolence. He collected fine phrases, melodious words, as some men collect rare butterflies, others curious antiques. And we who can remember the extraordinary power of his "Dorian Gray"; the fine wisdom of his "Intentions"; the fresh and delightful wit of "The Importance of Being Earnest"; the intellectual clarity of his "Soul of Man under Socialism"; realise fully how well he could have dispensed with these imitative affectations.

But they are part and parcel of the man's temperament, and as such must be recognised. Here, as in his first work, they abound, only unfortunately there are few of his merits to counterbalance them. But now and again there are touches of pleasant poetry, and happy fancies, which lift the play into a higher sphere of wit. Here, for instance (Act II), where the Duchess says to her lover Guido:—

"You are my lord,
And what I have is yours, and what I have not
Your fancy lends me, like a prodigal
Spending its wealth, on what is nothing worth."

Or here, where Guido, steeling himself against his passion, declares he will take his kisses back:—

Duchess. Alas, you cannot, Guido,
For they are part of Nature now; the air
Is tremulous with their music, and outside
The little birds sing sweeter for those vows

Imitative, no doubt, but in this and various other passages—more particularly at the tragic close of the play—there is quite an agreeable Jacobean flavour about many of the lines. It is a pity that so often a speech is spoilt by the intrusion of some commonplace line or palpably borrowed conceit. It is only fair to add that in some of the more flagrant cases the lines have been bracketed by the author, and although, as Mr. Robert Ross, the editor, remarks in a short prefatory note, "there is no evidence to show" whether the passages "were omitted for stage representation or were intended to be omitted by the author altogether," one may reasonably infer that the latter was the more probable.

It is a pity that Oscar Wilde did not treat this Italian story as Browning treated his Florentine

tragedy in "The Ring and the Book," or as Rossetti treated his Lombardian tale, "A Last Confession." In these cases each poet expressed the drama in the form best suited to his own peculiar genius. Rossetti, perhaps, owed something to Browning's vivid, graphic manner of telling a story; but "A Last Confession" is full of distinctive Rossetti touches. But the wilfulness, the capriciousness which marked the development of Wilde's literary career lead him in many futile experiments. And such works as "The Duchess of Padua" afford further material for those who are always scoffing at this erratic genius for his insincerity and superficiality. At his best, we do not think he was

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either insincere or superficial. He was a superb humorist as well as an artist; and there are always people who mistake a truth wittily expressed for a superficiality. Truth for them must always wear a surplice and stole—or it is a masquerader. Even in "De Profundis" the humorist peeps out at times, and this it is which has disturbed many readers and made them doubt the writer's sincerity. To us the sincerity seems indubitable. Moreover, no man who was merely the clever poser, as Wilde has ever seemed to the average dramatic critic, would have written "The Soul of Man under Socialism."

Oscar Wilde's best work, however, needs no defence in the pages of THE NEW AGE. It is a pity the "Duchess of Padua" gives so slender a promise of what he could achieve.

The Socialist Movement in England. By Brougham Villiers. (T. Fisher Unwin. 340 pp. 10s. 6d. net.)

We expected something better from Mr. "Brougham Villiers," who is a clever man, than this detached review of the English Socialist movement, its causes, and its aims. To the uninformed proletarian and the middle class man this book will give a fair summary of the development of Socialism in England. We suppose that is the object of pricing the book at 10s. 6d. net, so that it may be read by the million. To any ordinary student of English politics there is nothing new in this history; it is very interesting reading, as the style is an attractive one; but real information is the last thing one should look for in the pages of this volume. Still, the author has many shrewd remarks which Socialists might do well to remember, such as: "There is an international aspiration in Socialism; there cannot be an international method." The S.D.F. should ponder long over that sentence, and then mend some of their ways.

Mr. "Brougham Villiers," like all present-day respectable writers, does not do justice to the work the Social Democratic Party have carried on with tireless activity under the most disheartening conditions in preaching the Socialist creed in England. The Fabian Society and the S.D.F. laid in the middle and working classes the foundation of the present Labour Party. The I.L.P., a later creation of Messrs. Keir Hardie, Champion, Maltman Barrie, Hudson, Ramsay Macdonald, and several others, have benefited by the seed which was sown. The I.L.P. entered into English politics at a favourable moment, when the discredit and prejudice attaching to Socialism had been removed by the efforts of the S.D.F. and the Fabians. Mr. Keir Hardie and Mr. Ramsay Macdonald availed themselves of their opportunities, and, pointing to Mr. Hyndman and Mr. Shaw as "middle class" folk, they claimed that the I.L.P. was the true working class party, led and organised by working men. The L.R.C. was founded, and we all know the result of the combination between the I.L.P. and the Trade Unions. The leaders of the Liberal Party at the opening of the present Parliament were alarmed at the advent of this third party in politics. Within two years that fear has disappeared, and the Labour Party has become a refractory tail to a most tiresome dog. Well, Mr. Hudson has wasted his money, and a good many other people their time and energy. True, we have an entity called the Labour Party, which is something; but a multiplication of entities is not of much use so long as the whole, which they were intended to replace, remains just the same.

Mr. "Brougham Villiers" has the inevitable chapter on "The Emancipation of Women." We have never understood what this phrase means, and Mr. Villiers throws no light on our darkness. He tells us: "No woman who is about to become a mother or who is rearing a young child should have, for the time, any other compulsory duties whatever. . . Child-bearing is far too vital a social function to be undertaken in any light manner." Really! what nonsense all this feminist cant is with which we are flooded to-day. The world has existed a good many thousand years, with a

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steadily increasing population, without women having to be wrapped up in cotton-wool. Savage races, among whom it is common for the women to do heavy work in the fields and the home while the men hunt or laze, have always had a sufficiency of healthy children. One wonders whether this new "feminism" may not be a modern form of the "sheltered flower" argument which has been utilised with such ingenuity by men in past centuries to keep women under their glass cases or in their boudoirs. Women shall be, as M. Brioux pointed out in "Maternité," the sole judges of the number, if any, of their children; certainly, not men.

In the chapter on "Socialism and Freedom" we read: "And here we come face to face with the apparent paradox that the civilised man, governed by a code of laws, complex and detailed to the last degree, has far more freedom than the savage, unruléd hunter of the forests." The only reasons given for this astounding proposition, by which the most serious argument against Socialism is sought to be dismissed, are that a man "can travel to the ends of the earth; and can communicate in a few hours with his friends in the Antipodes . . . and the pirate and the brigand are suppressed"! Democracy would never have progressed far in its efforts to regain the freedom of pre-civilised days if it had acted on Mr. "Brougham Villiers's" ideas of freedom.

Apropos the Licensing Bill, Mr. Villiers's solution of the public-house problem is more drastic and more sensible than Mr. Asquith's: "The State should gradually take, by taxation, all, or nearly all, the monopoly value of the licenses granted, and use the money thus obtained, not as an additional revenue, but as a substitute for the present taxes on intoxicants" (p. 280). In the Bibliography we note the omission of Mr. Sidney Webb's "London Programme," Mr. Richardson's "How It Can be Done," and the finest book on spiritual Socialism in the English language, Oscar Wilde's "Soul of Man under Socialism." Miss Beatrice Potter is referred to as "Porter." Ruskin's "Munera Pulveris," Mr. Shaw's "Unpleasant Plays," and Mr. Ramsay Macdonald's valuable "Women in the Printing Trades" are excluded.

The Stage Censor. By C. M. G. (Sampson Low, Marston and Co., Ltd. Price, 1s. 6d. net.)

This book supplies a handy guide to the history of the contradictions and imbecilities (there is no politer word) involved in the office of Censor. The Censorship in its present form dates from Walpole's Administration in the eighteenth century, but in one form or another the power, closely correlated with the acceptance of fees, has existed for three or four hundred years. From the time of Walpole to the present the ban of the Censor has always been a method of securing an enormous circulation of the censored play in book form, and regarded from the advertising standpoint, the Censor's fee must be looked on as a very good investment. The fact that so few dramatists have availed themselves of this opportunity is a tremendous involuntary testimonial to their ultra-respectability. The book is written easily and fluently, and is worth reading, not only for the facts it summarises, but for the frequent anecdote, illustration, and quotation with which it is enlivened. Some of the idiocies of the Censor are almost unbelievable; all of them demonstrate the wonderful British talent for adapting non-sensical institutions to preposterous uses. In days to come, the latest adaptation of the Censorship, as puri-

tanism in excelsis, to shelter and encourage libidinous illiteracy and repress well-thought-out criticisms of life, will no doubt be one of the treasures of psychological museums. In the meanwhile, good argument for the abolition of the office can be culled from these pages, the pith of the matter being summarised in that part of Lord Chesterfield's speech against the Censorship which is here quoted.

DRAMA.

A Shakespeare Memorial National Theatre.

PROGRESS in England has a habit very often of coming in by a side wind. When Messrs. William Archer and Granville Barker published their straightforward business-like proposals for the establishment of a National Theatre, the lump of opinion was against them. Now that the question of putting up a statue to Shakespeare in Portland Place is on the tapis, the most important opinion has elected for a scheme similar to theirs in desperation.

Anyone acquainted with London statues will have no difficulty in realising the revulsion of horror which must seize any admirer of Shakespeare when it is proposed to put up a disfigured block of stone in his honour. Or is it suggested that we should have another Nelson column, with a figure so high up as to be happily out of sight? In any case, London is not a place for statues which are inevitably ugly and stupid, and Portland Place could by no chance serve suitably as the niche for anything but a statue of a gentleman's gentleman.

If we had a really great sculptor, and if we had a really noble square, used and frequented by many people as a matter of habit, there might be a case for a statue. But if we have a great sculptor we have yet to discover him, and we certainly have no place to display his work, while in any case the foolishness of petrifying Shakespeare in a sooty stone figure (glimpsed hurriedly as one passes by) instead of embodying him in a National Theatre is almost beyond argument.

It is much to be hoped, therefore, that the "Portland Place Committee" will stay their hand and not proceed with their proposals, at any rate until after the opposition have a chance of recording theirs. A National Theatre would be of permanent benefit to every inhabitant and every visitor to London, it would enable Shakespeare to be properly acted and sufficiently acted. A statue will, of course (let us be just) be useful to the sculptor, to a few Americans, and to policemen who will use its niches (as they use the Trafalgar Square lions) for storing mackintoshes.

The difference between the two sets of opinion is probably that between men who have a real critical interest in Shakespeare as a living thing and men who worship him as a dull fetish. Shakespeare ought to contribute a very great deal to the national drama, we ought to see a good many of the plays that nowadays we never do see, and of those we do we ought to require a different presentment. Most frequently nowadays Shakespeare is used as a mere mask to hide an ostentation of scenery and a revelling in spectacular effect. To get him acted adequately and suitably it will be, as Archer and Barker show in their book, absolutely essential to have his plays presented on the repertory plan, only possible in a National Theatre.

The real point of the matter is, however, that while

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Shakespeare is not in the least in need of a national memorial, we are very much in need of a National Theatre. That a number of people have got together to persuade each other of the desirability and imperative nature of a memorial is one of the commonplaces of psychology. We have Mr. Sidney Lee and Mr. Furnivall, who write about Shakespeare; Mr. Beerbohm Tree who acts round about Shakespeare, and the rest who in their various ways are interested in the Shakespeare cult, all coming together and reducing themselves to the common denominator of a fatuous statue. But this reductio ad statue is the index of a considerable force of opinion in the community in favour of doing something to accentuate the fact that Shakespeare is dead 300 years, and those of us who are neither obsessed by cults nor reduced to statue level may quite legitimately tap this opinion to the tune of as many thousand pounds as the National Theatre requires. The Shakespeare cult has manufactured a desire to do something which it is our business to provide with a reasonable objective.

After all, if a sculptor is available and a statue desirable, what better site for it than the drive in front of the National Theatre? And upon the pedestal might be carved a frieze of dancing commentators—each carrying a separate word—happy souls with faces wreathed in smiles. To place the statue in such a position would be a graceful tribute to the Shakespeare worshippers, who need never, of course, go inside the theatre—except perhaps to afternoon lectures.

It is to be hoped that those responsible for the National Theatre project will do their utmost to urge on a meeting at a very early date, and that all who are interested in getting a National Theatre will give their every possible support. There is a real chance of getting a National Theatre now, and in anything the Provisional Opposition Committee do they can certainly count on an enthusiastic backing.

A National Theatre in England means, of course, not only a Shakespeare theatre, but a theatre where every kind of good play, new or old, would have a chance of suitable presentation. Such a theatre would necessarily be a repertory theatre; we should be able to keep plays alive just so long as there was any life in them, instead of exhausting them by a "run." Part of the work of the theatre would be the training of a school of actors, part of the work would consist in a steadying of the whole insecure theatrical world. Much of the vicious speculation that is so demoralising now would be directly discouraged.

To carry on a theatre to produce the Vedrenne-Barker type of play is impossible now, except for a limited period. The National Theatre would produce this type as a matter of course as part of its work. It would make easier, therefore, the work of pioneer theatres by creating a taste for pioneer plays. Indeed, a National Theatre would be of such enormous benefit to the national drama as to almost justify us in becoming Shakespeare cultists, and quite justify us in being deferential to commentators; we might even for that purpose conceal our mere human delight in Shakespeare. But at any rate, a dead stone memorial being in sight, it is worth while spending a good deal of time and energy trying to turn it into a living house of plays.

L. HADEN GUEST.

MUSIC.

Claude Debussy.

The other day I recorded my first impressions of Claude Debussy's "La Mer," recently performed under his direction at the Queen's Hall. Before and since that I have been reading a little book* on his life and work by Mrs. Franz Liebich. This came out a day or two before the concert, but just too late to be reviewed before M. Debussy's appearance at the Queen's Hall. It is a delightful little book in every way. It has much serious and intelligent criticism, with what above all things is necessary in such a book: a sense of propor-

tion. This Mrs. Liebich has to perfection. Her admiration of Debussy is unbounded, but her enthusiasm does not permit her to say unholy, intemperate things. In regarding the work of Debussy and acclaiming him as the most original musical genius of our time she does not forget (as I do sometimes) that old Bach is still head and shoulders above all who have come after. But what about Beethoven and Wagner and Brahms? Oh, yes, we know; but they must always play second fiddle and second-second fiddle and third-second fiddle to John Sebastian. He was their master; without him we might still be somewhere about Schubert in our ideas of harmony, and have remained in a Mendelssohnian state of bathos and bath buns. But my knowledge of Debussy is confined to very few of his not-too-many works, and I have been unable yet to place him any where in my familiar categories. He stands absolutely and completely alone. His ancestry is dubious; but I mean this in a friendly way. You have only to read Mrs. Liebich's charming monograph to see how complete is his isolation. With great skill Mrs. Liebich has given an outline of Debussy's work and his methods. Her task was one of difficulty, and without labouring any point or timorously neglecting others she has made what is to my mind the most important and the best of recent publications in contemporary music, and certainly the most interesting of Mr. John Lane's series. Of course, like most men with original ideas, Claude Debussy has been howled at by jealous and effete contemporaries. His harmonic method is contrary to all practised law. He is his own law. He is a splendid, impenitent egotist; and he lets

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* "Claude-Achille Debussy." (John Lane. 2s. 6d. net.)

them all howl, while he is getting freer and freer, with greater power and greater skill, until presently, I suppose, the howling pedants and pedagogues will cease, and the conservative British public and critics (not the French; they've more wit) will mildly take their place as devout worshippers, as the case was when the Wagnerian Idea became at length fashionable. The following words of M. Debussy's, mildly philosophical, almost priggish, as they are, were taken I noticed, by several writers in our daily papers, as being terribly heretical and blasphemous: "I prefer to hear a few notes of an Egyptian shepherd's flute, for he is in accord with his scenery and hears harmonies unknown to your treatises. Musicians will only listen to music written by clever experts . . . It would benefit them more to watch a sunrise than to listen to a performance of the Pastoral Symphony . . . Methinks it spoils an artist to be greatly in sympathy with his surroundings; I am always afraid of his thus becoming merely the interpreter of his own milieu." The simplicity of this and the purity of motive behind it is charming, but merely because he translates this gentle homily into action that is not quite familiar and homely they consider him an Anarchist!

Mrs. Liebich raises a scientific point upon which I do not intend to make any comment, for it is quite beyond me. Referring to an essay by M. Marnold on the Nocturnes of Debussy, she points out this writer's analogy, "drawn from different scientific sources, between the evolutionised functions of the ear and those of the eye. He says that if musicians have at first utilised the simplest possible combinations of sound to arrive by a continual and gradual evolution to the most complicated, it is because they could not do otherwise; for the progress from simplicity to complexity is a general and constitutional law of our own nature, the effects of which are nowhere so tangible and irrefutable as in the relation of our senses to external phenomena." And, as an example of this, reference is made to "that immutable phenomenon of nature, the rainbow," which was at first thought to be all of one colour. "Homer distinguishes it as purple. Later Xenophon defined 'what is called Iris, a purple cloud, red and yellow-green.' Two centuries later Aristotle sees three colours, red, green, and blue, and he adds, 'Between the red and the green sometimes yellow is discovered.' After a lapse of three hundred years, Ovid recognises in the rainbow 'a thousand dazzling colours which the eye cannot distinguish separately.' Still Aristotle's tricolour division persists until the thirteenth century, but emended by the observation of an infinity of intermediary nuances of which artists have not succeeded in giving an exact reproduction. M. Marnold points out conclusively that this evolution of the colour-sense follows closely the order of colours in the solar spectrum, commencing with red, the colour engendered by the smallest number of ethereal vibrations. Parallel with this progressive perception of colours and hues is the corresponding increasing classifying of intervals into dissonances and consonances . . . At present our ears, sharpened by experience, are able to appreciate a more and more complex system of harmony and to discern the effects of more and more rapid vibrations. As there are rays of the spectrum as yet unseen, so we may conclude that coming generations will hear and combine overtones, the sonorous vibrations of which are as yet unheard by our contemporaries. From these remarks, Debussy's relative standpoint to the past and future of the art of music is clearly discernible. But if his chord combinations must be styled of ultra-modern construction, he is nevertheless equally beholden to antiquity for a great deal of his original tone colouring." (This in special reference to his adoption of antique scales and quasi-antique forms.)

Like all of the best French composers, M. Debussy is a critic, and Mrs. Liebich quotes his remarks on "Gil Blas" after listening to the "Ring" at Covent Garden in 1903. "It is difficult," he wrote, "for anyone who has not had the same experience to picture to themselves the condition of a man's mind, even the most normal, after attending the Tetralogy for four consecu-

tive evenings. A quadrille of leit-motifs dances in one's brain, in which Siegfried's theme and Wotan's lance are vis-à-vis, while the malediction motif cuts some weird figures. It is more than an obsession, it is a complete possession. One loses one's identity, and becomes transformed into a walking leit-motif moving in a tetralogical atmosphere. It seems as if for the future our habitual code of civility will not prevent us from hailing our friends with Valkyrie exclamations! Hoyo-toho! Hei aha! Hoyohei! How gay it all is! Hoyohei . . . ah! milord! how insufferable these people in helmets and wild beast skins become by the time the fourth evening comes round. Remember that at each and every appearance they are accompanied by their damned leit-motif. There are some who even sing it themselves. It is as if a harmless lunatic were to present you with his visiting card while he declaimed lyrically what was inscribed thereon." His description of Strauss is interesting. "He is tall, and has the ingenuous and decided manner of those great explorers who have made their way through the territories of savage tribes with a smile on their faces. For the purpose of rousing a civilised public it is as well to possess a little of this particular manner. All the same, his forehead is that of a musician, but his eyes and features are those of a 'superman'; this last expression is borrowed from his instructor in energy, Nietzsche." And of Grieg's music he says it gives him "the charming and bizarre sensation of eating a pink bonbon stuffed with snow." 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.

SOCIALISM AND THE MEDICAL PROFESSION. TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

Permit me to regret an attitude antipathetic to medical science that of late has marked your pages and advertisements. And let me remind you that when libelled science has found it necessary to challenge the evidence of your anti-vivisection friends before an impartial tribunal, the result has always been the same heavy damages for science.

I enclose a list of members of the new Research Defence Society, and heartily hope it shall not be said in time to come that THE NEW AGE was among those irrational forces that made such a Society necessary.

It is well to see twaddle such as you review in the journal to-day destroyed by the brilliant pen of Mr. M. D. Eder, though to pay such books as these the compliment of a column was a mistake; but anti-vivisection is another matter.

Medicine is the only "learned" profession that counts for much to-day, and I hope Socialists are not going to quarrel with it. This is no time to scorn science.

EDEN PHILLPOTTS.

CHILDREN'S BILL.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

Mr. Pomeroy objects to any interference with the right of the parent to exploit his own child, and he advances as the basis of his objection the very plausible argument that child-labour enables fathers to make up their wages to a living standard. Were Mr. Pomeroy a Socialist he would see that what he uses as an argument against the prevention of child-labour is the very strongest argument that can be used for such prevention.

Why, in the first place, does a father send his child into the street to sell newspapers and hawk milk, or into the pestilential atmosphere of a slum barber's shop to lather chins almost to the verge of Sunday morning what time its eyes are heavy with sleep? I can assure Mr. Pomeroy, as one who has had some experience of the life of poverty, that the child's parent does not consider child-labour either useful, desirable,

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or funny. Child-labour and married-woman labour are the result of the force of sheer economic necessity. Mr. Pomeroy admits that, of course, but he draws false conclusions from it. He seems to think that child-labour is desirable or at all events inevitable. He admits that the father must make up the difference between the amount he earns and the amount necessary to maintain a family in a decent and orderly fashion, but he seems to believe that this can only be done by the father exploiting his wife and children by throwing them into the labour market and sweating them in a fashion which would make the veriest Manchester politician cry out with sickly horror.

But if you prevent the father from exploiting his child, obviously, since the necessity for making up the difference already noted still exists, he must find some other way of doing it. And why not a Minimum Wage? He may, of course, try to exploit his wife still further, but we can assume that the Suffragettes in the course of a few years will not only prevent him from doing so, but will prevent him from exploiting his wife at all. ST. JOHN G. ERVINE.

* * *

ANTI-FEMINISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

I am quite prepared to grant that E. Belfort Bax and E. Wake Cook have a certain kind of courage, but it appears to me to be overshadowed by the prejudice which warps their understanding of woman. To judge by his writings, Bax has either dominated, or has been dominated, by certain women, and he generalises from his own particular experience.

Evidently he and his disciple, Mr. Cook, firmly believe that under Socialism men will continue to order and govern women's lives, and that women are only to develop on the lines ordained by men. "If we give women this"; "If we let women do that"; what arrogant impertinence it sounds to women who have not only planned their own lives, but have been bread-winners for the weaklings of their kin. It is all so early Victorian and so out of place in the Socialist movement.

Mr. Cook fears to confer political power upon women because they "do not claim equality with soldiers, sailors and policemen." Upon what authority does he make such a statement? If he claims that sex disqualifies, how can he account for Nicolau de la Haye of Lincoln Castle, Grace Darling, Phoebe Hissh, Florence Nightingale, and the women who took part in the Boer War? Some of the greatest military geniuses of olden times were women.

If Mr. Cook examines a little more scientifically he will find that every type of man has its prototype in woman. Brutal, vicious, courageous, timid, sentimental, passionate, gentle, intellectual, sensitive dispositions are inherited by boys and girls alike, and in spite of centuries of repression which compel the dependent woman to adopt the indirect expression of herself, the age of industrialism has given hundreds of thousands of women economic independence and the opportunity to check the abnormal development of the sex functions and encourage the growth of social functions.

Just as I gladly recognise that many men to-day are keenly working for women's freedom, for the good of the race, so one must sorrowfully admit that many women reflect the opinions of Mr. Wake Cook.

It is not a struggle of one sex against another, but a struggle between the advanced types of both sexes against the forces of reaction. MARGARET G. BONDFIELD.

* * *

THE ASIATIC IN SOUTH AFRICA.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

Your correspondent, "T. F. R.," of Pretoria, propounds what is assuredly a New Socialism. Indeed, were it not that in the course of his letter he twice uses the word "Capitalists" it would have been hardly capable of differentiation from the orthodox protestation of the petty white trader against Asiatic competition.

It is a fact that Indian coolies were first brought into South Africa by the Natal Government some forty years ago. It is equally true that this was done in the interests of the coast planters as also that, like all slavery and quasi-slavery, the principle as well as the incidence of the system of indenture, are thoroughly repugnant to accepted British ideals. The more thoughtful South Africans deplore the system, while the more thorough advocate its prompt termination. Quite obviously a colony, and consequently the Empire of which that colony forms part, must suffer in morale from the continuance of a system which includes the "importation" of human beings, their transfer from master to master, their retention during service as quasi-chattels with none of the civic rights indispensable to the status of free men, and their repatriation at the conclusion of their indentures as an alternative to re-indenture or the payment of a special prohibitive tax.

It is, however, quite safe to affirm that no anti-Asiatic agitation would have ever arisen in South Africa had the patient Indian been content to remain the white man's serf,

and had it not been for the immigration of some few hundreds of the Indian trading community.

The statement by your correspondent that "year by year the Asiatic population of this colony is increasing" is only partially true, and such increase as has lately occurred has been due to continued importation of indentured labour.

The danger of subversion of white supremacy in this colony may best be gathered from the facts that no Asiatic may acquire either the political or municipal franchise; may own fixed property; and is liable to segregation in separate compounds.

After their recent manly opposition to the Asiatic Registration Act, during which numbers of them—merchants, shopkeepers, and little hawkers—sacrificed, not only their liberty, but every material asset for the sake of their communal self-respect and the honour of their motherland, your correspondent's gratuitous assumption of inherent superiority of the Kaffir, not to say of the white community, is perhaps not altogether convincing. My friend, Mr. Harold Cox, is well able to speak for himself, but he will, I know, permit me to employ a pronouncement of his to which, I submit, closer attention might, with advantage, be paid, as well by people styling themselves Socialists as by professed Individualists:—

"The strength of our Empire ultimately depends not upon the supremacy of the English race, but upon the maintenance of English principles. However proud we may be of our English blood, we cannot study the history of our country without learning that the population of England has been recruited from many countries and that this readiness to receive and absorb other races has been one of the many causes of our national expansion. Aliens have come here; they have imbibed our traditions and learned our language, and have become English in soul without a drop of English blood in their veins; and then they and their sons have gone forth to build up the Empire."

With all of which I thoroughly agree.

L. W. RITCH.

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