

# THE NEW AGE

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART.

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## NOTES OF THE WEEK.

UNLESS something completely unexpected occurs, the resumption of Parliament on Tuesday will make little difference in the mere political situation. It is known that events are waiting upon the preparations of the Opposition to form a Government; for until the Opposition are ready, neither the Unionists will attempt to force a General Election nor will the Government too openly tempt them. But Mr. Bonar Law is far from being ready, and most of his party are in terror lest they should be called upon to repeal and not merely to amend the Insurance Act. To do the former they are both indisposed and too timid; and the latter appears to them an inclined plane sloping to the unknown. For amendments, to be of any value, must necessarily include the abolition of the compulsory element, and perhaps in many instances the abolition of the contributory element; and without these features where would the Act be? Under these circumstances it is not to be wondered at that Mr. Bonar Law should have assured his friends on both sides of the House some few weeks ago that his party are not yet prepared for office. The effect of this will be seen in the continued stagnation of politics, in the determined and joint efforts of both parties to maintain Sir Rufus Isaacs and Mr. Lloyd George in their present offices, and in the mechanical passage through Parliament of such Bills as must be passed before the House adjourns in July for five or six months.

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In preparation for contingencies, however—since accidents happen even under the best-regulated caucuses—the Liberal Publication Department has just published a compendious eulogy of the work of the present Government during its seven years of office. If it were our disposition to arbitrate instead of to

judge, we could easily do as the journalists do, or even as the publicists of the day do, namely, enumerate what in our judgment are the good features of this Government's legislation, what are its bad, and strike a balance between them. But the curate's amiable duty of picking out the good parts from the bad parts of the bishop's egg is not ours; and on a representative review of the work of the Government we are driven to declare that in the very respect in which it has both prided itself and been praised even by its political opponents—Social Reform—the present Government, at the same time that it has been the ablest, has been also the worst enemy the English democracy and proletariat have ever encountered and suffered defeat under. We do not think that this proposition needs any further evidence in its support than the issues of THE NEW AGE during the six years of our existence. But since the present seems to be a convenient moment for drawing a line, as the children say, and adding up, we may as well summarise briefly the changes undergone by the nation during the Liberal régime.

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Nobody can deny, in the first place, that the House of Commons in particular, and Parliament in general, have lost enormously in prestige. "The essence," said Professor Macdonell, writing some time ago on the Referendum, "the essence of the representative system is trust of the many in the worthiest available." And that trust and confidence of the public in the House of Commons as, with all its faults, fair in the long run, have hitherto been the strength of both the Government and the nation. But where is that confidence to-day? So far as we can learn from a perhaps more varied experience of all classes than any other journal, no class, save the class of the large profiteers alone, has any longer the smallest faith in the goodwill of the governing Commons. The ability of the Government, as we have suggested, nobody denies; but its intentions towards the great mass of the people are not merely suspect, but they are everywhere in private denounced as positively malicious. This, we believe, is a new and a sinister phenomenon in political life; and it has unfortunately only too many grounds for its support. Since the days of the Budget, of now embittered memory, it is hard to recall a single social measure that has not been, we will not say unpopular, but detested by the country at large. And the effect of forcing these measures upon us in the teeth of all the opposition we could offer has been at once to convince us of the immense power of Parliament, of its immense indifference to public opinion and of our absolute defencelessness against it. That state, again, we venture to say

is another new and sinister phenomenon: a people at once hating and under the compulsion of submitting to its government; and under that compulsion, moreover, with no immediate hope or prospect of relief. For not only is the Government itself felt to be an alien and almost an inimical oligarchy, but, for the first time in our history, the opposition is being realised by the public (largely under the influence of Mr. Belloc in person and of events) to be part and parcel of it. The great struggle that Macaulay foresaw for his descendants of the People against the combined Crown and Parliament, is now, it appears, about to begin. All the features of the greatest constitutional battle the world has ever seen can now be dimly made out. On the one side are the Crown and Parliament financed, supporting and supported by the greediest, the most ignorant, and the most able profiteers of history, with all power in their hands, economic, political and military. On the other side is that mass of thirty or so millions, the People, proletariat to a man, if they had the realism to admit it, dependent on the former for wages, for life, and with no power save that of their hands. And between the two are the forerunners of the bitterest and the most enduring wars—insolent contempt on the one side and hateful fear on the other. The picture is black, but not, we are afraid, too black for the facts. The last seven years of the Liberal régime have, at any rate, made it blacker.

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In the second place, what of the Social Question, as it used seven years ago to be called? How has that fared under the Liberal régime? According to the "Daily News," the Social Question, as a result of the work of Mr. Lloyd George and his friends, is in a fair way to being answered—has, in fact, been partially answered. The septennial period under review, says the "Daily News," "marks an epoch in social reform." "The work of the Government expresses not only industry but the statesmanship which builds deep and sure." Where or what is the evidence for this? Not only has the relative position of the employing and the wage-earning classes (our only classes now) been changed to the detriment of the latter, but their absolute differences are more strongly marked than since the days of feudalism. As industry has increased with the aid of inventions, transport, markets and foreign policy (which has been directed by profiteers exclusively), Rent, Interest and Profit have likewise increased out of all proportion to wages. The standard of luxury, in other words, of the propertied classes has been rising much faster than the standard of living of the propertiless classes. Can the "Daily News" deny it? Will Mr. Chiozza Money or Professor Bowley support them in denying it? As little can anybody truthfully deny that as well as suffering relative loss the proletariat (numbering, be it remembered, a good thirty millions of us) has also seen both its own status and that of the employing class hardened considerably during the last seven years. For the first time since Land Feudalism was broken down, a new feudalism has been inaugurated almost in set terms; a Commercial Feudalism under which wage-slaves are set apart from and below their employers with more indignity to their common humanity and less hope of vindicating it than ever the serfs of the barons were permitted to feel. If this is the solution of the Social Question—as perhaps in the opinion of the capitalist pimps of the "Daily News" it may be—there is no man living who would not prefer that the question should have been left unsolved until the Day of Judgment. Unanswered, unsolved, the answer and the solution might always have remained a hope, a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night; but the solution in the form of Commercial Feudalism is a foreclosing of the discussion of the rights of man, it is a crime against humanity. We repeat our indictment of the last seven years' work in social reform of the present Government. It has made the task of social revolution infinitely harder, the hope of our nation infinitely smaller, and life in our own

island infinitely more dreary, depressing and undesirable. While, therefore, with cloven flames about their heads the Liberal apostles are celebrating the Liberal record with hosannas to Mr. Lloyd George and his friends, we, looking solely to the class of the proletariat and observing the effects upon them of the Liberal Messiah, see in the latter only his cloven feet.

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It is not to be denied, however, that the oligarchy has had for its coadjutants and assistants not only its paid servants of the official Press, the bureaucracy and the other institutions it took over from the former aristocracy, but the technically unpaid and voluntary services of the leaders of the proletariat, whether proletariat, professional or simply amateur. Nothing, indeed, will be lacking when we come to look back on this period to complete the disgust with which we shall contemplate it; for the astonishing and humiliating circumstance will then be apparent that it was with all the signals against us, with the shriek of several warning whistles in our ears, with red flags waving in our faces, and, at the same time, with our own leaders eagerly driving us on, that we plunged as a people into the disastrous tunnel of Commercial Feudalism. Who will be to blame when posterity arrives at the day of reckoning? Not wholly the oligarchy, that is certain; for once more we say that it is with our eyes open that we are taking the plunge. It is, no doubt, a part of the plot that the friends of the oligarchy, avowed and unavowed, should pretend that the solution of the industrial question is this of servility and no other. But not only is it contrary to reason that this should be the only solution, but the fact is visible and almost tangible that better solutions exist, have been stated, have been published, have been demonstrated, have been circulated, have been examined, have been found—in theory—satisfying. Then why has not this solution been preferred to that, the better to the worse? We confess that we are staggered by the choice that has been and is being made. All the liars and ignorant but malicious dolts of whom the official parties are full would not have wrung from us a single word of despair; but that, with both the facts and two alternative solutions present before them, the one servile, reactionary, inhuman and wicked (yes, wicked), the other free, progressive, humane and spirited, the former should be chosen by the unpaid sincere friends of the proletariat, this, we say, is the most tragic spectacle that reasonable men can witness. To whom and to what are we referring? We are referring, first, to the facts now as completely demonstrated as they ever can be, that the wage-system is irremediable, that under the existing system of capitalism wages can never, never, never be raised above the subsistence level of the working classes, be the profits of industry a Golconda for every employer in the world, that nothing the State can do, nothing charity or religion can do, nothing education can do, nothing that prayer, fasting, propaganda, art, sacrifice can do, while the wage-system remains, can alter the economic fatality which decrees to the propertiless the bare provision for his existence and to his employer the whole surplus of the value of his labour above it. Next we have in mind that the solution, alternative to the servile solution, is now as clearly known as the facts upon which it is based; and much more clearly known than the still undeveloped servile solution itself! The apes and boobies chatter of the difficulties of establishing the system of National Guilds, under which no proletariat class would exist, as if the difficulties were great and insuperable in comparison with the difficulties to be met in establishing the Servile State. But precisely because the latter runs counter to nature, its difficulties are prodigious, though perhaps—as is usually the case with devilish things—more in practice than in theory. Consider, for instance, the incalculable amount of labour that has been, is being and will be spent upon the mere props and stage of the wage-system, upon the Arbitration Boards, the Poor Law, Prisons, the Wages Boards, the Insurance Act, Old Age Pensions.

Thousands of new officials have had to be appointed to keep these underpinnings in place; and tens of thousands of voluntary workers spend their days in assisting them. And more and more will be necessary as the inhuman edifice threatens to rot to pieces. It is inconceivable that a system, consonant with the genius of man, always appearing spontaneously where men are free, satisfying to men's hopes, and recommended by every canon of morality, society and economics, should require greater exertions to support when once it is re-established, or present greater difficulties in re-establishing if once it is clearly realised, than a system that everybody hates and all must be paid or deluded to defend. The wage-system, we say, is an unnatural system, it is hateful, it is inhuman. Moreover, it is unmitigable, irremediable. The only means of affecting it is to destroy it; its only amelioration is by abolition. What slavery was B.C. wage-slavery is A.D. A new era will not commence, A.D. will continue, until wage-slavery is abolished as its forerunner was abolished. And we know how to do it! Every reader of THE NEW AGE knows how to do it. A disgrace attaches to every professing master of economics who is not now fully aware that the abolition of the wage-system is not merely the only Social Reform that is not a lie, but that the means are clear and even more practically simple than the devices and inquiry necessary to bring in and maintain the Servile State. Lastly, and almost needless to state, we were referring to the persons controlling the Labour Party and Press and to the persons conducting Fabian Social Reform by private and public propaganda, to the "stalwarts" of the old S.D.P., and now the B.S.P., and to the professed independents such as the "Nation," the "Christian Commonwealth," and the "Clarion." What, we ask, are these people doing to continue muttering dead formulæ when the superstition has been exposed? Or are we mad and do we incur nothing but private loss and public hatred week by week in defence of a chimera? Yes or no, can the status of the proletariat be raised while the wage-system remains? Yes or no, can the wage system be abolished? If neither, we are mad and the sooner THE NEW AGE is dead the better. But if both—? We pause for a reply.

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In lesser things, however, than those we have just been considering, the way of the world appears to make no exception of THE NEW AGE. The educational controversy—itsself, be it noted, as yet in advance of the Government's Bill—has already divided the disputants into two camps: those who know what they are talking about and those who only think they do. On this subject we have already stated what every practical teacher in our primary school knows, namely, that the only immediately necessary, immediately practical, and immediately revolutionary reform in primary education is to reduce the size of the classes, leaving everything else for the present exactly as it is, only under the anvil of this single event. We are glad to say that our view—it is more, it is our certain knowledge—has been publicly endorsed in the "Times" by an ex-President of the National Union of Teachers, and at the Conference by the present President; and will, we are sure, be endorsed by every President and member of the Union to come. Mr. J. W. Jacobs, the President of the recent Headmasters' Conference at Brighton, repeated it at length and with the utmost earnestness and conviction before an audience that needed not a word to convince it. Every inspector worth his position knows that this is the key to the position. Change everything else and leave the classes as they are, regiments of conscripts, and nothing is changed. Change them and leave everything else and everything is changed. Mr. Jowett, an old member of the Bradford School Board, has in the "Clarion" maintained the same view. We must reduce the size of the classes first, he said. And he added, as all those whom we have already named added also: that reform in education must work from the bottom upwards. This is

clear, this is definite, this, we venture to affirm, is authoritative. If a single primary teachers' association will deny it, we will withdraw our remarks, apologise for expressing them, and never write on the subject of elementary education again. Once more we pause for a reply.

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But listen now to the suggestions that come from what we have called the party that merely thinks it knows what it is talking about. In the "Nation" of May 10, "Ten Progressive M.P.'s"—such is the title they give themselves—issue a manifesto on "An Education Policy" addressed presumably to Lord Haldane and his Committee and designed to summarise the "practical suggestions as to future policy" which the Progressives of the House of Commons agree to support. What are these practical suggestions? First, that the "Religious Difficulty" must be settled in a certain fashion. The fashion is of no importance, for, as Mr. Jacobs stated and as every teacher (and parent, too, who is not a maniac) knows, there is no "Religious difficulty." Secondly, that Physical Education must be undertaken—to the extent of feeding, doctoring, drilling, bathing the children, and, still further, to "the instruction of mothers" in these things! [Why should not the children be begot as well?] Thirdly, "the Co-ordination and Development of our Educational System," which mouthful means that children shall be scholarshipped from the primary schools to the universities. Fourthly, the "Education of the Adult" by employing the universities during the summer vacations for classes of adult "working people." Lastly (but not least!) the "Need for More Financial Assistance." Our readers, we hope, will find it hard to believe that throughout this whole document not a single reference is made to the suggestion which, we have seen, every practical teacher naturally makes first, the reduction of the size of the classes. Not a word, not a hint, not a breath, that this, and this only, in the opinion of the whole guild of teachers, is the one thing necessary and indispensable to reform.

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But take another instance—the "New Statesman." Messrs. Webb and Shaw are fond of making a merit of deferring in all cases to "expert" opinion. Their journal is "expert" or nothing. Yet in a series of articles on Educational Reform, some writer or other, under their ægis, contrives, with the "Ten Progressive M.P.'s," to omit the expert and unanimous opinion of tens of thousands of teachers and to enumerate only the usual academic, ignorant, and mechanical formulæ. Worse even than this, an editorial in the current issue lays it down that the first educational reform is to raise the school age! On what grounds this is immediately desirable in the interests of education, as professed experts, we fail to see. The elementary schools as they exist to-day are simply not fit for children over the age of thirteen. To use the language of teachers, children "mark time" after they have passed into what was called the Seventh Standard. The economic ground for the changes on the other hand, we clearly see. It is to prevent juvenile labour supplanting men's labour in the wage-market. (By the way, if the "New Statesman" and other progressive papers are so anxious to exclude cheap labour from competition with men's labour, why do they countenance the thrusting and pulling of women into industry? Sauce for the goose is sauce for the goslings. Juvenile labour could have its Minimum Wage, like women, and all would then be well!) But what has this economic reform to do with educational reform? What has raising the school age to do with the "expert" opinion that the whole of the school-time under present conditions is worse than wasted? Utilise school-time by reducing classes and making education possible, the school age will raise itself—and other reforms will be added. Ignore this as the "New Statesman" does, and in another fifty years we shall still be talking of educational reform. But Mr. Ann Shaw, it appears, would have the world "go on talking"!

## Current Cant.

"We are well on the road to Socialism."—PHILIP SNOWDEN.

"Never has Mr. Snowden given a finer instance of his matchless power than in the rs. book entitled "Socialism and Syndicalism" . . . with his keen, piercing intellect, with his clear, convincing logic, and in lucid and luminous language . . . Mr. Snowden makes this double subject plain. . . . To-day the secret is disclosed. The book is on sale."—Advertisement in the "Clarion."

"The Empire, being made by poor men, appeals to poor men. . . . Our King has grasped the meaning of empire. He knows that the strength of his throne rests on the loyalty to his person of the little people."—ARNOLD WHITE.

"Londoners who live in the world's capital, the centre of the universe, the seat of science, the cradle of modern culture, the haunts and homes of heroes and heroines, and kings in art, literature, life, can afford to be lethargic because of the consciousness of their superior position in the world."—J. CARR.

"The National Insurance Act is a great and beneficial measure. There will come a day when those who toil and spin will rise to a full realisation of its importance. . . ."—"Daily Chronicle."

"Humanity has taken a prodigious step forward."—HUGH DE SELINCOURT.

"Though we live in a democratic age. . . ."—"Morning Post."

"Liberalism stands for good administration as well as for good legislation. . . . Liberal Ministers have sent a pulse of reforming sympathy through every Department, and in countless ways have made life better for us all."—"The Star."

"It is to lessen sin, sorrow, and suffering that we ask the vote. . . . Indirectly the possession of the vote will raise women, socially, economically, and morally, and the men of the country will rise with them."—E. H. SHILLITO, B.A., in "Everyman."

"Now these papers"—he undid a bulky parcel as he spoke—tell a true story from its beginning to its end—the story of a white slave who, without trickery, kidnapping, or brutality, found herself ensnared for ever by the lure. . . . These remarkable words are taken from the introduction of a new serial which will appear in 'Ideas' in a few weeks. . . . In the meantime you must feast on anticipation."—"Ideas."

"It is very difficult to say what is literature and what is journalism."—ST. JOHN G. ERVINE.

"Mr. Galsworthy stands for all that is best in our present dramatic movement."—EGAN MEW, in the "Academy."

"Dr. Driver has not only held his course successfully through a particularly grave theological crisis, but it is largely owing to his work that the crisis has issued in a deepened and clarified faith instead of leaving a widespread deposit of profane rationalism."—"Christian World."

"There are many things to be recorded to the credit of the steady strong men of the Cabinet."—"Referee."

"The Sunday-school is an admirable institution. It teaches little boys and girls to be good."—GEORGE R. SIMS.

"During the last fifteen years the wages of workers in other than agricultural industries have advanced in a much greater ratio. During this period the standard of living in all classes of society, and particularly among the working classes, has risen considerably."—CHARLES BATHURST, M.P.

"The report of the birth of a son to a charming little lady by her second husband makes a few remarks concerning her first venture 'apropos.'"—LONDON MAIL.

## Foreign Affairs.

By S. Verdad.

Now that King George and Queen Mary have visited the Kaiser, the prominence of some of the characteristics of the event cannot be misunderstood even by the amateur students of foreign affairs who continue to give Fleet Street, or a great part of it, the benefit of their alleged expert knowledge. It is no more necessary now than it has ever been to pay particular attention to the sentimental leading articles in the daily and weekly papers, or to the innumerable paragraphs from "well-informed correspondents" about "agreements," and so on. This journal alone announced last week that the real motives of Lord Morley's trip to Berlin had reference to Egypt, though the Bagdad Railway was naturally discussed. So far as the Egyptian question is concerned, there is nothing to be added to what I wrote last week; but there are some other aspects of Germany's position towards the remaining Great Powers which can well do with a word of comment.

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The peaceful influence of certain factors cannot be overlooked. The changed tone of the German Press is remarkable. Obviously the Foreign Office has let it be known that the anti-English campaign of the last four or five years was to be stopped. This was due not merely to the approaching visit of King George—the change I speak of began a few weeks ago—and not to the situation in the Balkans; but also to the favourable information conveyed to the Wilhelmstrasse touching the Russian Budget, which was introduced on May 23. Again, at recent Ambassadors' Conferences in London the British Government found itself in agreement with the German Foreign Minister on many points relating to Asia Minor. This led to an "improved understanding"—that is, the capitalists in England found that they had more in common with the capitalists in Germany than they had supposed. That is all to the good. But neither this "improved understanding" nor the King's visit has had the slightest effect on the German Army Law or the German Navy Law. The German Government has not gone back on its decision to raise the peace strength of the army to 800,000 men, and work is proceeding on the warships now on order. I do not wish to convey by this that Germany is going to war next week; but simply that while there is no necessity for gush there is also no necessity for pessimism.

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Trading considerations more than ever determine the foreign policy of a country. If the warrior of antiquity looked for more worlds to conquer, the governments of modern times seek prosaically more countries to exploit. Even in the time of an Abdul Hamid large tracts of Asia Minor were almost entirely given over to concessionaires, and German agents were particularly active and influential, chiefly because the authorities at Constantinople always looked to Berlin for active help in time of trouble. But French, Russian, and English capitalists had begun before the revolution to take an interest in the development of Asia Minor, and now, with the practical break-up of the Turkish Empire, the definition of commercial spheres has become a necessity. Formerly, in case of dispute, Abdul Hamid's Government exercised a powerful authority; and the prestige of his diplomatic success and of the army enabled even the stupid Young Turks to control the foreign capitalists. All this has now been done away with. Turkey is in the hands of the Powers, and the Powers must decide among themselves matters which were until recently left to the Turkish Government.

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When we realise the friction which this involves, we shall better understand the difficulties in the way of diplomats. It was a hard task for the Powers to apportion Thrace, Macedonia, and Albania among the Allies; but it is proving a thousand times harder task for them to apportion commercial spheres in Asia Minor

among themselves. There is more than Asia Minor to be taken into account. Germany is willing to give up a little railway on the Levant coast to France provided that France grants a concession or two to German traders in Morocco. England demands that the German owners of the Bagdad line shall give up their rights in Koweit, and Germany is prepared to do this if England will waive her claims to a portion of the Portuguese Colonies in Africa. Russia is willing to grant Germany a certain amount of influence on the southern coast of the Black Sea if only the Kaiser's Government will consent to a small alteration in the Potsdam Convention. And so on. The discussions are delicate, involved, and sometimes acrimonious, and the public will hear little or nothing about them. The details are never likely to be published; but when the negotiations are over we shall have a short but favourable statement. I say short but favourable because an immediate agreement on all points is assured.

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If I have not referred to France in connection with these negotiations it is because she has not so far taken a very prominent part in them. In fact, France's traditional policy in the Near East has been shattered by the events of the last three or four years, and French statesmen have not yet quite made up their minds how they should act. France had for two or three generations supported Turkey financially and morally, and in return Turkey had permitted France to act as the protectress of Roman Catholics throughout the Empire and to inspire the higher classes in Turkey with French thought and the "tone" of French civilisation. General von der Goltz and Baron Marschall von Bieberstein gradually turned Turkey in the direction of Germany; and the Young Turk régime slighted French offers of assistance, except when that assistance happened to be financial. France, as Gabriel Hanotaux says in last Friday's "Figaro," was useful only for lending money.

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As the same writer also says, however, peoples remain even though rulers and régimes and governments pass away; and a consideration of the attitude thus expressed may give us the clue to future French policy in the Near East. Although no official decision has been reached in this matter—although, indeed, the subject has not yet been fully discussed or thought out—there is a strong desire in French diplomatic circles that the financial assistance which was formerly given to Turkey for the benefit of Thrace, Macedonia, and Albania should now be given to the Balkan Allies concerned, the object in view being precisely the same as before. France, it is suggested, should become the friend of Greece, Bulgaria, Servia, and Albania exactly in the sense that she was formerly the friend of Turkey. M. Hanotaux himself seems to give his assent to this view; and anything he may write about the Near East, while it may not be heeded by French politicians, will certainly be carefully weighed by European statesmen.

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It is, perhaps, rather more than a coincidence that the Allies used French guns in the Balkan war, while the Turks used German guns. The weapons of peace are still more powerful—is it only a coincidence that Turkey began to decline when she turned away from French thought and civilisation and concentrated her attention on what Germany had to offer as a substitute? Once, again, I think, the quiet, slow, and obscure forces which make for victory in the end will be found on the side of France. It is very remarkable that Germany and England are at this moment wholly engaged in discussing commercial and financial concessions, and that the minds of France are devoting themselves to enquiring how French thought can be spread among the Balkan States. I repeat, this is very remarkable. The immediate commercial future of the Near East is being decided in Berlin. But the future of the Near East is being decided in Paris.

## Guild Socialism.—XVI.

### Agriculture and the Guilds.

OUR libraries are choked with books on agriculture. Its science, economy, and commerce have each produced regiments, brigades, and armies of ponderous, interesting, dull, light, frivolous, stupid, biased tomes and books and brochures and tracts. The daily and weekly Press gives endless columns to market reports, to farmers' meetings, to blight and disease, to all the current agricultural facts and events. All this array of printed matter, differing in all else, has one point in common: the condition of the farm labourer is unanimously regarded as static. He remains to-day the most static of the fifteen million wage-slaves of Great Britain, and being the most static, the most hopeless. Foolish politicians, worse than a pest of mosquitoes, drop poisonous nonsense into men's ears leaving with their stings nothing but irritation. They raise little festering sores which they call "single tax," or "small holdings," or "the minimum wage," or "labourers' cottages." But they all assume that the farm labourer is a static quantity, doomed to lie for ever prone upon the earth, an Icarus who can never again fly. The Labour Party and the trade unions leave the farm labourer to his fate. It would pay them handsomely to spend £250,000 on the organisation of the farm labourer; but Hodge, the cleverest workman of them all, is consigned by his urban comrades to chill isolation. In his Cimmerian darkness no hand is held out to him—to this man upon whom in the last resort we depend for our food and our life. To the landlord, yes; we pay half his agricultural rates. To the farmer, yes; we protect him with a body of law and custom that makes him almost as independent as his landlord. We even encourage town-bred wasters and starvelings to go "back to the land." Kept in the background of this wild extravaganza, a mere super, stands Hodge, the man who ploughs and sows and reaps, who drains our land, cuts and cleans our ditches, trims our hedges, thatches the cottages, feeds the sheep, tends the lambs, herds the cattle, trains the horses, whose daughters milk the cows and feed the chickens, scald the milk. Whether it be pasture or tillage, it is Hodge who does the work—does his work faithfully and is forgotten.

Farm work is admittedly highly skilled. Why, then, is it so poorly paid? Let us first see the current wages paid to agricultural labourers. We quote from the Fifteenth Abstract of Labour Statistics:—

	Average Cash per Week	Average Earnings per Week
Northern Counties .....	16 5	20 10
Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Cheshire .....	16 3	19 8
North and West Midland Counties .....	15 2	18 7
South Midland and Eastern Counties .....	14 4	17 3
South-Eastern Counties .....	15 10	18 9
South-Western Counties .....	13 11	17 4
Wales and Monmouthshire ...	13 9	18 0
Scotland .....	14 2	19 7
Ireland .....	9 3	11 3

How comes it that we pay these starvation wages to the highly skilled workers of what is still our greatest and most valuable industry? We are not concerned here to trace the history of agriculture through its various perambulations from hind and serf, through villeinage down to feudalism and so to sweated wavery. One point need only be emphasised: agriculture is our most ancient and continuing of industries. It has out-

lived the Normans, Plantagenets, Tudors, and Stuarts; it began before Sheffield and Birmingham were heard of; Manchester and Glasgow are newcomers. In this long course of centuries, customs have rooted themselves in the soil, the whole system has crystallised hard. Not only has the law of diminishing returns operated but rent has assimilated the methods of plutocracy. And Labour has always paid: not the farmer, who still prospers; not the agent, who still drives his gig; Hodge has paid in poverty and rheumatism, with the work-house as his sanctuary.

The free and easy importation of foodstuffs into Great Britain is apt to blind our eyes to the fundamental value of an efficient agricultural industry at home. With us it has become so much a matter of course that it requires an effort of imagination to visualise our national life without it. These lines are being written in a little town that looks out on the Caribbean Sea. It has a population of 14,000, of whom perhaps 350 are pure white, the rest a medley of aboriginals and negroes. We are hemmed in on all sides by impenetrable forest and mangrove swamps. The people depend almost entirely upon the sale of mahogany, which drifts down the various rivers in rafts of logs. It is Christmas Day and the hiring season for mahogany cutters, who sign on for a year and get months of wages in advance. They are busy spending it on rum. Down the small unpaved streets, roll drunken negroes, caribs, coolies, and half-breeds. The gaol close by is full of men who have inflicted grave personal injury during drunken bouts. For breakfast this morning we drank tea imported from England, canned milk imported from New York, canned tongue imported from Chicago, packed eggs imported from New Orleans, marmalade imported from London. To-night, at dinner, we shall eat canned pork imported from Chicago, butter, potatoes, beans, peas, turnips, rice, coffee imported from New Orleans, Mobile, or New York. The only food obtained locally is fish. Yet the land is as rich as any in the world. A few miles inland good coffee-berries lie rotting on the ground, sugar canes grow for the asking, there is rich pasture for cattle. Rice grows of such quality that some years ago the Japanese Government ordered 250 sacks as an example and a sample. They might as well have asked for 25,000 sacks. Thus we are all paying through the nose for agricultural products most of which could be grown in the country.

Why should this little community be victimised by exorbitant charges imposed upon it by the exporters of America and Great Britain? Because there is no agricultural industry? But why? Because there is no labour available. The foundation of agriculture, as of every industry, is labour. The Government is scouring the world for labour, offering wages to negroes, to coolies, even to Sikhs and Afghans, far in excess of the wages paid to the agricultural labourer of proud Britain.

It is here that we hit upon the paradox of agricultural conditions in Great Britain: the industry is economically susceptible of Guild organisation but the labourers are unorganised and therefore insusceptible.

We remarked that it would pay the Trade Unions to spend £250,000 on the organisation of the agricultural workers of Great Britain. In 1910, the accumulated funds of the Unions amounted to £5,121,529, representing £3 10s. 2d. per member. £250,000 is roughly one-twentieth of this amount or 3s. 6d. per member. The low agricultural wage bears down urban wages in two ways: (i) the prevailing rate of wages over a large area influences the wages paid in the towns in that area; (ii) the low agricultural wage drives young men into the towns and so intensifies the competitive wage rate. Three shillings and sixpence is less than a penny per week. Would not urban wages be raised a good many pennies per week if the rural worker were so circumstanced that he need not throw himself upon the wage market? Certain it is that if the Trade Unions do not seriously undertake the organisation of agricul-

tural labour it will become the urgent duty of the Guilds to do it.

Certainly of the Guilds, for the control and supply of food is surely the most important function of such large economic bodies as the guilds are destined to be. They would be criminally foolish to trust their very lives to the mercy of capitalistic packers in Chicago or to wheat-thieves in any part of the world. (Probably by that time, wheat-corners will be engineered in Canada.) But there are other reasons: The right distribution of the land and its economic exploitation necessarily flow out of an industrial revolution. With the Guilds possessing a monopoly of labour and refusing to sell it as a commodity for wages, the great landed estates will infallibly be broken up and land as an "amenity" will lose all its meaning. It will then become the duty of the Guilds to cultivate the land or otherwise put it to economic use. Inasmuch as the Guilds will control the consumption of food-stuffs, it follows that they must ultimately control their production. Industrial Britain covered by a net-work of Guild organisation contemporary with an effete land system worked by wage-slavery would be a contradiction in terms: the Guild members would be eating food produced under a régime against which they had successfully revolted. Food so produced would surely stick in their throats.

It is certain that our land system has outlived its usefulness; it can go no further. In 1897, 47,869,000 acres were under cultivation. Notwithstanding the growing demand for food-stuffs by an increasing population, the acreage in 1911 fell to 46,929,000 acres. We are told that tillage has given place to pasturage as more profitable. It is not true. In 1897, there were 2,070,000 horses used solely for agriculture, mares kept solely for breeding and unbroken horses. In 1911, the number was 2,033,000. In the same period there was only a slight rise in cattle, 11,004,000 to 11,866,000. Sheep fell from 30,567,000 to 30,480,000. Pigs went up from 3,719,000 to 4,250,000. Probably the change in the Irish land system would explain that item. Now let us look at the crop output. Wheat advanced from 56,295,774 to 64,313,456 bushels during the period under review. But this was an abnormal year, for in 1910 it was 56,593,432. In nine out of these fifteen years the crop was under 60,000,000; in 1904 it was 37,919,781 bushels. Barley has a more sorry tale to tell. In 1897, 72,613,455 bushels; in 1911, 57,803,216. Oats fell from 163,556,156 bushels to 162,933,336. Beans and peas fell from 11,900,157 to 11,447,112. Potatoes were more hopeful; they rose from 4,106,609 tons to 7,520,168 tons. Per contra, turnips, swedes, and mangolds went down from 37,164,673 tons to 30,885,112. Hay fell from 14,042,703 to 11,656,471. Hops also fell from 411,086 cwts. to 328,023. Of course all these corn and green crops fluctuate according to the season. The only significance of these figures is that our agricultural industry is stationary when it ought to be keeping pace with the growth of the population.

There are a thousand technical aspects of this problem into which we need not enter; indeed, they are irrelevant, because the problem for the Guilds is to secure the monopoly of labour, and therefore our task is to consider the conditions that govern wage slavery in agriculture. The Guild point of approach to the agricultural problem is first to organise the labourers and then bring them into line with modern practice. Of course, we know that the farm labourer is intensely conservative; on the wages he receives how could he be anything else? Of course, we know that education must play a fruitful part in building up a fruitful agricultural industry; but of what use is education to under-paid, under-fed, badly clothed agricultural labourers, whose only books are the Bible, Moody and Sankey's Hymns, and Old Moore's Almanack? All this we know; nevertheless, the first step is not improved agricultural methods, not a new incidence of taxation, not improved housing conditions, but the organisation into an effective trade union of the farm labourers.

In 1881, there were 2,574,031 persons engaged in

agriculture, including woodmen, gardeners (domestic and non-domestic), nurserymen, seedsmen and florists. In 1901, the figures were 2,262,454—a decline of over 300,000 agricultural workers in 20 years. But in the two decades, the population of the United Kingdom rose from 34,884,848 to 41,458,721—an increase of 20 per cent. Having regard to this natural increase in population is it too much to assume that during these twenty years agriculture has dumped upon the competitive wage market 750,000 men, women and children? We must not only count the 300,000 who actually left agriculture, but also allow for the natural increase upon an agricultural population of 5,500,000 persons, young and old—an increase that did not go into agriculture because its conditions forbade, and who accordingly left the country and either emigrated or crowded into the towns; 750,000 in 20 years is 37,500 annually. Can the trade unions afford to let this continuous stream of competitive wagery continue indefinitely? The older men who are intrigued with politics doubtless think that some hocus-pocus in the way of single tax or small holdings will stanch the flow. The political labourist is fool enough to believe anything, but perhaps the younger school of Labour leaders, men who have discovered the political illusion, will understand that the first charge on economic emancipation is ceaseless and effective organisation.

Now is there any reason under the sun why we should continue to pay the landlords £200,000,000 a year for mismanaging and generally muddling land and agriculture? Would it not be cheaper for the nation to purchase the land outright on the basis of annuities for two lives, and to hand over the whole business to an agricultural guild? By this means agriculture would become an integral part of our national economic processes. To-day it is largely an excrescence. If we cannot get potatoes, or butter, or what you please from our farming folk, we shrug our shoulders and buy from Denmark, Holland, or France. Little we reck that in adopting this cynical attitude towards agriculture, we are gradually upsetting the counterpoise between town and country that makes not only for national health, but for national safety. We will say nothing of the psychological or even the spiritual influence of the "good, gigantic smile of the cold brown earth," although it is a factor of supreme moment. But look at France. A large army of Frenchmen habitually divide their time between industry and agriculture. The result is that there is a natural ebb and flow between town and country that makes for the economic stability of the French nation. Would not the same ebb and flow, the same elasticity of movement, beginning at harvest time, prove profoundly health-giving and economically sound in Great Britain? It is certain that the existing commercial system is utterly unfitted for and incapable of any such large arrangement in Great Britain. In France, industry and agriculture are married; in Great Britain they are divorced. But under Guild organisation what could be easier and jollier? Does it strain our imagination to see the Agricultural Guild calling upon the other guilds, at seed time or harvesting, for 100,000 men? Would not such a scheme of co-ordinated labour bring us appreciably back to those great and solemn festivals that mankind from its infancy has arranged to celebrate the gift of creation, of fertility?

We must not, however, permit the joyous vision of a rejuvenated agriculture to blind our eyes to existing realities. The complexities of land tenure, the vast complications of the agricultural market, the vested interests that have grown on and about agriculture in the market towns—you will find the gombeen man in England, Scotland and Wales scarcely disguised from his prototype in Ireland—render any quick solution of the problem impossible. This at least is true: the Guilds in approaching the problem through the gateway of labour and the abolition of wagery will hold the key to the position. The first lesson to be learned is that Hodge economically emancipated will be Hodge spiritually, mentally and technically transformed.

## Insane Portugal.

By V. de Braganca Cunha.

II.

"ENGLISHMEN see with increasing regret the oldest of their allies forgetful of a glorious tradition and of an immense heritage of rich Colonial possessions, sunk in a hopeless turmoil of mutual chicanery, jobbery, and persecution at a time when other European countries less favoured by fortune in every material respect are winning their way by splendid self-sacrifice and patriotic effort towards the goal of a higher civilisation".<sup>1</sup> Strong and painful words when applied to any country. They were uttered by an English daily which has continually been taking Republican Portugal to task for the neglect of promised reforms, and has now formally threatened to leave her to her fate!

The recent attempt at a coup d'état for which the Radical Republican Federation was responsible, was described by Affonso Costa as a movement of "conspiracy and revolt." The "House" seemed satisfied by the Premier's statement and a motion of confidence in the Ministry was carried by 86 votes. This incident, however, gives rise to some reflections. When the provision in the Republican Constitution (Art. 33, Clause C), that no one of the Ministers should be elected President of the Republic, was under discussion it raised a tempest of protests from politicians who held self-interest and vanity to be the only springs of action. "You withdraw the motion or I appeal to the streets," were the words of Affonso Costa, the leader of the "Grupo Democratico" to-day in power. The motion was, perhaps, introduced to moderate the party ambition, to repress the inordinate vanity of the leaders, and thus to secure neutrality in the affairs of the State. But Affonso Costa knew that the supporters of the candidature of Manuel Arriaga to the Presidency, were the instigators of the motion. His suspicious mind instantly surmised sinister plots that he thought ought to be read through. His political opponents, he believed, in proposing the exclusion of Ministers to the Presidency had no other design than to exclude his partisan and colleague in the Revolutionary Government, Psernardino Machado, the advertised candidate to the Presidency; and the perfectly unscrupulous nature of his mind, the propensity to violence made him resort to tactics which he now condemns. But his threat "to appeal to the street," while it conveyed a notion of the petty minds that are ruling Portugal, made it distressingly plain that an ex-Minister of Justice in the Revolutionary Government, by his overbearing conduct, wanted to keep the deliberations of the very "House," which has now passed a vote of confidence in the Government, under a control as indecent as it was pernicious. Here was a proof that Affonso Costa did not take seriously the "representatives of the people," and hoped that the Lisbon populace, over which he ruled with an absolute dominion, would devise new expedients of blood to modify an article in the Republican Constitution!—a constitution that already regarded as traitors those who "endeavour to change by illegal means that which the nation has established."

The reason of all this is not far to seek. "In the time of the Monarchy," wrote Cunha e Costa, a distinguished lawyer and Republican member of the Lisbon Municipality, "part of the elected members were, indeed, chosen in the Ministry of the Kingdom, but many members owed their seats to their own influences. Nowadays, with the possible exception of Lisbon and one or two other centres, all the members ostensibly chosen by the country, come from the Ministry of the Interior, or rather from the Directory, where all the subordinate elements rule the roost. For the great assembly which was to establish the organic bases of the administration, recourse was had to an inverted selection from which resulted a Parliament without initiation or discrimination, a Parliament which the public conscience has already condemned definitely and inexorably." "This

<sup>1</sup>"Times," January 2, 1913.

insanity," said Cunha e Cunha, emphasising the obscurity of the members of the Constituent Assembly, "reached a climax when the Assembly converted itself, entirely on its own initiation, into an ordinary Congress. In contradistinction to the French Legislative Assembly, which decreed that its members were not eligible for the future Convention, our Constituent Assembly suppresses competitive election and declares itself to be immortal—until 1915. . . . This trick—for we have lived on nothing else but tricks and chicanery—has exasperated the already general discontent".<sup>2</sup> The picture is not a whit overcharged. The Portuguese Parliament is, indeed, a Parliament of national ignorance, where a presumptuous "Senator" ventured, not long ago, to express the opinion that a black-board was necessary in the "House," and if such motion, which he put forward in all seriousness, were approved his colleagues would be able "to follow arguments on finance." He was, no doubt, right on that point, however mistaken he may have been in considering himself less illiterate than the others.

The average Republican politician does not and cannot, of course, follow the intricacies of international politics. "Agitators of the first rank, eloquent and inspiring speakers, or conspirators of untiring and unshakable tenacity," to put it in the words of the Republican writer Cunha e Costa, "their energies have been entirely absorbed by the propaganda and preparations for the Revolution which has prevented them from studying the national problem and its solutions";<sup>3</sup> and it is very suggestive that Theophilo Braga, recognising the dangers which threaten the downtrodden Portuguese nationality, should confess the Republic is powerless to avert them.

"The Ministers representing the Republic abroad cannot be taken seriously by any Government,"<sup>4</sup> were his words to a journalist of the Republican "Seculo." Again, taking a representative of the "Dia" into confidence, the aged Professor explicitly confirmed his charges against each of the so-called Republican diplomats.<sup>5</sup> Coming from a man of Braga's authority, from one who was the President of the Revolutionary Government, these utterances made a profound impression on the public mind. The interview led to a discussion in the "House," and the "Seculo," in a leading article, asserted that "the Republic is served extremely badly by its diplomats." "The representatives of Portugal abroad," said this Republican daily, "have been almost always recruited from politics and usually appointed either from a wish to remove rivals or after they have failed as statesmen. The Legations are not, therefore, considered as important posts to be entrusted to persons of high merit, but as party consolation prizes."<sup>6</sup> Braga was called a "traitor" and "irresponsible" in the Chamber, and on April 8th, when he entered, many "Deputies" left their places. We will not enter here into a discussion of the patriotism and straightforwardness of a man who certainly knows the Republican diplomats far better than any living Portuguese. The choice of Theophilo Braga as President of the Revolutionary Government was of no small importance to the Republic. Braga's antecedents marked him out as in many ways just the man whom the times demanded; and the one feature which was loudly advertised as being characteristic of the Professor was his indifference to the goad of ambition which drives on inferior men so madly. Braga took seriously the imaginary mission of guiding the destinies of Portugal and announced the Revolution to be the "rare and notable event, the expression of the pride of an indomitable race, the bravery of which has rendered it legendary, which filled with joy and enthusiasm the heart of patriots."<sup>7</sup> But now he is shown to be "a false friend, a bad citizen, and a treacherous colleague"; and the "Lucta," edited

by an ex-Minister in the Revolutionary Government, hurls upon the "irresponsible" Professor the reproach of having through his indiscreet utterances when President of the Government, provoked the hostile attitude of Spain towards Portugal!

This brings us to the very heart of the matter. The map of Europe has already undergone many changes, and it is not improbable that the political complications which accumulate on Europe's head may result, among other things, in endangering the position of Portugal as an independent Power. Several distinct and important new phases have manifested themselves since the recent visit of Colonel Seely, the representative of the War Office, to Spain. Romanones, the Spanish Premier, has spoken pretty freely, and his remarks on the subject of "expansion" had such a weight that the Portuguese daily "Diario de Noticias" could not refrain from quoting the Spanish statesman's utterances at some considerable length.

That there is real anxiety, even the "Mundo," the organ of Affonso Costa, unconsciously admits. The "Mundo" (April 16) printed an article condemning the recent attempt on King Alfonso's life—an attempt in which, we may observe, a Portuguese anarchist was involved. It said that the King of Spain's death would in no wise alter the situation in Spain. This clumsy trick on the part of the Republican daily must have caused sardonic laughter in many quarters. For the "Mundo" supports Affonso Costa, who has found a place in his Cabinet for a leading member of the "Carbonaria," and it defends every act of a Government that at the demonstration held in Lisbon on February 16 eulogised the murderers of King Carlos as "true heroes, worthy sons of Portugal"!

In what form of justice or injustice the Powers propose to inflict their good services on Portugal we cannot tell. The right to intrude—no matter in what form it is—we think a direct infringement of the independence of sovereign States, not less reprehensible in principle than the acts of the Corsican warrior; and the maintenance of Portuguese independence ought to be the object of every Portuguese—be he a Republican or Monarchist—to secure. There is no protector to shield the nation from the coming assaults of powerful neighbours. Theophilo Braga already repudiates in the interview published in the "Seculo" all reliance on English alliance. We do not wish to disprove the charge of Braga. But we believe from such alliance the cause of Portuguese Republicanism has nothing to hope. Moreover, a balancing system, to which smaller States are used to look up for salvation, affords no protection against the combination of two or three great Powers, but has helped in the past the concentration of all authority into the usurping hands of few potentates.

Portugal has, in the past, exhibited in the midst of domestic convulsions a vitality such as that which baffled the destructive genius of Napoleon. There is, however, a marked distinction between the present crisis which may prove fatal at any moment, and those which have shaken Portugal in the past. "In every one of the previous periods of recuperation," wrote M. H. Koebel, the author of "Portugal: Its Land and People," "Portugal has had before it an ideal upon which to fix its eyes, and a personality in which that ideal was represented and centred. At times this one in the forefront strode forward on his own initiative; at others he was insensibly propelled from beneath. It did not matter which. The symbol was there, to go or be pushed, and the progress continued. Putting aside for the moment its human incarnation, where is the ideal now? The majority of educated Portuguese will tell you with perfect frankness that they have become completely fogged on the point, and an Iberian nation without an ideal is a rudderless ship indeed."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>2</sup> "Dia," December 31, 1912.

<sup>3</sup> "Dia," December 31, 1912.

<sup>4</sup> "Seculo," March 30, 1913.

<sup>5</sup> "Dia," April 2, 1913.

<sup>6</sup> "Seculo," April 1, 1913.

<sup>7</sup> "Proclamation of the Revolutionary Government, October 5, 1910.

<sup>8</sup> "Academy," June 24, 1911.

## “England’s Day of Reckoning.”

By A. G. Crafter.

### II.

THE preceding and first article of this series led up to the following essential theorem :

The Crown, the symbol of British sovereignty and British power, rests wholly and solely, not on the English, not on the people of this ancient Kingdom (the creation of an ancient Act) alone, but on the whole of the British race and nation of the five principal, and independent (not united), British Parliaments. This is now the nation and the Kingdom. The subject and tropical tribes, races, and dependencies of the Empire are subject to this Sovereign Nation.

There is no parallel. The Imperial problem is one problem; this another. The two cannot be joined. A succession of a thousand “statesmen” have sought to fuse these (National and Empire expansion) since Brougham first spoke of inter-Parliamentary federation sixty years ago. They are still at it, and their thoughts are of an obvious, yet illusive, precedent, while, in the meantime, these two dissimilar British units steadily develop beyond and away from their Parliamentary machinery, which was, but has ceased to be, national.

The German Empire, a national federation, unlike the British Empire, is a congeries of contiguous and united States of white citizens, the whole possessing a common purpose in combination, and a common patriotism as the very essence of their nationality. The British Empire, on the other hand, sea-bound, comprises (1) certain self-governing and, to a great extent, interdependent States of a common history, race, and civilisation; and then (2) a heterogeneous non-assimilable element of various and antagonistic races, castes, creeds, and colours, which are governed by, or subject to, the first. I leave any analogy to be discovered in the components of these two Empires to my readers, merely recording my own opinion that both British National and Imperial growth is an original development which demands original treatment.

Britons, as Seeley said thirty years ago, have carried their State and their Crown, in what he correctly described as a national expansion—i.e., of both the nation and the kingdom—to other countries. Anyhow, the richest, most virile fourth of the British race now in the four Dominions, though not English, and though, as a whole, these distrust and reject English dominance, are, nevertheless, consciously, insistently, British, perhaps more British than the English. But still their patriotism, apart from mere love of country, and though they also love their countries, is not in their case local, but is of history, and therefore British. Nevertheless, like the Irish, like Mr. McKenna’s Disestablishment Bill Welsh “nation,” or like, and because of, similar and other empty claims of mere unnational and un-British local party expediency, these also lay claim to separate “national” titles. Yet these are not nations. This transitory phase is merely a repudiation of the “English” assumption of both National and Imperial pre-eminence, the persistent labelling, by the English, of British things with their own only local tribal designation, a practice indefensible on the score of usage, and always offensive to that half of the British with whom the English, retaining pride or the sense of justice in any form, might well now admit, as they eventually and soon must, their actual present dependence, as well as the real urgency, particularly to the English, and to this mother State of the Nation, of reciprocal economic and defensive co-operation.

Here it might be useful to remember that the so-called “Wealth of England” is clearly not the wealth of the English; while the “Glory of Empire,” so far as the English—especially the English—are concerned, is under the present domestic and rigid legislative system, merely an expensive luxury. The balance of

the English-speaking and the Germanic States, the chief and winning competitors against English labour in every form, numbering four times the inhabitants of little Britain, increasing yearly at the rate of a million and a half in excess of Britain’s growth, but possessing none of this snobbery-begotten pride of an wholly illusive “Wealth” or “Glory,” are, nevertheless, more prosperous and better paid than the people of this country. In other words, the Empire, though unquestionably a source of wealth, returns of its bounty, not to this taxed and faithful, if deluded community, but to their, and to its, profiteers. This, I suggest is due entirely to the jealous determination of local “statesmen” to retain, at any cost to the people—the State, or the Nation, or the Empire—the ascendancy which they now enjoy, which is local, which seems national, but which would be lost (they think) to them and theirs, if adequate National Parliamentary reform occurred. England has become an industrial country with all its accompanying evils. But still, that trade, which is her trade, is threatened on every hand, in every market, and her pre-eminence—the pre-eminence of the United Kingdom—as an exporting country will indubitably pass forever within the present decade. English prestige, therefore, when that occurs, must then merge with British prestige, for, after all, prestige, one might almost say, is Empire. On the other hand, the Nation, in its five States, is not an industrial Commonwealth. The remedy, again, for Britain’s local social conditions—conditions of her domestic industrialism, with its concomitant capitalism, the last supplemented by international capital attracted to London’s market by this easily exploitable Empire—is to be found, and can only be found, within the union of these five States. That is, social reform in Britain can never be successfully dealt with, until the way is paved by Parliamentary reform, leading to a National Executive (inter-Parliamentary, or inter-Governmental, but inter-State) of some kind.

In the writer’s opinion the people of the four Dominions will never accept a political union with the English, or Britain, while the English, as English, dominate the United Kingdom, or with the English as a nation, that is, unless, or until, their numbers—say, thirty years hence—exceed the population of the United Kingdom. In the meantime, a serious error in Britain’s domestic policy might easily shatter the whole national structure as well as the Empire, with the consequence of forthwith precipitating the transfer of Anglo-Saxon dominion from the Atlantic and Britain to the Pacific and to the three great Continental English-speaking States of that coming world’s centre, under the headship of the United States. The alternative, a simple matter of historical and terminological accuracy, is for the English to subordinate their mere tribal and only domestic aspirations to the true national title and national spirit, which is not English, but which is, and can only continue, British.

The word “Imperial” might, and, in the case of the German Empire, does, include a Nation and no more. But in the British Empire, as I have already pointed out, we have two fundamental divisions—the one, coloured, 360 millions strong; the other, the Sovereign Power, white, and of 60 millions of population. These two non-assimilable divisions together, are the Empire, and Imperial. The word Imperial in this case, therefore, can only connote “Empire.” Any other ruling simply leads, without one compensating advantage, to confusion. There is no precedent. For instance, the Hon. G. E. Foster, of Canada, an enthusiastic Imperialist, of whom Earl Grey informs us: “Few men, if any, have a more intimate knowledge of the Empire,” not only states (1) that “the people of the Dominions are not allies, but are of the blood and members” (with Britain’s) “of one common family” (July, 1912); but (2) he then speaks of “loyalty to the Empire, under the flag of the Empire” (July, 1912); and (3) that people of the Dominions are of “sturdy British stock,” also that “an Imperialist is one who devoutly wishes the Empire experiment to be a success” (November, 1912);

finally (though I might keep on quoting this authority) we were told at the City Carlton Club—"Imperialists aimed to bind the Empire together as a whole," including India. And "this ideal," adds Mr. Bonar Law, "is worth risking something for"—"if the whole Empire is to become a nation." Now all these leaders clearly aim at nothing less than an Empire nationality, which they term Imperialism. I could quote practically the whole of the leaders of one party to that effect. They do not contemplate, as is generally supposed, a union of the British race and the five British Parliamentary States only.

The whole thing is bosh. One is inclined to ask: who pays for it? Or is it the Imperialistic balderdash of little partisan "statesmen," for cheers, who have never even tried to understand their subject? The "flag of the Empire" is, like the Crown, solely national. The nation is greater than its Empire, will fight for its Empire, but the subject Empire will never fight for the nation. "Loyalty to the Empire," on the part of Britons, is loyalty to their common responsibilities in connection with the races and countries which are outside their patriotism, but which are subject to their Sovereign nation. Yet Mr. Foster, and other Imperialists would have us think that this loyalty, to an only incidental duty, is patriotism. As a matter of fact, no one has ever yet produced a feasible and acceptable, scheme of Imperial Unity, and no one ever will. On the other hand, a war threatening these shores would immediately evolve a national union of the five States. That, or the end of the Empire, and the end of the British power.

## Sweet Simplicity.

By E. Nesbit.

A CERTAIN dismal charm, all its own, marks the circular sent out, in a somewhat indiscriminating profusion, by the Anti-Socialist Union of Great Britain. Union; Great; Britain; these be Words of Power. Socialist, also, is a word that should have the strength of magic to uplift the heads of those Christians who remember the teaching of their Master. But anti is a word of weakness. And that not only when it is astray among words of power. Its weakness is apparent even when it is ranged among words almost as weak as itself. Anti-Vegetarian, Anti-Puritan, Anti-Insurance Act. The statement of a mere negation cannot be a word of power. How much better watch-words were "For Meat!" "For Commonsense!" "For Liberty!" But the Anti-Socialist Union of Great Britain (why not of Ireland? or doesn't Ireland matter?) finds it not so easy to change its negation to assertion. It is against Socialism; therefore it is for. . . . what? For the English rich, one supposes, and for things as they are. Not for the English nation, and for things as they might be, or ought to be.

Its treasurer is Lord Somebody, its vice-chairman Mr. Somebody Else, M.P. Its chairman Mr. Claude Lowther, also M.P. It is this gentleman who sets his name to the appeal which lies before me.

"Dear Mr. Smith"—he writes with condescending impertinence to a total stranger whose strangeness might, one would have supposed, entitle him to the ordinary 'Sir' of commercial courtesies—"Dear Mr. Smith—As chairman of the Anti-Socialist Union, I claim to speak with authority on the subject of Socialism, and I feel it my duty to warn those who are living in a fool's paradise of its monstrous growth—which, uninterrupted, may at any moment bring national bankruptcy and individual ruin upon us.

"The abolition of the Monarchy—the repudiation of the National Debt—the taxation of *all private property* out of existence—has been the spoken and written policy of the Socialist Party for the last twenty years.

"Ridiculous as the proposals may seem to the student of economics and appalling as they may appear to the patriot or even the ordinary citizen, we cannot blink the fact that there are millions in Britain who support these opinions and that Socialist agitators in every part of the country are daily raking in recruits to the ranks of Socialism.

"I earnestly entreat you to read the accompanying enclosures and to become a member of the Anti-Socialist Union whose aim is to arrest a disease which like a leprosy is spreading over the country.

"Yours truly,  
"CLAUDE LOWTHER."

Without inquiring too closely as to the nature and etymology of the "fool's paradise of its monstrous growth" in which Mr. Smith is presumably living, the mind dwells in fond speculation on Mr. Lowther's possible methods of "interrupting" such a paradise. How will he interrupt a paradise? What is he going to do? How is he going to do it?

The magnificent tribute of the letter's third paragraph will be balm to those millions of Socialists who have been in doubt as to the spread of their ideas. It will hearten them like a cordial, inspire them like a trumpet-blast.

Paragraph four of Mr. Lowther's letter informs the inquirer that Socialism is "spreading over the country like a leprosy." Well, whatever else a leprosy does, it does go ahead. Again the Socialists bow, smiling and blushing in the face of Mr. Lowther's compliments.

Paragraph four, besides the compliment, contains an entreaty. Will Mr. Smith read the accompanying enclosures? Mr. Smith will—and does. He reads the "enclosures" which, singularly enough, "accompany" the letter with which they are enclosed, and finds three parallel columns headed: "What the Socialists are Doing," "What the Anti-Socialist Union is Doing," and "What the Anti-Socialist Union Wants to Do, and Must Do."

### WHAT THE SOCIALISTS ARE DOING.

1. They are spending over £300,000 each year on propaganda work, and meetings are held at the rate of 2,000 a week.

### WHAT THE ANTI-SOCIALIST UNION IS DOING.

1. We are employing 40 speakers continually, and 60 speaker-agents hold 200-300 meetings each week.

### WHAT THE ANTI-SOCIALIST UNION WANTS TO DO AND MUST DO.

1. To hold not 200 meetings a week but 2,000.

Mr. Smith reads, and his comment on column three is something like "Don't you wish you may do it?" Column two admits that the Anti-Socialist Union has to pay its speakers. The Socialist speakers speak for love. That is one of the great differences between societies based on negation and societies based on affirmation. When the anti-Socialists find themselves believing in something, and not merely denying something, they may be able to hold their 2,000 meetings a week as the Socialists do. Till then they will have as many hired negationists as they can pay for. No more. And Mr. Smith would like to remind Mr. Claude Lowther that a cause which has none but advocates is not, and never can be, a popular cause.

### WHAT THE SOCIALISTS ARE DOING.

2. They have branches in every town, representatives on every Municipal Council, and 42 Members in Parliament. They have active supporters and growing membership in the Church, Press, Army, Navy, Schools, and Universities. They are establishing Sunday Schools in all the large

### WHAT THE ANTI-SOCIALIST UNION IS DOING.

2. We have 40 schools in various parts of the country where speakers and workers are trained to fight Socialism. (No representatives in towns, no Municipal Councillors, no Members of Parliament.) An Education Section has been formed to check the enormous growth of Socialism.

### WHAT THE ANTI-SOCIALIST UNION WANTS TO DO AND MUST DO.

2. To send trained speakers to every Socialist meeting to put intelligent questions, with a view to correcting inaccurate statements. To send missionaries versed in all the necessary facts and figures to knock the bottom out of the Socialist case.

In the obvious difficulties presented by his scheme for dealing with Clause 2, Mr. Claude Lowther has Mr. Smith's surprised sympathy.

WHAT THE SOCIALISTS ARE DOING.

3. They are . . . responsible for the industrial unrest existing in almost all our large trades.

WHAT THE ANTI-SOCIALIST UNION IS DOING.

3. We have a Committee of Experts who make a trenchant examination of all Social Reform Measures. (*But not, apparently, any influence with "our large trades."*)

WHAT THE ANTI-SOCIALIST UNION WANTS TO DO AND MUST DO.

3. To make a systematic and wholesale exposure of Socialist promises.

Here, again, Mr. Smith, perceiving that Mr. Lowther has his work cut out for him, and only paid agitators to help him in it, regards Mr. Lowther with sympathetic amazement. Mr. Lowther himself grows more dismal as the contrast between Socialist and anti-Socialist work unfolds itself before him.

WHAT THE SOCIALISTS ARE DOING.

4. The organised labour of the country, representing nearly 2½ million working men, has been captured by a handful of Socialists.

WHAT THE ANTI-SOCIALIST UNION IS DOING.

4. We are endeavouring to emancipate Trades Unionism from the yoke of Socialism.

WHAT THE ANTI-SOCIALIST UNION WANTS TO DO AND MUST DO.

4. (*Mr. Lowther here loses heart for particulars, and falls back on a general statement.*) This work calls for vast and immediate expansion.

Mr. Smith feels still more strongly what sort of work it is which is cut out for Mr. Lowther.

WHAT THE SOCIALISTS ARE DOING.

5. In addition to millions of pamphlets and leaflets, they have seven weekly papers and 40 monthly journals which are circulated broadcast. They are now starting a daily paper.

WHAT THE ANTI-SOCIALIST UNION IS DOING.

5. We had a monthly paper, "Liberty," which we were obliged to suppress for lack of support.

WHAT THE ANTI-SOCIALIST UNION WANTS TO DO AND MUST DO.

5. To start a weekly paper which would deal with all the arguments advanced in the different Socialist weeklies. To invoke the aid of the most brilliant and lucid writers . . .

The pathos of column two almost unmans Mr. Smith. "We had a monthly paper, but. . ." Poor Mr. Claude Lowther. The vain dream he put in column three commands Mr. Smith's pity. The most brilliant and lucid writers, my deplorable Anti-Socialist, are never found to champion a mere negation.

Mr. Lowther himself has the hopelessness of his cause brought home to him more and more vividly and irresistibly, as he ends his parallel columns in a terse burst of futility.

WHAT THE SOCIALISTS ARE DOING.

6. They are sending their missionaries, both men and women, into the factories, workshops, Army, and Navy.

WHAT THE ANTI-SOCIALIST UNION IS DOING.

6. Nothing!

WHAT THE ANTI-SOCIALIST UNION WANTS TO DO AND MUST DO.

6. To send hundreds of missionaries (*see Clause 2*).

Mr. Smith passes over the agreeable suggestion of Socialist Vivandières for our Army, Socialist Little Buttercups for our Navy, and dwells with interest on the second column, Mr. Claude Lowther's naïve confession of failure. What is the Anti-Socialist Union doing? Nothing! If anything could draw Mr. Smith towards the ranks of that incompetent Union it would be Mr. Lowther's glorious ingenuousness. But Mr. Lowther's unsolicited testimonial to the power of Socialism makes a stronger appeal even than the child-like simplicity of its opponent. Mr. Smith, who has hitherto supposed Socialism to be the creed of a few cranks, will now hasten to make himself acquainted with the tenets of a faith which produces such works as those scheduled in Mr. Lowther's first column. "By their works ye shall know them."

And the two and a half millions of Socialists owe Mr. Lowther a debt of deep gratitude for his fearless advertisement of their successes. So deep a debt that one pauses an instant on the thought. . . is it possible that Mr. Lowther is himself a Socialist; one who, with the wisdom of the serpent, has taken this means of making known to the world the triumphs of Socialism? Either that, or Mr. Lowther has the simplicity of the dove—a simplicity to bring tears to the eyes.

AD MILTONI HONOREM.

Not Shelley; not the wildest rhapsody  
Of Chopin or Verlaine; no lyric wine  
For me; but the hard chiselled purity  
Of Milton's verse, eternally divine.  
Like Zeus himself with death-closed marble eyes  
Seated beyond the turmoil of the crowd  
And smiling—motionless for evermore;  
The grandest bird of song disdains to soar,  
But floats upon his eagle wings—a cloud  
Become a part of the unchanging skies.  
No Gothic weariness or fantasy  
Or arabesque of mystic sinnings wrought;  
Not naked, like a stone-bound deity,  
The rebel athlete hurls the discus, thought.  
As in a frieze, men see the brave array  
Before the Ilian gate of Paradise  
Thunder with pagan war through silent art;  
When, waking wisdom with his golden dart,  
From the nocturnal Hell of sanctities  
Satan, or is it Phœbus?—dawns to-day.  
Joy's stellar witness summoneth the wise  
To the event of this theophany—  
A more than Tuscan wonder; to surmise  
The blind Greek loveliness of tragedy.

W. HUMPHREY.

America: Chances and Remedies.

By Ezra Pound.

V.

Proposition III—The College of the Arts.

In America you can be subsidised to study the development of ablauts in Middle High German; to make comments on the works of Quintet; to read Assyrian tablets; even to paint pictures, to sculp, and in one western college a man has been given a fellowship in musical composition. (I believe this happened at Oberlin and I pay the trustees my respects.)

No institution that I know of subsidises literary creation or experiment. There are certain prizes awarded. One man is being paid to translate the Divina Commedia into terza rima with feminine endings. The German Emperor encourages the ex-Germans in, I think, California. Mr. Fells is patron to a poet who advertised for a patron and whose name is not known to me.

Mr. Morgan, in finance, advocates "backing the man," and says he has lent a million dollars more than once to men whom he knew had nothing. In the arts he encourages the dead. I am very glad he sees fit to collect; for the presence of masterwork in the country will, in time, beget some sort of discrimination.

Retiring professors are pensioned by Mr. Carnegie, and all this is very nice and humane, but the careful expenditure of a bare two million dollars would bear a deal more fruit in sheer artistic creation, and would eventually pay the country many times over in actual possessions obtained; but let us have done with practicalities. I speak of something better.

The whole question of art patronage is too wide to go into, suffice it that the Ptolemies when they wished to lift the centre of the world's culture bodily into Alexandria, could find no better device. Cosimo de Medici, who may be regarded as a sound man and one little given to toying with chimeras, was of like mind in Florence.

I do not propose to talk social theory. I treat an immediate issue. I think there is any amount of willingness to patronise the arts now present in America, and that the point of fact need hardly be argued.

The question of the most advisable method remains.

The American Academy at Rome is a most commendable model. Ten men are kept there, for a term of three years each—painters, sculptors, architects.

But why of necessity Rome? Why only ten men? Why only three sorts of art?

The mingling of young men engaged in *all* the different sorts of art has always proved most fruitful. One comes to a capital, in fact, in order that one may find the most dynamic minds of each variety.

My proposal is of the simplest. I want not ten men but a hundred. I want not Rome, but New York or Chicago.

I want these hundred men chosen with regard to their intentions and their capacities, not by an academic foot rule. I want them to be men who have done enough to show that their work is neither a passing whim nor a commercial predilection. I want painters, sculptors, musical composers, architects, scholars in the art of verse, and in the art of prose for that matter, and those who show some signs of being dramatists, and I should admit the occasional artists in the slightly divergent arts, say etchers or workers in bronze or in stained glass.

I should leave the charter so open that no dynamic man need be excluded. I should not have a freak committee, but as no institution has ever yet proved too revolutionary I should base the qualifications for admittance largely upon originality. I should insist, on the contrary that, save in rarest cases, the candidate should have reasonable knowledge of the prevailing fashions in the technique of his art. There is no effective revolution in art except that which comes from men who cast off bonds which they show themselves able to bear.

I would rather have the whole hundred of these artists chosen by one efficient artist than by any staid committee that was not composed of efficient artists. There is no hope for such an institution as this, unless the selecting committee be guided by an almost blind hatred of mediocrity, unless they have it branded and engraved upon their consciousness that one fragment of perfect work outweighs forty salons of exhibitions without such a perfect fragment.

Longinus said it long ago in his book to young writers, "When you have composed such and such a thing, think how it would be received by Sophocles or Demosthenes." Until the American artist can work with some thought in his mind of how such and such a work would appeal to, let us say, Rodin, Anatole France, Henry James, or whatever master you will, dead or living, who is known to be reasonably severe, and to have a decent hatred of botches, until just such time is there no use in taking the American writer or artist seriously or of providing him with any plum cakes whatsoever.

But to return to our college. Presumably after the American neophyte in the arts has been beaten with a rope-end until he knows those things which any decent sailor man should know blind, drunk, or a-sleepin' :

I should turn a hundred of him into a super-college, to wit, a college with no professors. I should give him enough yearly income (ranging from £100 to £200) so that he needn't worry about his actual food and lodging. I should take him on during the impossible years of an artist's life, to wit, along between twenty and thirty. I should keep him for from one to three years, according to his earnestness and his performance. (I would not have the three year limit absolute, though I think special provision outside the college could be made for unusual cases.) I would require nothing of him except that he painted the thing as he saw it, at his own rate and time, and that he showed up at a general sort of club rooms reasonably often, to quarrel, to dispute, to fraternise with, to backbite and to accelerate his fellows.

I would have at least ten per cent. of the fellows, foreigners summoned from abroad.

I would not have over twenty per cent. notably of any one religion.

I would have a reasonable fund to provide for bring-

ing great artists from the corners of the earth to loaf about the club room and abuse the bad work of the fellows of the college, or to commend it on such rare occasions as any of it seemed worthy of commendation.

New York is an exceedingly beautiful city; any more than one intelligent man might find a worse way of spending a vacation.

The art of the world has come out of the capitals of the world, because it is only in the capitals of the world, at certain favoured periods, that the best minds among the older men and the ready minds of the younger enthusiasts have mingled and have taken fire one from another.

America is saved when she manages to make a capital, the segregation of officials at Washington has not done this. The game was better played at Alexandria and at Florence.

I write of this little school perhaps lightly, but I do not feel the need of it lightly, nor is my intention of seeing it real a passing fancy of the hour.

## Letters from Italy.

### XVI.—CAPRI.

"AND those in the ship bound me upright, hand and foot, to the mast, and fastened the ropes from it; and they sat down and smote the hoary sea with the sweeps. But while we plunged swiftly on and came as near as a shout might travel, not secretly they rose up hard by the sea-swift ship, singing this clear song:—

"As thou goest by, much-praised Odysseus, great lord of the Achaians, here bring thy ship to land that thou mayst hear the speech of us twain. For there has been none sailing by in his black ship but has heard the honey-dropping speech of our mouths, and gladly has he dwelt here gaining greater knowledge.

"For we know all that Argives and Trojans suffered in broad Troy by the will of the gods, and we know all that is upon the much-blossoming earth."

"So spake they, sending forth lovely speech; and straightway my heart yearned to be heard, and I bade my fellows loose me, bending my eyebrows at them for a sign. But they, leaning to the oars, rowed the harder."

That is Homer's account of the visit of Odysseus to Capri. There was no particular excuse for my making a new translation when there are so many excellent versions on the market, but I wanted to express an exaggerated regard for this island without writing sloppy dithyrambs. And, of course, Capri is the island of the sirens. Have you not all seen guide-books decorated with an unpleasant half-female creature intended for the Homeric Siren? And I have contemplated with vague curiosity the remarks of Italian tourists in hotel visitors' books—"Addio, bella Sirena, addio bellissimo cielo, addio" (heavy sobs and a blot), κ.τ.λ.

Old Homer, the "Ionian father," that "mouth sweeter than Calliope's," etc., etc., knew his business when he planted his colony of sirens along these shores. There may or may not, be some truth in that complex yarn someone told me about someone else who knew a book written by a Frenchman to prove that Homer had a Phœnician chart at his elbow when he wrote the *Odyssey*. But anyhow, as I say, he would never have found a place more happy for his purpose.

The Island of Capri lies off the Sorrento end of the Bay of Naples. Anyone coming from the Gulf of Salerno towards Sorrento would have to pass close to Capri, and those sea-weary heroes, with their "old Greek dread of the sea," would yearn beyond all things to land on the little sand beach and forget their toils. I don't see how Odysseus got his men to row past. (It only costs twenty centesimi to land at the Marina Grande.) And the beauty of the place seen from the sea would attract even the most stodgy Philistine.

After this Odysseus business Capri led a more or

less respectable life for ten or twelve centuries. It was colonised by Greeks from some other Greek colony (Sybaris) in Italy, but never flourished particularly well. This seems a little curious to me (though I have it on the faith of no less an authority than an Italian guide book), because so much of the place fits in with the descriptions in Theocritus, of which I hope to speak again. But it may be that contact with the barbarians was bad for the Greeks. I recollect to have read once in Symond's Italian essays a passage translated by him from some Alexandrine author, who himself quotes from an earlier Greek, Apollonius of Tyre I think, though it is quite possible I am wrong. And this Apollonius (if that was his name) speaks of the inhabitants of Poseidonia (i.e., Pæstum) who by association with the people about them had "become barbarous like the Tyrrhenians and Romans," and who met together once a year in their temple by the sea to bewail their fallen state. That is a very pathetic tradition, as Symonds rightly observes, especially for those who have stood among the yellow-brown columns of the Temple of Poseidon and regretted the beautiful lost art which created them. Perhaps some such fate as that came to the Greeks at Capri, for there is no sign of their residence, except a cemetery recently dug up.

In 26 A.D. Tiberius Cæsar, being sated with every crime, sin, vice, etc., of the human race, retired to Capri to consider his past actions with the vain hope of evolving some new brand of debauch. Owing to his failure he is said to have become lunatic and to have spent feverish nights and days perambulating about his palaces, of which he built about a dozen. If it had occurred to him that an innocent and blameless existence would have been for him the last and direst perversion, he might have kept his wits. As it is we hear of wild and disgusting orgies, and their consequences, like the Syphilitic bastard in Flaubert's "Hérodias," and the ghastly stories of noblemen hurled from the high cliffs into the sea and mangled to death by the oars of the galleys. When one finds that Monte Solaro rises straight from the sea to a long ridge nearly 2,000 feet high, one sees that the spectacle must have had some excitement even for the jaded nerves of an "Imperial lunatic."

What happened to Tiberius in the end I don't exactly remember, but no doubt he perished unpleasantly in order that lower-fourth schoolboys might be fitly edified by sermons on divine retribution. Anyway, I haven't taken the trouble to look up the Emperor's dwellings, which one can see quite well on picture postcards; and they are in a very ruinous condition, and very dull after Rome, Tusculum, Ostia, and Pompeii, and they are a long way from where I live. I have seen the remains of a Roman villa, half under water now, but that I could scarcely help since it stands in the middle of one of the best views.

Further history of Capri escapes me. There is a semi-ruinous tower on Monte Solaro, which a German painter here tells me is Saracenic. In the vulgar it is called "Barbarossa," but I don't know what Kaiser Red-Beard was doing in Capri. Anyhow, the island has been a kind of appendage to Naples, and is now a resort of Tedescans and Neapolitans. Laus Deo, there are but few Americans and English, at least at Anacapri. Capri, the village, pleases me not; it is too metropolitan, too full of surging crowds of second-rate foreigners. But this end of the island is much more select, patronised by royalty, etc., etc. Also Capri is a resort of fifth-rate painters, who make horrid, meretricious little oil sketches of a long-bearded old loafer, who poses around the place in front of the shops where his degraded countenance is exposed for sale. Only yesterday I counted fourteen of these portraits in various shops, all bad and all "saleable." Really, one would think painters might be above producing such obvious "junk"; if they can't make a living honestly, they can at least starve decently. Basta!

RICHARD ALDINGTON.

## Readers and Writers.

A HUNDRED years ago last Friday Wagner was born, and in celebration of his jubilee the Paris Opéra has been en fête, distributing laurels to Wotans, and crowning the bust of Wagner, and I know not what else beside. At the same time a few of Wagner's very earliest letters have made their first appearance—probably at a jubilee price. They are begging letters such as any newly married hobbledehoy might write, appealing without any dignity or humour to his employer for loans. His employer, in this instance, was a Parisian publisher who appears to have been so appreciative of Wagner's genius that he left him copying and correcting music when he should have paid him to write it. All the neglect, however that Wagner received from Paris slid off his back in after years; for praise, however belated, undid every wrong with him. In commemoration of the day I dutifully turned over the leaves of Wagner's "literary" works; a mere museum of intellectual oddities.

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At the Chatelet Theatre in Paris—Paris, mark you—a brand-new play of Maeterlinck's was anxiously expected to be performed last week. It was to signalise Maeterlinck's "return to the drama" after, I presume, his exercises in boxing. To my astonishment the play turned out to be our old friend: "Mary Magdalene." It is possible that this play is new to Parisian theatre-goers, but we have had it in translation (Methuen) in England for several years, and long enough to dislike it intensely. The theme, as readers of THE NEW AGE may remember, is the conversion of Mary Magdalene from her old ways under the romantic influence of Jesus; and very disgustingly it is treated. Madame Maeterlinck, who is, of course, playing the title-rôle of her husband's play, probably sums up the character of Mary as conceived by Maeterlinck pretty accurately: "a courtesan . . . whose mode of life has become distasteful and who is longing for better and higher things." The Crucifixion, it is re-assuring to learn, will not be represented on the stage, even by bioscope superintended by bishops; but "cries of grief and horror" (off, as they say) "enable us to assist at it in spirit." Would any artist, I ask, touch, only to vulgarise, the story even as recorded in the canonical Gospels? As recorded in the Gnostic gospels, of course, the story is infinitely more subtle, as may be seen by turning to Mead's "Fragments of a Faith Forgotten," where the "Gospel of Mary Magdalene" is translated. Yet Maeterlinck has the reputation both of an artist and a mystic. Not with me.

\* \* \*

The Japanese NO dramas (Heinemann, 5s. net) which I announced a fortnight ago have duly arrived, and I have read, so far, the Introduction and one of the plays. Dr. Stopes' Introduction is only so-so, containing facts, but not many ideas. We learn that the NO dramas are ancient, have been exclusively reserved for the Japanese aristocracy, and are not "dramatic" in our sense of the word. Very interesting, but what do these things mean? Why were the plays jealously guarded from plebeian popularity; and how came they, without dramatic qualities, to hold their own so long? An explanation faintly reveals itself in the play I have read, though I doubt if my guess is communicable. The play represents a damsel condemned to hell because her two lovers have murdered each other on her account. Well, what is wrong there? Everything, according to the "Daily News" critic, for in the Western view, the girl is "the most innocent of mortals." And that, undoubtedly, would be the popular view. But ask an artist in life what he thinks of the "innocence" of a girl who, in the esoteric idiom, "buys her lovers a fight"—he would leave it, I imagine, somewhat blown upon. The suggestion I make is that the "idea" of the plays is a subtler morality than the populace would be likely to understand; and my evidence is not only this play, nor even alone the "Daily News" comment on it, but the nature

of the "drama" by which these ideas are represented. There are no dramatic "moments," no climbing of climax, no "scenes"; but the whole consists of rigidly prescribed fine attitudes and fine recitation. Above all, realism is avoided. Unless you are on the level of the author, you miss everything—as you deserve to do. To the gross it is the cackle without the hosses.

\* \* \*

The Italian Renaissance, as everybody knows, had great men for its initiators, great men (in the form of the classics) for their ensamples, and, in consequence, great men for its products. But the Chinese Renaissance, a local affair though some four hundred million people are concerned, has a set of missionaries, women and tradesmen for its conductors, and is likely, in consequence, to do China more harm than good. Amongst the English "classics," we are told, chosen for circulation in China, "Little Lord Fauntleroy" is most popular—which shows the universality of bathos; for the little lord was a little prig and should have had his ears boxed every time he called his mother "Dearest." A certain Chinese statesman, however, was asked what in his opinion should be translated, and he replied: the stories of British and American *statesmen*. So there is no doing anything with the race! After these two silly selections comes a heap of books usually marked in our second-hand shops at a penny soiled: Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace's "Wonderful Century"; Angell's "Great Illusion"; Horsley's "Science and Alcohol"; Kirkup's "History of Socialism"; "Text Book of Joint Stock Companies." These are the scraps of which China is to make for herself a new heaven and a new earth. I can see it!

\* \* \*

The new life of Morris by Mr. Arthur Compton-Ricketts, one of the numerous former editors, I believe, of this journal, seems to be a poor thing. Mr. Marillier, who knew Morris very well, has difficulty in finding anything to praise in it, save the bibliography and a letter by Mr. Wilfrid Blunt. The latter conveys the information that Morris was insusceptible to sex, and would discuss a subject with the prettiest woman no longer than she had anything interesting to say. It is a pleasing trait and one of the best I have heard of Morris. In other respects Morris was an erratic boulder in modern civilisations dating from the mediæval ages. His psychology would be a vain study.

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Strictly speaking, it was an impertinence of Mr. William Archer to follow Mr. G. K. Chesterton as the Saturday special article-writer of the "Daily News." Apostolically drunk or sober Mr. Chesterton never wrote without uttering, if only by accident, one or two good things; and, at his happiest, mots poured from him faster than his understanding could keep pace with them. I imagine, indeed, that he was often his own most surprised (and delighted) reader. But Mr. Archer, never very proliferating, has been empty this many a year; and even trips to America and Japan seem to have been unavailing to replenish his mind. On a recent Saturday for want of something with which to fill his column, he blundered into a discussion of the relative excitement of life in ancient, and life in modern times. The discussion had been opened by that most accomplished journalist, Professor Ferrero, who maintained that life was much more exciting to-day than in Athenian days. Precisely what a journalist would say! The "Times," strangely but truly enough, had replied that Athens in the days of Socrates and Aristophanes was actually in touch with great events and great men, and not by newspaper and hearsay only; therewith settling the discussion for everybody with any intelligence. Mr. Archer, however, must needs put in his paddle to maintain that our own times, intellectually if you please, are superior to the days of Johnson. So swift is progress since Mr. Archer was born that a conversation at Johnson's Club would pale before the brilliance of a conversation between, say, "Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, Lord Morley, Mr. Balfour, Sir Oliver Lodge, Professor Gilbert Murray, Mr. Wells, and Mr.

Shaw." Well, I have heard some of these gentlemen converse, and some I never want to hear. But give me Johnson's conversation with Burke, the fullest reported by Boswell of all the meetings of the Club. They talked things, not thinks, and like men, not scientists. By the way, I will suggest a subject for Mr. Archer's mettle: Imaginary conversations between the Mighty on his list. Let us compare him under the most favourable circumstances with Boswell.

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Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch appears to be having a devil of a fine time as the King Edward VII Professor of English Literature at Cambridge. His lectures, we are told, are being attended by shoals of Girton girls and by troops of the wives of the dons. Such dovescotes are easily fluttered, particularly on such a series as the "Writing of English." For, as surely as eggs are eggs, "Q.'s" audience is in expectation of "tips" for writing essays. In this respect, I am sure, disappointment awaits his lady-hearers when they come afterwards to examine their capture; for nobody can teach style by lecture, and "Q." could not do it if it could be done. What, however, he can do is to produce in his audience iconoclastic thrills by open confessions which he would not venture to make to a company of educated men: this condescension being a familiar form of concealed anti-feminism. His lecture last week, for example, contained the "shocking" admission that he, "Q.," could not read Elizabethan prose, with one exception, with pleasure. "Its one merit," he said, "consisted in that it was struggling, fumbling to say something." Well, that's something! The exception was the translation of the Bible, "out and away" the greatest book of English prose; and its appearance was a miracle. What stuff! What rubbish! The man who says that the appearance of the revised Bible of 1611 was a "miracle," in the sense of being unprepared for and unexpected will be maintaining next that Joshua caused the sun to stand still and that the whale swallowed Jonah. It is worse than superstition, however; and worse even than ignorance; for the "explanation" is not only untrue, but it is flatteringly misleading. If forty-seven obscure nobodies by the mere grace of God could create without the support of their age the greatest book of English prose, why should not an equal number of Girton girls and dons' wives . . . you hear the silent applause? But the hypothesis is unfounded, as anybody can see who examines comparatively not only the predecessors but the contemporaries of the men of 1611. The forty-seven were preceded by the translators of three centuries, "all good Englishmen and faithful speakers of English"; the Elizabethan period strictly had closed before they began their work; Shakespeare himself had ten years to live when the Version was begun; Bacon was at the height of his glory. That English prose was then being written by masters of whom the Forty-seven were simply forty-seven nobody can deny; and if the names are not enough let anybody turn to the text of the Dedication to James. In it they will find evidence, not only that the translators received royal encouragement, but the even more royal encouragement of emulation with their contemporaries. "We shall be maligned," they say, "by self-conceited Brethren, who run their own ways, and give liking unto nothing, but what is framed by themselves and hammered on their anvil." That charge, I maintain, acquits their contemporaries of the worst crime against artists—namely, indifference.

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In curiosity last week I picked up on a bookstall a copy of a new magazine: "The Patrician." Nothing more deserves to be said of it, but I was set calculating the number of new magazines now being hatched. It is amazing. I'm afraid, to tell the truth, that THE NEW AGE set the fashion; for every one of the new journals and reviews sets its cap at us. Well, I have no objection myself so we all die together, though death by overcrowding, they tell me, is most uncom-

fortable. But what I should like to know is the *raison d'être* of these "New" creations? I will be frank and ask what reason for existing have the "English Review," the "New Witness," the "New Statesman," the "New Freewoman," the "Blue Review," "Poetry and Drama," "Everyman," and half a score of others? It would be tedious to examine them in detail for an answer; but where is the "idea"—to take two only—that justifies in creation the "New Statesman" or the "Blue Review?" A journal is presumably justified when (1) it proposes to do something that no existing journal does, or when (2) it proposes to do better what existing journals do badly. Neither of the above publications, however, satisfies either of these conditions. The "Nation" and the "Board of Trade Gazette" covered the ground of the "New Statesman," and better, not worse. The "Blue Review" was anticipated by the "English Review." In the autumn I understand we are to have still another weekly review. 32 pages at a penny, and edited by Mr. Austin Harrison.

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"Even supreme mastery of style is a small thing when it is not the instrument of a shaping imagination." Mr. S. K. Ratcliffe in the "Daily News" on the late Goldwin Smith. Put it in "Current idiom" if you please. As if supreme mastery of style could exist without a shaping imagination! The writer probably meant that Goldwin Smith ceased to be a Liberal when he realised that under Liberalism plutocracy would "reign till it rotted."

R. H. C.

## They Do Not Understand.

By J. T. Fife.

LONG, long ago, in the capital of a great nation which was known all over the world as the "Island Empire," there lived a very strange man.

He was a foreigner; and so the people of that city didn't like him at all. They said he was a wizard, was in league with evil spirits; and they would have burned him at the stake in the city square, but they were afraid. As time passed the desire to kill him increased, and that, because he was always asking questions. In fact, he was known as Mr. Why.

Now, you and I should be only too pleased to answer questions—that is, proper ones. Nay, at a pinch, we might even "answer a fool according to his folly." It is to be regretted, therefore, Mr. Why is no longer a citizen of this world.

One day, while the King was reviewing his army in the Royal Park, Mr. Why broke through the cordon of guards which kept the common people at a proper distance. He marched right up to the King, and, without any more ado, asked what the soldiers were about.

Now, you must know that such an action coming from one of the common people was without precedent in the Island Empire, therefore the guards were taken by surprise. Before they had recovered he was addressing the King.

This almost paralysed them.

He just walked—walked! mark you—and that was all. And it was required in that land, that on approaching the Sovereign, one had to halt twenty and a half paces from the regal presence, lift up both hands over the head, bow once to the North, twice to the East, three times to the South, and four times to the West. For this purpose, those who attended Court, carried mariners' compasses. One then faced his Majesty again, and began to bend slowly back until the outstretched hands touched the ground; after which, and in that manner that vulgar little boys call the "Crab

Walk," one proceeded slowly until one reached the feet of the King. On arriving thus far one was commanded to rise, or the King's body-guard removed the pieces. The Lord High Executioner was ever in attendance for this. Such a method had originated in the ante-glacial period of that nation's history, but the reason was unknown.

However, the King was in merry mood, and the dismay pictured in all the courtiers' faces made him burst out laughing. Then the courtiers laughed, and so did the guards, who had been approaching the Royal grandstand from all quarters in crab fashion after running to the twenty and a half paces.

"Well, caitiff!" said the King, "What wouldst thou?"

"I asked," answered Mr. Why, never once saying "Your Solar Mightiness," as was required. "I asked, what are those men doing?"

"What dost they do? H'm," pondered his Mightiness. "What dost they? Aha! Now for it. Ho!"

This last he addressed to the Lord High Executioner.

"Hither send me the Grand Prime Minister, the Secretary of State, the Minister for War. Aha! Quick!! Hasten!!!"

The courtiers all echoed Aha! while the L.H.E. interviewed the Deputy, who ordered the Chief Lord-in-Waiting, who asked the Gold Stick, who solicited the Black Rod, to request the instant attendance of the Prime Minister and his Cabinet.

And so it was; for they hurried from business of great public moment, in which they were determining that a well fifty feet deep was a wall fifty feet high, in order to await the King's pleasure.

"Answer this caitiff," commanded he after they had concluded their contortions and genuflections.

"Aha! answer this caitiff!" chorused the courtiers.

"Yes, your Mightiness, we shall answer this caitiff," said the Prime Minister. "Ho! Caitiff! What is it?"

Mr. Why was amazed at the procedure, though he again asked what the men were doing.

"Ha!" replied the Prime Minister. "Hum! Those men are the army. They are manœuvring—ah, parading, er, drilling aha, being inspected, er doing ever so many things."

"But why? For what purpose are they drilling?"

"Answer!" said the King to the Minister for War, touching him with the baton he held in his hand.

"Oh, your Mighty Solarity," protested the War Lord, "the honour is too great for me."

"Come, come!" called the King. "Answer! or—" and at the sign the Lord High Executioner stepped forward.

"Your Solar Benignity, yes! Answer the question? Yes!" He quavered this out, but there was no quaver when he spoke to Mr. Why.

"Varlet," he said, "they are drilling so that they may be able and ready to fight."

"Why?" persisted the stranger.

"Your Solar Mightiness, must I answer this?" pleaded the troubled War Lord.

"Answer!" said his Mightiness impatiently.

"Well, varlet, so that when our neighbours over the water come to steal our neat little island, we shall be able to resist them."

"Isn't their own land good enough?"

"H'm yes; perhaps; well—but—but—Oh, your Mightiness, it is the Colonial Secretary who should answer such a question. Why Emperor Sauer Kraut may make my answer a 'casus belli.'"

The King commanded the attendance of the Colonial Secretary, and ordered him to answer the question.

"Isn't their own land good enough?" he mused. "Ay—ah—yes, of course. But—but, well, you do not understand."

"That is why I ask," said Mr. Why. "It is said you drill men, and make an army, so that it may be able to defend those lands that your neighbours wish to steal."

"Oh—ho?" said the Secretary, "has all that been said? Well, well! I'm very much afraid some one has shown great lack of discretion. My colleague, the Secretary for War, has not surely been so ver—er, I mean, alive to the importance of answering such question in camera, or, at least, diplomatically."

Here the King interposed.

"Cut the cackle," said he, which was surely a very unkingly way of speaking.

"Your Solar Solarity! yes," replied the unfortunate Secretary. "I'll cut the ah—er—what you call it. Well, honoured sir!"—not caitiff or varlet, mark—"honoured sir, the various kingdoms, principalities, etc., do likewise. Each has an army. Therefore it must follow, if our nation is to keep its place in the van of progress, it must have an army too. Don't you see?"

"No; not I," said Mr. Why. "I understand you have an army to prevent Emperor——"

"Hush, hush! No, no! Now, not another word," the Secretary interjected, while all around were saying "Hush!" looking preternaturally grave. However, the King commanded that he be allowed to put the question as he chose. "For," he continued, "are we downhearted?"

Immediately a yell of "No!" almost broke the welkin, whatever that is.

Mr. Why proceeded: "To prevent Emperor Sauer Kraut from stealing your land."

"Yes, yes! and—?" said the Secretary.

"And that Sauer Kraut keeps an army to prevent you stealing his."

"No, no!" protested the Colonial Secretary very agitated. "No, not at all. The army of——"

"Hush!"

It was the Secretary of State who spoke.

"Hush! Let us put it in this way. Let us talk of the armies of A and B. So. Then, while A has its army on a purely defensive basis, trained to protect its borders from any aggression—we are all agreed on that, B, however, keeps his army on an aggressive basis. Don't you see it now?"

"Well—yes," said Mr. Why, "I think I do. A considers it good business to kill B to prevent B killing him."

"Tut! my dear, respected, and honoured friend, no. But A believes in being ready. 'In time of peace prepare for war,' you remember the passage? Ah!—But I'm certain His Solarity could put it much better."

"Hear! hear! So let it be!" chorused the courtiers. But the King—remember Truth is stranger than Fiction—the King was thinking.

"Now you see it?" continued the Secretary of State.

"No, I do not," replied Mr. Why.

"And neither do I," said the King; which surprised everyone around. And the Press correspondents—Didn't I tell you reporters were present? No? Well, they were. You see, this was a very progressive, extra special, late edition country, so the reporters had to get new pencils in order to take proper note of what the King said.

Mr. Why showed no desire to stop.

"But what do all those men do for a living?" he asked.

"Most august Sire," answered the War Lord, "soldiering is their work."

"Oho! But how are they kept?"

"The nation pays them," was the answer.

"Costly, isn't it?"

"Well, yes, millions. Hundreds of millions."

"And that's what I don't get," said the King. "I'll go on strike yet. An increase in my salary is long over due. I'll join the Labour Party——"

"Pardon, your Mighty Mightiness, pardon! We will consider this as a command," said the Prime Minister, and courtiers and the people cried "Hurrah!"

"Yes; we believe it is time, your Majesty. Therefore we shall double the Death Duties, increase the Land Tax, and triple——"

But such a howl of fury came from the courtiers that what was to be tripled was never heard. The people yelled too. Such was the alarm that all the guards fixed their bayonets and marched to within the twenty and a half paces, and were getting ready for the contortionist progression.

It was his Mightiness who restored order, by sacking the Prime Minister on the spot, and ordering him to be taken to prison.

This made the reporters frantic. A few of them were signalling by means of a pocket-wireless telegraphic watch to their editors to send by return the cinematographic photographer. Order restored, Mr. Why was commanded to proceed.

"Well, then," said he, "but do the people like it?"

"Eh!!!"

Such was the universal interjection; such a question upset them.

"Do the men like it?" persisted Mr. Why.

"Well, no! Not all of them," answered the Man of War. "But what has that got to do with it? They've got to like it."

"H'm! It's very queer," was Why's only remark. Then he did a terrible thing; a most awful thing. He turned round to leave; actually turned his back on the King. Did ever anyone hear of such a—a—an almost sacrilegious action? Instead of retreating backwards on all fours and thumping his head on the ground three times to the minute, he actually turned and walked away.

The King, kind and all as he was, couldn't stand that.

"Guards!" he yelled, "Guards! Stop that man!"

But Mr. Why didn't require the guards to stop him. When he heard the King yell out, he thought someone had hurt him, so returned to render assistance.

Ah! It was an angry King he now saw; a King no longer inclined to humour the idiosyncrasy of a foreigner: he had been too grossly insulted.

Frowning on Mr. Why he bellowed, "Hast anything to say? Hast——"

"Indeed, no," answered Mr. Why. "Only I do not understand."

"Hah! That saves you not! You do not understand? Ha! ha! ha! He doesn't understand."

The courtiers, and next the populace took up the cry. "Ha!" they yelled, "He doesn't understand."

Mr. Why regarded them with astonishment.

"Yes," he said, "it is true. I do not understand. Your army and Emperor Sauer Kraut's army are composed of men, most of whom do not desire to be in the army——"

"Ho! ho!" said the King, "who speaks of armies now?"

"I do," said Mr. Why. "And I do not understand why those who compose the army do not put a stop to it. They are the people—the nation——" But he got no further.

"Guards," screamed the King, "Guards! My God! Why don't you kill him? He is an anarchist, a foreign alien. Guards! Guards!"

Rough hands were now laid on Mr. Why. The Lord High Executioner drew his scimitar and smote at him, but the War Lord's cheek came in the way and curled up its blade like tinfoil. The army, though, ably assisted by the guards, carried him off to prison, while the people howled, "Kill him! Kill all aliens! God save the King!"

As Mr. Why was led off to prison he remarked:—

"Now, I see. The army exists nominally for one thing, but really for another."

But poor Mr. Why was executed all the same.

## Views and Reviews.

THIS will be a very dull article, for Mr. Philip Snowden is so hopelessly out-of-date that I can do no more than vamp up arguments familiar to the readers of THE NEW AGE in reviewing his book. Lest I should be accused of wantonly destructive criticism, let me quote from the review of this book in the "Daily Citizen." "Mr. Snowden is one of the orators of the Labour movement, and he is also one of its distinguished writers. His power of expression is to be found in his exceeding clarity. He sees things clearly, and he states them clearly. Add to his lucidity his wealth of ideas, ordered and comprehensive, and the reason of his interest for readers and hearers is at once manifested. . . . It will be seen from what is said that the volume will be a real acquisition to the forces of progress." I do not want to criticise this review, but I must remark that the statement that "there is evidence of hurried writing" is compatible with the description of Mr. Snowden as one of the distinguished writers of the Labour movement only in a sense derogatory to the literary ability of that movement.

Mr. Snowden, of course, regards Socialism as a political movement; indeed, in drawing the customary distinction between evolutionary and revolutionary Socialists, he says: "This phrase, Revolutionary Socialism, has survived long after it has ceased to have any real significance, for nowadays not even the loudest voiced Revolutionary Socialist expects that the Social Revolution will be achieved in any other way than by the gradual acquisition of political power by the democracy and the gradual transformation of the capitalist system into a co-operative commonwealth." This may be true of "Revolutionary Socialists," but it certainly is not true of those allies of the Social movement whom Mr. Snowden patronises so insufferably in this book. It is Mr. Snowden's misfortune, due entirely to his deliberate stupidity, to be contradicted by facts; and, as readers of this journal know, the co-operators have refused to federate with the Parliamentary Labour Party. "Politics divide, economics unite," said the President of that Conference; and the Parliamentary Labour Party has lost the support of the co-operators. But is the statement true of Revolutionary Socialists? Mr. John Graham Brooks, writing of American Syndicalism, argues that Syndicalism is the result of disappointment with politics. "Politicians of every ilk and shade had promised results that did not come. Incoming Governments held out hopes that were not realised. Wherever these disappointments reach a certain portion of the wage-earners, Syndicalism gets its first expression." Lest it might be thought that this was simply disappointment with ordinary party politics, I make another quotation. Mr. Brooks says: "Two or three years later it was written: 'We Socialists in ninety Communes have benches full of deputies and two members of the Government, but what have they done for Socialism? They are busy, most of them, explaining why they can do nothing. One critic said: "The only talent they had developed was *le talent de s'excuser*; it is all talk, talk." Thus out of the sorrow or the rage of disappointment Syndicalism is born. It was only a more concrete and acute form of that chagrin at the failure of parliaments and legislatures which the people of many countries have come to feel, and none more rebelliously than we in the United States. It is thus not alone the

\* "Socialism and Syndicalism." By Philip Snowden, M.P. (Collins. 1s. net.)

revelation that politics and trade unions work so feebly and so tardily, Socialism also brought its own discouragements, to those who are now Syndicalists. Socialism is long enough in the field to have furnished its own history of disappointment."

But even if Revolutionary Socialists agree with Mr. Snowden, Mr. Snowden does not agree with himself. For he objects to Kautsky's definition of a Revolutionary Socialist as one "whose aim is that a hitherto oppressed shall conquer the power of the State" in words which, for sheer baffle-headedness, are not surpassed by any politician whose "power of expression is not to be found in his exceeding clarity." Mr. Snowden says: "This [Kautsky's] seems a very unsatisfactory definition of the Social Revolution. The conquest of political power by a new class is not the Social Revolution [although the Revolutionary Socialists, according to Mr. Snowden, agree with him that it is]. The Social Revolution is the conquest of economic power by a hitherto subject class. [Who is sneering at the Labour Party now?] It is possible for political power to pass into the hands of a new class, but no Social Revolution to follow. We have seen that in this country. In 1867 and in 1884 there was a political revolution which transferred the political superstructure to a new class—the proletariat. But no Social Revolution has followed. The political power of the new electorate, instead of accomplishing a Social Revolution has from certain points of view made the economic position of the capitalist class more secure than before." Did I not say that the man is deliberately stupid? For he accepts Marx's definition of the Social Revolution as "that more or less rapid transformation of the vast juridical and political superstructure of society which results from the transformation of its economic foundations"; and yet can argue that the mere extension of the franchise "transferred the political superstructure of society to a new class."

The fact is that Mr. Snowden has lost himself in special pleading for a bad cause. For by the very terms of Marx's definition (to which he adheres, and proves therefrom that "all Socialists who help the evolutionary processes which culminate in the Revolution are Revolutionary and Evolutionary Socialists at the same time"), the transformation of the economic foundations of society must precede the transformation of the juridical and political superstructure. The present economic foundation is wages, the price paid for labour as a commodity. Has the Labour Party abolished wages; have the co-operators abolished wages; has gas-and-water Socialism abolished wages; will the State Socialism that Mr. Snowden desires abolish wages? The answer to all these questions is in the negative; and there can be no transformation of the juridical and political structure until the economic foundations of society are changed.

What, then, is his objection to Syndicalism. It is simply that Syndicalism has as its object the abolition of the wage-system. Disguised under various plitudes, such as: "Socialism has been so much concerned about the community that it has neglected the individual to some extent. Syndicalism comes to urge that aspect of the social problem": there is the hostility to the abolition of wages. "The Socialist State will settle the rates of remuneration of the various grades of workers," he says in another place; and as "Socialism will neither abolish private property nor prohibit private enterprise," this simply means that the Government will compete for labour with employers. We are to devote our attention to electing more Labour members so that the root of all evil, the commodity idea of labour, may flourish under the auspices of the State. The sacrifice is really too great for such a reward; and not even for the sake of this "pale ascetic," with his "passionate devotion to the cause of the people," as the Liberal papers phrase it, will we forego the glimmer of truth that Mr. Snowden would obscure.

A. E. R.

## REVIEWS.

**Industrial Germany.** By William H. Dawson. (Collins (The Nation's Library). 1s. net.)

THIS book may be described as a readable selection of important facts, statistics, and figures. It is a horrid subject; for industrialism is beastly at best, and Germany has never been noted for refinement, so that when we have the two together we might well fancy ourselves back in the stone age. But no doubt our business men are afraid of the Germans and would do well to study their methods. From our point of view the workmen should do so, too, for the contents of this little volume should be a warning to them, and especially to the Collectivists among them.

The German State has set out to exploit all the natural resources of the country in favour of the manufacturer; and the mere fact that the railways, when this was being done, became State-owned, does not mean that the workmen are well paid. Take this as an example:—

The net yield of all the German State railways in 1911 was estimated at £36,500,000, and, after allowing a deduction for interest at the rate of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., a profit of £16,000,000 remained for public purposes. It has been estimated that, since they passed into the national possession, the German railways have provided over £150,000,000 of revenue, and inferentially saved the various States taxation to that extent.

Unquestionably the profits are swelled by the comparatively low wages paid to the inferior grades of labour, and perhaps to some extent by the fact that the railway service employs so many females, and it may be unsafe to conclude that the present return will long continue. The daily wages of labourers on the Prussian State railways, in 1909, ranged from 2s. 6d. to 3s. 3d. a day, and those of artisans from 3s. 3d. to 4s. 9d., the hours varying from nine to twelve a day. These rates, low as they are, were 17 per cent. higher than in 1905. It is easy to see that even a moderate increase of pay in the case of a staff now numbering 488,000 servants of all grades would make a serious inroad upon profits. To some extent the State tries to atone for paying low wages by providing benefits of material value to certain classes of workmen—e.g., houses at low rents, free garden plots, pensions, bonuses, holidays, etc.; but the wages question is a source of great soreness, and of as much agitation as is possible under the rigid regulations applying to this branch of the State service, which makes strikes impossible.

This is the Servile State with a vengeance; and the last half-dozen lines of this excerpt illustrate the contentions which THE NEW AGE has been making for years past. Payment in kind and not in money; prohibition of strikes—have we not foretold it all? and how can Labour make any progress under these conditions, especially when three million bayonets stand ready to guard the interests of the masters?

Of the remaining chapters of a book which is undoubtedly of value to Socialists, emphasis should be laid on the section dealing with "cartels" and syndicates—employers' syndicates. It is not sufficiently realised in England that the German Trusts are as omnipotent as those in America, even if on a smaller scale. Hear Mr. Dawson again:—

The eighty odd cartels and syndicates in the coal and iron industries probably outweigh in importance all the rest put together, alike in the amount of capital represented and in their influence upon industry generally. One of the oldest and most powerful of the syndicates is the Rhenish-Westphalian Coal Syndicate, formed in 1893 for the avowed purpose of abolishing unhealthy competition in the coal trade—in other words, of regulating prices with an upward tendency. By the agreement upon which the syndicate is based, the allied collieries agree to limit their output to the shares assigned to them and to sell to the syndicate, which supplies the market at its own prices. To-day this syndicate controls the entire colliery industry of Rhineland-Westphalia, and, in consequence, the coal trade of North-West and much of Central Germany, since the cost of carriage largely disables the Silesian collieries from competing within these areas. The coal is sold to the public by associations of dealers formed under the direction of the syndicate, and subject to its control in all important matters. The costs

of the syndicate are covered by a levy on the accounts of the allied companies; but this deduction is merely nominal, for it is naturally allowed for in the fixing of prices.

This is only one syndicate; there are several others, described by Mr. Dawson at some length. And perhaps the most significant lesson for us may be drawn from the efforts made by the capitalists to combat the spread of trade unionism when the workmen's movements threatened to interfere with cartels and profits. They started an opposition trade union movement, the so-called "Pacifist" or "Free Labour" societies, "formed as a rule for individual industrial undertakings and largely subsidised by the employers." It is hardly necessary after this for Mr. Dawson to tell us that the "Pacifist" trade unions refuse to countenance strikes and "do not represent the labour cause in its most virile aspects." We shall yet see a "Pacifist" trade union movement in England, with Mr. Philip Snowden and Mr. Ramsay MacDonald at its head. A very good book this; and full of warnings obvious enough to everybody except Labour M.P.'s.

**In Jesuit Land.** By W. H. Koebel. (Stanley Paul. 12s. 6d. net.)

The story of the Jesuit civilisation of the Guarani natives has been already told by Mr. Cunninghame Graham in his "A Vanished Arcadia," but Mr. Koebel has seized the opportunity offered by the impending commercial development of the Misiones territory to write what is practically a new edition of that work. The story is worth retelling; but instead of the usual tourist's introduction, we should have preferred a detailed account of the probable development of this territory contrasted with the actual results of the efforts of the Jesuits. A judicial summing up in favour of the disinterestedness, the skill, and the practical success of the Jesuit administration was scarcely necessary: no one now denies the colonising genius of this order of priests. But our knowledge of capitalist enterprise makes us more than a little dubious of the results of the forthcoming development of this portion of Paraguay; we have good reason to fear that as compared with the comfortable and cultured slavery imposed by the Jesuits, the modern entrepreneur has only the inhuman and degrading slavery to offer that the colonists who secured the expulsion of the Jesuits imposed. We should have preferred, because we really need, some information concerning the nature of the development that now awaits the Misiones territory. Certainly, it is not likely that the labourer will now get the benefit of his labour, in addition to all that organisation and culture imply; and Mr. Koebel's book will at least serve as a basis of criticism of modern capitalist effort. The book is illustrated with some good photographs, and has, at least, the merit of dealing with an interesting subject.

**The Cable Game.** By Stanley Washburn. (Melrose. 4s. 6d. net.)

We suppose that there are people who like to know how newspaper men earn their living, more particularly when they are of such importance that they are allowed to charter steamboats. Mr. Washburn is such a man, and he tells in this book of the trials and adventures through which he passed in the attempt to obtain information for his paper concerning the riots in Russia. Really, it does not matter to us what he was after; his book might be a novel for all the value it has. We are introduced to a black servant, who is, we suppose, more real because he is less comical than a character in a work of fiction dare be. We have several accounts of storms on the Black Sea, and the hair-breadth escapes from death of Mr. Washburn and his crew; and the whole is written in that detestably journalistic style that makes most American books unreadable. There is not a triviality about his journeyings that is omitted; and the only fit memorial of them is the few columns of news in the Chicago "Daily News." The book is the unwarrantable intrusion of a previously

unknown person, whom we prefer shrouded in the anonymity of "Our Special Correspondent."

**Rambles in Kent.** By J. Charles Cox. (Methuen. 6s.)

This volume is a fellow to Dr. Cox's three previous volumes on Sussex, Surrey, and Somerset. The interests of the author are various, including architecture, literary and political history, that heterogeneous collection of subjects summarised as archæology; and he has an eye to see, but not a pen to describe, the beauty of scenery and of stained glass. Dr. Cox is a born pedestrian: his prose betrays the fact; but he does not whistle for want of thought as he paces through a county. He muses on dates, styles of architecture, traditions of political and literary association; and one might do worse than tour a county in his company. Certainly, his planning of walks is admirable, and his books may lure people abroad who regard places as inaccessible if they are not on a railway line. What "the call of the wild" may fail to effect, that curiosity that is attracted to places that are connected, ever so remotely, with well-known names may achieve; and snobbery may thus become the servant of hygiene.

**Vagabond Days in Brittany.** By Leslie Richardson. (Methuen. 5s. net.)

This is another example of a sort of book that is becoming common, and is practically useless. If Mr. Richardson wishes to write a guide-book to Brittany, let him do so; if he wishes to write a storybook, let him try! But to write a guide-book in the form of a storybook is to be neither interesting nor intelligible. The task of disentangling fact from fiction is not one that will appeal to tourists, and, to a reader who does not intend to travel, Mr. Richardson's recital of his drinking bouts and "corroborees" lacks much of humour and everything of art. Maximus and Lucien may be of great importance to themselves, or even to Mr. Richardson; but we may reasonably protest that we are not interested in their seasickness, that the story of their angling competition has "an ancient and fishlike smell," and that we think that a man who, as a stranger and foreigner, thrust himself into a bridal party and danced seven times with the bride deserved the thrashing that he did not get. To see Brittany through the eyes of a couple of immitigable cads is not the best introduction to a country with a history, and is none the less unwelcome for the facts that the cads are imaginary, and the country is not.

**Modern Grub Street and Other Essays.** By St. John Adcock. (Herbert and Daniel. 3s. 6d. net.)

Mr. Adcock is a tedious person who writes about what the sexton said, what the charwoman said, what the fools in the clubs said, about death, love, and social life respectively. Other essays deal with the ideal holiday, which is to be obtained by changing occupations so that duchesses do laundry work and washerwomen receive society; with a rummage sale, the truth about sport (which is simply that it is cheaper to buy your food than catch it), the gospel of success, and similar fatuities. The essays dealing with the literary life are only diluted Gissing, without his talent or love of literature; and Mr. Adcock's advice about literary agents, and literature generally, may interest those three notorious novelists who spent a week-end together and discussed prices. Naturally enough, the volume contains an essay on "Poetry and the Public," wherein the public is praised for ignoring modern poets, and the poets are reprimanded for not doing as Mr. Adcock has done, writing what the public wants. The fact is that Mr. Adcock is still in Grub Street, and there we may leave him.

**The Invincible Alliance.** By Francis Grierson. (Lane. 3s. 6d. net.)

This volume of essays will add little, if anything, to Mr. Grierson's reputation. His apparent profundity

deserts him when he deals with tangible things; and his own criticism of Lamartine, that a man of genius loses inspiration and power when he descends to politics, ought to have warned him against political prophecy. "The Invincible Alliance," which gives the title to this volume, is a suggestion for an alliance between England and America, against a coalised Europe and a menacing Asia. Mr. Grierson suggests an exchange of preachers between the two countries as a means to this end; but why not give Europe and Asia the benefit of their eloquence, and export the lot to these Continents? A number of the other essays in this volume have appeared in THE NEW AGE, and, as Mr. Grierson does not acknowledge the fact, we need not do more than remind him of it. When he writes of our Parliamentary arena, he does little more than translate the symbolism of "F. C. G.'s" cartoons into language; and his political wit has degenerated into transcription from a menu-card. We miss from this volume the commendation of M. Maeterlinck; but doubtless that will arrive in time for a second edition.

**The Revolt of the Birds.** By G. Edward Young. (Kelly. 2s. 6d. net.)

This is described as "A Song-Drama for Children," and its excellent purpose discounts criticism to some extent; moreover, children are not naturally critics of poetry. But we may doubt whether good feeling can really be inspired by bad poetry; and some of Mr. Young's lines are so inept that we can only hope that the children will not transfer their destructive energy from ornithology to literature. To write:—

Now womankind their murderous headgear doff,  
We place on Love the crown ne'er to come off:

is to put a premium on confused utterance. For it is certain that the headgear is not murderous, but murdered; and "the crown ne'er to come off" is such a paltry rhyme and limping rhythm, so inept a description, and so redundant an expression—it expresses, in short, so many literary vices—that the possibility of its inculcating virtue is not apparent. Better stick to prose, Mr. Young, if you want to preach.

#### A YOUTHFUL SPIRIT'S JOURNEY.

I STOLE away in silence from those sun-swapt native hills,  
Where forests wild with music of a thousand woodland  
rills  
Had taught my soul the sanctuary of youth's delightful  
dreams,  
And carried me through Arcady on amiable streams.

I roamed away in manhood's guise, youth's spirit left  
behind,  
And sought for worldly majesty; sought wisdom of man-  
kind,  
Stupendous strength of souls and high nobility—  
I found but slaves contented with captivity.

Heedless to truth's own transcendental light,  
The mass of men meandering through travail's dreadful  
night;  
And no star shone to guide them to heavenly freedom's  
hall;  
Their food was but a poison, a bitter, bitter gall.

The sweat of slaves surrendered to hideous golden gods  
Oozed out and flesh and blood were soulless as earth's  
sods;  
Through all this load of sadness, of dire infirmity,  
What craving can there be for Time's eternity?

Drooping low with anguish at mankind's dreadful states,  
I ploughed my way through jungles to where Youth's  
spirit waits;  
And clothed me once again in his celestial spring,  
And forest brook and lovely glen once more with music  
ring.

THOMAS FLEMING.

## Pastiche

## CONCERNING A GARRULOUS PROFLIGATE.

## I.

Come, friend, we will leave them  
While he—the bibacious, lust-ridden cormorant—flaunteth  
Seductive account of the evening's voluptuous conquest—  
Mouth cynical, leering, eye gloating, demeanour  
thrasonic,  
Face livid as clay of dead passion.  
But YOU will not sip the libation he poureth  
To the fetish of rampant concupiscence. . . .  
The others! ah, see how they grovel,  
Imbibing the roseate tricklings that flood like a philtre  
Their brains hebeted, and cheat them with nebulous  
musings  
On clinging, enveloping graces, impossible amours.

You—you are a poet  
With eye meet to usher chaste visions  
Safe unto the guardian soul's benediction,  
Fair visions that wander so vagrant through woodland,  
by rillet,  
By flower-spangled banks all alough at the sunlight, fast  
over  
The west hills at sunwane in radiant raiment, through  
valleys  
At dusk, veiled so coyly  
In mist of blue waters;  
And lips that may woo the shy music  
Of frail chords deep hidden  
In resonant caverns.

Yes, chaste are you, friend, and  
Youth-love I extend you,  
So will we leave them.  
If virtue could tower with her beauty  
Immaculate o'er them, serenely bemused, unbesmirched,  
or  
Make frigid their scurrilous banter with survey im-  
perious,  
Censure dispassionate,  
Then might you tarry;  
But, lapped by convivial ribaldry, fumes enervating,  
Too oft she unbendeth, bestoweth  
A license of unexpressed mirth on their scandal. . . .  
I heard you  
Laugh, once—then  
The lark ceased her vespertine pæans,  
And joined the demoniac choir of glutton-slaked rooks, in  
The high trees exulting.  
Your arm, friend,  
We'll wander  
A while in the garden. . . .

## II.

Ah! See how serenely  
The moon bendeth low to the tree-tops.  
Meseems, she hath zephyrous converse  
With leafy emissaries—haply,  
Of mortals' sly vagaries 'neath their conniving conceal-  
ment;  
Certain, she holdeth  
Quiet intimacy with the laurel  
So frankly responsive about us.  
How tranquil 'tis, friend, and what spirits  
Hath drifted from Lethe, and folded  
Their languorous wings in the shadows. . . .  
There, hear now: incontinent laughter  
Comes reeling out into the quietness!  
But think you, friend, thus they could revel  
An they stood but a while 'neath the trees here,  
An they gazed but a while at the moon, with  
Calm, reverent eyes? I am glad, friend,  
We left them;  
So happy—enraptured Diana  
Smiles down with such fair approbation—  
That my spirit aspires to her bosom  
On silvery gleams that mine eyes—too,  
Too ardent—hath drawn through the ether.

But let's to conjecture: what, think you,  
Unleashed his lecherous passion,  
Persistent for circumspect quarry?  
Now, hap'd he on some potent garden that wantonly  
wafted

Redolence of prodigal roses on breath of the south wind?

"Nay, an it were so  
He now would be drooping in silence, beholding the ruin  
Of spent, scattered petals."  
Then, haply, he plundered the bloom with melliferous  
yearning?

"Nay, then, like the bee is he mutely distilling a  
sweetness  
A dowry for others?"

Then, friend, hath he caught the wild dancing of carnival  
waters

'Mong cascades of laughter ecstatic—inveigling allure-  
ment

Of grots siren-haunted?

"Nay, friend, might he not then be silently tracing  
and weaving

Idyllic adornments?"

Then hath this Anacreon visions of complaisant maidens,  
And rich-mantling goblets?

"Methinks, then would flow from his nuptials mellow  
music."

Then, friend, was it merely

A surfeit of viands,

Improper combustion,

A torrid indulgence of Fancy?

O "I fear me."

Ye gods!—and now list to this raucous hilarity! . . .

But, see, the eye waneth,

The moon climbs aloof, and,

Dear friend . . . so . . . a calm salutation!

'Twill linger, an amulet sure, for our slumbers . . .

I'm happy we left them;

Good-night, friend.

ALBERT ALLEN.

## THE EPIGRAM.

JOHN: Truly, we live in an epigrammatic age! We  
must all make epigrams or die. It matters little what  
we make them *about*. Beer, like Mr. Chesterton; Free  
Love, like Mr. Shaw; Roman Catholicism, like Mr.  
Belloc; or even Whiskers, like a less illustrious jester.  
The epigram's the thing. How bored one gets with this  
monstrous cleverness!

TOM: Still, there is a use for the epigram. For in-  
stance, when I come upon a short, striking sentence, after  
reading a passage of exposition or argument, I feel that  
it *illuminates* the whole passage; and that the exposition  
would lack perfect lucidity and the argument be pointless  
without the essential epigram: like a cathedral wanting  
the spire, or a sword without a point.

JOHN: True; but what would you say of an architect  
who only built spires, or a soldier who was only armed  
with a sword *point*? Yet these moderns are such mad  
architects and inadequate soldiers. The epigram is very  
effective when used by a literary artist. After he has  
elaborated his argument and brought out all the resources  
of his reasoning and his enthusiasm, the epigram may be  
used wisely to carry ultimate conviction. But Chester-  
ton and Shaw deluge us with epigrams, and nothing but  
epigrams. Epigrams are their substitute for reason,  
faith, and even intellectual honesty. Or, perhaps, they  
use it as a veil to conceal that admirable but unpopular  
quality which belongs to them both—common sense. It  
matters little, however. What vexes me is that even  
when they do utter a true and beautiful thought, it is  
expressed so perversely, and mixed up with so many  
absurdities that one generally loses it. You remember  
what Lessing said, that "He who brings Truth to his  
readers rouged and powdered, and in fine clothes, is not  
her lover, but her pandar." Ah! well, Mr. Shaw and  
Mr. Chesterton always bring in Truth disguised, and  
disguised so successfully that one cannot say whether it  
is Truth or not.

TOM: The epigram is most vicious, however, when it is  
a habit. As by excessive drinking one may become that  
half-human thing, a drunkard, so, by force of habit, the  
journalist or writer ceases to be a journalist or writer,  
and becomes an epigrammatist. In time he thinks more  
of how a sentence *sounds* than of what it *means*. When  
I read a new book, I find myself often saying, "Ah!  
that is clever!" but very rarely, "That is true!"

JOHN: The epigram is the mark of an hysterical age.  
It denotes lack of mastery. Our writers are not serious  
enough even to *write* seriously. Their capricious pens  
lead them a fantastic dance. The epigram is not a weapon  
which they have mastered, but an obsession which has  
mastered them. They can resist anything but an  
epigram.

EDWARD MOORE.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

## TRADE AND WAGES.

Sir,—Twenty-five years ago I heard a lecturer say, "The rich are getting richer and the poor poorer." This statement has been regularly repeated ever since, and is endorsed in THE NEW AGE "Notes" of last week; but if it is true, the poor should by this time all have taken to the woods! It is true the rich have been getting richer, and are continuing to do so, but the standard of the poorest remains always the same. They get, just because they must have, what will keep them fit for work; no more. The occupations and trades where more intelligence and skill obtain are better off than they were twenty-five years ago, although they do not get—as a manufacturer freely deplored to me only the other day—anything like a fair share in the wealth accruing from good trade, general progress, and inventions. The poorest, the unskilled, get nothing but contempt.

The better conditions and wages men have, the more likely are they to be still improved. The worse the conditions and wages, the more hopeless is the prospect of any improvement. Take a case from the wool industry. Twenty-five years ago the top wage for a dayman wool-sorter was 28s. per week. To-day it is 37s. 6d. Wool-sorting is a skilled trade. The men work side by side in large rooms, devoid of machinery, where conversation is possible from one end to the other. Wool-combing, although as necessary as sorting, is not a skilled trade, and it is carried on amidst deafening machinery, and a heavy odour of stale oil and wool, conversation being, of course, almost impossible during work. After ten hours in the sickening atmosphere of a combing shed, the operative has not a great deal of spirit left for much else. The wages of woolcombers to-day are little better, relative to food prices, than they were twenty-five years ago.

I once saw a procession of woolcombers on strike. I shall never forget it. Ninety per cent. could have stood for the apothecary in "Romeo and Juliet," without any make-up whatever, and I am sure Dickens, when he created Smike, had seen a woolcomber! Although they held up their heads with conscious effort, I felt that they were men, that their condition was not their own creation, but that of the well-dressed persons who superciliously passed them by. And, truly, for these really "bottom dogs" there is no hope until their better-off brethren in labour take up their cause as their own, and refuse to condone any longer conditions which condemn any fellow-man to degradation. They must feel that "an insult to one, is an insult to all."

F. WHELDALE.

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## RAILWAY CLERKS.

Sir,—Your writers of the articles on "Guild Socialism" flatter the Railway Clerks if they think that more than 2 per cent. of them ever heard of THE NEW AGE, to say nothing of the Guild Socialism therein outlined. Such strong meat is not for them, nurtured as they are, like the teachers and the post office employees, in services which are nurseries of small souls.

Their horizon is always the annual holiday or the next 5 per cent. increase in salary—not wages, Sir. Their ambition, which few attain, is 50s. or £3 a week, and a home in suburbia, where residue of energy may be spent in aping gentility. Have you, Sir, ever been in one of those "homes"? I have, and the slums are not more discouraging. You cannot help thinking what such people would be on £3,000 a year. I am not blaming them, I mourn over them, lamenting the conditions which made them what they are. The small farmer, miner, mechanic, or navvy, is a more complete man. Although their wages may be less, they are engaged daily in handling and producing the first necessities of life, and amongst these men, I think, will the first Guilds be formed.

JAS. LOCKE.

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## THE INSURANCE ACT.

Sir,—I do not wish to intervene in the feminist controversy which is raging in THE NEW AGE, but I should like to point out to Mr. Sydney Robert West that it is not enough to resist the Insurance Act in solitary splendour, secure in his "hatred of a slave-making Act." There are thousands who can do this, but they accomplish nothing unless they combine, and their union gives support to thousands more who dare not act alone.

Therefore I urge him to join this association, which contains people of all political views, and so help those

who are being fined and victimised for retaining some independence and love of freedom.

MARGARET DOUGLAS,  
Hon. Secretary,  
Insurance Tax Resisters's Defence Association.  
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## INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION—A CHIMERA.

Sir,—The scheme of international federation, so interestingly described in your columns by Mr. Henry Meulen, has one weak point. It assumes that the signatory Powers are all fully satisfied with the status quo, and are in a position to continue so indefinitely—a condition which certainly does not obtain at the present moment, and, as far as one can see, is not likely to do so until the millennium. Is it in human nature that a vigorous and expanding nation, which finds its borders becoming year by year more and more restrictive, should consent to the bolstering up of some effete and nerveless government in order that the political boundaries of, say, 1913, shall be preserved unchanged through all succeeding centuries? The idea is absurd, and we may as well give up all these chimerical schemes of universal peace and set ourselves to face the bracing fact that a country's peace depends on its own strength and preparedness to defend its inheritance. As soon as these qualities sink below a certain critical point, then will that country fall, and rightly fall, a prey to some "bitter and hasty nation" which, in the keen struggle for existence, finds itself in need of new territory for its teeming population.

I will conclude with one word of warning, which is that no nation is likely to survive which has allowed the production of its necessary food to pass out of its own hands, and has grown to depend on supplies imported from abroad. The first menace of war will reveal the terrible weakness of its position.

IMMO S. ALLEN.

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## FEMINISM IN "THE NEW AGE."

Sir,—Mr. West is wrong. I did not, as I have already said very explicitly, throw to certain ladies of unusual abilities the carcasses of men I despised, saying: "There, my dears, you're quite as good as these." I did contrast three well-known men with three women equally well known in similar spheres, pointing out that the advantage lay rather with the women, hence the comparison between Mr. Rouse and Miss Harrison. I cannot accept the principle of Mr. West's "proper comparison," viz., between all men since civilisation began, and all women, for the confused results obtained from such a higgledy-piggledy jumble of minds, nations, and races would be much too anarchist in nature to suit my taste. The only possible comparison, surely, is between the best types (or average types) of similar classes in the two sexes; a comparison which is at least as old as Manu, and which can be properly made only on the principles of artistic selection so well expressed in the Indian law codes.

I confess with great pleasure that I am unable to understand the callow mind of anyone who can express himself so jauntily, like a perky shop-assistant with a day off, by saying "modern women are wasps" (we can always hear this sort of thing from office-boys and junior clerks), and by referring to Miss Harrison's work as being the result of "the excellent feminine patchwork faculty of putting two and two together." I beg Mr. West not to read Miss Harrison's works again; for anyone who can speak of the pleasure of reading them as a "penance" is obviously incapable of understanding them, or her, or the subjects she writes about with so much charm, penetration, and lucidity. Only a day or two before I saw Mr. West's letter in type I completed a re-perusal of Miss Harrison's "Themis" and her "Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion," and I am prepared to maintain that these typical works could have come only from a creative mind of a very high order. Only such a mind could have sifted, analysed, and correlated the material, in particular, for the chapter devoted, in the first-named book, to the Dithyramb and the Spring Festival, and to the account of the Orphic and Dionysiac Mysteries in the second. But this is a point which cannot be argued about, except by scholars who have tried to travel over the same classic ground, and consequently realise the difficulties in the way. And no scholar who has done so would dream of speaking—at any rate, among scholars—of Miss Harrison's "mere extensive reading." As Paley said, "Who can refute a sneer?"

Mr. West's reference to a swarm of wasps is, I admit, irritating—not because it annoys me personally, but because I am sorry to think that exaggerated Press reports of militancy, and deliberate attempts to raise sex-

prejudices, have caused many men like Mr. West—who writes well enough to show that there is no excuse for his not knowing better—to overlook or belittle the quiet, unostentatious work of such women as Miss Jane Harrison, Miss H. D. Oakeley, Miss E. M. Sharpley, Mrs. Henry Sidgwick, Miss J. P. Strachey, Miss K. Jex-Blake—I could name dozens. I am not speaking of abnormal females, such as my critic would appear to have come across to the exclusion of better types, but of average cultured women. It happens that Miss Harrison in particular has been known to scholars through her books for a long time; but Mr. West need not imagine that she has been lecturing at Newnham for many years without influencing and inspiring many gifted pupils.

It is a pity that Mr. West's hatred of the Insurance Act did not lead him to support the only organisation formed to combat it. It is misguided pseudo-individualism of that sort which has allowed the country to become saddled with the Act. Let me inform my critic that, apart from the few men on the committee of the Insurance Tax Resisters' Association, practically all the gratuitous work of the revolt which this association organised was done by women; and, as the records of the association show, women throughout the country resisted the Act much more strongly than men. Isolated, Mr. West and the friends he mentions can do little; but if they had put their backs into the work of Miss Douglas's association, the Government would have experienced much more trouble than it has.

As for the influence of women on the White Slave Act, I do not think my critic has yet proved his contention. As opposed to the cutting from the "Church League for Women's Suffrage," an organ which I had never previously heard of, my recollection is—I cannot, unfortunately, lay my hand on cuttings at the moment—that "Votes for Women" utterly opposed the flogging clause. As for the better-class women, their views, in so far as I have been able to ascertain them, were decidedly hostile to the flogging clause and to the other crude features of the Act. On the other hand, the slave-women, the "respectable married woman" type of lower middle class female, supported the Act exactly as feather-headed Will Crooks did. This type of woman, by the way, predominates in the Liberal Women's Federation, and it was many of these "Liberals first and women afterwards" people who did their best to facilitate the working of the Insurance Act. Miss Bondfield and Miss MacArthur were, in my opinion, guilty of a very grave error of judgment in "roping in" women under the Act—in fact, they were downright foolish; but their offence was no worse than that of the Labour members with whom their political work was always closely associated.

I do not follow Mr. West's reference to "long-sighted people who know how old the world is, and that it did not begin with themselves." I am the last person to whom this cock-a-hoop observation should be addressed, for I have been acting up to it and emphasising it in *THE NEW AGE* and elsewhere for the last five years. And one thing is certain, if I may borrow a phrase from Mr. West: England will never be "brought round" by any superficial critic with a bee in his bonnet who cannot realise that there are as many classes and types of women as of men, that to brand a whole sex as "wasps" is neither just nor funny, and that any social reformer who reckons without the type of woman I have referred to earlier in this letter will find his one-sided principles unequal to their duties. This does not profess to be a daring prophecy of a far-off event; it is only the common-sense observation of a man who realises that intelligence is not confined to one sex and to a few abnormal members of the other.

I do not think it irrelevant, and I trust, sir, you will not, if I make two complaints about articles in *THE NEW AGE* which seem to me to contain remarks as ill-founded and shallow as those of Mr. West. I allude to the two references to Miss Underhill, one by "R. H. C." in "Readers and Writers" and the other in "Present-Day Criticism." It is, no doubt, unfortunate that the "Daily News" should have selected Miss Underhill to review a book by a man who is not yet her intellectual equal. Still, *NEW AGE* contributors are constantly doing this themselves; and the fact that Miss Underhill reviewed Mr. Hewlett's book favourably certainly does not justify the application of the word "parrotting" to Miss Underhill's criticism of the character of Jesus. Here, again, I have had to travel over a good deal of the ground covered by Miss Underhill, and, even if I had not, I could still testify that her book "Mysticism" showed a scholarship and balance which are in strong contrast to the petulance of your critic. I have not yet finished "The Mystic Way," but a perusal of the first two or

three chapters have shown me that scholarship, dignity, and firm grasp of subject are there as before. You cannot judge Miss Underhill by her little volume of poems any more than you can judge, say, Voltaire by his tragedies. When "R. H. C." speaks of Miss Underhill's work on *Mysticism*, putting "work" in inverted commas, it seems to me that he not only defeats his own ends, but brings discredit on the critical authority of *THE NEW AGE*. All who know more than the average superficial quantum about Oriental philosophy are well aware of the high value of Miss Underhill's books. However unjustly *THE NEW AGE* is treated by others, it should not retaliate by being unjust in its turn.

J. M. KENNEDY.

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Sir,—In your issue of April 17 you say: "We never urged women into 'economic independence.' On the contrary, we warned them against it. It means wage slavery for themselves, and the workhouse for their brothers."

From the above I gather that you hold the fallacious doctrine that there is only a definite amount of work to be done in the world, and that if women do it, men will have to go without work.

This belief has been shattered into atoms wherever it has been tested. The most famous example is the hostility to machinery which characterised, and still characterises, many workmen. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries men went in bands and smashed machinery to prevent it competing with human labour. Yet their fears have proved entirely groundless. An enormous quantity of labour-saving machinery has been invented and put into use within the last hundred and fifty years; yet the demand for human labour is today as great as it has been at any time in recorded history. The unemployed problem was more serious a hundred years ago than it is to-day.

Your position is essentially the same as that of Mr. Joseph Fenn, who has lately revived a famous doctrine of Sismondi and Rodbertus in your columns. He maintains that the working class and the middle class have a diminishing percentage of the total national income, and are, therefore, able to purchase only a diminishing proportion of the national product. The rich, on the other hand, are so surfeited with commodities that they can buy no more; and are, therefore, unable to spend their constantly increasing incomes. Consequently, the commodities which are produced cannot be bought; and increasing stagnation results. This theory has often been erroneously attributed to Karl Marx, although, in fact, he did not believe in it. Bernstein points out in his "Voraussetzungen des Sozialismus" that there is one passage in the third volume of "Capital" in which Marx seems to hold the doctrine of Mr. Fenn; but he scouted it on all other occasions before and after.

The simple answer to Mr. Fenn's theory is that it is opposed to all ascertained facts. Unemployment has not increased during the last century; not a single reliable observer has maintained that it has. The working class and middle class have not a diminishing proportion of the national income; statisticians of all creeds like Giffen, Tcherkesoff, Bernstein, and May have blown that doctrine into atoms. No class has any difficulty in spending its income. The working class is certainly not a saving class. Neither is the middle class; for we are constantly told in newspapers and magazines that the good old habit of saving is out of date, and that the middle class spends every penny of its income with an extravagance unknown in the past. The upper class does not spend its whole income in personal consumption, but it spends every spare penny in productive consumption. Many people overlook the fact that the fund for developing new industries of every kind has to be saved out of the annual income of the rich. The population is enormously increasing, and that means enormous expenditure in new buildings, houses, factories, machinery, and everything else. Old plant has constantly to be renewed. New countries have to be opened up with railways, harbours, waterworks, electric lighting plant, sewerage systems, factories, and all kinds of expensive undertakings. All the capital for this purpose has to be saved out of the incomes of the rich. It is notorious that the demand for such capital is far greater than the supply. So keen is the competition for capital that the rate of interest is rising every day. In Western Canada there are railways waiting for rails, because capital cannot be saved fast enough. Substantial towns cannot get waterworks and sewerage systems, because the demand for capital is too keen. When the famine of capital is over in Canada, it will begin elsewhere. China, India, Siberia, the whole of South America, the whole of Africa, have all to be opened up; and many genera-

tions will likely pass before there is any stoppage in the ever-increasing demand for capital. One thing is certain; that since Sismondi set forth his theory in 1819, the world has not advanced one inch nearer to the "great unemployment problem," as Gaylord Wilshire, another follower of Sismondi and Rodbertus, is fond of calling it.

We may, therefore, safely say that there is not the slightest danger of over-production, except as a temporary phenomenon, for many generations to come. The labour market can easily absorb any number of persons who are likely to be thrown into it. A sudden rush of women into industry would certainly be serious, just as the sudden introduction of the power loom and the spinning jenny unquestionably caused enormous misery for a time. If women go gradually into industrial life, however, as they will likely do, there is not the slightest danger of their brothers having to go to the workhouse. The only result would be that more money would be earned, that the standard of life of the working class would rise, and that child labour and aged labour would be largely abolished.

As for the pleasantness or unpleasantness of becoming wage-slaves, that entirely depends on the temperament of the individual. To many women work is the most loathsome thing in the world. Such women fly eagerly into prostitution, or into the most repulsive marriage. To many others, work is not an evil; while the greatest of miseries is to depend on another and have no money of one's own. Difference of temperament is a far deeper thing than difference of sex. Difference of temperament is caused by difference in the fundamental organs of the body—the heart, the liver, the digestive organs, and so on. Compared with these organs, the importance of the organs of sex to the individual is very slight. There is far less in common between a man with a strong heart and a man with a weak heart, than between a man and woman who have both strong hearts. Consequently, it is futile to generalise about women, and say that they cannot work, that their place is in the home, and so on. These are the qualities of a temperament, not of a sex. Many women can work, and can do it with the greatest ease, and abhor home life, and are totally incapable of living in dependence on any man. It is very desirable that all such women should get into industry or business as quickly as possible, and their doing so would be a national benefit, and would not do the smallest harm to anybody.

British Columbia.

R. B. KERR.

[By confusing and confounding our economic analysis with that of our contributor, Mr. Finn, our present correspondent has made it impossible for either of us to reply to his arguments in detail. On the general subject, therefore, we will content ourselves with the comment that our correspondent appears to have read to the X Y Z of capitalist economics without mastering its A B C. On the subject of the entrance of women into wage-industry, the parallel, we may point out, of women with machinery is typical of the epicene in humanity of many professed feminists. That their entrance is against their will and against their nature we should have thought nobody would now deny; but, in any case, another generation of it will convince the most dull by ocular demonstration. The effect on men's wages, however, is not open to speculation. Whether from Chinese labour, child labour, or women's labour, the introduction of cheaper labour into the competitive labour market is certain to result in the bearing down of men's wages. What arguments are there against juvenile labour that cannot be advanced against women's labour? None that we can see. In warning women, however, against wage-industry we do not maintain that women should never under any circumstances enter industry. Our contention is simply this, that until the competitive wage-system (which our correspondent cannot yet have examined thoroughly) is abolished, it will be best both for women and for men that the former should keep out of the wage-market. Afterwards, however, and when national guilds have replaced profiteering and wage-slavery, women can safely enter industry without bearing down either men's wages or standards of work.—ED., N.A.]

\* \* \*

Sir,—Apparently if a man fails to lose his head for love of woman—he loses it for *hate* of her. *Thou art the man!*—"and others." May I respectfully draw your attention to the letters of "F. M." and Mr. Sydney Robert West in your last issue? May I gently remind you of a contemporary, "The Awakener," in which alone you will find a parallel to the appalling fanaticism expressed? I ask you. That story of the "Earl's Daughter!" As propaganda! In THE NEW AGE! That

drivel about the wasps! Is this "Woman" to replace the mythical "White Slaver" you have so justly disposed of? These hysterical people will be advocating "Flogging for Women" next. They are literally off their balance. Come, Sir, pull yourself together. Throw off these (by you) misguided maniacs! Leave the women alone! You know nothing about them. You have erected an Aunt Sally. How long will you continue to irritate your admirers and well-wishers by taking that game seriously? It is becoming an obsession with you. Shades of Parnell! Oh, waste, waste!

H. F. RUBINSTEIN.

[In his excitement our correspondent has failed to observe that the writers he names were correspondents also.—ED., N.A.]

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#### "WOMEN AND MYSTICISM."

Sir,—Criticising Miss Underhill's "Immanence," your reviewer remarks, in effect, that no woman can ever be a mystic. Has he forgotten the Christian women mystics, Catherine of Siena, Juliana of Norwich, and others? Why should there not be successors of these?

I am not surprised, by the way, that a contemporary accuses THE NEW AGE reviews of "coarseness." The phallic-worshippers are naturally indignant with those who do not revere the sacred emblem.

EVERARD L. BRINE.

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#### PROLAPSUS CALAMI.

Sir,—As one who, for a long time, has taken an interest in THE NEW AGE, among other reasons because of the high ideal it maintains of style, I cannot but regret the inclusion in last week's issue of "Prolapsus Calami," by "I. A. R."

I protest, because, in the first place, there are still many of your readers who have a reverence, intellectual or religious, for Christianity and its Founder, and who consider such "disjointed musings" the blasphemy of a juvenile who has not yet realised the meaning of good taste. Would such a delicate expression as "hell, rot you" be addressed to Zeus, or Socrates, or Gotama, or Swedenborg?

I protest because expletives—the language of the coster and the navy—have not hitherto been included in the artist's vocabulary. Mediocrities of the Masefield type adopt them in juxtaposition to the name of Christ in order to create a shiver. But is not this mere vulgarity, evincing the lack of that delicate refinement and taste which recoil with a shudder from such hideous verbal garbage.

"I. A. R." laments he is not a gentleman, and resents his poverty. The former is obvious, but the latter, even in one "intellectually unemployed" is incomprehensible, because every true artist, be he poet or painter, or musician, or writer knows he possesses—and is well content with the knowledge—a something which is of infinitely greater value, and confers infinitely nobler compensations than all "the wealth of Ormus and of Ind."

One other word. I notice "I. A. R." implores the Deity to make him a fool. Evidently, Mr. Editor, some prayers are miraculously answered.

A. E. ALDINGTON.

[Our correspondent should contrast the effect of the deeply felt lines we published last week with the effect produced on sincerely religious people by the easy episcopal endorsement of "Christ on the Bioscope."—ED., N.A.]

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