

THE NEW AGE

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART.

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

We take our readers to witness that we did not expect much from the present Trades Union Congress. Though the largest in numbers ever held, and thus in some respects a phenomenon of history, the brain of the leviathan is in inverse proportion to its bulk. From first to last with the fewest exceptions compatible with intelligence at all, the Congress devoted its hours to rehashing its old ideas and chuntering over them, as they say in the North, like old women in a chimney corner. The exceptional moments were when Mr. Smillie curdled the blood of the delegates—and of the President in particular—by suggesting that strikers should arm themselves against the police; and when, in a burst of generosity, the Congress voted £500 (or was it pence?) to the organisation of the rural workers. Such precipitate action takes our breath away. What is the world coming to when the largest Trades Union Congress in history votes more than the salary of an M.P. to the work of caulking the leak in organised labour by supporting an agricultural union; or when one of its members emits hot air on the subject of active resistance? On the other hand, it need not be pretended that the Congress is any more representative of the rank and file than paid leaders usually are. Nothing has been more noticeable during recent strikes than the tendency of the men to repudiate their officials; and it is precisely these latter who as a rule get themselves elected to Congress. In consequence we see at these meetings not the representatives of the rank and file so much as the men who live upon them or, at least, hope one day to do so. Of the five hundred and more delegates at Manchester it is probably safe

to say that a good two-thirds have no other notion of their duty to their class than to climb on their shoulders into office or into Parliament.

* * *

Our "Open Letter to the Congress" which the "Daily Herald" kindly distributed amongst the delegates was, it is needless to say, the subject of no public comment whatever. That is quite as we expected and we are therefore not in the least disappointed. The facts, however, on which our Letter was based are not merely incontrovertible in the argumentative sense; they are incontrovertible in actual experience. Sooner or later they will have to be faced, and we can well afford to wait until they slap the cheeks of the Labour delegates. If it were merely our little whim to depict the situation as daily growing more desperate for the proletariat; if it were only our fancy that discerned a fall in real wages constantly in progress; or if it were our pretty Fanny's way and no more to point out that political action has failed and industrial action on unscientific lines will fail also; then, indeed, we could join in a complimentary laugh at the astuteness of the Labour leaders who simply would not be taken in by our simulated seriousness. But the hypothesis, unfortunately for the joke of the case, cannot be held. The suppositions and imaginations are not ours, and it is not we who have even met them in advance of everybody else. They are to be found in Blue Books, and, more certainly still, in the ledgers of the grocers and the account-books of the house-keeping wage-earners. Also, it is clear that this latter class has been meeting the facts for years longer than we have been writing about them. Real wages began to fall in 1906, a year before THE NEW AGE had a word to say against the Labour Party. They have continued to fall ever since to the certain if puzzled knowledge of every poor devil who could not supplement his income by spouting at branch meetings of his Union or getting a job under the Insurance Act. All we have done is to examine the facts as economists and thereafter to reconstruct the theory and practice of revolution upon them. The facts, we say, are not ours; nor, we may add, are now the theories based upon them. These are the common property of all who can reason and are not above coming to a conclusion that does not square with their present opinions. Thus we may say that if the delegates are capable of learning by

experience, they have and will have every opportunity. They may, and welcome, ignore our Letter; but they can be defied to ignore the movement of wages.

* * *

The City Editor of the "Daily Citizen" has been instructed apparently to reply to our proposition that wages, being the price of labour as a commodity, must be determined by the cost of production, that is, by the average subsistence cost of the proletariat. His cue it is, to judge by his opinions, to maintain the counter proposition, on which indeed the whole existing Labour Party rests, that wages are susceptible of being increased indefinitely beyond the cost of subsistence of the working classes; in short, that the working classes may one day be able to *save* out of their wages and so acquire property and economic power. Now we can have no possible objection to this theory except that it is not true; for nothing would please us more than to be able to accept it and therewith to wash our hands of the Labour movement. Nobody, least of all ourselves, is "in" the Labour movement for fun. It is the fact, we believe, that the continued existence of the proletariat class is the sole and certainly the chief obstacle to the next step in civilisation. Civilisation, unfortunately, cannot advance until the rear has been brought up and the degrading wage-system has been destroyed. That, at any rate, is the assumption that keeps us deeply concerned in the welfare of the Labour movement. If, however, we could be assured that things as they are and with no further effort were in train to bring about the improvement of the condition of the proletariat; and that the present organisations of labour, political, industrial, and so forth, with their present objects and tactics, would infallibly raise wages all round so that at least there should be no material excuse for complaining in our streets—our perturbation would be superfluous and our concern an impertinent intrusion. But alas, a very moderate knowledge of economics proves that this is not the case, and cannot be the case. It is not necessary to rely upon the wage-fund theory of Mill to prove that wages are fixed under competition by the average cost of production of labour. The fact proves itself; the income of the working classes is so near their expenditure that the "savings" of the whole forty millions of them, whether in Wemmick's "portable property" or in any other form, would not suffice to give the whole class a week's holiday at Blackpool. And this is as true to-day, when production is ten times more potent, as it was twenty years ago; and will remain true though productive power should increase tenfold in the coming twenty years. The reason, as we say, is obvious to the most elementary of economists. By reason of their possession of the two chief instruments of production—land and capital—the possessing classes can skim the cream of industry to the surface of the milk, however rich this may be; for by as natural a law as that by which cream rises, the surplus value of production over its cost in labour congeals about the property on which it is produced, and this property belongs to them!

* * *

Our "City Editor," however, seems not to be aware of this economic law; for he concludes that the only thing necessary to higher wages is more production—and this, he thinks, will result from "better health and the higher moral and mental education of the workers." We all agree that these things, whatever their effect upon production, are both good and necessary; the mental education in particular of the working classes is at present so carefully neglected as to produce only Labour leaders; but what can be the effect of these improvements, if they should take place, upon the dis-

tribution of the product according to the relative monopoly-powers of Land and Capital? None—none whatever. Epictetus, we should say, was one of the most "educated" slaves that ever lived; but all the surplus value his genius could produce could benefit him nothing so long as (a) the property to which he applied his talents was his master's, and (b) he had no alternative but to strike and starve or strike and be transferred to another master. Similarly, though all our wage-slaves should to-morrow become, under the influence of the "Daily Citizen," models of health and culture, the only economic effect would be to increase the profits of the owners of the instruments of production, and to leave wages just as they are. Provided, in fact, that the proletarian must live by wages or not at all (and he must by definition) he has no choice but to accept such wages as he can obtain in competition with his fellows—in the long run, the average cost of his subsistence merely; and this no matter how much his skill can produce. That better health and a better education would give the proletariat more sense to devise a way of emancipation is not to be denied; but that is certainly not the economic outcome of an increased productive power, and the proposition leaves the present tactics condemned. To increase his share of the total production, be it large or small, of his hands, the wage-earner must obtain for his class what the owners of Land and Capital have practically obtained for theirs—a monopoly. In other words, the unions of the various grades of labour must be each all-embracing; and each union must act as one man. Then and not till then will it be true that the increased skill of the workers will raise their income.

* * *

To illustrate the position of labour while its unions have only a fragmentary monopoly of their property (i.e., their skill), we can suppose it applied to Land and Capital. If it were the case that more than half of the existing landowners and capitalists were willing to lend their land and capital for merely their personal keep, what, do you suppose, would be the effect upon the Rent and Interest of the other half of the possessing classes? Is it not plain that they would come down with a run? Or suppose that half our manufacturers were prepared to run their businesses with no profit, no interest, and no rent, but only salaries and running costs—would not the effect upon prices be to bring these down to a level below that at which the other competing half could possibly produce? In short, would not Rent, Interest and Profit disappear if only half the present owners were prepared to forgo them? But in the case of Labour this divine lunacy actually prevails. *More* than half of our wage-earners are prepared to employ their labour for subsistence alone, with the effect upon *all* labour that its price is subsistence and nothing more. The case can be illustrated even more vividly by a supposition not too extravagant in these days of self-denial: Suppose a large class of intelligent men to arise capable of living upon nothing and willing to work for no return save the exercise of their skill, and suppose their numbers to be unlimited—would the ordinary wage-earner, requiring food to support him, stand a chance of being employed in the same market? He, of course, would not. To continue to exist at all under these circumstances he would need either to abolish the new-comers or to obtain possession of them for his own class. He would need, that is, to become a monopoly or to obtain a monopoly—there would be no other way. And applying this to the labour world of to-day, we say that it is equally incumbent on the proletariat if they mean to continue to exist, still more if they mean to increase their share of production, that they should create a monopoly of their labour and employ it only upon terms satisfactory to themselves. That this is being done we are the first to admit. The Unions are filling up, and soon, in one or two trades, there will not be a blackleg in existence. But it will be this, and not the highfalutin nonsense about education, that will in the end raise wages. And it is this work that ought to go forward.

A division of labour in the trade union movement is necessary, however, if rapid progress is to be made. We have ourselves suggested often enough that the political and the industrial sections should be divided and their respective officers kept distinct. This opinion has now been reinforced from the most unexpected quarters. Speaking at Keswick recently, Mr. Sidney Webb recommended the separation in the trade unions of the industrial and the political functions; the union of the two duties in the same persons and offices was, he said, a hindrance to both. Mr. H. H. Schloesser, the Parliamentary counsel of the Labour Party, in his recent work on "Trade Unionism," has, we are glad to see, made the practical suggestion that the Standing Committee of the Conference should specialise in industrial organisation, leaving the political work of the Congress to the Labour Party. And now Mr. Appleton, of the Trades Federation, has expressed a similar opinion. Writing in the "Daily Herald" on Monday last, Mr. Appleton said: "What is there, except stupidity, to prevent the Federations meeting together and passing the constitution of an organisation that would leave politics to the Labour Party and combine, for specific industrial and economic purposes, all the forces of trade unionism." What, we echo, except stupidity! These opinions, unfortunately, came too late or too early to be heard at the Congress just held; but we may be sure that at some Congress or other they will be heard. The inefficiency of both the industrial and the political sides of the Labour movement is too apparent to be much longer endured, even by the other classes. If the proletariat cannot supply, to the honour of England, better leaders than they now select, for the honour of England better leaders from the other classes will thrust themselves upon them. Get on or get out applies quite as fairly to labour leaders as to the men whom they are too stupid to lead.

* * *

The "Times" of Tuesday surprised its readers by publishing from "A Labour Correspondent" an article on "The Failure of Trades Unionism" that might, for the most part, have been written by ourselves. We naturally do not subscribe to the opinions of the writer, but with his statements of fact and the deductions based upon them it is impossible for us not to agree. The article has been attacked both by Liberal and Labour journals from the "Daily News" to the "New Statesman"; and chiefly, strange to say, on its strongest parts. Objection, for instance, has been taken to the "Times" remark that "with trade unionism pure and simple the workers went ahead" while "with politics they are going backwards." What, quibbles one writer, is trade unionism pure and simple? How, asks another, can politics be related to reaction? The answers to these questions have many times been elaborated in these columns, and we do not need to repeat them now. It is enough that, whatever the positive theory of the relation between wages and Labour politics may be, the facts necessitate the conclusion that, negatively at any rate, the Labour movement, since its incursion into politics, has failed to hold up its industrial end. On its lowest ground the Labour movement exists and is paid to keep wages up to the level, at least, of prices. Without any heroic or revolutionary object, its elemental duty is at any rate to see that its members do not lose ground. But that, as everybody now knows, is precisely what the Labour Party and movement have failed to do during the last seven or ten years. On the contrary, prices have shot up units beyond wages—the latter having relatively fallen in six years by almost ten per cent. There is really no getting over this fact, and it is merely folly to attempt it. But neither is there, we think, any getting over the implications of the fact which the "Times," like ourselves, points out. Judged by this criterion alone, the politicisation of trade unionism was a mistake, and is resulting in failure. It has sacrificed the substance for the shadow, and, as long as it continues, will mean the progressive worsening of the industrial conditions together with the concomi-

tant evil of the progressive strengthening of the hold of the capitalist State upon the proletariat.

* * *

The strangest reply, however, to the "Times" and, incidentally, to THE NEW AGE (though our name is not mentioned and only the word "wagery"—of our coinage—acknowledges our existence) is to be found in the "Daily News" of Wednesday. In proof that Trade Unionism is wise in entering politics, and has something to gain by representation at Westminster, the "Daily News" remarks that "the root of the industrial disturbance has nothing to do with politics," and that the rise in prices over wages is due to causes "which are wholly outside the range of parliamentary influence." If our readers have persevered in these Notes to this point we invite them to an interval of refreshment while they examine this naïve, not to say, rascally, admission of the "Daily News." The charge they set out to rebut is that the Trade Union movement is wasting its time in politics, is hunting the slipper of economic welfare in a corner where the slipper is not to be found; and the reply of the "Daily News" is that, of course, Parliament is no place for economic emancipation. But, if it is not, what interpretation can be placed on the anxiety of the "Daily News" to keep the Labour Party there? We dare not breathe the words "capitalist conspiracy," lest our hare-brained readers should accuse us of romancing. But we pause for a better reply. How much more frank is the "Spectator" on the same subject. The "Spectator" no longer pretends that wages can be raised by any income whatever. Some months ago, if we remember, Mr. Strachey pinned his faith to more capital as a means of raising wages. If only, he implied, capital were competing for labour instead of labour for capital, everything in the garden would soon be lovely. Our reply to this beautiful dream was that capital could never be driven to compete locally with itself until the whole world of labour had been exploited; in short, English workmen would have to capitalise the world before they could hope to create a surfeit of capital here at home. The demonstration that this hypothesis of his was built on a fallacy has left the editor of the "Spectator" literally without an idea. He confesses intellectual bankruptcy in these straightforward terms: "The truth is that none of the devices, whether they be trade union plans or political plans, will get rid of the fundamental causes of labour discontent. . . . The best we can look forward to is a greater moralisation of industry, so that the essential hardships of economic law may be mitigated by human kindness." After this in any severe society of intelligence Mr. Strachey would be expected to keep his mouth shut. Having nothing to say, he should hereafter say nothing.

* * *

On the subject of the railway disaster at Aisgill we wrote generally and, as it appears, prophetically, last week. The psychological effects of the ignominious defeat of the railwaymen two summers ago are even now far from exhausted. It would, we fear, be truer to say that they are only now beginning to become manifest. That nobody can or wishes to establish a direct connection of cause and effect between that defeat and the recent "accidents" may be taken for granted. But that there is an indirect connection we are certain. The psychology of both the officials and the men is still on strike. A significant remark of Mr. Paget, the Superintendent of the Midland Railway, to the railwaymen involved in the disaster, may be recorded for future reference. As fellow-servants of the Company, he said, he and the men meant to stick together. That is the guild spirit and we believe it widely exists. The question is, however, whether this union of the salariat and the wage-earners of the railway industry may not be turned permanently, as it was temporarily in the present instance, *against* the interests of the public. It looks, we confess, like Syndicalism. Statesmen must wake up to ensure that the new camaraderie of workmen and officials does not threaten the State with extinction.

Current Cant.

"Small fault can be found with the present-day public."
—"Evening Standard."

"Of the tragedy of the Railway accident we do not care to speak."
—"Evening News."

"Many people may regard our point of view as too sentimental. . . ."
—"Daily Express."

"I am very democratic in this world, because I believe that the next world will be on an equally democratic basis."
—ANDREW CARNEGIE.

"The King exists for the whole nation. He is our father, our friend, our leader."
—ARNOLD WHITE.

"I suppose the feminine reader would like a little pen picture of this new author, Mr. Compton Mackenzie. Well, he is not very tall, and not very short, and not very fat, and not very thin. . . . He parts his hair in the middle. . . ."
—KEBLE HOWARD in the "Daily Mail."

"Any movement which will bring the working classes into closer touch with the administration of the affairs of the Church of England is to be welcomed."
—"Pall Mall Gazette."

"No one will deny that the presence of a large body of direct representatives of Labour has had an important influence upon legislation. . . . The parliamentary Labour party has come to stay. . . ."
—"News and Leader."

"The habits of newspapers prove that their virtues are by choice and their errors by pressure of circumstance."
—"The Spectator."

"Things are most unmistakably changing for the better in Ireland."
—"Home Counties" in "The World's Work."

"Canon Newbolt has been preaching bravely against the loose ways of holiday-makers."
—"Saturday Review."

"Liberal Governments are not always their own masters. Half their work is done in obedience to traditions."
—"The Nation."

"Have you ever read a Nat Gould novel? Probably not, and yet his circulation exceeds eight million copies, fully justifying the 'Athenæum's' recent statement that all living writers are headed by Nat Gould."
—ADVERTISEMENT in "The Globe."

"Mr. George R. Sims has no use for whitewash. Virtue is virtue, and vice is vice. . . ."
—"The Referee."

"By the aid of Labour, Politics are made human; Parliament has to listen to the story of man's inhumanity to man."
—"Daily Citizen."

"The public has a keen instinct, and would soon resent anything in bad taste."
—MAXINE ELLIOTT.

"The Parliamentary Labour group shows us that in the absence of geniuses men of cool sense make a very efficient substitute."
—"The Star."

"The man who enters Parliament thinking that he can saunter into the House of Commons between three and four in the afternoon, dine in comfort, and go home at eleven, soon finds out his mistake. . . . Of course, occasionally they get a night off."
—"Liberal Monthly."

CURRENT CAUTION.

"All those unfortunates who have been married for seven years and are launching out upon the fateful eighth, will do well to avoid Mr. Philip Gibb's new novel."
—"St. James's Gazette."

Foreign Affairs.

By S. Verdad.

NOT merely during the progress of the Balkan War, but also during the peace negotiations which preceded the Treaty of Bucharest, the best plans of the Great Powers had to be modified over and over again because one factor in a multitude of factors had been neglected. Adrianople, for example, would not for a second time have become an acute question if it had been borne in mind that the Turks must have had an object in pouring troops from Asia Minor into Thrace, even at a stage when the war was supposed to be "over." Similarly, the desire of Russia to bring Serbia and Bulgaria together in order to check the Greek designs on Constantinople has had to go ungratified for the time being because M. Sazonoff and his permanent officials forgot Albania for a moment.

* * *

The future of Albania, overlooked almost entirely when the Allies began to quarrel among themselves, is once again a question of some urgency, and its solution, far from tending to separate Greece from Serbia, is, on the contrary, drawing the two countries closer together. For this state of things the establishing of the proper frontiers is responsible. When the representatives of the Powers began to decide the northern boundary of Albania, it will be recollected, Austria and Russia mobilised their armies and very nearly plunged into a disastrous war in order to make their views prevail. This northern boundary may now be taken as settled, though not to the satisfaction of anybody concerned, least of all the Albanians themselves, the Servians, and the Montenegrins.

There are, however, more frontier lines than one. It is perhaps fortunate for the peace of Europe that the western coast of Albania borders on the sea and not on land, though even here disputes have arisen between Austria and Italy. But it is the fixing of the eastern and southern frontier lines which have led to renewed trouble, and this time Greece and Serbia are the complainants. In the east the Powers wished to include in Albania a great deal of territory which the Servians regard as Servian, and in the south they wish to include a stretch of land down to Janina which the Greeks have already formally annexed.

* * *

If this were merely a dispute between the Powers on the one hand and Greece and Serbia on the other the matter would hardly be worth referring to at all. But here, as in so many other instances throughout the war, the Powers, nominally united, are divided; and it is on this division of opinion that the Greeks and Servians are counting for the protection of what they consider as their own property. The Turks trusted to the differences among the Powers when Adrianople and its future had to be reconsidered, with a result known to all the world.

* * *

For several weeks past the close relations between the Quai d'Orsay and the Athens Government have been exciting comment in the other European Chanceries; and the unusually strong support extended by France to Greece has met with the emphatic disapproval of Russia and has brought a strong Note of protest from M. Sazonoff. A French military mission to organise the Greek army—the same mission, by the way, that led the Greek army to victory during the war—has been followed by a promise of financial support.

* * *

This procedure, while it enables France to strengthen her position in the Eastern Mediterranean, is contrary to the interests of her partner, Russia, who is becoming alarmed, too, at the extent to which French financiers are beginning to support German industries. Again, if France is prepared to help Greece to the extent she has promised, her assistance will be asked for when the time comes to settle the question of the Albanian

frontiers. No one, of course, expects that a relatively unimportant matter like this will result in serious European trouble, but it is quite likely to result in another little war, this time between the Albanians and their neighbours to the east and south.

* * *

There is one feature of the situation in Thrace which has caused some anxiety at Athens during the past fortnight. The Treaty of Bucharest laid it down that certain towns in the possession of Greece should be handed over to Bulgaria in exchange for one or two concessions agreed to by the Bulgarian Government. These included Xanthi and Gumuldjini and certain specified districts. It was arranged that the Greek troops should evacuate these places, which were formally to be handed over to the Bulgarian regiments sent to take possession. The Greek troops fulfilled their share of this arrangement by leaving the districts in question—which, however, were then occupied not by Bulgarians, but by regiments of cavalry under the command of Enver Bey, whose men, without opposition or protest from Sofia, had penetrated several miles to the west of the Maritza River.

* * *

The first impression the Greeks had was that this was merely a clever manœuvre to assist the Turks when they came to bargain with their former enemies about Adrianople—it would obviously be to the advantage of the Turks to be able to say: "Well, we will give you back Western Thrace, but you must allow us to have Adrianople." No great concern, therefore, was felt at first; but when the Turks continued their advance, gradually coming nearer to territory which had been recognised as Greek, the first impression of ease and curiosity gave way to one of alarm. It was currently reported at Athens, even in those circles which are sometimes described as "well informed," that Bulgaria was deliberately encouraging Turkey to enter the new Greek sphere, for reasons which I have already explained in former articles. The Bulgarians would be willing to accept assistance from any quarter to drive the Greeks and the Servians back, as far as possible, to their former boundaries; and an agreement, however temporary, between Turkey and Bulgaria, would be very awkward for King Constantine. The Greek army has had enough fighting, whereas Enver Bey's men are only too anxious to begin.

* * *

It will soon be time, however, to disband the really powerful Turkish army which is now in the field. To keep 300,000 men under arms is an expensive matter. But Enver Bey has made it clear—and no doubt he speaks with the authority of those 300,000 men—that his force will not be disbanded and sent home until Adrianople has definitely been secured for the Ottoman Empire.

Towards a National Railway Guild.—VIII.

THE terms upon which the property of the railways is acquired by the State will be of the highest moment to the Guild, as those terms would be taken into account in defining the financial obligations of the Guild to the State and seriously affect the prospects of Guild workers.

It stands to reason that much would depend upon the bargaining power of the two parties at the time of the purchase, and great care would have to be exercised so that financial obligations were not placed upon the Guild above what it should reasonably be called upon to bear.

To guarantee for ever an interest payment based on dividends under company management could not be reasonably entertained. Nor is it desirable that some smaller interest should be given *in perpetuity* as the object should be for the Guild, at some not unreasonably distant date, to be freed from capital obligations; leaving it, so far as property in the railways is concerned,

to be called upon only to contribute to the State such amount as is necessary to maintain the properties and provide for all improvements, extensions, and innovations as they become necessary by the progress of science, and the requirements of the commercial and travelling public in respect of transport and its affinitive services.

For purposes of simplicity it would be best that each railway should be considered separately and the amount of its cash value fixed. If payment of the purchase price is extended over a period of years some addition would have to be made for this accommodation.

The functions of the directors of each company would then be purely financial, i.e., the apportionment to the shareholders of the annual purchase payment as received from the State. The Guild would also be free to negotiate for the services of those directors willing to join it.

In valuing the property of each of the fifty or more separate railway companies there might be a combination of appraisal from average market prices and condition of the property.

For example, although the prices at which transactions have actually taken place, on the Stock Exchange or elsewhere, are generally some criterion of value based on dividend-earning power, it may be found that a company have paid excessive dividends when judged from the point of view of condition of property, i.e., the line may have been "starved" to maintain dividend rates. If salaries and wages below the general standard have been paid with the same object, this should also be allowed for.

The purchase terms most generally favoured, I believe, are at twenty-five years average profits, i.e., £100 of stock having, for twenty-five years, averaged dividends of four per cent. would be capitalised at par value of £100. This might be taken as fair in the case of a railway property well maintained. Stock of another railway having paid the same average dividend of four per cent. may have done so out of second-rate equipment and by maintaining low wages and salaries, and this should not receive the same purchase price, but account should be taken of the two factors mentioned and a lower amount than four per cent. substituted as purchase basis, say three and a half, or even three per cent. if necessary.

To ignore considerations of condition of property and rates of salaries and wages paid by a company would be to place a premium upon the success of the shareholders in squeezing high dividends to improve the twenty-five years' average, irrespective of the real value of the business.

Taking all the railways together, whatever the annual aggregate amount paid in dividends and interest may have been (say fifty millions annually) it should not be necessary for the State with its sound guarantee to have to call upon the Guild to provide an annual payment nearly approaching such a figure, especially if the State guarantee of payment extended over a period of two generations, as spoken of in the "Open letter of THE NEW AGE to the Trades Union Congress"—see issue August 28, 1913.

If the State chooses to borrow the money and pay off the capital value to each company at once, there would be no objection to its doing so, so long as the smaller interest to be paid on Government Bonds would admit of the fifty million pounds annually to be paid into a trust fund by the Guild meeting the Government interest and also effacing the debt entirely within a period to be calculated.

In speaking of the bargaining power of the Guild prospective with the companies, through the State as intermediary, it would be well at this point to consider what are essential steps to be taken for the purpose of strengthening the railway workers and placing them on bargaining terms.

A re-perusal of this series will reveal that no active

help can be anticipated from large trading interests, as the conversion of the railways from private to guild management cannot promise any benefits of a "material" nature to those already comfortably and preferentially served under the existing régime; although, as paradoxes abound, there may be some intelligent and benevolent individuals amongst large capitalists who have the honesty of character to be heartily nauseated with their enforced rôle of public plunderers and willing to offer no active resistance to a reformation provided its soundness can be effectively demonstrated.

The case of the enormous number of small firms is, however, quite different. They have nothing to lose and everything to gain by a guild régime which would serve them in many ways, principally by its power of resistance to pressure of the purse, politically or otherwise, of their large competitors.

It is more important that the proletariat outside the guild should be educated to understand that the improvement of any workers' conditions even above their own must in the end be beneficial to themselves, if they will join in a campaign against cheapness of any kind of labour, and work shoulder to shoulder with railway employees in their endeavour to bring into being a railway guild, or indeed with any organised labour enlightened enough to make guildisation of its industry its first object.

The most important step of all is in the direction of solid organisation of the railway workers themselves. Let them concentrate upon complete monopoly of railway labour with a realisation that officers and men alike are carrying the same burden upon their backs—the burden of the dividend hunters and dividend pensioners. Realising at the same time that to throw off the dividend incubus in its open form, and take on a similar load by reducing charges for services under the name of Nationalisation, will be little or no lightening of the burden.

By the employees in each industry concentrating their efforts upon the acquirement of entire monopoly of their labour in order to secure guild conditions the complete emancipation of the wage slaves can be brought about.

As has been ably demonstrated by various writers in *THE NEW AGE* the proletariat in their highest aims have never looked beyond a lightening of their conditions, "some little more fodder, some slightly easier harness," to be purchased by higher wages when secured, only to find that prices are put up against them almost to the point of the advantage gained, and to the increased disadvantage of the unorganised or fixed wage classes.

Striking under these conditions is in the end simply a diffusion of strength and union funds, the only advantage of which is the fighting experience gained for use in a greater cause. This experience, however, is more than nullified by the tendency of the public to vent their irritation against the workers for engineering sectional, and in the end abortive, disruptions of trade; whereas in a clear logical cause the public sympathy might be depended upon.

As I write the Press reports of the Trades Union Congress record the passing of the sixteenth annual resolution in favour of Nationalisation of Railways, with, *for the first time*, a protest on the part of an enlightened delegate that it would be "a pettifogging middle-class reform," and the further significant resolution, also passed, of the Fawcett Association, pledging itself "to work steadily in the direction of increasing democratic control both by the employees and the representatives of the working classes in the House of Commons."

Let the "Nationalisation" resolution die its natural death and be replaced by a resolution in favour of a National Railway Guild, with the appointment of a committee to report in explicit terms annually what means have been used during the year to forward the project, and practical steps will have been made towards real emancipation of at least one large section of the great labour burden carriers.

HENRY LASCELLES.

A Pilgrimage to Turkey During War Time.

By Marmaduke Pickthall.

WE were on the Black Sea, but, our eyes looked out on something absolutely colourless. All view was curtained off from us by fog—a fog as thick as cotton-wool, by which the steamer's length was partly hidden. Because of this our ship was hardly going, its progress being governed by the movements of a row-boat on ahead, of which the occupants were taking soundings. We heard them shouting numbers in Roumanian close to us, but could not see a shadow of the boat or them. And ever and anon the fog-horn deafened us. Once we were very nearly on some rocks, a fellow-passenger informed me; once I myself was witness of the near escape we had of a collision with another steamer. There were despairing shouts as the vague shapes of funnels and a hull loomed out before us suddenly, right in our course, and very close indeed. The sudden backing of the engines made us reel. It was after that escape that we began to go so slowly and the rowing-boat was sent ahead to clear the way.

There were about forty other passengers on board, none of them English. At that time people shunned Constantinople on account of the war, the alleged instability of the Government, and the reported danger of a massacre of Europeans. Having come from Berlin—which was pro-Turk territory—and not from Paris, I had not heard the dreadful rumours which disturbed the minds of several of my fellow-travellers; and, hearing them, could laugh at their improbability. One French lady, hysterically anxious to rejoin her husband who had some employment in the threatened city, repeatedly bemoaned her case to an acquaintance that she had on board, seeming to think the fog of evil omen for her husband's fate. All the Europeans seemed put out and anxious, impatient of delay, but the Turks, of whom there were a few among us, were resigned, as usual, and I, who had no pressing claim on time, was able to assume and feel the same indifference. At evening it became known that we had missed the entrance to the Bosphorus and, even should we afterwards succeed in striking it, could not go in now as it was past six o'clock. The ship dropped anchor, then madame began to sob aloud, and exclamations of annoyance came from all sides. We should have to spend forty-eight hours upon a passage which was commonly performed in twelve. It was disgusting, quite insufferable! One gentleman—a Greek—professing to know exactly where we were, suggested we should launch the boats and row ashore to Rûmeli Cavak, whence we could take a Bosphorus steamer to Constantinople. His notion found no favour with the rest of us. If the skipper and the pilot could not find the way, we thought it little likely that a landsman would be more successful. Besides, the fog was deadly cold, the visible small patch of sea dark and repellent in its smoothness like thin ice. There was warmth and comfort and good food on board the steamer, and everyone at length agreed to make the best of it. A sense of kinship in adversity was born in us, and that night everybody talked to everybody. One plunged at once to friendship without the usual fence of courtesies. One man told me the whole history of his married life—he never knew my name, nor I his—and showed me photographs to illustrate it, in the dining-room; another tucked his arm in mine affectionately, and asked my help to send a wireless telegram.

After dinner I put on an overcoat, turned up the collar, and went out on deck to smoke alone. The fog was still as thick as ever. Our siren and the big horn spoke at intervals; and from the darkness upon all sides other hoots and shrieks responded, from sea-waifs anchored round us in the fog. I soon got to know their several voices and look out for them, and conceived some notion of their bearings in respect of us.

As I was strolling up and down on deck a man approached, whom I had remarked by day for his obsequious adherence to the first-class passengers, though he himself was of the second class. He passed me with a conscious little smile—in doubt, it seemed, whether to speak or no. I did not look forbidding, evidently, for a minute later, as I stood beside the rail, staring point-blank at nothing, trying to locate the different fog-horns which kept sounding in that black consistency, he was at my side, addressing me in French of the Byzantine school, observing it was cold, extremely—very, very cold. I made polite rejoinder. He exclaimed, "Ah, you are French?" "No," I said; and then, as he appeared consumed with eagerness to know my nationality, reluctantly confessed that I was English. It seemed a shame to make no more exciting statement, in view of his inquiring zeal.

"Ah," he replied, "I thought you must be English by your pipe and the fashion of your overcoat. There is an air about the English which the other nations lack entirely. I am very happy to make your acquaintance. We love the English much. If you desire it, I can speak English with you." To show his powers in this direction he added, "How do you do, sir?" in my native tongue. But as I took no notice of the interjection, the conversation was pursued in French.

"Where are you going?"

"To Constantinople."

"Have you been there before?"

"Once. It must be eighteen years ago."

"What is your business there?"

"I have no business there. I go for pleasure."

"For pleasure—in this time of war, and in the winter! That is little probable." My inquisitor now smiled, incredulous. In talking, we had turned so as to face each other, each leaning with one elbow on the rail. The light of a near lamp was on his face, a sleek one and a fatuous, to me displeasing. He wore a fez, but was no Turk; the fact was patent from his impudence. "Perhaps," he said, exceeding knowingly, "you have some secret mission which you will not tell me."

To slay this notion, which, if spread abroad among the vulgar might well have gained me undeserved and undesired attentions, I informed him of the truth: that I was going to Constantinople simply to observe the state of things in Turkey.

"Ah, then, you are a politician?"

"No; a writer."

"Ah, it is very fortunate that I have met you. I can tell you everything. Are there any questions you would like to ask me? I am well informed of everything in Turkey. I have secret informations which I can procure for you."

I put a question as to the atrocities committed by the Bulgarians in Macedonia. This made him snigger.

"That is all a fabrication. I have private information from a friend of mine at Dédé-Aghach, where the Turks have slaughtered all the Christians." It so happened that Dédé-Aghach was one of the very few places where we had respectable European evidence upon the horrors committed by Bulgarian troops and komitajis. I said as much. At once my friend revoked, exclaiming:—

"I will tell you how it was: The Turks began to massacre, killing two or three; so the Bulgars said: You will either become Christians or leave the country, or else we will massacre you all. Were they not right? Ah, sir, you do not know all that we have to suffer, we Christians here in Turkey, from the fanaticism of the Mussulmans. I shall be happy to inform you fully. I am at your disposal."

I smoked in silence for a while before replying:—

"You talk nonsense. If it had not been for the Turks, not one Oriental Christian would have been alive to-day. The fanaticism of Latin Europe was in a fair way to destroy you when the Turkish conquest came and, with its toleration, preserved you in existence."

"Ah!" he veered round at once. "What you are saying now is very true. Formerly the Turks were not at all fanatical. And even now they are not half so bad as people think. I have heard gentlemen on board

saying that there has been another revolution, and attacks on Christians in Constantinople. I, who am of the country, well acquainted with the Turkish character, find myself wondering how such false reports can be believed."

I may be wronging my unknown interlocutor, but I cannot help suspecting that, but for the firm line I had taken with him, he would himself have told me those reports were true.

"May I ask if you have friends living in Constantinople?" he inquired. His tone had grown much less obsequious, and more respectful. I let fall Turkish names. "But you should know Armenians also?" he protested.

I replied that I should do as I thought fit. He hung about my overcoat a little, in a sort of awe; then, bowing low, wished me good night. I then resumed my interrupted exercise, musing upon his kind and all the mischief they have done to Turkey. His like beset the newspaper correspondent, and the traveller with information which, if not entirely false, is so presented as to give a false impression; which information is invariably made to correspond exactly with the traveller's own taste, as ascertained by the informer. The better sort of native Christians are almost as exclusive as the Turks. This type is ever at the service of the foreign busybody. He is a product of the policy which Europe has pursued for a whole century, of interference on behalf of Ottoman Christians, and missionary efforts for their education and advancement. The result is that the Christian of the baser sort, while still technically an Ottoman subject, pays allegiance in reality to foreign Governments and asks no better than to be their hireling.

Not five years ago, at the Turkish revolution, there had been a chance that these parasitical enemies would vanish, either emigrating from the country or becoming part of the Ottoman nation. To secure this end the one necessity was for the Powers of Europe to withdraw their countenance from certain internecine agitations and intrigues. For a few weeks only did this hope appear. Then Europe made it plain that she was still the enemy of Turkey, intent now more than ever to despoil and rend her. What other construction can be put upon the fact that the revolution was considered finished, its results estimable, in the chancelleries of Europe within a year of its first outbreak, when everyone acquainted with conditions in the country knew that Turkey must remain in revolution for at least ten years? The parasites believed that their orders were unchanged. They early in the day betrayed distrust of the reformers—distrust which was, of course, reciprocated. Nay, many Europeans who had spent their lives in Turkey, and were not upon the whole unfriendly to the Turks, seeing that the revolution worked no miracle, became its enemies; forgetting that reforms need time, that to create a nation out of divers elements is a work of education which requires at least a generation to bear any fruit; forgetting also the attacks to which progressive Turkey has been subject; not considering at all the country's or the people's good, nor yet the influence the change must have upon the Muslim world. Of course, there is another view of recent Turkish history which sees the native Christians in the light of martyrs; the powers of Europe, chief among them Russia, as righteous judges moved by aims of large humanity. But this is altogether an anachronism. One might as well regard the Roman Catholics in England at the present day as sufferers, and justify a crusade of the Latin Powers for their deliverance. It is, besides, too violently held and preached to bear calm scrutiny.

These reflections, and the ceaseless hooting of the fog-horns, kept me waking in my bunk. When I got up in the morning after four hours' sleep the hoots were still persistent. I imagined we had hardly moved from last night's anchorage. It was, therefore, with astonishment, when I went up on deck, that I saw the round towers, ruined walls, and quaint, red-roofed town of Rûmeli Hissar bathed in early morning sunlight rising from a sea of periwinkle blue.

Even as I came on it the vision faded, a drift of opal fog swam in between, and by the caprice of the floating vapours the Asiatic coast appeared as a great purple shadow. Then something loomed upon our port bow, took shape rapidly, became an ironclad as busy as an ant-hill. It vanished, but another followed, exactly like it except that this was black while that was grey. There seemed no end of foreign warships in the strait. My fellow-passengers were glad of it; the Christians in Constantinople must be safe, they said; the nervous Frenchwoman thanked God with streaming eyes intent upon a first-class cruiser. And yet the scene was wonderfully peaceful as the clearing fog revealed it—the mosque of Orta-Reuy, with its graceful minarets, reposing on the water like a swan; the mosque and palaces of Dolma-Baghcheh; the clustered wooden houses, brown and grey, with pretty red-tiled roofs, the wooded hills, the cypress trees, watching the sparkle of the sea on which we glided slowly. Ahead of us, the soaring minarets and stumpy dome of Aya Sofia appeared in mist; then, to the right of them, and seeming high in air, clear of the fog, shone out the diadem of old Stamboul, the glorious Suleymaniyeh. This was soon hidden by an arm of Galata as we drew up to the quay where the same pushing, yelling, seeming furious crowd of touts and porters waited as in peace-time. I saw no difference there or on the drive up to Pera with a serviceable hotel dragoman who had released me and my luggage from the tumult, except that everything was two shades cleaner, that the horses drawing my carriage were of a more wretched description, and that wheeled traffic in the streets was less than could be reckoned normal even at that early hour. I saw tramways, but no trams, which rather pleased me. All the decent horses had been taken for the war, my guide informed me. The streets through which we passed were altogether of a Western kind, New Art prevailing in the lines of building. Except at one point where some disused Moslem cemeteries allowed a view across their cypress-tops of Stamboul and the Golden Horn, they might have been in any city from Madrid to Budapesth. The fog had lifted. It was now a sunny morning, though the air bit shrewdly as I noticed when, having been shown to an exalted bedroom at the Pera Palace, I ventured on the balcony without my overcoat. The view was dazzling. The waters of the Golden Horn ran blue below a hill of cypresses, Stamboul beyond them forming a high background; while on this side of the water there were hills and glens all over-grown with wooden houses, under red-tiled roofs, with domes and minarets and pretty graveyards. And over all the roofs and domes, above the mourning plumes of the old cemeteries, there fluttered coloured streamers decorating the whole town. These were children's kites. A very tranquil murmur rose up from the scene. My guide—himself a Christian—assured me that the city had been peaceful through the war-time, without the slightest hint or fear of riot. Why, then, were the foreign warships in the Bosphorus?

Australian Notes.

By Grant Hervey

(President, Foreign Affairs Department, the Young Australia Party.)

AUSTRALIA, according to the "Daily News," is the most typically British portion of the Empire. It is "more English than England in blood, habit, and speech, and no Dominion is richer in promise."

Let us see how this Liberal daily's judgment squares with the facts.

To begin with, Australia is not a Dominion. Canada and New Zealand are true Dominions, in that they acknowledge political inferiority to Great Britain; and are, apparently, more or less content with that humble, semi-provincial station. Australia, upon the other hand, is a free Commonwealth—a State in semi-alliance with

Great Britain to-day, that may be compelled, by the stupidity of English statesmen of Sir Edward Grey's description, to enter into far more intimate relations with Germany or America—and perhaps with both—to-morrow. It is of not the slightest utility, either in Australia or in England, to blink these facts. Our status is different from Canada's, and distinct again from that of New Zealand. If we have any companion State within the Empire at present, it is South Africa—and South Africa, too, for reasons more or less analogous with our own, may be compelled ere long to look to Germany or towards some other foreign State for an effective international champion. Statements such as these may have an unpalatable tang for the "Daily News," and for the "Daily News" variety of British intelligence, but they are in strict accordance with the facts.

Australia is "typically British" in that everything within this Commonwealth which is over-ripe for destruction is of modern British origin. Our British institution of land monopoly, so carefully transferred to the Antipodes; our six shoddy provincial imitations of the British House of Lords, each and all of them filled with the pillars of that land-monopolising system; our six serio-comic imported British Governors, all of them worshipped by the stupid Tory landowners in our six Legislative Councils—why, yes, all of these things are typically British; and it is because they are so British that, as institutions, they clamour for the unsparing hand of the destroyer. It is expressly in order to smash these typically British things that our Young Australia Movement has been created. We mean to destroy that monopolistic British land system as thoroughly and as emphatically as we mean to abolish that system's co-ordinate Legislative Councils. And when this Commonwealth becomes at last what it ought to be, and what it must be—an independent Saxon-English Republic—imported British Governors one and all, from the high and mighty Governor-General down to the English figurehead of the smallest and least important province, will most certainly be crowded out.

It is because the best and most vigorous Australians are thoroughly English in blood, speech and habit that we rely upon their ultimate aid and hearty assistance in order to bring about these desirable ends. When we say thoroughly English, of course, we do not mean the English of to-day. We mean the Englishness of the great traditional England—that England of which Oliver Cromwell is the supremely representative man; that England which did not hesitate to kill a king, when a king was so ill-advised as to get between that great traditional England and that England's destiny. There are the signs, here in Australia to-day, of a great English renaissance. Australians are thinking back. They are remembering the proud historic origins of their race; and it is because they are filled, consciously or unconsciously, with that dark inward pride, that inward spiritual strength and sense of manliness—it is because of this inherited instinct of nobility and greatness that we are prepared to walk new paths, and to enter into new, world-political alliances—dismissing your unhappy, Liberal-looted England, which is apparently prepared to stand indefinitely the rule of Asquith, Grey and George, and to see the name of Britain dragged daily through the diplomatic dust—unto the devil.

Our spirit, in short, is not only the Lexingtonian, but it is also the pre-Lexingtonian spirit. We are prepared to do what the makers of America were prepared to

do—to turn our backs upon a degraded, degenerate England and walk alone. If we were not prepared to do this, given the all-sufficing cause, then we should feel ashamed to look our spiritual kinsmen in the face. We should be ashamed to look at the great figure of Cromwell, or to stand within the stark and mighty shadow of men like Hampden and Pym. Modern Englishmen may be prepared to forget the tremendous achievements of their race, but we are not. The home-dwelling Briton of to-day may be prepared to play the part of a servile, stamp-licking automaton, but never try that policy upon an Australian. All modern Englishmen hate us and affect to despise us, we know, but at the back of their hatred lies the vague and disquieting thought that England has fallen; that things are not as they were; and that the rude speech and action of these "blasted Colonials" is sprung from the mouth and hands of a ruder-speaking, ruder-acting England, that bruised and battered the world in a braver, nobler day.

The modern Englishman, of course, sees only the pseudo-Australian type—the half-baked premiers and prime ministers, who cringe and fawn with one ultra-loyal eye upon the King, and the other expectant optic fixed upon the British money-lender. This is the type that makes Australia appear ridiculous abroad. These are the men whose cup of happiness is filled, and whose wives are elevated a cubit or so with cheap suburban pride whenever their "loyal" deeds and words are rewarded with a pinchbeck title. They are bought with a paltry gaud, and are dismissed from the official British mind with an official British sneer. Here in Australia the people at large object to imported titles. It is natural that an old ex-feudal land like England should have dukes and barons, earls and lords; but when Sir Timothy Cringeanfawn comes back to Australia with a brand-new knighthood, we inspect the latest Imperial cad with hard, unsympathetic eyes; and we wonder just exactly what kind of a dirty trick this decorated nincompoop has played, as a quid pro quo against Australia.

No Prime Minister, State Premier, or other politician who goes to London to raise a loan can ever be expected to tell the modern Englishman the truth about Australia. Only the men who want nothing from England have sufficient intellectual honesty and moral courage for that task. And that, we may premise, is one among the various merits of our Young Australia Movement. We want nothing whatever from modern England. We neither thirst after knighthoods nor baronetcies, nor yet are we intent on extracting millions from the British money-lender. All that England has of value for our purposes we possess already. The traditions of the great historic England are ours, in any case, quite as much as they are yours. Our forefathers made England mighty amongst nations. You apparently—you modern Englishmen, are content to see our ancestral land become a jest and a mockery abroad; a thing for any dog who feels disposed to lift his leg against. Well, it is all that one expects from a breed that can tolerate a George as its Chancellor of the Exchequer, or a Grey as its Minister for Apologetic Affairs.

If we out here have tolerated Sir Timothy Cringeanfawn as an Australian politician, it has been for the time only. Australia is so vast—some twenty or thirty United Kingdoms could be stored within its territory—Australia, we repeat, is so enormous in its area, and so scattered in its population, that nothing, as yet, can be done quickly. Hence, it has taken us no less than ten or a dozen years to so much as hammer the solid framework of our Young Australia Movement together. It was more or less the same, it is well to add, with the bringing about of Federation. Almost half a century was required to get this Commonwealth launched. Another half century, at least, will have to pass before the world begins to feel the force and acknowledge the importance of this "typically British" Commonwealth of Australia. The England that Cromwell launched was not understood, nor its

true dimensions perceived, all in a hurry. Cromwell's bones had to be dug up, and his skull displayed and mocked at, before slow and solid England vibrated through and through with the Stuart-shifting spirit of Cromwell. And if Oliver Cromwell could live, and work, and die, and wait, why so can we.

The radical difference, then, between modern England and Australia is this. Englishmen, or the majority thereof, who possess voters' rights, appear to be willing to accept Grey and George and Asquith as a permanent political institution. Even the sponsors of the proposed Guild system of a reorganised society—even these appear to meditate no step towards the establishment of a Grey-destroying, Asquith-obliterating Young England Party. It is very peculiar. They seem to acknowledge that England is hopeless, that the modern Englishman is a hog, in short, and that political pearls are wasted upon the labelled-and-ticketed Georgian swine. Hence all this Back-to-India exhortation, as if the policy that modern Englishmen are too ignorant or intellectually too degenerate to criticise or understand might find an appreciation in the Punjab, or perchance discover a few score effective apostles in Bengal!

Well, Australia does *not* accept the Australian Liberal Party, or the Australian Labour Party, as the last word in Commonwealth politics. Men—and a few quiet, un-demonstrative women—in Australia—have a feeling that this land is indeed full of promise. Read any Australian newspaper, talk to any Australian politician, and the hope or the fear of a third (National) party pulsates in every column and echoes from every lip. "What is this Young Australia Movement? What does it mean? Why don't its leaders get into Parliament? What are they waiting for?—these questions are becoming audible in every part of Australia. Men recognise that there is an alternative to Labour, as well as to Liberalism, and to the leadership of that typical mean-Colonial Englishman—Mr. Joseph Cook. The ranks of Labour and of Liberalism in Australia are alike in this. They are full of men who are uneasy and dissatisfied, men who *know* that Liberalism leads nowhere, and that Labour goes around in a circle to the right, whilst Labour's opponents merely go around in a circle to the left. These men, poor fellows! are very unhappy. When they vote for Mr. Joseph Cook they curse him beneath their breath. And when they vote for Mr. Andrew Fisher they go away dejectedly and shake their heads. As an Australian farmer said to me yesterday: "I dunno which I hate the most, them Liberals with Joe Cook, or them Labourites with Fisher; and it's time us coves whacked blanky blazes out of both of them, and started a reconstruction party of our own."

This man, I found on investigation, was a relative of Arnold Toynbee who founded Toynbee Hall, and who burnt up his energy on behalf of the walking misery of East London. I present his rough, unscholarly opinion as a symptom of the national discontent—the belligerently British habit of mind that begins to perceive the necessity of destroying Australian Liberalism along with Labour. This Toynbee at the Antipodes is a man after Australia's heart. A great, squarely-hewn tower of a man, no graduate of Oxford, but a senior wrangler of the plough, prepared to let metaphorical daylight through these Liberal and Labour failures who are engaged just now in playing a game of see-saw with the destinies of our nation. Our Young Australia Movement will find a sure and certain use for this Nelson's Column of a younger Toynbee a little later on.

Meanwhile, here are some questions for the "Daily News" to answer. Why are there no rugged, Cromwell-earnest Englishmen in England to-day? Why are there no belligerent Toynbees at work in England now, to "whack blue blazes" out of George and Grey and Asquith, to say nothing of Bonar Law and Austen Chamberlain? Why are there no "typically British" Britishers in Britain, to start a brand-new, well-balanced, full-policed British Reconstruction Party. Is England *dead*—or what?

The Irish in England.

By Peter Fanning.

FROM November, 1890, to October, 1891, the Clerics and anti-Parnellites, with one accord, assured the Irish people that the one thing needful to secure national unity and the establishment of Home Rule was the removal of Parnell.

Well—their wish was gratified—Parnell was dead. But before his death the Chief had asked his enemies: "From whom do I receive my authority? Who gives me power to exercise it? My position has been granted to me on account of the services which I have rendered in building up this party, in overcoming prejudices, in soothing differences of opinion and in keeping together the discordant elements of our race within the bounds of moderation. Now—don't throw me to the wolves till you get my price. Get my price—then change me to-morrow!"

But they would have his blood. So they killed him, and threw him to the wolves; but, they have not yet got his price, even up to to-day, twenty-two years after their crime.

The chief had only been in his grave a week, when Healy, the man who was primarily instrumental in his destruction, had the insufferable insolence to declare at Navan, "I had hoped that in the grave of Parnell would be buried all the controversies respecting his leadership. I am sorry to find that that is not so."

Healy imagined that having destroyed the man who made him, the mantle of Parnell would fall to himself, instead of which, there were half a dozen scrambling for the vacant throne; and mauling each other with the same fury as they had previously, in a pack, hounded Parnell.

It would serve no useful purpose to follow the antics of these gentlemen for the next few years, when they were split up into Healyites, Dillonites, O'Brienites, McCarthyites, O'Connorites, etc. But I will return to them again, when they begin to tell the actual truth about each other, and we shall then see why certain of them were so anxious to put Parnell out of the way. While the anti-Parnellites were making an exhibition of themselves the Parnellites of Tyneside, joining forces with the Old Guard, found good, and, as it eventually proved, successful work to do, in agitating for an "Amnesty" for the Irish political prisoners.

During the period of the Parnell movement proper, Irish literature, other than political, was at a complete discount. The whole attention of the nation being concentrated upon the economic and national struggle, neither time nor attention could be devoted to historical research. But now, owing to the destruction of the political movement, a band of Irish writers under the leadership and direction of Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, one of the founders of the "Young Ireland" movement of the 'forties, came forth with a project to produce a "New Irish Library." The labours of these patriots resulted in the issue of twelve works of such historical value and importance as to entitle their authors to the gratitude of their fellow-countrymen for all time.

If there are any readers of these papers who desire to obtain an accurate knowledge of Ireland and Irishmen, their antiquity, laws and customs, art and literature, songs and music, wars (with their victories and defeats), sports and pastimes, I would urge them to procure the following nine works: "The Patriot Parliament of 1689" (T. Davis), "The Bog of Stars" (Standish O'Grady), "The Irish Song Book" (A. P. Graves), "The Story of Early Gaelic Literature" (Dr. Douglas Hyde), "Life of Sarsfield" (John Todhunter), "Owen Roe O'Niell" (J. F. Taylor), "Swift in Ireland" (R. Ashe-King), "A Short Life of Thomas Davis" (Sir Charles Gavan Duffy), "Lays of the Red Branch" (Sir S. Fergusson).

In the above works, obtainable for a few shillings, will be found a store of information which will come as a surprise to the ordinary well-read Englishman.

English historians appear to be afraid to tell the truth about their own country; but they never scruple to tell a lie about another. All kinds of fudge are palmed off on the English people as historical fact, and unfortunately Ireland and Irishmen have been the greatest sufferers from these professional liars. For ages, the official recorders were accustomed to refer to Irishmen as "The mere Irishry," "The wild Irish"; and latterly, "The dirty, lazy, good-for-nothing Irish." I have no desire to appear offensive to any English reader of these papers; but the truth is, that these pretentious airs of superiority are a source of endless amusement to Irishmen. When we hear Westminster called the "Mother of Parliaments" we smile, knowing as we do that Ireland possessed a National Parliament when the English possessed nothing but woad. When we hear ourselves referred to as the ignorant Irish, we think of the times when it was customary for kings, princes, and scholars of the European nations to repair to Ireland to obtain the free education which she, out of her love of culture, offered to every seeker. One such free scholar, an English king, out of gratitude for the hospitality received has left behind him the following description of the Ireland of his own experience:—

KING ALDFRED'S ITINERARY.

I found in Innisfail the fair,
In Ireland, while in exile there,
Women of worth, both grave and gay men,
Many clerics and many laymen.

I travelled its fruitful provinces round,
And in every one of the five I found,
Alike in church and palace hall,
Abundant apparel and food for all.

Gold and silver I found and money,
Plenty of wheat and plenty of honey,
I found God's people rich in pity,
Found many a feast and many a city.

I also found in Armagh the splendid,
Meekness, wisdom, prudence blended,
Fasting in Christ both recommended
And noble counsellors untranscended.

I found in each great church, more'er,
Whether on island or on shore,
Piety, learning, fond affection,
Holy welcome and kind protection.

I found the good lay monks and brothers
Ever beseeching help for others,
And in their keeping the holy word,
Pure as it came from Jesus the Lord.

I found in Munster, unfettered by any,
Kings and queens and poets a many,
Poets well skilled in music and measure,
Prosperous doings, mirth and pleasure.

I found in Connacht the just, redundancy
Of riches, milk in lavish abundance,
Hospitality, vigour, fame,
In Cruahan's land of heroic name.

I found in Ulster from hill to glen
Hardy warriors, resolute men,
Beauty that bloomed when youth had gone,
And strength transmitted from sire to son.

I found in Leinster the smooth and sleek,
From Dublin to Slewmary's peak,
Flourishing pastures, valour, health,
Song-loving worthies, commerce, wealth.

I found besides from Ard to Glea,
In the broad rich country of Ossory,
Sweet fruits, good laws, for all and each,
Great chess-players, men of truthful speech.

I found in Meath's fair principality,
Virtue, vigour, and hospitality,
Candour, joyfulness, bravery, purity,
Ireland's bulwark and security.

I found strict morals in age and youth,
I found historians recording truth.
The things I sing of in verse unsmooth,
I found them all—I have written sooth.

The above picture of Ireland, drawn by the King of Northumbria, in what is historically spoken of as the dark age, shows that as a Roman soldier never desecrated her soil, so the effects of the break-up of the Roman Empire left her untouched, and enabled her

later on, from her own abundant stores, to give knowledge and culture to all the peoples of the Continent. Ireland did not receive from the world her noble title "The Isle of Saints and Scholars" without meriting it. How she was dragged down from her proud eminence; why she lay for centuries in the dust, hated and maligned, and how she rose again and claimed her right to nationhood, may be learned from the volumes named above.

When these books appeared, individual Irishmen throughout the pit villages of Northumberland and Durham constituted themselves unpaid agents for their distribution, and went amongst their people disposing of hundreds of them.

In Newcastle, seeing that it was hopeless to expect anything like joint action between Parnellites and anti-Parnellites in political matters, my brother and others thought it might be possible to draw us together again by the means of Irish literature. For this purpose they organised an Irish literary society, and applied to Sir Charles Gavan Duffy for advice. Sir Charles forwarded to my brother an autograph book containing lectures by himself, Dr. G. Sigerson, Dr. Douglas Hyde, and the following letter:—

Dan Fanning, Esq. Villa Maillory, Nice.

Dear Sir,—I am much pleased with the news you send me, that the Irishmen of Newcastle are about to form a society for the promotion of a national spirit in literature, social enjoyment, and for self-discipline which such a project implies and involves. They have done wisely in taking the name of Thomas Davis to sanction such an experiment, for in a long life-time I have met no man who laboured so consistently and so successfully in the same field.

Do not let our countrymen in Newcastle forget to how much the name of Davis pledges them if they are determined to be worthy of it. Industry, which like his will not be intermittent, but steadfast and patient to the end: convictions which have been well considered and cannot be shaken either by reverses or misrepresentation; a love and sympathy for the whole Irish people without limitation of race or creed, and a forbearance like that which has bequeathed to his country a body of native literature without one ungenerous reflection upon any human being. A Davis society will be a self-contradiction if it does not teach and practise the virtue for which he is loved and honoured.

May I exhort you to remember that when Irish literary societies have failed in the past, the cause has almost always been want of special work to do. The example of the parent societies in London and Dublin will be a useful guide, but it is always open to a new society to break new ground. There might be classes for Irish history; a course of Irish literature illustrated with copious examples; nights with Moore, Mangan, Davis, Ferguson, and the Irish poets, at which their best ballads would be recited and their best songs sung.

And do not forget that the New Irish Library which men are working with unselfish zeal to produce ought to be carried into every Irish household and made familiar to Irish audiences from every platform.

I shall watch your labours with interest, and with the certainty that if they be wisely pursued the men engaged in them will be wiser, better, happier, and even more prosperous, because they have found their enjoyment in such generous labours. Believe me, my dear Sir,

Very faithfully yours,
CHARLES GAVAN DUFFY.

For a time this effort met with a fair measure of success. Irish songs, music, and literature were dealt with, and Irishmen became better acquainted with their national treasures. Amongst those who assisted in this respect was Mr. J. L. Garvin, who gave us an exceedingly able address on Cuchulain and the Knights of the Red Branch. Another particular effort is worthy of mention. One of the members brought his mother to one of our nights, and whilst the son lectured on Irish lace-making, the mother gave us a practical illustration of that difficult art by making an exquisite piece of Limerick lace in our presence.

I am sorry to say that with the departure of my brother from Newcastle the society collapsed. It was not exciting enough for the mere politicians, so they made no effort to prolong its existence. There was nothing in it to be sold.

The Restoration of the Guild System.

By Arthur J. Penty.

X.

HAVING outlined those tendencies in modern society which are making for the restoration of the Guild System by providing the social atmosphere which is necessary to their existence, it remains for me to state more precisely the immediate work which may be undertaken.

Such work is of two orders—idealist and practical. Those whose interest is mainly confined to ideas could not do better than direct their energies towards the re-creation in society of the thought and atmosphere of the past. For it is by directing the public mind from the future to the past that those ways of thinking about things will be restored which are an indispensable condition of the success of any practical scheme which may be undertaken to restore the Guilds.

Those with a practical turn of mind should address themselves to the task of organising small workshops on a co-operative basis, which is the key to the situation. From whatever angle we approach the industrial problem, this will be found to be the central position which is to be forced. It is a philosophical truth that no synthesis is complete, in that there is always something left over which is the starting point or nucleus of another synthesis. Even so with our industrial system. Its economic synthesis refuses completion. Agriculture and certain small workshop industries refuse to adapt themselves to organisation on a large scale.

With the agricultural problem I am incompetent to deal, though I recognise it to be the most fundamental problem of all. Such, however, as are interested in it should study the work of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society. So far as I gather from its literature the economic problem which confronts the revival of agriculture is parallel to that which confronts the revival of craftsmanship—the middleman stands in the way. The Irish peasant remains poor because the middleman robs him of his earnings by standing between him and his market. The craftsman to-day is poor because the middleman controls his market by usurping functions which do not properly belong to him.

But I shall be told there is this difference between the case of agriculture and that of craftsmanship. That agriculture is a permanent need of society while craftsmanship is not; that the craftsman is a thing of the past, and that it is a waste of time to attempt the organisation of craftsmen because machine production is destined sooner or later to supplant hand production. In this connection the first point to which I desire to draw attention is that though in certain directions the craftsman and small workshops have given way to the factory because of the ability of the factory to produce work which lends itself to repetition more cheaply than is possible under small workshop conditions of work, it is yet far from being true of all classes of work. Indeed, it is very much open to question whether in the long run the small workshop will not altogether supplant the factory for all work of which it is capable. In many branches of production the factory holds sway to-day not because it is more economical, certainly not because it is more efficient in the best sense of the word, as all who value good work know, but because the small workshop is impossible in modern society apart from co-operative organisation. A consideration of all the circumstances surrounding small workshops to-day will help us to understand what form such organisation should take.

Though small workshops have suffered in the past from the competition of steam-driven machinery, that need not be the case in the future. As I have already pointed out, the substitution of electricity for steam as the motive power of machinery places the small workshop

on a different footing, because electricity is capable of distribution over a wide area, while steam power is not. I mention this not because I favour the use of machinery, or can see any solution of our problems so long as it remains uncontrolled, but in order to remove the prejudices of those who imagine small workshops are incompatible with machine production. While it is probable that if practical organisation is undertaken it will be necessary to compromise over this question of machinery. And here I would add that there is no objection to compromise, so long as we are honest with ourselves. The evil is that people will persuade themselves that a bad thing is a good thing when they have no option but to do it. As someone said recently: "When we can't realise our ideals, we idealise the real."

An indirect cause of the disappearance of endless small workshops has been the closing of old ones by the Public Health Authorities, while small masters have found it impossible to obtain others in our crowded towns. And in this connection it should be remembered that the small workshop is not generally mobile in the sense that a factory is. It generally supplies a local demand of some kind, and if a small master can't get a workshop suitable somewhere near where his business has been established, it probably means that he must go out of business, for small masters rarely have the capital necessary to build new workshops. Moreover, sites are very difficult to get in our crowded towns.

Another factor which has undermined the position of the small workshop is the spasmodic and erratic nature of demand which has followed the decay of local markets and the rise of national ones. Men in a small way of business find themselves alternating between periods when they have twice as much work as they are able to do, and when they lack work altogether. This kind of thing makes production on a small scale almost impossible in these days of cut prices, for it is impossible to produce economically under such conditions. The necessity of regularising work is so important to economy of production that manufacturers in these days are compelled to be continually enlarging their businesses in order to cope with this increasingly disturbing factor. Moreover, as the producer nowadays has to fight for his market, a workshop which is not large enough to support a traveller may go under through lack of work, though it may produce cheaper than a larger one.

A further difficulty which obtains everywhere where local markets have disappeared, is an increased cost of distribution to the small producer. This is especially true of furniture making, where the small producer cannot avail himself of the carrier companies because they do not take sufficient care with the goods they carry if sent unpacked, and the cost of a packing case, which under such circumstances generally has to be made specially, is a very costly item.

Then there is the supreme difficulty under which small workshops are placed in these days due to the manipulation of prices by the middleman. It is not generally known by the public that under this system the selling price of any particular article bears little or no relation to the actual cost of production. This has come about as the result of a policy pursued by middlemen for keeping the market to themselves. Certain articles are not only "jerried" and sweated, but are actually sold without profit. The middleman advertises these freely. The public, taking it for granted that everything he sells is equally cheap, come to him, and then he sells them articles on which there is a good profit. The result so far as the small workshop is concerned is that the craftsman finds himself checkmated in that, as it is only by running several lines of business together that the market can be handled; he, being specialised in one branch, is kept out of the running. Further, this confidence trick of the middleman stands in the way of any improvement in current design, because as it happens that the articles which are artificially lowered in price are things of necessity, while the

profit is entirely upon things of luxury, it becomes impossible to produce useful things which are beautiful and to make a living by so doing. If the craftsman attempts this he finds his prices are compared with commercial articles which are "jerried," sweated, and sold without profit. And as the craftsman cannot get near the commercial price for necessities, he becomes discredited in the eyes of the public, who, imagining everything he makes is equally expensive, do not bring to him such things as he can make and still sell at the ordinary commercial price.

The most fundamental of all the causes of the decline of the small workshop is the general absence of any artistic tradition in this country. For as was pointed out in the first chapter, in Paris and other places where some such tradition still survives, the small workshop still holds its own. And this for the simple reason that work with individuality can only be produced in a small workshop, because it is only in a small organisation that personality counts.

A consideration of all these issues should convince anyone that though the small workshop may be disappearing to-day, it is not because it is not a social and economic unit of production, but is due to the operation of causes which are clearly abnormal and symptomatic of an age of transition, but which may be overcome by better organisation. Obviously the solution of the problems of the small workshop is to be found in some form of co-operative or marketing agency, which would do for the small industrial producer what similar organisations do for the small agricultural producer. Such an organisation would market his goods, regularise demand, institute credit banks, and in many other ways bring him into a direct relationship with the market which he is not to-day. A special work which such an organisation might do would be to bring together small producers, craftsmen, and designers, where it would be for their mutual advantage. I cannot insist too strongly upon this aspect of the question. Good design would be the strongest weapon of offence which it is possible to forge, for it would give the small producer an advantage over the factory which it is difficult to over-estimate, for it would place him outside of ordinary competitive conditions. Moreover, it is the only way of guarding such a movement against commercial exploitation. The factory and commercial middleman are incapable of producing beautiful work, and once such can be placed on the market, the days of commercialism in the crafts are numbered. In a word, the effects of reformers should not be to compete with shoddy work, but to create a market for good work, in which endeavour the reaction which in many directions is setting in against shoddy work will assist us.

Such an organisation as I have described might strengthen its position by organising a society of consumers who would pledge themselves to support the craftsman's movement, thus resuming in some measure the functions of the patron who in these days has ceased to exist. One of the reasons why many people nowadays demand cheap furniture, etc., is because they do not feel permanently settled anywhere in the way that our forefathers did. This difficulty might be met by organising societies which owned furniture and let it out to their members at a certain annual charge. Such societies would encourage good work, because it would be to their interest to own furniture which was substantially made. I feel sure there is a great future for such societies if directed with taste and intelligence. Perhaps organisation on a similar basis to the co-partnership housing societies would be advantageous as it would solve the problem of how to get hold of the necessary capital by issuing loans to such members of the general public as were interested to support the movement with their surplus capital.

Valuable as such practical suggestions may be, they are yet dependent for their success upon propaganda which would bring the public into sympathy with the aims and object of the movement. Before practical organisation is possible, it is necessary to make the public familiar with the evils of manipulated prices,

since until the implications of this system are understood by the public it will be impossible to restore that confidence between the craftsman and the public which lies at the root of all successful organisation. People must be taught that the production of good work is incompatible with the worship of success—that the worship of success works out as the worship of the bagman. He must be taught, moreover, that success in an enterprise of this kind depends upon the spirit in which it is undertaken, and that only when they value good work sufficiently to put themselves to the inconvenience of looking for it will they be able to get it. It is just as much a matter of finding the man as of paying the price.

This is the parting of the ways. Social reform means ultimately personal reform. It means facing life in a different spirit and finding out what are the real issues. If we are content to continue living as a nation of Philistines, indifferent alike to poetry, religion, ideas, and art, worshipping vulgar success, wasting our precious gifts in sordid speculative enterprises and our leisure in senseless luxury, dissipation, and excitement, then no power on earth can save us. We shall continue to wallow in the troughs of commercialism, and no solution of our problems is possible, though every voice in the land should demand it. Unless individually we are prepared to live for the truth and to make sacrifices for it, society will remain as at present at the mercy of the speculator, the sweeter, the hustler, the mountebank, and the adventurer. For there can be no remedy. More important to a nation than the acquisition of material riches is the welfare of its spiritual life. This is the lesson the social problem has to teach us.

(THE END.)

Readers and Writers.

MR. EZRA POUND seems to have set out in his articles on modern French writers to support the superstition that Paris is always "twenty years ahead of all other worlds of letters." The same was contended in Dryden's day, and my readers may recall Dryden's reply. I am not Dryden, but neither is Corneille now alive, still less Molière. Nor, if I may say so, is Mr. Ezra Pound Lord Buckhurst; and all these things make a difference. Mr. Pound, however, clearly defines his position from the outset. For him there are only two great and interesting phenomena in the world: Parisian intellectual life and the promise of America. In both, unfortunately perhaps for myself, I see, on the contrary, little either of promise or of performance. From America, it is true, we cannot expect much since the "solitude and room to grow," postulated by one of my colleagues as necessary to literature, are singularly absent from that vast and busy ant-hill. Moreover, I can see no immediate future for a nation that not merely looks to Europe for its opinions, but to second-rate Europe. A taste for the best is surely the precedent condition of a capacity for the best, since men become what they love. From Paris, on the other hand, we are entitled to expect something at least as "ripe" as anything in Europe. Paris has a tradition behind it, and native models of excellence. Paris is not a twig planted in a desert, but a tree planted by rivers of water. But the best thing that Mr. Pound has yet been able to say of Paris is that it contains a little group of café habitués who imagine themselves to be the only Israelites in a world of Philistines. And it is precisely with this little clique, apparently, that he is most concerned! I reserve my judgment until he has produced his evidence that any one of this mutually devoted band can write good French, let alone talk good sense. My apprehensions, however, are not horripilating, for I observe that in discussing these phoenixes Mr. Pound allows himself to write of "fetching up in a cellar." He would not, I feel sure, write round Anatole France in this style, or even round a Lavedan. It is obvious he breathes too freely in the atmosphere of Paris for great respect.

The English translation of Gobineau's "Renaissance" is due to be published to-day (Heinemann, 10s. net). By the courtesy of Dr. Oscar Levy I have been able to read an advance proof of his lengthy, but not too lengthy, introduction. It is obvious at the first glance that Dr. Levy found in Gobineau exactly what Nietzsche found in him: a profound and at the same time a witty spirit. This combination of wit and profundity is as rare as it is caviare. The mass of us take, even in private, serious things seriously without a suspicion that serious things are serious only because they are taken seriously. The valuation of phenomena is, after all, the only contribution men can make to creation; it amounts, in fact, to creation. Our scale of values is thus the measure of our intelligence and will—of our creative power, in short. Gobineau, like Nietzsche, instituted a scale the graduations of which were peculiar to himself and his type, and of which in some respects the common scale is the reverse. His serious things were things the world holds as jokes or, at best, as lunacies; of the world's serious things, on the other hand, he made light. Dr. Levy tells a story of him on which his own comment is perfect. Unlike Strindberg, who, after a life of agnosticism turned Catholic on his death-bed, Gobineau refused to receive holy consolation so long as he was conscious. It was administered to him only while he was unaware of what was being done. Dr. Levy's comment is this: "The power of the great free-thinker's mind was such that it could even give way at the right moment!" Such stories apart, there is plenty of evidence that Gobineau was both a great mind and a greater man than even himself suspected. A better stage than he occupied or a different Act of the drama was necessary to reveal himself to himself. With the De Tocquevilles, the Bismarcks, and the Wagners, great in one way as these were, he was not always at home, though sufficiently at ease. Their ideas were for to-day, his were for to-morrow; and in their company he was always waiting for his cue.

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Another book I announced some weeks ago is now out: the "Caricatures" of "Tomt" (Mr. Rosciszewsky). These consist of some seventy-five drawings of public persons all of which have appeared in THE NEW AGE. In keeping with their origin, the "Caricatures" have been produced in a form similar to that of THE NEW AGE volumes. Only two hundred and fifty copies have been issued, and it is most unlikely that the edition will be reprinted. The price is five shillings net, and the profit, even if all are sold, cannot be more than £20. I shall be glad, when the times comes, to publish a balance-sheet of the whole transaction, for the information of the curious.

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While awaiting the comments of the reviewers, should they venture an opinion, I may remark on the reception Mr. Rosciszewsky's drawings have had from the readers of THE NEW AGE. To be quite accurate, there is no evidence that they have been received at all. For some three years now, this caricaturist has been contributing a weekly criticism of public persons in a style of immense power and with every mark of insight and passion. Only the most casual, apparently, of observers of our English public life, Mr. Rosciszewsky, a Pole, with less English than most journalists, has nevertheless "divined" in the very spirit of THE NEW AGE the characteristics of several hundred of our leading men. I can swear to it that, save in a few instances, he got no direct help from his colleagues. They could only wonder that a foreigner should see at once what their eyes had only discerned after long looking—the real shapes of the poodles on the public stage. But while we wondered—and I hope I shall be forgiven this fresh offence against the correct taste of the C. K. S.'s—the readers of THE NEW AGE did nothing to our knowledge but gape in silence. Once or twice a voice of timid approval was heard; twice or thrice a reader of weak nerves threatened to cease subscribing if the caricatures continued to appear; but for the rest there was silence. You cannot imagine, unless you

have tried it, what public production under these circumstances means to an artist, be he literary or draughtsman. It is like lecturing to the dumb in a hall of pitch darkness. Riot, I frankly say, would be a better tribute. Fortunately for himself, however, Mr. Rosciszewsky has the indulgence of the foreign gentleman for our English peculiarities.

* * *

I have been looking over the lists of autumn books in the hope of finding something to salute with pleasure. With the exception of some half a dozen—not one per cent. of the total to be published—I find none to arouse my desire; but on the other hand I find many the bare thought of which threatens to quench the smoking flax of my zeal for the new. If my state were singular it would, of course, be of no more concern than I could make it; but from imagined singularity my state has become so common that practically every reader of sense shares my feelings and, when he is permitted, expresses my view. The "Nation," for example, only a week ago was "convinced that the pessimist [meaning THE NEW AGE] about contemporary literature is justified in his gloom." And this, remark, was said on the eve of the autumn productions and probably with the publishers' catalogues in hand. The "Athenæum," likewise, has a sable note on the matter apropos of Mr. P. P. Howe's pamphlet advocating Malthusianism in the publishing trade. The only question on which there is now any disagreement among the competent is the question of responsibility: which of the four parties to current literature is the major criminal—the author, the publisher, the reviewer, or the reader. Against all four there is, I find, an active prosecution, less active, however, in the case of the two parties that could really be brought to book. For of readers it is useless to complain; they are as God made them; the best writers have usually the greatest cause to hate them. And of authors similarly I find it hard to make a reasonable complaint. Dependent as they are upon some publisher for appearing in print at all and then upon some reviewer for the prestige they acquire, they are as completely in the hands of these two as land is in the hands of a farmer. Practically there exist at any time authors of every degree of possible excellence save genius; and it is not altogether their fault and still less the fault of the reading public if the worse and not the better are selected for publication. The real culprits, in fact—certainly the culprits most accessible to exemplary punishment—are the publishers and the reviewers; and though both of these have been blamed, neither have been blamed nearly enough or as if they were what they are—responsible for the condition of modern literature.

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The reasons for their being let off lightly are obvious. The "literary" Press lives by publishers' advertisements, and the reviewers are the "literary" Press itself. How then shall they quarrel first with their bread and butter and secondly with themselves? Nevertheless, a few truths have slipped out between the crevices of their caution, and a few more may be expected when the wash of the present publishing season begins to ebb. To quote the "Nation" again, "reviewers often permit themselves to be used . . . as ill-paid assistants of the advertising manager." Aha! And the "Athenæum" dismisses publishers contemptuously as offering "no hope." But my own view is not merely passively acquiescent in this condition of things; I am for fighting. If there are—and, of course, there are—reviewers who echo the opinions of their advertisement columns, let us have them up for public trial; let us have their names and the names of the journals in which they are permitted to write; let us weigh their words against the advertisements that appear concurrently with them. Let us ask, for example, why the "Nation" in the same issue that contained the above-mentioned diatribe, praised eight of the ten books reviewed in its columns? Or why the "Athenæum" of the same date

discovered no fewer than nine out of ten of the books that week examined to be worthy of some degree of eulogy. Questions like these, if they could be answered, would put us on the track of real discoveries, or rather of confirmations; we should begin to find how silken are the cords that bind the reviewer to the publisher. Possibly, also, we should learn that practically no reviewer can be trusted or can even trust himself in a journal that accepts the bribes of the publisher. It is not, however, let me hasten to say, a case of deliberately adapting opinions to the size of the advertisement. This practice is only common to journals—chiefly daily newspapers—that live by what is called "whitemailing." The more reputable journals do not adapt their reviews at all, but only their reviewers! But this is equally effective, needless to say, though less crudely dishonest. For instance, does anybody suppose a NEW AGE reviewer could obtain reviewing for the "Nation," the "Spectator," the "Athenæum" or any such journal? It is unthinkable. And the reason is not that THE NEW AGE reviewers are not competent even in the opinion of Fleet Street. They are the deadly envy of the profession! But the reason is that they have no concern with the feelings of publishers, authors, or the immediate public; in short, they do not "accommodate" themselves to commercial interests.

* * *

The comparative helplessness of reviewers throws me back on the publishers as the real cause of the disgraceful state of our literature. Yes, the publishers are to blame. Let us attack the publishers. Precisely as the profiteers in industry kill out good workmanship and flood the country with shoddy, profitable only to themselves, so the publishing tradesmen of malice aforethought and with only one desire in their minds—namely, profit—kill out or silence by neglect or contempt not only the best living writers, but the best part of the writers whom they employ, utterly careless of the effect upon literature and of the further effect of literature upon life. The tales that could be told out of school of these people (for I was a publisher myself until happily the business failed) are such as would make political corruption seem relatively dazzling in its purity. They have so surrounded themselves with myth, however, that no lay reader would believe me. Shall I, therefore, risk my reputation for sobriety and incur the charge of personal malice by unfolding them? Leave me to fight in my own way; I shall convince you yet. One myth—the most baseless—shall, however, be mentioned; it is that publishers ever exercise their own independent judgment in commissioning obscure writers to publish with them. I have known many obscure writers; c'est mon métier. I know obscure writers to-day who, properly encouraged, could do honour to English literature. I have never known one who, without preliminary jobbery, was approached by a publisher to submit a work for publication. You think, doubtless, that publishers—as it is often said of editors—are "on the look-out" for fresh minds and promising writers. Myth, pure myth! It required a personal "pull" to procure the publication of the work I referred to the other week as the purest work of genius our brief age has produced. The "Ethiopian Saga" has never been able to find a publisher. Not one of the many series of articles, even including the series on "National Guilds," has ever been "asked for" by any publisher in England, though by several publishers abroad. Mr. Penty's work on "The Restoration of the Guild System" has been refused re-publication. From the experience of THE NEW AGE, a journal that has introduced more "obscure" writers than all the other journals put together, it is safe, even without my personal testimony, to generalise. If this is our experience, what else can be the experience of others even less fortunately placed?

* * *

I am sorry to hear about the death of Mr. Robert

Guppy, who passed away at the early age of forty, after having just crowned Dr. Oscar Levy's Nietzsche Edition with what is perhaps the best Index in our literature. Mr. Guppy was a Post Office employé in a small Yorkshire town, and one day offered himself to compile the Index out of admiration for Nietzsche! The value of our English Nietzsche has thus been enhanced considerably, for the aphoristic manner of Nietzsche's writings really required a good index, which, by the way, is still wanting in the German and French editions.

R. H. C.

Views and Reviews.*

THIS synopsis of intellectual history reminds us of the truth of one of Nietzsche's dicta: "It is now unseemly to be a Christian." One cannot be aware of the curse that Christianity has been to civilisation, and commend it, without ranking oneself with the "base things of the world, and things which are despised," whom, according to the writer of the first epistle to the Corinthians, God has chosen. For the Hebrew Scriptures which, as Nietzsche said, begin with the story of God's mortal terror of science, have had only the effect of quickening in man this fear of the known. "For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness." Thus the writer of the first epistle to the Corinthians described the nature of Christianity; and made obvious the fact that, intellectually, Christianity was the supersession of both the dialectical and experimental methods of arriving at knowledge and, perhaps, truth. In Greece, although its history is disfigured by some few cases of punishment for heterodoxy, reason was free: "opinions were not imposed except by argument," says Professor Bury. "You were not expected to receive some 'kingdom of heaven' like a little child, or to prostrate your intellect before an authority claiming to be infallible." But with the rise of Christianity to power, there was an end to such freedom.

It is true, of course, that Christians suffered some persecution in the early days of the faith; but what they suffered was nothing compared with what they inflicted. Nor can the persecution of the early days be attributed to any deliberate wickedness of the Roman Emperors: "in general," says Professor Bury, "the persecution of the Christians was rather provoked by the populace than desired by the authorities." Even under Trajan, when to be a Christian was to be liable to the death penalty, we find that it was "laid down that Christians were not to be sought out, that no anonymous charges were to be noticed, and that an informer who failed to make good his charge should be liable to be punished under the laws against calumny." Contrast this with the infamous "Edict of Faith," "which enlisted the people in the service of the Inquisition, and required every man to be an informer," and it will be seen that, although the Roman Empire was gravely jeopardised by Christianity, it was more tolerant of its enemies than Christianity has ever been.

It should also be borne in mind that the early Christians did not suffer death for heresy; that was inaugurated by themselves in the fourth century by the execution of the heretic Priscillian. "The general rule of Roman policy," says Professor Bury, "was to tolerate throughout the Empire all religions and all opinions. Blasphemy was not punished. The principle was expressed in the maxim of the Emperor Tiberius: 'If the gods are insulted, let them see to it themselves.' An exception to the rule of tolerance was made in the case of the Christian sect, and the treatment of this Oriental religion may be said to have inaugurated religious persecution in Europe. It is a matter of interest to understand why Emperors who were able, humane, and not in the least fanatical,

adopted this exceptional policy. For a long time the Christians were only known to those Romans who happened to hear of them, as a sect of the Jews. The Jewish was the one religion which, on account of its exclusiveness and intolerance, was regarded by the tolerant pagans with disfavour and suspicion. But though it sometimes came into collision with the Roman authorities and some ill-advised attacks upon it were made, it was the constant policy of the Emperors to let it alone and to protect the Jews against the hatred which their own fanaticism aroused. But while the Jewish religion was endured so long as it was confined to those who were born into it, the prospect of its dissemination raised a new question. Grave misgivings might arise in the mind of a ruler at seeing a creed spreading which was aggressively hostile to all the other creeds of the world—creeds which lived together in amity—and had earned for its adherents the reputation of being the enemies of the human race. Might not its expansion beyond the Israelites involve ultimately a danger to the Empire? For its spirit was incompatible with the traditions and basis of Roman society. The Emperor Domitian seems to have seen the question in this light, and he took severe measures to hinder the proselytising of Roman citizens. Some of those whom he struck may have been Christians, but if he was aware of the distinction, there was from his point of view no difference. Christianity resembled Judaism, from which it sprang, in intolerance and in hostility towards Roman society, but it differed by the fact that it made many proselytes while Judaism made few." The Roman persecutions of Christianity were dictated by the determination to maintain tolerance, in the interests of the Empire: the Christian persecutions of what was called heresy were dictated by the determination to maintain intolerance, in the interests of Christianity. As Nietzsche said: "The anarchist and the Christian are of the same origin."

One fact at least is clear: the Christians cared only for freedom for themselves. Socrates could argue that freedom of discussion was useful to society, and, therefore, that society should not protect any belief from intellectual attack; but "the Christians claimed the right of freedom exclusively for themselves from a non-Christian Government, and it is hardly going too far to suspect that they would have applauded the Government if it had suppressed the Gnostic sects whom they hated and calumniated. In any case, when a Christian state was established, they would completely forget the principles which they had invoked. The martyrs died for conscience, but not for liberty. To-day the greatest of the churches demands freedom of conscience in the modern States which she does not control, but refuses to admit that, where she had the power, it would be incumbent on her to concede it." In the year 313, Constantine promulgated an Edict of Toleration to Christians; about ten years after, he adopted Christianity. Before a century had passed St. Augustine died, and, says Professor Bury, "he formulated the principle of persecution for the guidance of future generations, basing it on the firm foundation of Scripture—on words used by Jesus Christ in one of his parables, "Compel them to come in." So soon did the spirit of Christianity become apparent, and it persists even to this day in the prosecutions for blasphemy.

The psychology of Christianity was no less apparent during the Reformation. Luther held that the Anabaptists should be put to the sword; Calvin burned Servetus, over whom he had no jurisdiction, and one of the charges against Servetus was that "he believed the statement of a Greek geographer that Judea is a wretched barren country in spite of the fact that the Bible describes it as a land flowing with milk and honey." The Puritans who fled from the intolerance of Church and State were themselves equally intolerant in the colonies they founded in New England. Roger Williams was driven from Massachusetts because he believed in the heresy of the separation of Church from State. "He founded Providence," says Professor

* "A History of Freedom of Thought." By Prof. J. B. Bury. (Home University Library. 1s. net.)

Bury, "to be a refuge for those whom the Puritan colonists persecuted." In the Roman Catholic colony of Maryland, toleration for all Christians was established; but death was the penalty for atheism. But in five years the Protestants became a majority, and introduced an Act excluding Papists and Prelatists from toleration. So we might go on enumerating the evidences of the real nature of Christianity, but space forbids. But if we think that freedom of thought and discussion is good for men and for society, we can only hold Christianity responsible for the Dark Ages of mankind, "for freedom of discussion and speculation was fully realised in the Greek and Roman world," says Professor Bury, "and then an unforeseen force, in the shape of Christianity, came in and laid chains upon the human mind and suppressed freedom and imposed upon man a weary struggle to recover the freedom which he had lost." As Nietzsche said: "Christianity has been the greatest misfortune hitherto of mankind."

A. E. R.

Art.

Modern Dutch Masters.

By Anthony M. Ludovici.

IN my last notes on art, I said that the graphic arts were losing their prestige, and as one of the signs showing that this is actually the present tendency, I pointed to the enormous toleration meted out to incompetent amateurishness, to the prominent attitude the latter now dares to assume before the public eye.

"The means to do ill deeds makes ill deeds done." Those people who, every summer, are let loose upon our country lanes and pastures, like so many ravenous consumers of rustic beauty, armed with their paints and pencils, their camp-stools and their impudence; and who imagine that it is sufficient to squat in front of anything and to reproduce it, in order to be "pursuing art," are usually quite devoid of all true artistic feeling, and possess but one of the essentials of the artistic life—leisure. Take them aside and talk to them and you will soon realise that what I say is true. Not only the prestige of art, but also the prestige of leisure, is bound to decline in such hands.

For instance, I am quite convinced that the peculiar quality of the South Downs between Eastbourne and Brighton requires a good deal of understanding. To render this quality, even a first-class man would require to give the matter some patient study, and to go to some pains in order to discover precisely the best "technique" for the purpose. The fact that every photograph of the South Downs, and every picture too, that I have yet seen, fails to express this peculiar quality, is sufficient to show how elusive it is unless it be precisely understood and properly grasped. And yet, there is not a single member of this band of summer "artists," who hesitates for one moment to sit down in front of these beautiful hills and to paint them straight away on his paper or his canvas, as if everything could be understood by everybody and as if all things were equal.

Fundholders' wives and unmarried daughters, whose very coarseness and absence of quality is stamped upon their forms and features, are the worst offenders in this respect. The mechanical and mercenary atmosphere of their homes may drive them, poor things, to desperation; but they should try to remember that desperation is not art.

You will, perhaps, reply that so long as they only "kill time" by such pursuits no harm is done. I say that unfortunately they do not stop at merely "killing time." As there is no final tribunal in these questions, at the present day, they have no one to tell them that they are only "killing time" and nothing more. Their aspirations are as exalted as their natures are base. But whereas their own and their children's musical talents never reach a larger audience than their unfor-

tunate fellow-boarders in the hotel or boarding-house drawing room, their daubs are sent with a pertinacity which only genius would justify to every "possible" art gallery in the United Kingdom.

To be hung in a public gallery is the crowning reward for all this insufferable impudence; and the fact that they *do* get hung and not *hanged* is one of the many anomalies of this anomalous age. The other day I took one of these pretenders aside, just as I came within sight of the magnificent Windsor Hill, near Wilmington, Sussex, and I suggested that this hill seemed to me to be so full of a peculiarly exhilarating quality, which I had not yet succeeded in completely defining to my own satisfaction, that I wondered whether she (a married woman, wife of a merchant fundholder) had given it any thought before painting it. She? Thought? What for? Had colour and shape anything to do with thought? She liked it, she *loved* Windsor Hill; but she had just sat down to paint it as it appealed to her—that was all! Peculiar idea! Thought and Windsor Hill! She was the wife of a merchant; but she had deep artistic feeling and she intended to prove it to an incredulous and spiteful circle of friends. There were no secrets hidden from her great mind.

I need hardly say that her daub was an execrable parody of the majestic eminence; she had not even the reverence of the child in the presence of the mere quality of altitude.

Deeply as I am aware of their frequently appalling consequences, I should be the last to decry the ordinary school drawing and painting lessons; for I believe that they do something towards helping people to see things a little more accurately—and this is surely a desirable end to attain in a stupid age—but I certainly think that all except the highly gifted child should be entered for such school "art" lessons on the clear understanding that the subject, like geography, is merely an accident in the school curriculum, and that even if moderate ability be shown by the pupil, the work, like map-drawing, should be dropped as soon as school-life is left behind.

Thanks to the natural arrogance of parents, the pampered pretensions of the modern child and the flattering guile of the commercial schoolmaster or mistress, there are yearly drafted from the school drawing or painting class to the art school, a host of unfortunate nonentities who have no more reason to adopt art as a profession or as a pastime, pursued before the eyes of the public, than they have to adopt historical writing or scientific research. History and chemistry are both subjects included in the ordinary school curriculum, and more than common intelligence is frequently displayed by pupils in these classes without such pupils ever dreaming of adopting history or chemistry as a glorious hobby. In these matters there is still some modesty left in the British parent and his offspring. It is, however, a curious thing that, in the graphic arts, the merest spark of proficiency is immediately fanned into a spurious flame of genius by the pretentious imaginations of both father (more often mother) and child; with the result that at least one twentieth of the fundholding womenfolk of England, instead of spending decent, modest and healthy holidays, flaunt their nauseating incompetence like a disease all over our countryside, and persist in their bad urban habits of body and mind, by pursuing, even in the fresh air, the sedentary occupation of perpetrating useless and inadequate technical "howlers."

Landscape is essentially the subject matter of the poet-painter. You require a rich and sympathetic nature to see and to reveal human qualities, when all that lies before and above you consists of a few miles of rustic scenery, a sketch of down-land and the sky. It is not every Tom, Dick or Harry's wife who can undertake to do this; for even the *men* who are able to do it are rare. At the French Gallery there is an exhibition of Modern Dutch "masters," which shows how difficult it is to make landscape a high branch of the graphic

arts even when an extra interest is added. Among the landscapes you will find some that include peasants, sheep, oxen, calves and goats; but in how many of them has any quality or character been seized which really concerns or thrills you? Nor can it be said that technical incompetence is their fault.

It is growing more and more difficult to find a good landscapist, just as it is growing more and more difficult to find a good poet; and yet landscape is the refuge of two thirds of the incompetent painters that flood our London galleries.

In any case I should like to see a little more caution exercised in the use of the word "masters." Every year half a dozen London journals, and as many galleries, proclaim the advent of a "master" with as much gravity and conviction as if the mere utterance of the magic word were sufficient to conjure the object itself into existence. Unfortunately the modern commercial newspaper and the equally commercial "patron" of art—the picture-dealer—have no such fairy-god-mother powers. They can proclaim and proclaim again, until they are blue in the face, but they are able to bring nothing into existence. "Let there be masters!" is not followed even by a cloud of dust on the surface of the truly artistic world; the only dust that is disturbed by such sonorous utterances finds its way quickly into the eyes of the dear British public, and usually stops there.

I would suggest that those who were responsible for the title of this exhibition at the French Gallery, should in future be a little more careful in their choice of terms. The only two men who, with any justice whatsoever, could be called "masters" here, are J. Maris and Josef Israels; and even concerning one of these there is some room for doubt. To call W. Maris a master is to misunderstand the word entirely. When, however, this same term is applied to men like Ter Meulen, W. B. Tholen, A. M. Parter, F. Engel, C. Koppenol, Van der Weele, W. Steelink, Jurres, Zoetelief Tromp, and J. Scherrewitz, one feels forced to protest against the misuse of the term for fear lest it should become as utterly meaningless as the rest of the category of distinguished titles which have been abused by a sensational Press and a sensation-adoring world for the last fifty years.

Mastenbroek, Kever and Klinkenberg possess good and interesting qualities; but they add nothing to what we already know; they surpass no one whom we have yet admired with moderation and equanimity, they are simply talented mediocrities. Let suburban amateurs make these mistakes in terminology; let the daubing wives and daughters of vulgar fundholders perpetrate them also—such mistakes do not, as a rule, go beyond the suburbs or the ugly drawing-rooms where they are made—but let all those who are interested in the cause of art, and who attempt to thrive upon its productions, at least endeavour to keep our most distinguished titles free from the taint of suspicion.

The Approach to Paris.

By Ezra Pound.

II.

FOR the best part of a thousand years English poets have gone to school to the French, or one might as well say that there never were any English poets until they began to study the French. The Plantagenet princes despised the northern jargon, and their laureates sang Provençal. Chaucer began our tradition with adaption and translation and he did better than Chrétien de Troyes and in this manner English became a respectable speech. I am well aware that poetry was written on this island before Chaucer. St. Colum wrote it in Latin, Cædmon wrote it in a tongue still more unintelligible and in a metric even less familiar. The history of English poetic glory is a history of successful steals from the French. It is, I dare say, the right of

domination; Shakespeare is more to be prized than Ronsard; and yet the assiduous Pléiade had made all the experiments and provided the Elizabethans with all the technique that had not been left them by earlier adapters from the Language of "Oc," or from that of "Oil," from the North French or from Provençal—or from, perhaps, the thin stream that came straight from Italy and a rather inefficient jet from the Latin. The great periods of English have been the periods when the poets showed greatest powers of assimilation; even in the less glorious eras we see Browning and Swinburne leaning somewhat upon Hugo. Swinburne is impartially eclectic, and he was almost the first writer since Herrick's time to treat poetry as an art and not as a vehicle for the distribution of philosophy. Even the 'nineties were fed upon the traditional exotic, and the work of that period shows virtues new in London, but already well known to the readers of the early Gautier. Lionel Johnson alone would seem to have reached the polish and fineness of "Emaux et Camées" in those few poems of his where he seems to be moved by emotion rather than by the critical spirit.

It is nearly 1,500 years since the charges of "Ignorance and Arrogance, and of having made a trade of their art" were brought against the bards at Drumceit. I suppose things were always about the same. I suppose it has always been equally dangerous to tell the confraternity anything it does not know, either about the development of some part of the art in the past, or about new findings abroad. I am not prone to acting *laudator temporis acti*; the curious phase of the case before the Drumceit parliament might appear to have been that the bards were recognised as having an art, an asset from which to make a trade.

There are two ways of being influenced by a notable work of art: the work may be drawn into oneself, its mastery may beget a peculiar hunger for new sorts of mastery and perfection; or the sight of the work may beget simply a counterfeiting of its superficial qualities. This last influence is without value, a dodge of the arriviste and of the mere searcher for novelty.

The first influence means a new keenness of the ear, or a new flair for wording, or a deeper desire for common sense if the work is what is properly called classic.

The present day English versifier having with that thoroughness which characterises all his acts, searched all the treasuries of the past, that is to say, having drunk in Greek strophes at Eton or at a board school, having traced the accented strophe to the ballade and to the canzon, might do worse than look once more to the Mt. St. Geneviève and its purlieus.

M. Remy de Gourmont (b. 1858, etc.) is the author of "Le Latin mystique" and many other works—among them "Le Livre des Litanies" now part of "Le Pèlerin du Silence." I suppose M. De Gourmont knows more about verse-rhythm than any man now living; at least he has made a most valuable contribution to the development of the strophe. It seems to me the most valuable since those made by Arnaut Daniel, but perhaps I exaggerate.

Fleur hypocrite,
Fleur du silence.

he begins, setting the beat of his measure.

Rose couleur de cuivre, plus frauduleuse que nos joies,
rose couleur de cuivre, embaume-nous dans tes mensonges,
fleur hypocrite, fleur du silence.

Rose au visage peint comme une fille d'amour, rose au
cœur prostitué, rose au visage peint, fais semblant d'être
pitoyable, fleur hypocrite, fleur du silence.

Rose à la joue puérile, ô vierge des futurs trahisons,
rose à la joue puérile, innocente et rouge, ouvre les rets
de tes yeux clairs, fleur hypocrite, fleur du silence.

Rose aux yeux noirs, miroir de ton néant, rose aux
yeux noirs, fais-nous croire au mystère, fleur hypocrite,
fleur du silence.

Rose couleur d'argent, encensoir de nos rêves, rose
couleur d'argent prends notre cœur et fais-en de la fumée,
fleur hypocrite, fleur du silence.

Rose au front d'ivoire jaune, amante de toi-même, rose au front d'ivoire jaune, dis-nous le secret de tes nuits virginales, fleur hypocrite, fleur du silence.

Rose violette, ô modestie des fillettes perverses, rose violette, tes yeux sont plus grands que le reste, fleur hypocrite, fleur du silence.

Rose incarnate, rose stupide et pleine de santé, rose incarnate, tu nous abreuves et tu nous leures d'un vin très rouge et très bénin, fleur hypocrite, fleur du silence.

Rose ardoise, grisaille des vertus vaporeuses, rose ardoise, tu grimpes et tu fleuris autour des vieux bancs solitaires, rose du soir, fleur hypocrite, fleur du silence.

So you will say it is a mere catalogue.

Rose pivoine, modeste vanité des jardins plantureux, rose pivoine, le vent n'a retroussé tes feuilles que par hasard, et tu n'en fus pas mécontente, fleur hypocrite, fleur du silence.

Rose topaze, princesse de légendes abolies, rose topaze, ton château-fort est un hôtel au mois, ton donjon marche à l'heure et tes mains blanches ont des gestes équivoques, fleur hypocrite, fleur de silence.

And so it runs with ever more sweeping cadence with ever more delicate accords, and if you are not too drunk with the sheer naming over of beauty you will wake at the end of the reading and know that the procession of all women that ever were has passed before you.

It is not a thing to argue over, it is a thing to attend. I dare say these fragments are unconvincing, but I cannot quote the whole poem in this notice. Neither can I, for the benefit of those deaf to accords, go over the strophes quoted and point out every resolution of sound and every repetition subtler than rhyme. If a man is incapable of hearing this litany I cannot help it. If he is incapable of discerning any melody of words less delicate than that which is marked off by the emphasising of such obvious similarities as *cat* and *bat*, again I cannot help it.

The world is still encumbered by "musical" people who cannot receive the music of Debussy.

To my mind, M. De Gourmont has given us the procession of all women that ever were; you may say that he has not. In "Fleurs du jadis" he has given us the pageant of modern Paris, with this same shadowy suggestion, this same indirectness.

Je vous préfère aux cœurs les plus galants, cœurs trépassés, cœurs de jadis.

Jonquille, Narcisse et Souci, je vous préfère aux plus claires chevelures, fleurs trépassés, fleurs de jadis.

Nielle un peu gauche, mais duvetée comme un col de cygne,

Gentiannelle, fidèle amante du soleil, Asphodèle, épi royal, sceptre incrusté de revêts, reine primitive induite en la robe étroite des Pharaons.

Nielle, Gentiannelle, Asphodèle, je vous préfère à la grace des vraies femelles, fleurs trépassés, fleurs de jadis.

I give one strophe entire to illustrate the wave-length of his rhythm. And this is no slight matter if we consider that the development of the Greek verse-art came with the lengthening of the foot or bar.

His strophe is here slightly longer than in the litany of the rose:—

Pivoine, amoureuse donzelle, mais sans grâce et sans sel,

Ravenelle, demoiselle dont l'œil a des fades mélancolies,

Ancolies, petit pensionnat d'impubères jolies, jupes courtes, jambes grêles et des bras vifs comme des ailes d'hirondelle,

Pivoine, Ravenelle, Ancolie, je vous préfère à des chairs plus prospères, fleurs trépassés, fleurs de jadis.

I have given, perhaps, enough to indicate the form and the convention of these poems. As for sources of inspiration there was, you will say, a catalogue of names by Mendes, which ends with

Et j'en oublie.

There were the Tuscan *stornelli*, such as Browning adapts in his "Fra Lippo Lippi"; "Flower o' the quince," etc.

And there were the mediæval litanies and sequaires of which M. De Gourmont has written in "Le Latin Mystique." And there was among these that marvellous sequaire of Godeschalk, with its

Amas ut facias pulchram.

But neither in these nor in the teaching of Mallarmé shall we find all the elements of the poems before us. M. De Gourmont has made his own gift.

"Le Livre des Litanies" contains "Le dit des Arbres" beside the works I have mentioned. The author's latest achievement is the "Sonnets in Prose" which have appeared in the "Mercure" but are not available in book form.

You may lead a fool to perfection, but you cannot make him regard it. The discovery of radium and the transmutation of elements are less a matter of comment among savages than the size of an anchor-chain. That a man may write in new wave-length concerns few people enough.

Bergère née en Lorraine,

Jeanne qui avez gardé les moutons en robe de futaine,

Et qui avez pleuré aux misères du peuple de France,

Et qui avez conduit le Roi à Reims parmi les lances,

Jeanne qui étiez un arc, une cross, un glaive, une lance,

Jeanne que les gens aimaient comme leur père et leur

mère,

Jeanne blessée et prise, mise au cachot per les Anglais,

Jeanne brûlée à Rouen par les Anglais,

Jeanne qui ressemblez à un ange en colère.

Jeanne d'Arc, mettez beaucoup de colère dans nos cœurs.

This last is from "Les Saintes du Paradis," and again, if a man cannot understand the significance of these rhythms, the critic is powerless to help him.

The quotations which I have given are to be considered, not in themselves, but as parts of the rhythmic structure.

A rhythm-structure may be built up of parts which are homogeneous or of parts which differ among themselves. As the general reader is probably more accustomed to think in terms of design than in terms of rhythm one may make comparison with another art: thus, it is quite easy to think of a geometrical pattern made up of homogeneous units. It is very difficult to think of a picture made up of homogeneous units (unless they were very minute in comparison with the size of the whole).

It is also easy to think of a design made up of half a dozen kinds of unit arranged symmetrically.

I set out these platitudes because very few people can be persuaded to think of the art of poetic rhythm as an art, and even when some intelligent critic has thought upon these matters seriously he is so apt to be followed by a horde of Boileaus, professors, teachers, jackals and "yanqui editors of chaste magazines," that the effect of his intelligence is almost nullified.

Thus, Aristotle wrote a fairly decent treatise in which he said, figuratively, that a certain shade of blue was delectable; the next thing we know there springs up a sect of "critics" who say that this shade of blue is obligatory. Then comes an intelligent person who says that a certain shade of crimson is delectable, and he is held by the vulgar to be heretical. And in the face of the third dilution of critics *he* is held to be blasphemous, and *they* talk about the tradition. Because I praise these rhythm-units of M. De Gourmont and because they happen to be homogeneous, or very nearly so, I do not wish to appear hostile to rhythm-structures composed of units which differ among themselves. I do not hold a brief either for symmetrical or for asymmetrical structure; these things are a matter of music; they are perhaps as complicated as any problems of musical construction. No one who has not some fairly complete musical training should give opinion on such matters, and no comprehending musician will bind himself either to the conventions of the sixteenth century or to those of the nineteenth. These are problems like any other problems. The problem of how far principles of pictorial design can be applied, by a sort of parallel, in verse, is a problem like any other. The problem of

how far the laws or conveniences of "musical" rhythm can be applied to word-rhythms is a problem like any other.

It is possible that the problems of an art are no less complicated than those of a science. The intelligent scientist is one who does not think that he has exhausted the possibilities of physics when he has seen steam hoist the lid of his tea-kettle. The intelligent artist is one who does not think he has exhausted poetic craftsmanship when he can find five rhymes for a sonnet.

My constation regarding these poems by M. De Gourmont is that the layman may find them delectable, either because of the matter, or because of the consonance of the words, or because of the rhythm.

The student may find them interesting, that is to say, they may appeal to his historical sense, because of their relation to other rhythm-structures composed of homogeneous, or of almost homogeneous, units. He may find them not unworthy of comparison with the strophes of "The Hounds of Spring" or of "The old blackthorn tree."

And lastly, the artist may find these poems provocative, by which I mean that they may stimulate his old habits of perception, or they may even bring into being new modes of perception. He may begin to think about rhythm in slightly different manner; or to feel sound, or to gather up sounds in his mind with a slightly different sort of grouping. He may, it is true, imitate M. De Gourmont, but such imitation is scarcely more than a closer sort of study of the original. Such study may be more "provocative" than a casual reading, and therefore of value to the artist, so long as it does not impede him in his task of making new and original structures.

For those who seek refreshment in the arts, a new principle of grouping is far from negligible. It is a far from casual matter.

Pastiche.

A POSSIBLE SOLUTION.

To the Submerged Tenth.

I am directed by his Excellency to acknowledge the receipt of your memorial of the 18th inst. laying before his Excellency your grievances, consisting, as therein stated, of your "extreme poverty and misery," which have become, in your own words, "well-nigh unendurable," and in consequence of which you pray his Excellency to advise you "by what step or steps you may attain to reasonable comfort and surety of existence." Your request has received his Excellency's most earnest consideration, and in reply I am directed by him to call your attention to the advisability of converting yourselves into common or domestic kittens. It is the opinion of his Excellency that the difficulties in the way of this step, though great, are by no means insuperable, and I am directed to point out to you that upon accomplishing the same you will at once enter into possession of the following advantages:—

(1) *Speedy and Instantaneous Death.*—His Excellency desires me to observe that in the event of a sufficient number of you converting yourselves in the manner indicated, the consequent superabundance of the feline population will probably result in a large quantity of you being subjected to death by immersion in buckets, followed by neat and unostentatious interment in the yard. I am empowered by his Excellency to extend to you a distinct pledge and promise that in such circumstances you shall be exempt for the future from all worldly troubles and annoyances, and to engage on behalf of H.M. Government in general and his Excellency in particular that the conditions which you will then enjoy will compare most favourably with any others which they are able to offer you as the result of any course which you may think fit to pursue as the result of advice hereinafter tendered you.

In cases, however, where the full benefits of transformation (as explained above) are not available, the following benefits will accrue:—

(2) *Clothing, Shelter and Food.*—These are matters upon which his Excellency cannot commit himself to any unqualified promise. I am, nevertheless, to observe that the food and shelter, deprivation of which you enumerate among your most considerable grievances, are habitually

assured to cats, and that a plentiful supply of warm and durable clothing (of a kind so satisfactory as frequently to be employed in the manufacture of coats and jackets for the upper classes) will be guaranteed to you by Nature, and that unless an exceptional run upon the fur market results in your being killed and skinned, it is his Excellency's opinion that you cannot very well be deprived of it. Under the provisions of several Acts neglect of your welfare will be a punishable offence, and I am to call your special attention to the existence of an old and powerful society whose only aim is to see that these are punctually enforced. The duties which will be laid upon you in return for these emoluments are pleasant and inconsiderable, and are understood by his Excellency to consist mainly in the pursuit and capture of mice. Whilst possessing no personal experience of this sport, his Excellency nevertheless desires me to observe that if it bears any resemblance to the chase of the fox or the shooting of grouse and partridges (in all of which his Excellency is proficient) it should prove invaluable in strengthening those qualities of coolness and decision to the possession of which his Excellency attributes his elevation to his present lofty position.

(3) *Freedom from the Attentions of the Police.*—The constant and unremitting persecution to which you are subjected by the police forming a major part of your grievances, his Excellency desires me to point out to you that the recommended metamorphosis will free you for good and all from any molestation by the body named. It is no part of the duties of the police to attend to cats, but should further interference be attempted, I am directed by his Excellency to inform you on the strict "q.t." that you have only to make use of your superior agility to take refuge upon the summits of telegraph poles, the gables of houses, or other inaccessible spots whither the obesity of these officials is likely to prevent their following you.

You are also to note that the enactments against loitering and indolence, which bear so hard upon you in your present state, will not apply to you after metamorphosis, and that liberty to stand, walk, sit, or even recline at length in the sun will be accorded you by general consent. The game laws are unlikely to be enforced against you, and, finally, you will undergo an immediate and considerable improvement in personal appearance, which, I am desired by his Excellency to inform you, will not be more gratifying to you than to himself, your present ragged and dirty condition constituting an eyesore which has caused his Excellency great annoyance.

His Excellency has instructed me to observe, on behalf of H.M. Government, that the advice contained in this letter is all which they feel at liberty to offer you, and that, in view of the great and increasing demands upon the public revenue, pecuniary assistance is peculiarly out of the question.

I have the honour to be

Your obedient servant,
DUXMIA.

For his Excellency the Governor.

"DICK TURPIN."

Stir up England! The Devil is in your midst! Let not your eyes rest, like those of the fool, on terrors at the end of the earth. You see nought save cut-throat China, the galled jade Germany, Indian and Egyptian sedition, and the blood-red Chrysanthemum! But while you gaze away with horny eyes, at home is a woe which should rejoice your enemies. Dick Turpin has reincarnated! He is Alive! No more sleep for you, England!

In Staffordshire last week was this malefactor, who now calls himself William Knight, sentenced to five years' detention. Five absurd years. What is the good of that? Turpin will snap his fingers at it. He—the Lero of a score train-boardings, the villain who stole a sou'-wester, the wretch who braved the Christian sea at Weymouth in a boat belonging to a pious fisherman, the depraved, degenerate rascal, described by one who knew him as the "worst character he had ever had to deal with." England! Do Something! Protect us, by all that's humane! Hang this Devil! Do not let him loose on us after five brief years. In his prison, they will lash him, starve him, chivvy him—everything *but* kill him. What is the good of that? He will come out a worse devil than he went in, and we shall be assassinated by his deep-dyed hands. Hang him, dear Mother. He is only eleven years old, and about four foot high! And when he is dead, set on ten thousand more probation officers to hunt down every lively kid in the land. We're unsafe while one of these hell-brats is alive!

T. K. L.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

SINGLE TAX AND PROFITEERING.

Sir,—Your Open Letter addressed to the Trades Union Congress emphasises the importance of the figures provided by the recent Board of Trade inquiry into working-class rents and retail prices. You conclude that, because prices have advanced 13.7 per cent., while rents of dwellings have advanced only 1.8 per cent., therefore the real enemy is what you call the "profiteer" and not the landlord.

If you claim that the Board of Trade inquiry proves the absolute gain to the landlords to have been only 1.8 per cent., and that "manufacturers are extorting more than landlords" out of the workers, I think you arrive swiftly at most absurd conclusions. For what you say regarding the difference between money wages and "real" wages must be true also of money profits and rents and "real" profits and rents. In each case the "real" income is not the money received, but the goods that can be purchased with such money.

The Board of Trade inquiry includes the prices of beef, mutton, pork, tea, sugar, bacon, cheese, butter, potatoes, flour, bread, milk, and coal. These goods are purchased not only by the money received by the wage earner. They are also purchased by the money received by the landlord and by the money received by the "profiteer."

Now, if you contend that the landlord-robber has succeeded in increasing his extortion by only 1.8 per cent., despite Single Tax accusations of "rapacity," his gain must likewise be offset by the rise in prices. With his rent increased by 1.8 per cent., he has to pay 13.7 per cent. more for all the goods I have enumerated above, and on the average his "real" rent has actually diminished, just as "real" wages have diminished.

Applying this same strange argument of yours to the case of the "profiteer," it is apparent his benefit has been more imaginary than real. He has had to pay increased money wages varying from 1.9 per cent. for skilled builders to 4.1 per cent. for compositors. But he does not sell all the goods catalogued in the Board of Trade inquiry. Many "profiteers" sell none of them. At the best, the "profiteer" sells only a few, and for these he receives prices increased by 13.7 per cent., but he has to purchase all the rest and pay 13.7 per cent. more for them. Therefore, on your own showing, and making the same use as you do of the Board of Trade figures, his "real" profits have been considerably diminished. One "profiteer" has blackmailed and robbed another, and your contention that either landowner or "profiteer" has been enriched is flatly denied.

It should occur to you that there is a fallacy in considering that the rent paid by wage-earners for house room, after receiving their wages, is the only payment landlords extort from them and from the results of their labour. Yet that is the basis of your whole argument, and it is your reason for rejecting the assurances of the "satellites of the manufacturing employer" that the cause of the increased cost of living is landlordism.

You define wages as "the price paid in the competitive market for labour as a commodity." This is not a definition, for it does not include the considerable number of workers whose earnings are no greater than those of "factory hands" and who are not in the pay of any employer. But however wages may be defined, there is no disputing the fact that they are that part of the total wealth produced from year to year which is received by wealth producers, whether in the pay of employers or not. True, they are only a small part, and the distribution of wealth is unequal and unjust; but who gets the balance not received by wage-earners? You will not maintain it is all collared in "profits" by the so-called "profiteer." You yourself distinguish, when pointing the finger of scorn at the "Single Taxer," between the "profiteer" and the landlord, although in other parts of your Open Letter the distinction between the owner of plant, machinery, and buildings, and the owner of land is more obscure. You will not maintain that the landowner gets no part of the surplus which is not received by wage-earners, for you must grant that a large part of this surplus is secured by landowners as tribute for the permission to use the earth.

No "profiteer" has yet been able to exploit a landowner. It is the landowner who exploits the "profiteer," and he can screw up his tribute to the highest point any industry can bear by keeping his hold on the monopoly of land, and allowing only some sites and some areas to be used.

It is after the landowner has received this tribute, after

rates and taxes have been paid for the sin of erecting buildings or installing machinery, after every effort is made to pass on these burdens to the consumer, that wages are paid. The produce of the factory, mine, or farm must provide the incomes of all and the revenue of the State. The community as a whole is robbed by the landowner, even though the so-called "profiteer" acts as go-between and pays the rent.

If by "profiteer" you mean anyone and everyone who employs a fellow-being, your quarrel cannot be with the "profiteer" as such. For great numbers of employers are scarcely better off than those whom they employ. They live from hand to mouth, have no special privileges, no monopoly, and no patent rights. Your quarrel manifestly is with a particular kind of "profiteer," especially the "great employing manufacturer" or the "large capitalist," who can generally afford to look on while other men do the work. The vice of the argument is that you do not distinguish among the "profiteers" who own (a) only buildings, plant, or machinery, (b) only land, (c) both land and buildings, plant or machinery. Most "large capitalists" belong to the third class. Part of their assets consists in land and a corresponding part of their profits is pure rent of land. Cement firms and salt firms, for instance, generally take good care to own the deposits of raw material upon which their industry is based, while landless labourers, deprived of all rights to these or any other natural resources, beg at the factory gates for the privilege of a job.

You quite rightly insist upon the great increase in the production of wealth, which is, as you state, proved by every test; but I repeat, you have to point the moral by showing who has pocketed the increase. You cannot use the term "profiteer," for it is abundantly clear that this term is a confusion. The balance, except for what is paid strictly in salaries and such peculiar payments as patent royalties, has been divided between interest and rent—interest upon stock-in-trade, buildings, plant, and machinery, and rent of land. But as stock-in-trade, buildings, plant, and machinery are being constantly reproduced, and as the owners of these things are constantly competing with one another, they cannot claim anything but the market rate of interest.

But land is not reproduced. It is limited absolutely in area. It is the essential condition of all existence. Its owners charge tribute for its use without giving anything whatever in return, or pocket a large part of the produce as rent and call it profits on their "investment." The more that can be produced on land, the greater is the tribute, so long as the monopoly is maintained—and repeated illustrations prove to the hilt how effectively both the dreadful "capitalist" and the common labourer can be "exploited" in this way.

The increased production has gone in rent. But you would disguise this fact with obvious confusions in terms. You would practise deception in trying to persuade the workers, on the authority of a Blue Book that proves nothing of the kind, that the landlord receives nothing but the few shillings a week paid by each wage earner for house room. When you discuss your final proposals for abolishing the "bondage of wagery," you sink the landlord out of sight and advocate "a reasonable annuity for two generations to the owners of plant and machinery." Are your readers to gather that a "reasonable annuity" is also your method of dispensing compensation to landowners? If not, what do you propose to do in regard to the rent now paid for land, and also in regard to the value of land for which no rent is paid because it is held out of use?

There are several considerations in regard to labour and wages I wish you to look at. Firstly, labourers are employed by other labourers. The producer of boots is employed by the wearer of boots, who in return produces bread or furniture or clothes. If producers of bread are prevented from producing, there is correspondingly less employment for the makers of boots and vice versa. The real employer of the 'bus driver is not the 'bus company, but the people who ride in 'buses. Every employed man makes a demand for the goods produced or services provided by other employed men.

Secondly, the general level of wages can never be more than the earnings men can get in the least productive occupation or on the least productive land. The condition of the man on the "margin," as both Mr. Shaw and Mr. Webb have shown, determines the condition of men in all other employments. The wage-earner will get the same wages whether he is employed by the greatest capitalistic concern or by the humblest and most

self-sacrificing shopkeeper in a back street. So that, although wages are "a price paid for a commodity," they are not less than what wage earners can get in the least productive employment.

Thirdly, labourers, as you say, are too plentiful. *But plentiful in relation to what?* Certainly not in relation to the fund in the possession of the "profiteer," which is apparently your meaning—an implicit statement of the wage fund theory that wages are determined by the amount of capital that could be devoted to the employment of labourers. In obedience to that theory, you would "capture" all capital for the guilds, and thus make labour the master of the situation. But the theory was blown sky-high thirty years ago by Henry George, who demonstrated that *wages are determined by the number of labourers seeking employment in relation to the number of available natural opportunities open to labour.* It is only if these natural opportunities are scarce that labour will be "plentiful" and will find difficulty in securing employment. And as everyone has an equal right to the use of natural opportunities, the proper course is to destroy monopoly in them by obliging every holder to pay their annual value to the rest of the community.

That means the taxation and rating of land values, for every "natural opportunity" is land in some form or other, whether it is the site of a house, an area suitable for a farm, coal deposits, slate quarries, or river water. The value of land represents the wealth which belongs to the community as a whole, and in appropriating it for the community we would not only "pool" this wealth, but we would force monopolists to let go the land they hold out of use, and thus multiply the available natural opportunities. It is only by giving each man an equal right to the use of land that you can make labour "scarce." You can only raise wages by so increasing and multiplying natural opportunities as to raise the man at the "margin," all the surplus wealth which is produced on superior sites and soils being pooled for common benefit. In other words, there are more labourers to-day than there are opportunities for employment. The taxation of land values would, we insist, annex the wealth that belongs to all, expel the land speculator, and open to labour the limitless opportunities in town and country which Nature provides. This would make opportunities more plentiful than labourers, and raise wages, just as existing conditions of monopoly in these opportunities restrict employment and force wages to subsistence level with each labourer's effective demand for goods correspondingly curtailed.

JOSEPH FELS.

[We willingly reply in some detail to this letter, although we know that Mr. Fels is a fanatic upon the subject. We will, however, assume that he is amenable to reason.

It is primarily necessary to impress upon Mr. Fels the fact, well known to our regular readers, that we have no more feeling of sympathy for the landlords than for the profiteers. Both in their own way (which in the final analysis is very much the same way) exploit labour. Mr. Fels complains that our distinction between rent and interest tends to become obscure. It is not for us to draw fine distinctions between the two. As a Single Taxer, Mr. Fels is penetrated with the belief that there are fundamental distinctions between the functions of the profiteering and land-owning classes. We do not deny that a profiteer, functioning as an administrator, differs in economic significance from a landlord who lives solely upon rent. But it is the same distinction on the other foot when we have a landlord functioning as an administrator compared with a profiteer who lives solely upon profits. The effects of the exploitation of labour by landlord and profiteer are precisely the same, so far as the wage slave is concerned. The French with logical clearness decline to make the distinction. A "rentier" draws his income from "rentes," precisely as he draws it from rent. Mr. Fels, not being a regular reader of THE NEW AGE (a moral lapse which we trust he will rectify), assumes that our whole attack is upon the profiteer. Accordingly he asks whether we are prepared to mete out the same justice to landlords as to profiteers when we advocate "a reasonable annuity for two generations." Of course we are. It shocks us to discover that Mr. Fels should have any doubt about it. But in the struggle to abolish wagery (the continuance of which Mr. Fels complacently accepts) we have deemed it wise to preserve a sense of proportion. If the profiteers exploit labour to a greater extent than do the landlords, then palpably the profiteer is the more serious enemy of the two. That was the point of our remark

that drew this reply from Mr. Fels, who believes that the imposition of a single tax upon the land values "would annex the wealth that belongs to all, expel the land speculator, and open to labour the limitless opportunities in town and country which Nature provides. This would make opportunities more plentiful than labourers and raise wages." Mr. Fels, in short, invites us to leave the profiteer alone and concentrate our attack upon the landlord. But he admits that, after the Single Tax had done its deadly work, the wage system would continue. As the wage system is equally fundamental to the existence of both landlord and profiteer, and as we desire the destruction of wagery, we are not so foolish as to make flesh of the profiteer and fowl of the landlord. Both separately and in alliance they exploit labour by maintaining the wage system. So far as Mr. Fels believes in the continuance of wagery, he writes himself down an enemy of labour, and so clouds with suspicion his personally well-intentioned attack upon the landlords. We are therefore fully justified in warning the trade unionists against his particular propaganda. His letter completely proves the wisdom of our remark. Mr. Fels can only come into court with clean hands when he frankly accepts the justice and policy of wage abolition.

Before touching upon some of the details in his letter, we must remind Mr. Fels that the new conception of society from which wages are eliminated necessarily transforms the meaning of many economic terms. For example, to the wage earner, rent, interest, and profits connote the economic power which the possessing classes exercise upon the proletariat. The deduction (adumbrated by Ricardo) is this: rent is in reality the economic power that one man or class exercises upon another. Thus a man with £100 in gold at the bank rents it out for £5 per annum. Another man with land valued at £100 rents it out at £5 per annum. The economic effect is precisely the same in both instances. Both, in fact, exact rent. The Single Taxers seem to think that the £5 exacted in the form of interest smells differently from the £5 exacted as rent. Our sense of smell, aided by reason and instinct, rejects any such theory. And in abstract justice we cannot morally distinguish between the two transactions.

There are some statements of fact in Mr. Fels' letter that call for comment. He quite rightly points out that the increase in rent of 1.8 per cent. must be offset by the advance in prices of 13.7 per cent. Therefore "real" rent has diminished. We believe this to be absolutely the fact, but how it helps Mr. Fels we are at a loss to understand. The landlord, certainly in all large transactions, rents his land on lease. If the cost of living advances, he cannot raise his rent. But the profiteer can, in association with his commercial colleagues, raise his prices once a month or once a year. To him it is largely a question of associated effort. If, then, "real" rents have actually diminished and "real" wages have fallen, somebody has run off with the plunder. We assert that it is the profiteers, whose income as a class has steadily risen in recent years up to 22½ per cent. Granting the 13.7 per cent. advance in the cost of living, this gives the profiteering class a net advance of 9 per cent., which is precisely the percentage of the fall in real wages. Why, then, should we point our guns only at the landlords, when obviously the profiteers have the heaviest artillery? Mr. Fels cries mercy for the profiteers because they apparently blackmail and rob each other. No doubt they do; but profiteers of every denomination, in happy unity with the landlords, are all agreed that they must maintain the wage system so that they may exploit labour. Mr. Fels is in that galley. If we can sink it, he, too, will go down. At the Judgment Day he will get short shrift if he contends that we ought first to have sunk some other galley in the same fleet.

The truth, however, is that Mr. Fels does not know the true meaning of wages. He rejects one definition because "it does not include the considerable number of workers whose earnings are no greater than those of 'factory hands' and who are not in the pay of any employer." The simple answer, of course, is that they do not receive wages—the small shopkeeper, for example. But it is not our definition; it is the classical definition from Adam Smith to Marx. The term "wage" has a distinct and well-understood meaning, and Mr. Fels must accept it if he would publicly discuss any subject in which the wage system is included.

It is this inability on the part of Mr. Fels to appreciate the exact meaning of wages that leads him into another extraordinary blunder. He quite truly asserts that many

profiteers are scarcely better off than those they employ. Therefore, he argues, "your quarrel manifestly is with a particular kind of profiteer, especially the great employing manufacturer or the large capitalist." Nothing we have written gives Mr. Fels any sanction for such a statement. Our quarrel is not with the individual profiteers, whether great or small, but with the system. The system permits every class and kind and degree of profiteer to buy labour as a commodity at a competitive price finally based on the subsistence level. Between the price paid for the labour commodity plus the price of the other raw material and the selling price of the finished product, landlord and profiteer are provided for. We tell the wage earner so to organise that he shall possess a monopoly of labour power, then to decline to sell his labour as a commodity and at all costs to retain his right (i.e., his economic power) in the product created by his labour. By organising himself into appropriate guilds he can thereby squeeze out rent, interest, and profits. In this squeezing-out process, both landlords and profiteers will be heard squealing. Which squeals first is only of academic interest to us. The purchase of labour as a commodity for exploitation is a sin and an abomination, not to be distinguished from chattel slavery. The Single Taxers do not appear to realise this, and are accordingly guilty of moral obtuseness.

Mr. Fels, for some reason we cannot grasp, next remarks that we implicitly accept the wage-fund theory. As Marx smashed the wage-fund theory a generation ago, and as our definition of wages has literally nothing whatever to do with this dead theory, and as, incidentally, we killed the theory ourselves in our series on the Wage-System, we appeal to Mr. Fels to believe that we are not utter ignoramuses. We solemnly assure him that Jeremy Bentham was dead before we were born.

The exact politico-economic situation that would be created by the successful imposition of the single-tax would be simply this: the profiteers would possess their present economic power plus the security of tenure they would obtain from State-rented land. As economic power precedes political power, they would be enabled to reduce or increase rents precisely as it suited their purposes. Rent, in the ordinary acceptation of the word to the profiteer, is a subsidiary, indeed almost a negligible consideration. Mr. Fels thinks land would become so accessible to labour that the labourer would find available "natural opportunities," and so be able to secure higher wages. He bases this conclusion, so far as we can gather, on the assumption that whereas "buildings, plant, and machinery are being constantly reproduced" (therefore requiring large command of capital) "land is not reproduced." Therefore the ordinary capitalistic processes do not operate in agriculture, and accordingly, free access to the land spells freedom from capitalistic oppression. As a matter of fact, so long as wavery is the foundation of our industrial system, capitalistic processes are as necessary to agriculture as to industry. Economically considered land does reproduce itself. If it does not, how does it "run down"? If it does not, why the necessity for periodic fallow? If it does not, why have 250,000 farmers left the Middle West and migrated to Canada? Has Mr. Fels ever heard of manure? We are really forced to the conclusion that when the single-taxers discuss land they are all as mad as March hares.—ED. N.A.]

SYNDICALISM AND OUR OPEN LETTER.

Sir,—

"We do not accept Syndicalism because it argues for the possession by every Union of its own land and machinery. . . . We would vest all assets in the State."—From Open Letter by NEW AGE to Trades Union Congress.

I take exception to the inference that Syndicalism argues for the possession of its own land and machinery by the Unions. If you mean by the remark that such is the wish and intent of the Syndicalist writers I would say that practically every one of them has specifically denied that construction of the Syndicalist theory. If you mean that such is the necessary outcome of Syndicalist principles even though it be undesired and denied by the Syndicalists I would say that here, too, I think you are wrong.

"Possession of land and machinery," certainly connotes possession for the purpose of extraction of rent for the benefit of the possessors. If certain Unions through this "possession" get rent, then certain other Unions must pay that rent, for under a Syndicalist régime there would be no Capitalists to pay, and rent does not come out of thin air. It stands to reason that no revolutionary

labour movement could possibly expect to gain the workers to its standard with a programme of one half of the workers to be tribute payers to the other half.

There are many trades which do not involve the use of land and machinery, and, therefore, upon such a programme the unfortunates in such trades would be simply freeing themselves from the Capitalists to enslave themselves to the workers using land and machinery. That would be too absurd.

On the other hand, your proposition is to "vest" the ownership of land and machinery in the "Guild" State. Now, vesting ownership is certainly putting the State into position of being the recipient of rent by virtue of the "vesting." If a man is the vested owner of land he is a landlord, or I don't know the meaning of words. If the State then takes rent it necessarily must pay it out as wages, and, therefore, you have not abolished the wage-system which is your aim as I understand it.

Furthermore, the very term "vested ownership" implies economic power, and if the State is to have this power, then the Labour Party are quite right in striving to obtain political power in order to gain control of the "Guild" State. By your plan, in fact, there is no other way of gaining such control. You deny it to the Unions and place it in the State. What controls the State? The Unions? If so, then your "phrase vesting ownership in the State" should be modified by "subject to the control of the Unions." And if you admit this you make "vested ownership" a misnomer.

If you say the State is to be controlled by the electors then you are denying that axiom, "economic power precedes and dominates political power."

It seems to me that the words "ownership," "possession," "vesting," and such like, are all implications of compulsion and force being normal to the future State, whereas I think the voluntary principle will be the prevailing note.

If the railway men are to "own" the railways they are admittedly in position to coerce the community, and if, on the other hand, the State is to have "vested" rights in the railways, then the State is in position to coerce the workers to the extent the "vesting" is valid.

I take it that in the ideal society there will be neither ownership by Unions nor by the State, but that property will be considered as for use by the community with no thought as to who "owns" it.

I really can't see that it makes any difference anyway. To me it is merely a question of words. Suppose we have society organised, if you please, under the Guild Socialist System.

The railways "vest" in the State. The railway men for some reason or other have a grievance which cannot be settled except by the Railway Union going on strike and forcing the Guild State to allow the Union better terms. What use would it be for the Guild State to say to the Union, "Fie, fie, you naughty, naughty Union, do you not know that the railways are 'vested' in me, and not in you?"

Do you think the Union would be the least influenced by the fact that the State had been allowed to satisfy its State pride by calling the railways its own?

On the other hand, suppose that the Union had been allowed to call the railways its own, do you think that the rest of the community would reconcile themselves with any better grace to being held up by the railway men by reflecting that the railways "belonged to the Union?"

GAYLORD WILSHIRE.

[It is a canon of controversy to state your opponent's case with scrupulous fairness. Mr. Gaylord Wilshire's statement of THE NEW AGE case is wild and silly caricature. He is old enough to know better. If he had done us the honour to read our articles, he would never have written this foolish letter. We have, throughout, been careful to emphasise the fact that economic power is with those who possess the monopoly of labour. We have repeatedly insisted that the State is merely the trustee for the community as a whole when the assets are vested in it. The trust deed is the charter. We have never argued for a "Guild-State." Such a hybrid monster could only be conceived in a night-mare. Mr. Wilshire writes as though the Guild and the Union are two distinct entities. We have worn out a regiment of pens in picturing the Union as the nucleus of the Guild. We have worn out as many more pens in iterating and reiterating the principle that the function of the State and the function of the Guild are fundamentally different. To write, as does Mr. Wilshire, of the Guild State struggling with the Union, and pretending that it has any kind of relation to our presentation of the case for National Guilds, is to reduce the discussion to a farce.—ED. N. A.]

“THE NEW AGE” AND THE PRESS.

Sir,—From my watchtower in the skies I am still waiting for the dappled dawn of quotation to arise; it is, however, very long in coming. The “Daily News,” as nearly as possible, mentioned THE NEW AGE in its leader of Wednesday, but, at the last moment, thought, no doubt, of me! It, therefore, spoke of the propaganda of the “abolition of wagery,” and after declaring that “with this criticism the Congress, being an eminently practical body, will not concern itself,” ran and hid itself in the folds of the “Times.” A “Times” correspondent also came within an ace of uttering the forbidden word. M. Beer is, I believe, the English correspondent of the German Radical organ, “Vorwaerts.” He was most indignant that the “Times” had agreed in its criticism of Trade Unionism with THE NEW AGE. The writers of the latter organ (no names mentioned) were “Catalinarian adventurers riding on confusion and chaos,” quite a good phrase for a German! I ought, before passing on, to say that a correspondent in the “Daily News” did survive the mention of THE NEW AGE. Mr. R. Mudie-Smith quotes with approval your note on Jack Johnson. Two or three cuttings have kindly been sent to me from sources I could not myself explore. A correspondent, Mr. Bannochie, in “London Typographical Journal,” for instance, writes that “as wages cannot rise . . . it appears that the suggestion now being put forward by THE NEW AGE to abolish the wage-system has some good points.” I should say it has! The “Daily Herald’s” reprint of your Open Letter to the Congress has been followed by a few references, and will, it is announced, be followed by a regular correspondence. Mrs. Josiah Wedgwood—who apparently carries on her husband’s propaganda during the Parliamentary recess—writes that the Letter is excellent but for the reference to Single-taxers as profiteers’ colleagues. I am only a learner, but the reply to her seems to be easy. The taxation of Rent, as of Interest and Profits, implies the continuance of the wage-system, n’est-ce pas? But if the wage-system is abolished, Rent disappears along with the remainder of the present surplus values. The Single-taxers, I therefore conclude, are merely disputing the right of the landlords to take so much in comparison with the other monopolists; it is a quarrel between profiteers over the distribution of their collective plunder. The Quaker Socialist Society, your readers will be pleased to have, have now incorporated the two following subjects on their lecture-list: “The Essential Immorality of the Wage-system” and “Guild Organisation as a Means of Liberty.” A new monthly penny journal has also just appeared: “Solidarity.” Its object is defined as the abolition of the wage-system by means of the economic organisation of the workers and the fitting of them to control production when the time comes. I am sorry to see, however, that one of its writers declares that “the logical reply of the workers to surplus value is sabotage.” But sabotage is not a preparation for responsibility! Aquinas, we are told, dictated his articles in his sleep. The “New Freewoman” must have dictated her reply to me (“Press-Cutter” to wit), in a nightmare. Your contention that the workers must create a monopoly of their labour-property is dismissed as ridiculous. Such monopoly is impossible, says the “New Freewoman,” without external possession in the concrete. But skill, provided it be necessary to production, limited in supply, and under the control of will, is as good as “property” as anything else. The professions, at any rate, have found it so; and an all-inclusive Union would have no difficulty in exchanging its labour-monopoly for the commodities it needs. The ideal, however, of the “New Freewoman” appears to be that of Ishmael. Even women are to have a bit of property, though how they are to get it the “New Freewoman” discreetly leaves it to women to decide: they must buy (!), beg or steal it! And when they have got it, they must “labour on it and defend it.” “The rifle and the plough go together.” I confess I like the backwoods picture of the new free women each sitting under her fig-tree rifle in hand to shoot trespassers on the newly-furrowed fields, what time the sweating oxen swing their twinkling tails. But it is a Cinema-vignette. Their reply to my phrase: a Marriage Guild for Women and Guilds for both Men and Women—is that “women have already shown skilled minds in the business of Marriage Guilds.” Their fear is that the Marriage Guild is becoming too despotic. But I understood that marriage was a declining industry; has women’s skill then departed? Enough of trifling, however. Marriage ought, I think, to be no more discussed than any other private affair. When society is whole, marriage does not need a physician; and when society is sick, it is society, and not marriage, that ought to be attended to.

PRESS-CUTTER.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Sir,—Your Senor Verdad write three week ago that the real Mexican problem “is connected with the opening of the Panama Canal and the influence of Mexico on the Central and Southern American Republics.”

Next week, I write that the Mexico problem have no relation to Panama, and that Mexico have nothing to do with the Central and Southern American Republics. I, who know it all as the palm of my hand, tell this to Senor Verdad.

Stubborn as pack-mule on a cattle-truck, the Senor, not thanking me for telling him, write me pedagogic little lecture that he “am concerned primarily with countries in their relations to other countries.” But I tell him that Mexico has not such relations as he pretend, so he remain ignorant and foolish.

Now I tell him that Mexican situation would be same every way if there were no Panama and no other republics. He write of what he know not.

As you not yet give the Senor his congé, he continues to write on foreign affairs, and so give me great pain. He first say that Washington very stupid not to know that “under the Constitution on ad-interim President cannot stand for election—a fact which ought to have been perfectly well-known to the permanent officials in Washington.” Then he write another paragraph in which he say that Mexico Constitution is a well-known fiction.

This is funny extreme. If Mexico Constitution be fiction, then Washington officials surely be great fools to negotiate with Huerta as the Constitution were real and not fiction.

The Senor Verdad perhaps have not the funny sense.

He also write that the great President Wilson and the honourable Senor Bryan are very foolish. But they know lot more about Mexico than your Senor Verdad, and they finally secure triumphing policy. This without army or navy they do because they know better than the Senor Verdad. I think the honourable Bryan never also hear of your Senor Verdad.

In San José, the city so beautiful of my birth, there live a young journalist who write much about the politique of Europe. We all think him very wise and distinguished. But when the good God send much coffee and we come across the great ocean to enjoy His bounty, we see little lines in many papers. This is how the affairs of Europe are writ of by the young man in San José. He clip them out with scissors and so seem very wise. Then we find out how he do it and so when we go home we laugh very much and clap him on the back and get great fun.

I think he must be cousin of your Senor Verdad.

MIGUEL ZAPATO.

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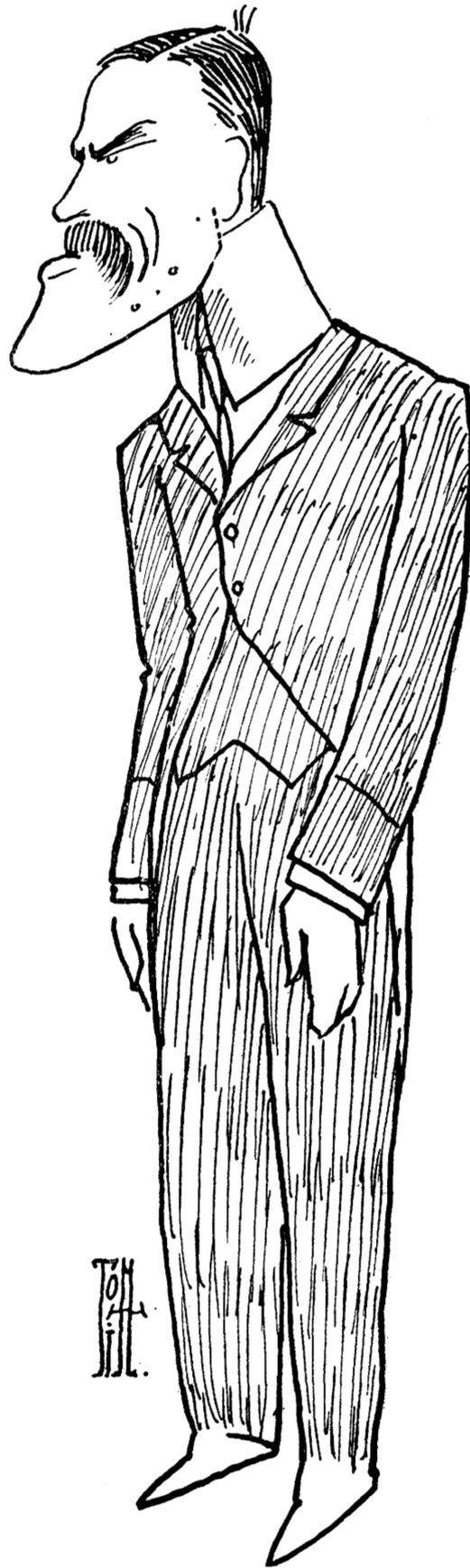
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