

# THE NEW AGE

INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER"

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART

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### NOTICE.

On and after July 31 the published price of "The New Age" will be Sixpence.

### NOTES OF THE WEEK.

It is now just upon twelve months since THE NEW AGE entered under its present auspices, so we will devote some space this week to a discussion of ourselves, our experiences, and our prospects. On February 7, when our first issue at the reduced price appeared, we gave our reasons for the reduction. One of them was our strong desire to merge as much of the circulation of "Credit Power" as possible with that of THE NEW AGE, and we did not see how to do this unless the extra cost to readers of the former journal involved by the change was made comparatively easy. We were not blind to the risks we were taking, for we said at the time, "On balance there will undoubtedly be a substantial loss in revenue." We continued, however, by saying that the loss "will be mitigated by the action of a number of readers who are undertaking to subscribe for two copies instead of one." We further justified our action by the reflection that "the prospects of widening the general circulation are more promising to-day than at any time since the war." The step we took, as is fairly generally known, was only decided upon after all the factors in the case had been exhaustively examined by the Conference of the Social Credit movement, which assembled at Hope last January. At that Conference a surprisingly generous provision of funds was assured, which made it possible for the projected price-experiment to be given a trial extending to several months. The result has been that the circulation of THE NEW AGE has since been raised to about fifty per cent. above the figure at which it stood at that time. Now there are two ways of looking at this result. To take the financial point of view first, it is obvious that if you halve the price of anything you must double your output in order to maintain your revenue. Well, that has not been accomplished; and the situation has to be dealt with. On the other hand, there is the fact that THE NEW AGE is now being regularly taken by a large number of new readers. The significance of this must not be ignored. As we look round and notice what an attractive display of journalistic enterprise is on con-

stant offer elsewhere, and at how low a price, we cannot but admire the loyalty of our own compact body of supporters who "spurn delights and live laborious days" in pursuance of the ideal which we all hold in common.

The truth is that our financial position has been affected by a development which we did not take into account last January. It was then natural for us to assume that to the extent to which our ideas gained ground in popular estimation, the circulation of THE NEW AGE would follow in some ratio or other. But we were wrong. We were like a commercial concern that set out to educate the public up to an appreciation of a certain article, and did not make allowance for the fact that, as soon as that appreciation began to be manifested, other concerns would begin to exploit it. Let us be fanciful and imagine that it had been possible six years ago (leaving aside the question of desirability) for us to copyright the distinctive features of the New Economics. We should have been justified in planning for a fruitful yield of revenue, for we should now have been able to issue injunctions against the "Nation," "Spectator," "New Leader," "Clarion" and even the "Workers' Weekly"—to name some of the journals that are now finding the discussion of finance and credit a paying proposition—and could have compelled them to respect our monopoly of these features. But as things are, we have to stand aside and watch "Honorable Bob"'s offering a "Sarony" brand of them, and "Jenkinses" offering an even better (?) brand which they are pleased to call "Kensitas." A little reflection will bring out this interesting conclusion, that the more THE NEW AGE succeeds in popularising its ideas, the brisker business it will win—for other journals who like to take them up. That is not very alluring in a commercial sense, but from the point of view of the adoption of the policy for which we stand, the sacrifices suffered are many times compensated.

Now, as will be appreciated by what follows later, there is still a fight to be fought. One half of our thesis is being rewritten and popularised, but the other is not, and at present there is no publication but THE NEW AGE that even so much as mentions it. Therefore we must take steps to ensure that we do not depart before our eyes have seen salvation. The



measures taken up to the present time have resolved themselves into the following situation namely, that the whole brunt of making up the revenue of this journal has fallen upon about one-third of the readers. And not only have they done this, but they are substantially the same people as are otherwise carrying on the propagation of economic truth through the medium of the Social Credit Movement. It is only due to them that we should do something to lighten the incidence of this double burden. That is the reason why we have decided to make the alteration in price. In doing so we have, just as on the last occasion, consulted some of the most active leaders of the Movement, and discussed the whole position with them. In view of the nature of the many letters and interviews that we have had, we are confident that the great majority of our readers will respond to our call on them if they can by any possibility afford to do so. They have already furnished convincing proof that their sympathy with the end we are striving for is strong enough to excuse our technical shortcomings in the conduct of the paper. We have been dull, often obscure, perhaps sometimes dogmatic, but we have had our faces turned directly towards the coming era, and we know that we are forgiven much because we have been steadfast in our striving to achieve the final emancipation of human life and culture from the thralldom of misconceived self-discipline.

There is another reason for bringing the revenue of THE NEW AGE nearer its expenditure. It will be explained fully in the immediate future, probably next week. Meanwhile, we may say that it has to do with plans which are being made for the more active work of the Social Credit Movement. This will entail new expenditure, the incidence of which will, at any rate initially, fall on the same body of supporters as are guaranteeing the continued existence of THE NEW AGE. Therefore all those readers outside the movement who pay the extra contribution to our revenue will have the satisfaction of knowing that they are thereby freeing an equivalent sum of money for educative purposes in quarters where this journal would not penetrate. The new development will afford an opening for the active co-operation of those who have very little money to contribute to the Movement, but have something better—their service. Now, with a new system of finance and production such as is comprised in Major Douglas's proposals, there are two possible lines of propaganda. One is to describe the end at which they aim. The other is to explain the means of attaining it. The first has to do with the humanities, and can be announced in homely language to the many who will listen to it. The second has to do with technique, and must be explained systematically to the few who wish to inquire into it. And since, to find the few, one has to interest the many, both lines of propaganda are complementary. In the past, it is broadly true to say that both have been presented together in the same literature, whereas the logic of the case now seems to demand their separation. But, on the other hand, our task was one of seeming only, because circles of economic and political initiative wherein it was essential that the nature and promise of the new economic theory should be realised, and realised as a whole. It must be remembered that Major Douglas was not dealing in aspirations, but in a business proposition. It so happens (and this assures its permanent stability) that this proposition involves the fulfilment of an aspiration shared by practically every individual in the country; nevertheless it was essentially a business proposition; it involved technical considerations. Therefore, it had to be brought to the attention of the technicians of finance and politics. Well, that was done, is still being done, and will continue to be done, wherever necessary. The

"how" of the proposition has been weighed and tested by those whose profession it is to analyse such propositions. Their investigations have been undertaken in secret, and their reports made in secret. What the reports are we have no means of knowing, but there remains the peculiarly significant negative evidence that *no responsible financier or statesman has essayed the task of arguing in public against the analysis and proposals which Major Douglas publicly submitted for expert examination in his "Economic Democracy" six years ago.*

Now, all this time there have been members of the Social Credit Movement who have been restive under this silence. They have appreciated the importance of the work being done, but have felt that it ought to have been accompanied by a great deal more "broadcasting." These will shortly be afforded the opportunity of taking part in that form of activity, and they will be given assistance in the selection and performance of the part they will take. The rôle of THE NEW AGE will generally be to maintain the distinctive features of the New Economics, and to provide a fuller and more varied series of instructional articles so as to meet the needs of both elementary and advanced students. At its higher price it cannot expect to extend its circulation very widely among the individuals with whom the movement comes in contact, but it can munition the main army of Social Credit propagandists, and it ought to find its way later on into the local branches of the many societies whose support for the objective of the Movement is going to be sought. This is something that can be consistently worked for, because the Social Credit policy, far from competing with political parties and meliorist societies, underlies them all, and will give substance and direction to their aims. If only one or two local branches out of all that exist in the chief towns of Great Britain were to subscribe, as branches, to THE NEW AGE—nominating someone to read it regularly and keep in touch with its outlook for the information of his fellow members—the cost would be negligible to them, and yet would abolish the money problem for us.

In the current issue of the *Observer*, Mr. Garvin devotes his article to discussing the report of Mr. Lloyd George's committee, which has been investigating the fundamental post-war methods of production, transport, and competition at home and abroad. The conclusions of this Liberal Committee have just been published in a book called "Power and Coal," with an introduction by Mr. Lloyd George (Hodder and Stoughton, 1s. net), and of this book Mr. Garvin says "it ought to be in the hands of every intelligent citizen without distinction of party." Criticising certain features of the book he remarks: "It rather involves a scientific question in an emotional atmosphere," and a little later says: "It is of crucial importance in this case not to involve in unnecessary controversy the purely scientific and constructive questions of Power and Electrification." Towards the end of his article he exclaims, "Will our three scuffling parties consent to give this country a chance at last?" We have selected these quotations because they are further evidence of Mr. Garvin's policy of emphasising the need of party co-operation, a need which THE NEW AGE has pointed out on several occasions. As far back as the time when the Coalition broke up we remarked that, whether this country were to have a Coalition again in the old formal sense or not, it would have to acquiesce in party co-operation of some sort by whatever name it chose to describe it. In its present critical position, it cannot afford to have party government. In a world of bitter international competition, the nation which would survive the ordeal will be obliged to achieve unity within its

own boundaries. An apparent unity may be arrived at by the coercion of minorities; but that will be of no permanent use. There only remains a real unity based upon a clear common interest. It must be something in the nature of a business deal out of which the capitalist, the wage-earner, and the consumer will all see a dividend at the same time. It is encouraging, therefore, to notice that both the *Observer* and (as we pointed out last week) the *Spectator* are, in their respective ways, feeling out towards the real conditions of such a stable basis of co-operation.

There is every prospect that what those conditions are, will be clearly revealed when the "Power" projects of Mr. Lloyd George's committee are brought to the point of "practical politics." And if they receive the backing of all three parties, the revelation will take place under the best possible auspices. For what will their adoption involve? A very large expenditure of money. And what will that involve? A corresponding expansion of credit. And the inevitable consequence will be, if we are to believe credit experts in the City, inflation. Now if this consequence cannot be escaped, the backers of the "Power" scheme, if they are agreed that it must be proceeded with, will have to decide how they are going to deal with the rise in prices which will take place. On the other hand they may, if they represent a combination of all three parties, be in a strong enough position to take the radical step of setting up an inquiry whether inflation need happen at all. That step is what a whole nation of producers and consumers is waiting for. It is the only possible way in which "our three scuffling parties" can begin to "give this country a chance." "A National Renaissance" Mr. Garvin looks for. Yes; but not on a gold standard.

There is no end to the stream of propaganda on credit questions. The most recent example that has reached us is a pamphlet issued by the Reformers' Bookstall, of 224, Buchanan-street, Glasgow (3d.), and written by Robert Fleck. On the outer cover is this passage—"It is public credit which turns bits of paper into the money that gives the power to the idler to grind the worker. Let the worker use the 'magic' of these bits of paper on his own behalf. They will prove an 'open sesame' by which he can dig coal, smelt steel, build ships, and get food, clothes, and houses in rich abundance in a brief space of time. Up, then, workers, and be doing; the night is far spent, and the dawning draweth nigh." In a foreword the author expresses his indebtedness to the following writers on economic questions—Messrs. Lehfeldt, Harvey E. Fisk, Hartley Withers, W. Thomson, H. T. Easton, W. T. Spalding, W. R. Lawson, and Arthur Kitson. No others are mentioned, and therefore the reader is rather unprepared for some of the clauses in the "Concrete and Definite Remedy" which is set out in them. (a) "A first issue of Currency Notes or Note Certificates will be made by the Government for £1,000 millions, including Notes and Note Certificates already issued. These will be placed in the National Bank as the fund from which the Government will meet its obligations." (b) "Every six months thereafter a further issue of Notes and Note Certificates will be made for £500 millions until the total issued amounts to £7,000 millions, which will be a figure a little in excess of the present internal debt. . . . With these issues the War Debt will be paid off in such a way as to cause a minimum of inconvenience. . . ." The writer gives the consideration of inflation very little attention, but he does not entirely ignore the price question. A "Board" is to "compile lists, draft specifications, and fix prices of Standard Commodities." Then

"Adequate Stocks of Standard Commodities will be maintained in shops under the control of Labour Exchanges or in conjunction with Co-operative Societies in small towns." To do this, "The Government will immediately establish plant to produce such Standard Commodities. . . ." Another provision makes it possible for people with incomes below a certain level to exchange currency at Labour Exchanges for "rebate" coupons which will entitle them to get Standard Commodities on reduced terms. "Any financial deficit caused" by the allowance of the rebates "will be met by a tax . . . levied every six months on the assessed amount of income for the previous year." All this, and there are pages more of it, is a jumble of impracticabilities. No doubt it will serve a useful purpose; a sentence here or a sentence there may serve to illuminate the principles underlying the "Concrete Remedy," but for the rest it is an exhibition of a great deal of energy and no little ingenuity being entirely wasted. A reform of the credit system which envisages, for instance, the creation of £7,000 millions of currency, and its application to debt repayment is one thing. But, given acceptance of the principle, the general public are the last people to appraise the methods by which it may be applied. It is highly technical, and would have to be the work of the most gifted experts that the Government commands. As a matter of fact the author's scheme betrays an insufficient grasp of the real principles involved. If he were to reflect a little more he would see that the objects which he quite properly wishes to attain, can be attained with far more effect and by much simpler and less provocative ways than those he recommends. However, he is doing good service in awakening the rank and file of the workers to the immense possibilities inherent in the right use of credit-power. That is what really matters.

#### THE DEADLOCK IN FINANCE.

Thanks to Major Powell, it is now possible to summarise the Douglas theorem in a few paragraphs—

1. The reason for the industrial stagnation which is so apparent to-day, in spite of there being men, materials, factories, and machines, as well as wide-spread need, is merely the terrible shortage of money or credit.

2. Money is just "tickets," a convenient device for transferring or exchanging goods and services between those who make or provide them and those who want them.

3. Our "ticket system" is radically out of gear. It is a case "Goods, goods everywhere, and not a ticket to buy them with." In other words, the total income of the community is insufficient to purchase the goods and services created during any given period, one reason being the "golden humbug" (as Major Powell dubs the gold standard).

What is the cure?

"The total of price values produced in any given period must be equal to the total of ticket values received by the consumer."

Expressed in the form of a simple equation, this formula reads—

Wages + Salaries + Dividends ought to equal Prices.

Analysis shows that at the present time the right-hand side is weighted down by a factor which turns out to be the deadweight of debt or credit. It is therefore suggested that in order to balance the equation the products of industry should be sold below cost, and the producer compensated by a free issue of "money tickets."

The Douglas proposals and other similar schemes deserve the careful study of Socialists if only for the reason that finance and credit are the life blood of the capitalist system. Without control of finance little can be done. Consequently, Socialists are faced with this urgent problem to solve: Is there any practical method of undermining or outflanking the financial citadel of Capitalism?

This little book should be of valuable assistance in deciding this very vital question.

(Extracted from a review of "The Deadlock in Finance" in the "Daily Herald" of June 25.)



## The Current Conflux.

"24,900 more unemployed on June 16."—*Daily Mail*.

"If only we could get back to the spirit of 1914—that spirit which appeared very much like a religious revival, when men and women of all classes, said not 'What can I get?' but 'What can I give?'—that is the spirit that will pull us through this difficult period following the war."—*Rt. Hon. J. H. Thomas*.

"Preliminary to the World Cocoa Conference today, a meeting of the British Empire interests was held yesterday in London. A resolution was passed urging that: 'In view of the serious condition to which the cocoa planting industry has fallen owing to the slump in prices, steps be taken to investigate the possibility of establishing adequate co-operative marketing associations in every cocoa producing country of the Empire, with a central office in London.'"—*Daily News*.

"When in 1919 the Italian workers seized the factories, we waited breathlessly for news of a successful proletarian revolution. It never came."—*Workers' Weekly*.

"Berlin, Tuesday.—The Fatherland League has decided at its Convention to remain very quiet for the present owing to lack of funds."—*British United Press wire in the "Star"*.

"The Government of the country should have sufficient credit to enable it to build houses without borrowing money, and the probability was that they might be driven to that course."—*"Sunday Times"* report of Mr. R. Smillie's speech at a Housing Conference at Glasgow.

A certain step the Government has taken will not be popular with the electors. I refer to income-tax arrears. Thousands of cases which had been relegated to the "in abeyance" basket have been revived in London, and though negotiations regarding the particular claims had been in progress for many months, and in some cases years, and had not been concluded, the drastic step has been taken of issuing writs for the recovery of the amount without any further notice being given. A demand for costs, too, for a substantial amount accompanies the writ.—*Manchester "Evening News"*.

Mr. E. Simon asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the widely-held opinion that the policy of a return to a Gold Standard by further deflation, as laid down by the Cunliffe Committee, is likely to result in an increase of unemployment, the Government will reconsider their policy on this question?

Mr. Snowden: The answer is in the negative.

Mr. Simon: Is the present policy of the Government that laid down in the Cunliffe Committee's Report?

Mr. Snowden: Generally. It has been stated more than once during the present Session since this Government came into office. I think I may summarise it like this, that as far as this is a matter of Government policy we have said that we are opposed to inflation, that we are generally guided by the Report of the Cunliffe Committee, and that we hope to see a return to the Gold Standard as soon as possible.—*Reported in "The Accountant" of July 5*.

Mr. Snowden has fixed a limit up to which a man may save without the risk of forfeiting the pension given to the thriftless. What is most to be regretted is that the new scheme will increase the difficulties to

be surmounted in establishing a contributory pension—without which social policy can be neither complete nor moralised.—*"Observer"*.

The laws of economics were not made by Governments, and they cannot be re-created by Governments; like the "guid wife," they are there to be obeyed.—*The Prime Minister*.

As is the case with every manifestation of secret diplomacy in these days the important facts are known in the City.—*"Observer"*.

The business I'm interested in and work in, has paid approximately three times the capital it had ten years ago in direct taxation, and five times its capital in direct and indirect taxation in that period. In spite of that we've only had enough to live moderately and quietly, and we feel poor to-day. A financial house paying 6 per cent. dividend per annum in this period, would pay about 25 per cent. to 40 per cent. of its capital in taxes compared with our 500 per cent. Is this fair? Is this just? What's the remedy?—*Mr. W. Crick, of Messrs. Crick and Co., boot manufacturers, Northampton*.

Vienna, Friday.—Three hundred and forty-five suicides and attempted suicides are reported to have taken place in Vienna during May and sixty-one in the first twelve days of June. Suicides in Vienna have almost invariably reached a maximum in May, but the figures of the last month are far in excess of all previous records.—*Reuter*.

Immediate action is to be taken to strengthen the bankruptcy laws, with a view of putting an end to the number of fraudulent bankruptcies. . . . The textile industries have been very badly hit by what are described as suspicious bankruptcies, and it is estimated that the losses under this head between July, 1920, and September, 1923, amounted to £25,000,000.—*"Daily Mail"*.

Rotterdam.—In addition to the nine ships which have recently been ordered here with the New Waterway Shipbuilding Company for British owners negotiations for other contracts are in progress. The company is one in which British capital is largely interested, and is not under German control. It was able to quote lower prices than British firms.—*"Daily Mail"*.

A banking machine which sorts and counts all the money and rings a bell as soon as an account is overdrawn is one of the features of the branch of Lloyds Bank at the British Empire Exhibition. There are also two machines which may revolutionise banking. When the official takes his last half-crown at night he simply scoops his takings into a bucket and empties this into a machine, which sorts it out into the various denominations and delivers them at the other end nicely packed in bags.—*"Daily Express"*.

Melbourne.—Dr. Earle Page, Federal Treasurer, has introduced the Commonwealth Bank Bill in the House of Representatives. The bank assumes the functions of a central reserve bank similar to the Bank of England. The bank takes over the note issue and starts its new career with a capital increased to £10,000,000. Melbourne bankers state that the scheme should work satisfactorily.—*"Daily Mail"*.

Again we pay bachelors and widowers, whether anybody is dependent on them or not, at exactly the same rate as fathers of families engaged in the same work. Theoretically, this rate constitutes the "living wage"; but, as a fact, it is more than enough to maintain the bachelor or widower without dependents and

not enough to maintain the average family, which is assumed to consist of five persons. A further fact—and one of a much more startling character—is that the "living wage," as generally understood, cannot be paid out of our present national income. What, then, is the remedy? It is proposed, not to lower the wages of men without dependents, but to pay a flat rate, and supplement it with a family allowance to those who have dependent children. On the face of things, it is likely to stimulate discrimination between single men and married men, to the injury of the latter. Actually, however, it has no such effect, because family allowances are not paid directly by an employer, and consequently he would not gain anything even if he stipulated that all his male employes must be bachelors.—*"Tit Bits," July 5*.

## The Poplar Wage Surcharges.

By C. H. Norman.

The correspondence printed below concerning the attitude of the Ministry of Health towards the Poplar Borough Council's policy of paying certain of its employees a minimum wage of £4 a week while Trade Union rates may be on a lower basis raises the whole issue of the right of local authorities to have their policy judged impartially, and not to have their local autonomy completely destroyed by the whims or prejudices of a Department of State which of late years has permitted itself to be specially affected by outside influences of a mysterious nature.

The correspondence opens with a letter of January 5, to Sir Wm. Joynson Hicks, in which I point out that:—

"The Divisional Court has decided that it has always been within the power of the auditor to surcharge the members of a local authority where he is of opinion that the payments made to their employees are excessive. The standard taken by the Ministry's auditor has been the payment of £1 a week or more in the case of the humbler employees over the standard scale as representing *prima facie* evidence of excessive payments. In these circumstances, I should be glad if you would explain to me how it is that the Ministry's auditors have not surcharged any local authorities in respect of the enormously differing payments of the higher officials, such as town clerks, borough engineers, highway surveyors, medical officers, etc. . . . whose remuneration varies from £750 a year up to £5,000 a year."

On January 14 the Department replied in these terms:—

"The powers of allowance, disallowance, and surcharge of items appearing in the accounts of Local Authorities are vested in a District Auditor by Statute, and in the exercise of those powers he acts independently and on his own responsibility. The Minister, to whom, as an alternative to the High Court, persons aggrieved by the decision of an auditor have a right to appeal does not give, and has no power to give, any direction to a District Auditor as to the manner in which the above-mentioned powers should be exercised."

On January 17, I replied thus:—

"I must point out Mr. Carson Roberts, the auditor in question, is a gentleman who, according to his counsel, Sir John Lithiby, was appointed by the Ministry of Health. I understand he has an office in the Ministry: that his costs in the litigation are provided for by the Department: and that, on a certain occasion, though he was of opinion that certain legal costs should be allowed, before granting the certificate he referred the matter for confirmation to the Legal Department of the Ministry. It appears to me a very grave circumstance that a Government Department, whether acting in form through the District Auditor or through the influence of the District Auditor, should suddenly adopt a policy which had never been dreamt of as lawful for years past in the case of the higher officials employed by Local Authorities."

On February 4 the Labour Minister, Mr. Wheatley, took up the correspondence.

"As was explained in the Department's letter of the 14th ultimo, the District Auditor is a statutory officer who exercises his powers of allowance, disallowance, and surcharge independently of the Department by which he is appointed, and not under their direction. Where costs are incurred by the District Auditor in litigation following the exercise of the powers mentioned, such costs would not be payable by the Department. It may be observed that it is open to any ratepayer or owner of property in the district to attend at an audit held by the District Auditor and object to any item of expenditure appearing in the accounts under audit. In such a case the Auditor would allow, or disallow, according as in his judgment the expenditure was legal or otherwise. In the particular case to which you refer objection to the expenditure was raised at the audit by certain ratepayers."

On February 9 I wrote:—

"Mr. Carson Roberts' affidavit in the Poplar case states specifically in paragraph 4: 'In very many cases the question which the District Auditor has to decide is . . . whether payments have been made in excess of those which it was necessary to make to obtain the supplies or services rendered. The duty of disallowing such excessive charges and payments has always been enforced upon District Auditors by the Local Government Board.' This sworn statement is in direct conflict with the letter of the Department of the 14th ultimo and the suggestion in the Ministry's letter under acknowledgment. In the Bethnal Green case no ratepayer or owner of property objected to the item of surcharge, and yet the surcharge was still made by the Auditor. The Department must have been aware for years of the enormous disparity between the payments of officials, not workmen, in boroughs of an equivalent description to those under discussion, and yet no criticism was ever made of such payments by the Auditor or Department."

On February 29, Mr. Wheatley replied:—

"The Statute provides that the District Auditor 'shall disallow every item of account contrary to law,' the Department take such steps as may be desirable to secure that an Auditor is aware of his general duty in this matter, but they could not, and do not, in fact, give him instructions as to how he should act in any individual case; the Auditor exercises his power of allowance, disallowance, and surcharge in particular cases, as has been previously explained, independently of the Department and not under their direction."

On March 2, I replied:—

"As the Department and the Auditor seem to differ totally on their responsibility on this matter, I can only express my regret that the Department should have embarked on the policy of surcharging the Poplar Borough Council in respect of the wages paid to the employees at the instance of that combination of wage-cutters known as the Federation of British Industries, at whose request the Department acted on representations made in 1922 and 1923. I am really scandalised that a Department of the State should be influenced to act in such a partial manner, should bring pressure on its Auditor, and then attempt to throw dust in the eyes of a correspondent who happened to have the material, unknown to the Department, for checking the various attempts to mislead in their letters. It seems to me the course taken has been a corrupt exercise of its functions by the Department."

On March 10 Mr. Wheatley concluded the correspondence with this letter:—

"I regret that I can add nothing to the statements made in the official letters addressed to you. I hope you will not persist in assumptions which appear to me to be erroneous and unjustified."

Unfortunately the facts support these assumptions; and the correspondence discloses a state of circumstances wholly contrary to the public interest, as the officials of this department are paid out of public funds to administer the department without bias and without favour to any party. It is a strange exhibition of honest impartiality to cavil at paying skilled or unskilled workmen £4 a week under modern conditions, and pass over, without remonstrance, payments to town clerks and other salaried officials ranging from between £2,000 and £5,000 a year.



## Mannigfaltig.

By C. M. Grieve.

### BEYOND MEANING.—IV.

I HAVE already commented on the suggestiveness of Professor Sayn's consideration of the relation of work such as Frank's to that of Jules Romain and the Unanimists: but this preoccupation with mob psychology—with life in the mass—has, in Frank's case, political rather than æsthetic bases, and cannot be fully appreciated without considering not only Romain, but the theoretics of prolecut, and the whole question of the inter-relation of man, art, and industrialism.

Sayn is indeed careful to point out that he uses the term unanimist deliberately, not in the strict sense which Romain has given it, but for the resonances which, since Romain, it arouses.

Dealing with that creation of "a new America" to which Frank's work is dedicated, Sayn observes that Frank belongs to a younger generation, "a patient and receptive generation, which has broken with the past and begins to see and understand; in which is slowly awakening—with liberated thinking—the sense of the total life of America, and which instinctively suffers itself to be led by the new forces. A generation strong and sure of itself, capable of building a world. The revelation is still indistinct, scarcely conscious. But already the entire scale of old values has given way, the doctrine of success has been broken."

Frank's novel *The Dark Mother* is, he says, "a poem of life, a maladroit poem doubtless, but one in which we glimpse the epical shock of two opposed generations and the unfolding in an individual of the unanimist consciousness under the tenebrous influence of the creative breath which circulates throughout the universe, the breath of that dark Mother which is life. . . . Clogged with characters, episodes, and details, it moves too slowly towards a confused end. All classes, all types of the American world pass in a maladroit disorder before the two friends. It is 'une oeuvre de début,' a mass of still chaotic material which the author explores painfully and scrupulously, and which he tries to order."

Although I have referred to the prophetic political implications of all such work as this, Frank is, of course, no partisan or propagandist of any political group or theory. He himself declares his faith unequivocally when he says that Art with a message is a profanation: the artist must simply be the servant of the soul, worshipper of the revelations of his life. But the influence of Dostoevski—and the sense in which Spengler declared that Dostoevski would be the Christ of the next thousand years—is clearly discernible in such a declaration as this, from his manifesto-analysis of the contemporary American scene: "Against the American doctrine of success, with its subsidiary Puritan morale, they (i.e., himself and artists like him) bring the gospel of Failure. Meaning only this: that the material ends to which we have reduced the largess of our lives are shoddy falsehood and that the glory of truth is the glory of being."

"Whatever may be the particular quality of each of these books (Frank's novels)," continues Sayn, "the fundamental thought is identical. The milieu in which the characters move changes—it enlarges to embrace a whole nation, it contracts to contain only one individual—but the theme is constant. Frank, who is neither philosopher nor economist, but exclusively an artist, has only one aim, to create, and only one ideal, the triumph of life. From this basis all his thinking derives and all his art too. This basis is doubtless that of all realistic and naturalistic schools. But, like Jules Romain in France, Frank represents a new tendency, or at least a renovated

tendency, of realism. He displays life, not under its superficial and apparently stable aspects, but in its profound verity in accord with which each object, each individual, no longer appears isolated, but is part of an ensemble in ceaseless movement. He desires to penetrate appearances, to pierce even to the heart of things, and to reveal, in handling mass or volume, in distinguishing the composing forces, the incessant interchanges which are effected from one to the other without pause. . . . All life appears to the artist as movement, perpetual actions and reactions, near and remote, pressures, and outbursts, whose medley creates the soul and fugitive thought—(sometimes stabilised)—of a moment, an individual, a group. Vision ceases to be the property of an unique sense; it becomes complete, global, instinctive, and immediate.

"Most men," says Frank himself, in *Our America*, "stir about on their little plane and know it badly. They are gnats gliding on the surface of a pond. Some men's knowing holds three dimensions. They see the flat world they act in: but they know it to be a facet of a greater world, and thereby they know it better. Countries, continents perhaps, the tangled traffic of peoples and of men, come in to them. But there are souls whose consciousness is higher. They partake of this global three-dimensional world, but know it too for a mere moving surface, moving beyond itself into dimensions that are truer and that cease from motion as they become more true."

Compare these quotations, with this statement on the total vision which A. Cuisenier quotes from Romain himself in the *Mouton Blanc* for November, 1922: "We can therefore at any hour and in any place, even the most deserted, test this type of vision. It does not result, as in the case of certain philosophers, from a pantheistic conception which dissolves the individual in the universe, nor, as in the case of the mystics, from a sentimental communion with the universe. It is a way of thinking, a direct contact, as though by antennae, with all the undulations that flow."

The philosophy underlying all these manifestations is, of course, Bergsonian. Miss C. E. M. Joad in her newly-issued *Introduction to Modern Philosophy (The World's Manuals. Oxford University Press)* expresses the essence of Bergson's philosophy thus: "There is no feeling, no idea, no volition which is not undergoing change at every moment: if a mental state ceased to vary its duration would cease to flow." It follows that there is no real difference between passing from one state to another and continuing in what is called the same state. . . . We postulate a series of successive mental states because our attention is forced upon them in a series of successive mental acts. It is for the same reason that we tend to regard ourselves as beings who endure continually in spite of change. Just as we say there exist separate states which change, so we speak of a self which experiences changing psychic states, and this self, we say, endures. But we have no more experience of an unchanging ego than we have of an unchanging psychic state: however far we push our analysis we never reach such an unchanging ego. . . . There is thus no self which changes: there is indeed nothing which changes—for in asserting the existence of that which changes, we are asserting the existence of something which, from the mere fact that it is subject to change, is not itself change—there is simply change. The truth that we are beings whose reality is change supplies the clue with which we can now proceed to consider and to understand the constitution of the Universe. For the Universe is that same stream of continual change, or 'becoming,' as Bergson calls it, that we experience in ourselves."

(To be continued.)

## The Theatre.

By H. R. Barbor.

### A THEORY OF EMOTIONAL GESTURE.

Some years ago an English physician, Colonel Netterville Barron, C.M.G., M.V.O., in the course of researches into physical culture in relation to psychological medicine, hit upon a theory of gesture which may prove to have a bearing of the utmost importance upon the art of acting.

Dr. Barron found that, in cases of mental abnormality, particularly various neuroses, patients tended to move abnormally, to cease from making certain gestures. The timid patient ceased employing the gestures which suggest self-assertion and anger; the sadistic mind reflected itself physically in overstraining of certain movements which denote anger, cruelty, and so forth. "Naturally," the reader may say, and dismiss the matter. Dr. Barron did not, however, let things rest there. He made an elaborate study of many hundreds of cases of morbid and healthy persons of both sexes and various ages. As a result of these researches he codified movement in terms of psychology, and eventually came to the conclusion that each and every emotion of the human mind has its most perfect expression in one particular gesture-complex. In other words, he found that fear, for example, can be most perfectly expressed by a certain movement of hands, eyes, mouth, nostrils, and a certain "stance." In like manner anger has its own particular archetypal movement, any divergence from which modifies the emotional expressivity of the subject.

Having at long last tabulated these conclusions in relation to the dozen primary emotions generally admitted by the psychologists (the commonest are Tenderness, Sympathy, Anger, Emulation, Wonder, Fear, Disgust, Positive, Negative), the physician began to apply his new-found knowledge curatively. During the war Colonel Barron was commandant of a vast hospital organisation at Blackpool, where at one time he had some seven thousand cases of shell shock and other war neuroses in his charge. His technique of "motor-psychology" was employed in the treatment of over thirty thousand officers and men, and, despite clinical and educational difficulties (for the instructors had to be taught, and time was a factor of great importance), the system employed proved as successful as it was revolutionary.

While still at Blackpool, Colonel Barron had experimented with wordless plays, presented along the lines of this novel technique. After his retirement from medical practice he devoted, and is still devoting, himself to further researches into the psychology of movement.

An examination of theatrical gesture soon convinced him that the actor's movements were a blend of purely emotional movements (the gesture-reaction to impulses of emotion), combined with "masking" movements (repressions), habit movements, personal idiosyncrasy or eccentricity, purposive and automatic gestures. Actually, in the theatre, Colonel Barron finds that few actors employ gesture to anything like the extent of revelation that his system facilitates. The reason for this is that the basically emotional gesture is frequently submerged in accidental and extraneous elements. Thus a player who seeks to embody fear may cloud the expression of trepidation by the "masks" which heredity, or environment, has taught us to use in order not to "give ourselves away." It must be obvious that the recognition of the fundamental notes in the gesture-gamut of passion would be valuable to the theatrical artist—and even more so to the film player. In essence the application of the Barron method to theatrical production is simple. The gesture equivalents of the primary emotions have been plotted. By combining them in various groups and to differing degrees the secondary emotions are expressed. Content, for example, is an admixture of the primaries

Disgust and Positive; Jealousy consists of Positive (interrupted) joined with Anger and Acquisitiveness; Reproach is Anger with Tenderness; Scorn is Anger, Disgust, Positive. In practical demonstration it is when the secondaries are portrayed that the crudity and almost absurdity of the primaries are seen to coalesce into eloquence, and to carry conviction of the basic truth of the physician's contention, that there is a gesture-speech intelligible to humanity irrespective of language and race.

Various authorities have written on this subject; but previously no one seems to have sought to chart the direct and non-volitional bodily reflexes to emotional stimulus. These are what Colonel Barron claims to discover. He does not pretend, be it noted, to teach the art of acting. The artist begins where the scientist ends. But the scientist can give a notation for the expression of mental states in terms of the body.

To accept this original theory is to acknowledge that there is an abstract (or perhaps a better word were the antithesis, concrete) technique of movement. At first glance one might decline to believe this. The actor may be disposed to rely on inward "feeling" or external observation to body forth the various moods and passions demanded by any particular rôle. But by such reasoning could the future prima donna refuse to practise breathing exercises on the ground that when she "feels" Isolde she can tackle Wagnerian scores undismayed. Colonel Barron derides all notion of feeling until the actor is an expert at expressing feeling in the absence of feeling. The expression of emotion depends, he asserts, on the adoption of certain hard-and-fast scientific, almost mechanical, technical elements. Only when these are completely mastered does artistry begin. Browning's Fra Lippo Lippi may be quoted for a similar assertion in the sphere of pictorial art:—

"Suppose I've made her eyes all right and blue,  
Can't I take breath and try to add life's flash,  
And then add soul and heighten them threefold?"

That is the artist's job, to add soul to life.

By employing this system, Dr. Barron claims that the body can be made as expressive as the face. Compare the faces of children, say, of one year, three years, seven, and sixteen years, and mark the differing degree of facial response to the different emotions. The baby face is at one moment a caricature of greed or pain past the art of a Hogarth, and at another a reflection of the bliss of the world at which the pen of a Blake can only hint. As the child develops it begins to master these direct reflexes. The process of socialisation or civilisation is at work in it. It "masks" its face by a gradually increasing impassivity. It imitates (Miming) its parents and fellows. It adopts certain non-emotional conventions to point out its desires (Indicative). It uses artifice either to ex-desires (Empirical) or to amuse its fellows (Eccentric). All these non-emotional elements are employed by the growing emotional elements (as opposed to "feeling") and gradually they tend to replace and, even in crisis, largely conceal or distort the expression of psychological conflict in terms of physique—which, again, is the actor's job. The great players possess in large measure this aptitude for revealing facially (and sometimes corporeally as well) the inward crises of sometimes corporeally as well) the facial technique of such artists as Charlie Chaplin, Duse, Mrs. Patrick Campbell, Chaliapine, and Paul Wegener exemplifies this ability. The Barron method seeks to free the body of its non-emotional restraints so as to make the whole player an index of feeling as plastic and eloquent as are the faces of the great actors and actresses. It



is not suggested that the non-emotional movements should be suppressed. That would be absurd. But they should be controlled and diverted so that they are allowed to take only their proper place in the player's technique, and not impede the expression of the assumed psychology of the artist's impersonation. If such magnification of expression is realisable through the reduction of Colonel Barron's theories to the focus of the theatre (and practical demonstration certainly suggests that it is realisable) this technique opens up far-reaching vistas of possibilities in regard to individual performance and the art of the theatre as a whole.

## New Verse.

"Voices on the Wind" (Second Series)\* is an annual anthology of British verse run (by a Miss Fowler Wright) on the theory that an anthology is misnamed unless it is representative of all the verse output of the region and period it covers. Good, bad, and indifferent must, if the selection is to give a fair idea of the output, be included in strict proportion to the total amount of each produced. If a tremendous amount of doggerel is being produced, and a small amount of genuine poetry, it is to misrepresent the position to concentrate on the latter and ignore the former. Miss Fowler Wright is guilty of no such favouritism, and, as one would expect, the principle she has adopted involves such a preponderance of the unutterably bad that to seek for the slightest gleam of merit anywhere in the collection is like hunting for the proverbial needle in a haystack.

The editor's preface redeems the book, however. It is almost incredibly absurd. We suppose that the general "reaction" of the Empire Poetry League (of which this indefatigable lady is hon. secretary) is practically the same as her own—not quite so intense, perhaps, but registering an "aggressive mediocrity," determined that Parnassus is not to be confined to any small clique of poets, that their betters are "morbid," not "imperial inspired," and taking credit themselves (and giving it apparently to everybody who is prepared to concede it to them) for good intentions which, wed to execution no matter how execrable, are (the Empire Poetry League insists) infinitely preferable to the most highly skilled technique prostituted to the expression of unrepresentative thinking. Or, as Miss Fowler Wright puts it, "The occasional writer—the amateur, if you will—when at his best, may write bad poetry, or (more probably) good poetry badly expressed, but 'verse' as distinct from what is poetry at all he is less likely to perpetrate."

"I suppose," she writes, "that the poetic tendencies of any period may be appraised more justly by a consideration of its 'minor' poetry, than by the work of its occasional genius, but I do not know that anyone has yet defined a 'minor' poet successfully. When I endeavour to resolve the question I find that quantity is the essential requisite of the major poet, even though the most part of his production be of an unreadable character. . . . We approach a formula. The work of a major poet is equal to that of two minor poets, one of whom would be remembered and one forgotten!"

Ninety-nine per cent. of the "poets" represented have never been heard of before by anyone outwith the Empire Poetry League, and never will be again. As might be expected, the female element predominates. No Scottish or Irish poet of the very slightest consequence, and of English poets only W. H. Davies, leaves the lump. Eschewing the "Georgians," the "Wheels" school, and every other more or less well-defined coterie of poets in British

\* Voices on the Wind. (Second Series.) The Merton Press, Ltd.

literature to-day, a list of at least one hundred "unattached" poets, each of whom is of greater consequence than all Miss Wright's *serins* put together, could easily be drawn up. An anthology of their work would serve various very useful purposes. But the virtue of most of these unattached poets is simply that they are unattachable; and no anthologist is likely to find all of those whom it would be necessary to include to make a "true demonstration" prepared to grant him the necessary facilities.

Miss Fowler Wright ventures to say that "if Miss A. D. Johnson were a voluminous writer, I believe she would rank among the very first of our women poets. As it is, her work is almost unknown except to those who seek the best for themselves." She might equally well have chosen for this commendation any of the other unheard-of people whose verses she prints: any one of them would have been, like Miss Johnson, a perfect *reductio ad absurdum* of the prefatory manifesto. Here is one of Miss Johnson's verses:—

"Down along the road of life, winding, dark, and chill,

Little stooping moon, I have left you behind;  
Curly golden moon above the Winchcombe Hill,  
And the stir of the questioning wind.

"There's a moon most nights. . . ."

That's just what Miss Fowler Wright has forgotten in making this monstrous compilation.

Miss Gertrude M. Marriage provides us with the following life-like portrait of the Muse to whom most of these people address themselves:—

"A water nymph once I've seen,  
Just clad in her curly hair,  
And a grass cloak  
So green—very green."

In fact very, very green indeed!

"Even in the short interval" (says Miss Fowler Wright) "since I wrote the preface to the previous volume, there has been a perceptible change of tone and outlook, and writers of the order of Messrs. Laurence, Flint, Eliot, and the like, can no longer issue their abortions in the comfortable certainty that criticism will approach them on respectful knees." But there is nothing that Miss Fowler Wright and her innumerable kind can put their hands to that will not receive the most cordial commendation of the countless little local rags which (no matter what an eccentric organ such as this may do) continue to prove from generation to generation that "God's in His Heaven, and all's right with the British Empire," by expatiating on the sanity and classicism of such a volume as this.

H. McD.

## Music.

If there is one thing that should once and for all explode the preposterous superstition of opera in the vernacular it is any attempt to translate "Pelléas." The last limit of fatuousness is surely reached in attempting to divorce the music of this work from the French text to which it is welded with a closeness that makes any attempt at separation a mere amputation. Here we have no broad stretches of cantilena, no wide arching curves of melodic line that more or less stand by themselves, but a syllabic chant reproducing stress by stress, accent by accent, quantity by quantity of the words to which it gives vocal utterance. I have never been able to understand, let alone sympathize with, the lunatic yell for "Opera in the language of the people," regardless whether the language of the people happens to be that of the opera, and such horrors as "Pelléas" in English, "Carmen" in German, "Maskenball," "Crépuscule des Dieux," and "Tristanno e Isotta," through which I have writhed in agony, will, I think, serve to explain

my lack of understanding and sympathy. The cry that is raised at once, is that everyone cannot be a linguist and understand operas in their own various languages, to which the answer is that no one *does* understand them word for word even in their own respective countries, sung by singers to whom this tongue in which they are written is native. The operatic audience in Germany, Austria, or Italy knows its opera inside out as the audiences of ancient Greece and Greek Sicily knew the dramas of which they were watching performances. \* This is no plea for bad diction and mispronunciation, but merely by way of reasserting the self-evident fact, which like so many other self-evident facts is generally ignored by wild propagandists, that opera is primarily a musical form. Moreover, a denial of the fact that even the finest translation cannot but alter the colour of the music, cannot, of necessity, follow absolutely the accents, vowel values and consonant stresses of the original, and must necessarily lend to the notes of the voice-parts qualities and colours other than those intended and devised by the composer, whose vocal writing is conditioned by the idiosyncrasies and peculiarities of the language to which he is writing, is merely ignorant impertinence, and people who put forward such denials are simply beyond the boundary of reasonable argument. In the case of England, where the object is the fostering and encouragement of opera of native growth, how this object is to be obtained by singing German, French, and Italian operas, written for German, French, and Italian singers and publics, in English is carefully left unexplained, and how also it is expected to develop an English school of opera by making English singers sing in translations of foreign works to which they are in every way unsuitable emotionally and psychologically—except in a few rare and isolated instances which do not count against the argument—is also left carefully in limbo. To the plea that if France, Germany, and Italy have definite schools of opera and an operatic tradition England can have them also, there is the unanswerable reply that they have them and England has not. The Ballad opera, or perhaps even the Gilbert and Sullivan type, is a definite and unmistakably English product, by that, I mean one peculiar to England. Why not busy yourself with developing and extending the tradition you have got instead of trying to manufacture an imitation of one you haven't and which under any circumstances is palpably, obviously, glaringly alien to your outlook and mentality? Italian opera is the expression of Italian psychology, of Italian life even to a considerable extent, similarly German Opera—of Wagner especially—of the German love of massiveness, romantic grandeur, and elaborate symbolism. But what connection with those things has the English outlook: the British mentality with its everlasting devastating and desolating "sense of humour"—how all too rarely a sense of the ridiculous—its restraint, its ideals of breeding, emotional reticence, and so on? Surely no one will pretend that that miserable pasticcio, that four times réchauffé mess of Maeterlinck and Debussy, that aborted offspring of the brain of an arty little provincial coterie-monger that revolved its flatulent vapourities for an incredible number of months at a theatre, appropriately enough on the boundaries of Bloomsbury and Camden Town, or that other, the "allegorical parody," "parabolic allegory," "parodistic parable" of a what-not by the gentleman who, as it was wittily put, "butchered an inoffensive Cosmos" to make a Gustav's holiday—surely, I repeat, no one will point to these as admirable fruitions, or even as more or less creditable mis-carriages on the part of that singularly unwilling parturient, English Opera?

In the midst of all this orgy of muddled thinking, of historic cant, and the spoutings of noisy ignorance,

the Grand Opera Syndicate keeps with most praiseworthy steadfastness to its admirable policy of operas in their written language with, as far as possible, singers to whom the language is native—and it seems that presently it and the Metropolitan Opera House of New York, together with a few of the great South American Opera Houses, will be practically the only ones holding out against the prevalent insanity of opera in "the language understood of the vulgar"—and in the interests not only of Art, and good taste, but good sense also, may they continue undeviated from the only rational policy.

A writer in *The Times* of July 5, after carefully showing how translation into German ruins the musical and emotional sense of phrase after phrase of Purcell's "Dido and Aeneas," distorts and misplaces stresses and accents observed with such exquisite care by Purcell in his setting of his English text, and altogether demolishing with singular completeness the case of opera in the vernacular (somebody else's vernacular, *bien entendu!*) winds up with the following piece of non sequitur bravura:—

"But the fact that translation is necessarily imperfect does not make the Germans refuse the attempt or fall back on the ridiculous idea that it is better to hear the music in an unknown tongue. . . ." (my italics) than presumably to hear it unspoiled, undistorted, and as the composer meant, in the original! As far as any argument at all can be traced in this crack-brained, typically journalistic form of reasoning, it is that because the Germans, French, Italians indulge in a barbarous, unmusical, inartistic custom the English should do the same. Thus we arrive at the quaint position that the very people who are always urging English musicians and music to throw off the foreign yoke, and cease imitating the foreigner, are trying to induce their countrymen to imitate the foreigner in two of the most inept proceedings, manufacturing a school of opera towards which the English musical genius has neither natural inclination nor normal aptitude for, and, opera in the vernacular.

KAIKHOSRU SORABJI.

## Reviews.

"Shaken Creeds: The Resurrection Doctrines." By Jocelyn Rhys. (Watts and Co. 7s. 6d. net.)

The case is unanswerable. Mr. Jocelyn Rhys has taken the doctrine of the Resurrection, made a comparative analysis of the account in each Gospel and given numerous parallels from antiquity. The second part of the book deals with other New Testament miracles in the same manner, but less fully. It is an industrious compilation written in an easy and flowing style. The student of Mr. J. M. Robertson's scholarly work, "Pagan Christs," will find in this volume an amplification and popularisation of some of his ideas. It will doubtless reach many people for whom Mr. Robertson's "dry light" may be somewhat too tough a proposition. Mr. Robertson pays his readers the compliment of demanding the exercise of thought. Mr. Rhys is content to instruct and exhort, and his readers will probably be more numerous. Although the parallels from antiquity prove that Christianity has no more basis in historic truth than any one of the myriad religions which preceded it, yet the widespread prevalence of a myth persisting through the ages would seem to point to the deep-seated need of the human spirit to express itself in some symbol—and the universality of this symbol merely indicates the common strain of humanity. Mr. Robertson, in his work "Pagan Christs," suggests that Christians have mistaken symbols for facts—that the esoteric myths of the ancients have been objectivated into biographical "truths." Undoubtedly the Christian Church, when it emerged in the fourth century as a State religion, was the product of about



four centuries of Christian imagination. "God is not a person," said the late G. W. Foote, "but an ideal varying in each individual with the greatness and purity of his nature." The Christian theology is untenable in the light of modern knowledge, but men and women have still the same intuitions for the Good and the True. They are still born with idealistic aspirations for a fuller life and the complete development of their natures. The task of religions is to embody the Ideal. After Freethinkers have knocked down the Christian scaffolding by which people have climbed up, what then? In what new form will be incorporated the idealising force which created past religions? Or can it be that we lack force to create? So poor and devalued are we that we have ceased to climb, and no longer feel the need of doing so, but grovel in a world void of healthy instinct and peopled only by the docile and dwindling descendants of the disciples of Dr. Marie Stopes. The finer religions have always stood for the integrity of the human soul, and have endeavoured to assist men and women in the realisation of their nature. Nature's sanction is given to producing fine and beautiful children in the next generation, and it may be that in the future "a free, glad, spiritual maternity will be woman's highest religion as a pure, earnest, searching love is that of man."

**Unknown Surrey.** By Donald Maxwell. (The Bodley Head. 15s. net.)

In this age of Garden Suburbs, with an ever-expanding population, one wonders in gloomier moments, whether all the beauties of the home counties will one day disappear under a net work of macadamised roads and red-roofed villas. Should the evil day ever come, future generations will discover with due surprise and, we trust regret, the excellent series which Mr. Maxwell is producing, and of which the above is the latest addition. To those who love the countryside of England, "Unknown Surrey" will give a very great pleasure. Not only has the author struck just the right note in his humorous writing, which combines a number of light anecdotes with the stories of his ramblings in out-of-the-way villages and unfrequented by-paths, but the volume is most generously illustrated not only with pen sketches, but twenty-four coloured plates of a very charming character. The text is of the kind which makes one desire to take the next train (or bus) and to go and see the places for oneself. That, after all, is the real justification of such a book.

**Cyrano de Bergerac. Voyages to the Sun and Moon.** Translated by Richard Aldington. (Routledge. 7s. 6d.)

A discussion of the physical and astronomical beliefs of the seventeenth century as contrasting with scientific discoveries up-to-date would fill THE NEW AGE and be News from Nowhere. But bearing in mind that Cyrano was advanced to the point of ridiculousness in thinking the earth round gives a pleasant piquancy to the reading of his fantastic and almost infantile narrations of his imaginary voyages to the Sun and Moon and of the incredibly Earth-like evolution of both. His imaginary inhabitants and institutions afford the basis of his satirical purposes, and a valuable reflection on his period. The principal charm of Messrs. Routledge's edition is the translation by Mr. Richard Aldington into the most attractively fluent English with an authentic seventeenth-century flavour. Mr. Aldington has also written the valuable introduction dealing with the life and contemporary influence of de Bergerac.

**A Son at the Front.** By Edith Wharton. (Macmillan. 7s. 6d. net.)

Whatever her topic, Edith Wharton touches it with a deft hand and gives it all the finish of her detached and rather masculine technique. "A Son at the Front" is another contribution to the miscellaneous accumulation of war literature, but although, according to the dates given in the book, it was begun in the last year of the war and not completed till 1922, it looks from yet another angle among the many potentialities of that vast subject with a direct vision apparently unblurred by distance of time. Many tongues of many countries have tackled the problem of the conscientious objector, but Mrs. Wharton is probably the first writer to present the vicarious C.O., so to speak. In this case it was the adoring relatives who pitted their puny strength against the ruthless machinery of military officialdom and

the equally ruthless determination of their boy to give a hand in the struggle of the country he loved. The milieu is the Paris of the English and Americans, which suggests implicit comments on international politics, and here Mrs. Wharton is admirably restrained. Her people are attractively real folk, but true to type, and though we meet so many of them and the pace of the story carries them by swiftly, yet her discrimination is nice and makes them all essential to her purpose by their varied motivations as affecting the main theme. It is a book for all who are not afraid that this vivid rendering of civilian psychology in wartime may tend to re-create the poignancy of war sickness.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—In joining what must be a host of friends who would wish to congratulate you on your achievement week by week, so making THE NEW AGE the liveliest thing in London journalism, may I suggest to our keen enthusiasts what may be an effective means of propagating good Douglas doctrine.

The world is so full of men and schemes purporting to solve the Sphinx's puzzle, it does not avail much simply to commend THE NEW AGE by strong and heated words. Suppose one says to one's friend, "Now, old boy, you know this is all eye wash. Current politics are a gigantic bluff. Hardly once in a moon is the real issue barely hinted at in the popular Press, or even in the House of Commons. If you want to know what the present game really is—a greater game than ever you've dreamed, or 99 per cent. of our 'progressive' statesmen have dreamed—well, just read THE NEW AGE."

The friend will just sigh and turn over to the golf or cricket news, which he feels he can read intelligibly. By the way, is that partly the secret of the sports page?

If, instead of spoiling a friendship by a too strong insistence, one asks if one may be permitted to send his address to the publisher, well, John Jones may think there is something in it if his friend is ready to attest his belief to the tune of a half-year's subscription.

We read good sound doctrine weekly and feel ready to bowl anybody over, and yet the financial column of the daily Press makes one writhe in one's sleep. Your last note of urgency is not overdue. After all, if we don't do this little thing, if to this simple extent we are not missionaries, the question may be asked if our minds are really worth enlightening?—Yours, etc.,

A COUNTRY PARSON.

## Pastiche.

NEW WINE IN OLD BOTTLES.

BY OLD AND CRUSTED.

"MATHS. AND MUSICAL BANKS."

Amongst the many deplorable lacunae in my mental equipment is a particularly bad gap in the mathematical section. Like the mock turtle, I am on fairly good terms with "Ambition, Distraction, Uglification, and Derision," but was never really friendly with any thing beyond the rule of three—a weakness shared with Australian aborigines, who, along with certain golfers I have met, are unable to count above five. By the way, it would simplify life immensely if golf numeration were universally adopted. Anyone can understand "one off two," "the like," "the odd," or "all square"; the rest is superfluity of oughtiness.

As for these fantastic arabesques wherewith Maj. Douglas decorates the more recondite chapters of his immortal works, they fill me with awe and reverence unspeakable, but I do not profess to understand them—which reminds me of my early days when I was painfully acquiring a knowledge of the rudiments of algebra at an educational institution in Frankfort-on-the-Main. My struggles with  $a + b$  were pathetic, not to say futile, whereas an old chum, one "Bill"—who was my faithful comrade in the pursuit of knowledge, and who as a great Troglodyte and loyal henchman of Harry Hotspur is still going strong—having as much use for equations as for a sick headache, hit upon a delightfully simple plan for disposing of the mathematical bugbear. Selecting a nice clean copybook he filled one or more pages with beautifully written algebraical formulæ, sprinkled them liberally with brackets, vincula, and any other cabalistic signs that took his fancy, using red and violet ink alternately with most pleasing effect, and winding up with a weirdly impossible solution as tail-piece. As an illuminated manuscript it was great, but as a contribution to exact science unconvincing.

Now, a German professor has his faults, but he is a conscientious pedant and takes his job seriously. As for having his leg pulled, his mentality could not conceive the

possibility of such sacrilege. Never shall I forget the wild hair and general "been-up-all-night" aspect of the learned Herr Dr. as he commented on this wonderful production next morning. It was "kolossal." Needless to say, the effort was returned marked "ungenügend."

The nearest equivalent to Old Bill's performance is to be found amongst the Professors of Economics and the City pundits, who would have us believe that the supply of pickled onions depends on the output of gold in the Rand and are evidently of the same kidney as the Professors of Inconsistency and Evasion at the Colleges of Unreason in "Erewhon," who, as the learned author informs us,

"seemed to devote themselves to the avoidance of every opinion with which they were not perfectly familiar, and regarded their own brains as a sort of sanctuary to which, if an opinion had once resorted, none other was to attack it."

Neither is their arithmetic a whit better than mine; the only difference being that I know my limits and they do not. For example, it is quite clear to this little ready reckoner that 3 into 2 won't go, whereas the Professors of Economics are always trying to prove that the 3 of production will go into the 2 of currency and leave 1 over for export. Moreover, as this kind of nonsense is supposed to have a "sound moral basis," and is supported by all the disciples of Samuel Smiles, from Mr. Gradgrind to Sir Felix Schuster, who is still walking—I should say talking—of the restoration of the gold standard—the logical outcome of this unholy union of cant and currency should be the establishment of "Musical Banks," as described by the great Samuel Butler. They were wonderful buildings, "epics in stone and marble," and could give points to the more flamboyant business premises of the "big five." It is also worthy of note that the banks of Erewhon

"never departed from the safest and most approved banking principles, although in commercial panics and in times of general distress the people, as a mass, did not so much as even think of turning to these banks,"

which is exactly what happens in the less fortunate country of Great Britain, where the banking system is run on the understanding that "whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath." However, signs are not lacking that the people are beginning to tire of playing the game according to the rules of "High Finance," and are finding out with the Erewhonians that

"the money given out at these banks was not that with which people bought their bread, meat, and clothing."

Should the directors of our gold-mongers' shops be getting a trifle uneasy about the state of trade and detect signs of mistrust on the part of the general public, let them follow the example of the Musical Bank managers, who, under similar conditions,

"put fresh stained glass windows into all the banks in the country, and repaired the buildings, and enlarged the organs; the presidents, moreover, had taken to riding in omnibuses and talking nicely to people in the streets, and to remembering the ages of their children, and giving them things when they were naughty, so that all would henceforth go smoothly."

Now, all you worthy gentlemen who signed the memorandum to the Prime Minister, get your hats ironed, roll up your umbrellas nice and tight, mount a 'bus at the Bank, and see what you can do; but I would rather have your salary than your job.

## THE SUNDAY JOINT.

By G. E. FUSSELL.

It was one of those streets of stalls where every household commodity is sold, known in London as a market. A progress throng of men and women struggled along, their progress impeded by each other and by the occasional perambulators. Raucous cries urged them hither and thither in the search for bargains, but, as always, the butcher's shop was the scene of the greatest struggle and the noisiest shouts.

Round it the crowd was particularly dense, and was most mixed in its elements. Young women, apparently the wives of clerks and mechanics, jostled those indeterminate old working men who keep boarding-houses; harassed "respectable" best piece; behind them motor-lorries and buses roared and rattled over the cobbles, but they were so absorbed that they did not hear.

"Buy, buy, buy," yelled the butcher, crazily, and the dense mass surged round him. Fingers were poked into

joints here, grimy hands picked up "pieces" there, only to throw them down again, rejected. Heated faces, redder than ever with worry, made a wall of meat looking at a wall of meat.

"Buy, buy, buy," shrieked the apparently infuriated butcher. "Yes, mother. You'll 'ave that bit o' spare rib." He seized the joint, banged it on the scales, threw it into the shop. "Fifteen pence, one and fi' pence," he yelled. "Wrap up."

The woman struggled into the shop with the intention of obtaining her purchase, although that seemed to be quite impossible, and once more the butcher took up his raucous chorus of "Buy, buy."

"Yes'm," he yelled, taking another piece of meat from a purchaser and yelling through the same motions. "Twenty-one pence, two an' a penny. Wrap up."

"Come orf it, mister," protested the woman. "Twenty-one pence, one and ninepence."

The man glared at her for a second, then smiled a hurt smile.

"Alright, mother," he yelled, "ave it your own price. It's Sat'day night."

It was a late hour in the poor quarter when the shop closed, but all things have their compensations, and Master Butcher was glad that he was "taking a run down to the coast in the car on Sunday."

## OBLITERARY OPINIONS.

By WILLIAM BELL.

G. BERNARD SHAW is probably the most comprehensive mind at work in English literature to-day. His agility of expression and liveliness of style make him younger than even the post-warriors. An Irishman by birth, he has written in English numerous plays which are mostly acted in Germany. So cosmic is his outlook that he has written the French interpretation of the life of Joan of Arc, whose real significance has not been understood by her own national writers. This brilliant Irishman has so mastered the English language that he handles it as though it were a piece of elastic.

Shaw offends timid people with his studied cocksureness. Having thought all round his subject before committing a word to paper, he gives shallow thinkers the impression that he is egotistical because of his supremely confident method of exposition. If by egotism they mean that Shaw knows of his own mind and that it is not an ordinary one, then let us agree at once that he is consciously egotistical. But one must still reserve the right to believe that the holder of such an opinion is himself unconsciously egotistical in thinking so of the versatile Celt.

Shaw is the intellectual and moral giant of this age of pygmies. He stands isolated from all the crowd of celebrated nonentities who provide modern literature. But there are spots even on the sun. Shaw's blind spot lies in his devotion to the exploded doctrines of the Fabian gospel. His economics are completely out of date, for he persists in a waddling behind Webb and following Hobson's choice in a way that renders him ridiculous. He has not had time to study any economic theory later than 1900.

## THE LITERARY LADY.

She had grey hair, a grim jaw, and glasses,  
She was looking for something  
In a Carnegie library.  
Enough said.  
She gave me the creeps.

I love books.  
I would willingly die  
To save several novels from extinction  
And a modern anthology or so.  
But I do not like literature  
With an upper case L.  
It is what she was after  
With that awful look on her face.  
She was poking for facts.  
She called them "datta" on somebody or other.  
She was doing a paper for the club.  
To think  
This obscene bundle of vanities and avidities and bones  
Was once a healthy girl  
Desired of men.  
God forgive me,  
I would enjoy murdering the old woman.

From "Palms," Guadalajara, Mexico.



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- SOUTH AFRICA.—A. Stedman, Hon. Sec., South Africa Social Credit Movement, P.O. Box 37, Johannesburg.  
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