THE
NEW AGE
INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER"
A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

The outstanding economic and political symptoms of the past year will be discussed seriatim by the Press according to usage, and we need not attempt to emulate it in that task. For us the one subject for review is the progress, if any, which has been made towards rectifying the defects in our national credit and price accountancy from which all these phenomena proceed, phenomena which, truly interpreted, are seen to be merely variants of one main problem, namely the attempts of insolvent rulers to extract money out of their insolvent subjects. It is a hard saying, but the condition of a people's existence involves the continuous allocation of money to the purchase of the means of life. If it were not so, how easily national budgets might be balanced! *Might* be, we say advisedly, for in such a case one would have to suppose a people who needed nothing persisting in developing and serving an industrial system in order to produce nothing! As things are, however, the ordinary citizen is set the impossible task of expending his income in two directions at the same time. He is told by the tax collector that it is his duty to the State to finance the repayment of the debts that the State has contracted on his behalf. He is told (though not on a printed form, but in the centre of his soul) that it is his responsibility both for himself, and far more for those who depend upon him, to buy food, clothes and shelter. How is he to decide? To do his duty is to neglect his responsibility: to fulfil his responsibility is to ignore his duty. The conflict is dramatically exemplified in the Clydebank rent strike. When foxes have excavated holes, they are *their* holes; when birds have built nests, they are *their* nests; but when the son of man hath builded him a house he hath yet nowhere to lay his head. Thus—at Christmas of all times—little homes have been disintegrated and their intimate constituents strewn across a pavement without even the shelter of a cattle-stall. The officers who have been obliged to carry out the evictions hate, every man, having to earn a Christmas dinner by such means, and yet have to smart under the odium of it all, and even to depend upon the protection of the police for their personal safety. Their only consolation, as they go muttering to their own homes afterwards, is the knowledge that before they have had time to take their boots off they will hear the sound of a distant bell which will tell them that the local clans are gathering and will shortly be labouring like Trojans reinstalling the homeless families in their old homes. Yes, there they will be, men who would down tools in a moment for a halfpenny an hour on their own jobs, hauling at bedsteads and tables for hours at a time at no wage at all. And in the end Donald and Annie will again sleep in their own room; and Father Christmas, arriving breathless with his bag of toys from the Land of the Just Price, will never know how nearly he came to missing them.

* * *

But, as every little boy can tell you, one set of picture blocks can make six pictures. Here is another picture. The owners of these houses, for which no rent is being received, have come up to Whitehall for help. There is more than £500,000 involved in the rent strike, and the borough will be bankrupt if it continues. The loss of the Clydebank house owners is said to be increasing at the rate of £40,000 or £50,000 a month. In addition, there are huge arrears of rates, which total fifty per cent. of the rents outstanding. Sir John Gilmour, Secretary for Scotland, has declined to commit himself to a statement of policy. He suggests that the deputation representing the house owners should formulate concrete proposals which would enable him to avoid the difficulties of "retrospective legislation." We are not surprised at Sir John's caution, but at the same time it is a tragic situation in which the owners find themselves. They are inevitably being pushed into financial bankruptcy, and when they appeal for legislative relief they are informed in so many words that the State is in a position of political bankruptcy. If Ministers of State, lifted high above the struggle for existence, are unable to devise even a palliative for the problem, how shall those who are submerged in the fight formulate a policy? Moreover, to what end do people go to the polling booth if this is to be the result of their choice of a Government? There is only one method of approach to the inextricable confusion of rent, rate, tax, and mortgage issues which comprise this problem, and that is to recognise each and all of them as the offspring of a faulty financial technique which creates and distributes debt at a faster rate than it creates and distributes money. And there is only one way

of resolving the problem, that is to reverse this ratio of debt to money. The way to do that is to create and distribute money which shall not constitute a new "cost" (and thus an increased debt). Inflation? That can be removed by agreement directly the controllers of prices can be assured that they will make more money in the aggregate by refraining from raising prices. That such an assurance can be safely given is beyond argument to those who have comprehended the nature of credit.

* * *

A third picture. Not only tenants, landlords, local authorities, and mortgagees are in this trouble, but the banks themselves. In a recent issue of the *Financial Times* there appeared an article on our shipping industry, in which the following passage occurs:—

THE BANKERS' FLEET.

In considering new building the amount of tonnage now being worked for account of banks must be taken into consideration. It is reported in shipping circles that *seven more steamers have been taken over by a bank, and that they will be run under management. This brings the bankers' fleet up to quite respectable proportions*, and thus the matter of adding more ships to the British merchant fleet or seeking to help foreigners to acquire more vessels by means of State funds needs to be handled very carefully.

The bankers' fleet! The significance of this lies in the fact that when banks advance money on the security of shipping, the very last form of repayment they want is ships. They want their money back, and nothing else; and seeing that no other business organisation in existence has such powerful means of compelling borrowers to produce the money when wanted, one may conclude with certainty that the banks' acquisition of ships has occurred for one reason only, and that reason, that the former owners were not only unable to earn sufficient to pay back their loans over a reasonable period, but were unable to find buyers for the ships themselves at a price approaching the amount of the bankers' lien on them. We have no space to navigate all the reflections that flow from this incident. We can simply remark that the irruption of the banker into the field of industrial competition raises a delicate issue. Hitherto the banks have claimed to be as much above commerce as was the old aristocracy, and it was recognised that their being so was the final guarantee of their disinterestedness in regard to the disposition of their credit resources. But if undertakings are now going to fall into their hands, and thus put upon them the responsibility of working them in their own interests, there must be a strain imposed upon their impartiality. Besides, on general principle, it is hardly the thing for banks which monopolise the life-blood of *all* industrial activities to become invested with a special interest in the earning power of some of them. Our second remark is that unless a radical change along New Economic lines is effected, the tendency of the industrial community to get clear of the banks by yielding up their revenue-earning (!) plant will be quickened. It may occur to our industrialists that there is a close analogy between Britain's debt to America and Britons' debts to their own banking system, and that if the logic of international finance leads to the conclusion (now being emphasised by Mr. J. F. Darling and others) that it is only in goods and services that the United States can be paid, the logic of internal finance leads to the same conclusion in respect of the claims of the "Big Five." The only difference is that whereas, in the case of America, we are short of the special money she claims, namely gold, in the case of our own banks we are short of all money without distinction.

* * *

There is one outstanding feature of the past year which is full of encouragement, and that has been the slow and sure education of the public in the money question. There is no journal of any party colour but is affording generous space for articles dealing with the operations of finance. Incidentally, the meaning of "credit" has assumed a sharp outline in the eyes of the ordinary citizen, and if its real nature has been slurred over, still the information that has been broadcast concerning it and its connection with various social and industrial processes is bound to have its effect. Then, recently, the question of a gold basis for credit has come in for analysis by acute intellects, and the results published in terms of outspokenness which could not have been paralleled twelve months ago, except in our own columns. We may say in general that the idea of the vital importance of credit has found its way into public consciousness and has engendered a wish to challenge such obstacles as stand, or are said to stand, in the way of its expansion. Even in its incipient stage this wish has twice been precipitated as a political impulse. The first occasion was just before the last Baldwin Administration appealed to the country, when Sir Montague Barlow foreshadowed an issue of £200,000,000 for internal industrial development. There was, as will be recalled, a hasty denial of such a project, accompanied by a mysterious declension in the price of the £ sterling on the international exchange, and followed by a sudden programme of Protection, the "ratting" of the *Daily Mail* and the defeat of Mr. Baldwin at the poll. The second occasion was when Mr. Wheatley introduced his Housing Bill and foreshadowed the raising of a large sum of credit for that purpose. It was almost immediately afterwards that Mr. Snowden's article appeared in an American magazine—an article, it will be recalled, which was interpreted over here as an oblique attack on the financial provisions of Mr. Wheatley's Bill. However, the Bill became an Act in due course, but the Labour Government has since fallen (the *Daily Mail* leading the attack) and the administration of Mr. Wheatley's Act is now at the mercy of a successor. And further, the issue upon which Mr. MacDonald's Government fell was just as unexpected (shall we say *improvised?*) as that upon which Mr. Baldwin's fell. And we believe it would have fallen sooner but that the interests behind the Dawes Pact wanted the Labour Government to have the credit of its adoption—in case of a popular reaction against its effects later on. It is as though there is ill-luck attaching to Government interference with the bankers' statute of credit-limitations. Well, they say "the third time's lucky." Will Mr. Churchill try a gamble this year?

* * *

Then a word should be said about the Independent Labour Party. At its last Annual Convention, while it declined to inquire into the Douglas Credit Proposals, it showed itself instinctively a little more aware than ever before of what was the vital factor in any scheme of applied Socialism by appointing a special committee to inquire into the best method of *financing* the transition of private industries to public ownership. This is a step in the right direction, for however ecstatically the poet paints the promised land the engineer must sooner or later test the bridge that leads there. We suppose that the committee will present its report within a short time, and its recommendations by their very nature will healthily focuss the intelligences of the movement upon the essential question of the ways and means of emancipation. We hope the committee will unanimously come to one conclusion, namely that an advance by means of bankers' advances is an advance backwards. If it gets that far, we can then all help in the exciting pastime of looking for an alternative advance by means of alternative advances.

* * *

In the meantime our own objective remains what it has always been, to concentrate on securing the adoption of the New Economic principle in the shortest possible time. We have to recognise as a principle that the Government in power must be the first object of our attention and persuasion. There is a good deal of force in the suggestion sometimes made that a party hungry for office is more likely to "take up" a programme than a party munching the fruits of victory, especially when there are elements of attractiveness about it for the average elector. But however true that may be of programmes in general, it is not true of the Social Credit idea. We should not ourselves try to enlist support for it on the part either of the Labour or of the Liberal Party, *as such*, on the plea that either might ride into power on it; and if we did, there is no doubt that our reasoning would be smiled out in half a second by the astute general staffs of those institutions. Each would, if it were frank, argue something like this: "Yes, you say that Social Credit, properly put before the electorate, would win almost universal approbation. Well, suppose we organise a campaign; and suppose there should be overwhelming evidence that the idea has caught on. So far, very good. But how will the practical working of the scheme injure the private interests behind Conservatism? . . . Oh, it won't injure them at all, you say! So your proposition, then, amounts to this: that we are to spend our time and money to win popular approval for your scheme, with the certain prospect that as soon as we should prove its popularity, the Conservatives would take it over and put it in their prospectus—good-will and all, and, on your showing, would then remain in office for ever. No thanks. Our job is to unseat the Government—not tie it on its saddle."

* * *

The moral of this is that we must not base our propaganda among the Opposition parties on its electoral advantages. We cannot hope to win staunch and active support except from those men and women who put the desired economic achievement above the question of Party instrumentality. The sincere advocacy of the New Economic proposals presupposes a fair understanding of them, and in such an understanding all party distinctions are dissolved. The witness of the New Economic spirit is that one is not *uncomfortable* in the society of any party adherent. Has this Tory a hard face? Well, I shall get on with him because of his horse sense. Or; is this Communist going to step over decapitated corpses to set the "capitalist" cleaning out sewers? Well, I will get him to recount all the social sins which he thinks can only be remitted by the shedding of blood; and very likely down through this brainstorm of his I shall peer into the softest of soft hearts. There are virtues in everybody which are waiting to be synthesised in a new order of society—and common humanity is the commonest of them. One day last week a poor man with a sick wife was charged with the theft of a coat. The next day £65 in small sums had arrived at the police court for him—a fine gesture of derision at your moralists and cynics.

* * *

While these signs of essential *goodness* continue to spire upwards from the hearts of the community we need not falter in our confidence that their spirit will flow naturally along the channels which we are urging their rulers to cut for them. We adhere to our belief that those channels will be cut, but only under the menace of a dangerous crisis, a crisis which will break down Party barriers within the ruling class in much the same way—but to a greater extent—as happened in August, 1914. Hitherto the responsibility of the Government in power has been equal to the call of events. By what may be ascribed to pure luck no two overwhelmingly urgent issues have exactly synchronised; there has always been *time* to get a patch stuck on here before the sound of rending has been heard there. But it is the essential property of luck to be discontinuous, and the longer it holds the less it may be trusted. For this reason it is for the present Government to be on the alert not merely for actual events but for portents; and insofar as we are able by economic intuition to isolate, exhibit and interpret these portents we shall make that our supreme task. And if we err in our prophesying on the side of the evil rather than the good our justification will be that at the same time we shall be lifting aloft for all eyes to behold the symbol and the means of averting disaster. In this effort we know we shall receive (and how much we shall need it, we cannot now estimate) the wholehearted co-operation of all our readers, whose loyalty to this journal has been worthy of the majestic cause and transcendent promise of which they and we are the chosen stewards.

Question Time.

J. C. G.—May I ask two further questions, this time in regard to Part II. of the "Note"?

(1) "*All the community's money is owed to the banks. It cannot be otherwise, seeing that all money originates as a loan from the banks.*"

It is no doubt true that all the currency in circulation would not equal the total amount of credit on loan from the banks, but the banks have no power to withdraw that currency from circulation. The public can demand currency from the banks, but the banks cannot demand currency from the public. In point of fact, most of the currency in circulation is not owed to the banks; it has been "earned" as wages, salaries, and dividends ("A" payments), or as rent, or for plant, raw material, etc. ("B" payments). Comparatively few of the recipients of this currency owe anything to the banks, i.e., have received an overdraft. Other money in circulation, not owed to the banks, is (a) that for which the banks received a quid pro quo in the shape of various credit instruments, (b) that represented by bullion bought by the banks or by the Government, (c) that represented by interest on capital invested abroad. Is not this so?

None of these arguments vitiates our statement. Imagine the citizens of this country to be numbered serially from one up. Let all the "odd" people be borrowers from the banks, and the "even" people not. Then imagine the "odds" to use their borrowed money to purchase goods and services from the "evens." It is, of course, true that the banks now have no power to call upon the "evens" to repay the loans they have advanced to the "odds," but that does not alter the fact that the "odds" and "evens" together (i.e. the community) owe the money to the banks. (a) What is meant by "credit instruments"? If you mean documents, which are themselves recognised means of settling debt, all that has been involved in their acceptance by the banks against loans is merely an exchange of one form of credit for another, which, of course, does not alter the ratio of total loans to total debt. If you mean shares or bonds, then there has been an issue of bank credit against security. (b) The "purchase" of bullion by banks is not a purchase in the ordinary sense; it is, again, merely an exchange of one form of credit for another. Government purchases of gold do not enter into the question any more than would our buying a gold watch chain. (c) Foreign money does not itself enter or circulate within our credit system; and even if it did, it would be money owed to a foreign bank by a borrower in the country in question. The whole world's money is a debt to the world credit system.

(2) *The writer's concluding illustration is as follows: All money having been withdrawn from circulation, let the banks select as sole borrower the owner of two stores—a baker's shop and a flour warehouse. He borrows £100 and transfers it to his shop, this being the only money in circulation. He pays out £50 in wages to his shop employees and receives it back for bread sold, and liquidates half his debt to the bank. The other £50 he pays out to his warehouse employees, but (asks the writer) how is he to make them buy bread with it so as to get it back and liquidate the other half of his debt to the bank? Well, how did he make his shop employees buy bread?*

He made the shop employees buy bread by paying them wages for turning flour into bread. (We presume you do not place emphasis on the word "made.") You can assume him to make his warehouse employees buy bread, but they can only get the money to do so by performing some service first; and for them to do that there must be a transfer of some material into the warehouse from somewhere else for them to work on, which, of course would involve the proprietor paying out money in addition to wages—the thing he wanted to avoid.

[Further questions will be answered next week.]

American Correspondence.

By C. H. Douglas.

There is always the possibility of two explanations of the present social and economic chaos. One is that, like Topsy, it just growed. The other is the "Plot" theory.

While all my own sympathies are towards the first of these two explanations, there does occur, from time to time, some incident which strains it perceptibly. The following correspondence (bearing in mind the very large amount of gratuitous advertisement that the New Economics has received in America) seems to be a case in point.

Lougheed Building, Calgary,
August 9th, 1922.

Major C. H. Douglas, 8, Fig Tree Court, Temple, E.C.4, London, England.

Dear Sir,

In view of the growing interest in the subject of credit among the farmers and others in Western Canada, I think it unfortunate that your books on the subject of credit reform are not being handled by booksellers in this country.

If the books are to be sold in America, I think it is very important that the prices should be given in dollars rather than in English currency.

Yours sincerely,

Just about this time I was informed by a visitor from Chicago that a number of orders had been placed with Chicago booksellers for copies of "Economic Democracy," but in every case it had been impossible to obtain it. A number of letters were also received, of which the following is an example.

University of California, Department of Economics,
April 11th, 1922.

Major C. H. Douglas, 38, Cursitor Street, E.C., London, England.

Dear Sir,

I am greatly interested in your plan and should like such literature on the subject as you can send me.

If this request implies any expenditure I shall be very glad to pay the costs.

Faithfully yours,

In 1921, "Credit Power and Democracy," of which the first edition had already sold out in England, was offered to practically every publisher in America, together with the figures of sale. Not one of them would look at it.

I have this week received the following letters (my italics):

United States Senate, Committee on Transportation and Sale of Meat Products, Washington, D.C.,
December 1st, 1924.

Major C. H. Douglas, Temple, E.C.4.

Dear Sir,

. . . You have such a following amongst the ignorant common herd of financial students . . .

I do not see why you require more evidence . . . to induce you in the interest of humanity to try to repair the injury you have occasioned by teaching a plausible, but unworkable, economic cure for existing evils.

Yours faithfully.

* * *

Harcourt, Brace and Company,
383, Madison-Avenue,
New York,
December 3rd, 1924.

To .....

Dear Sir,

We have your enquiry of November 21st in regard to the sales of "Economic Democracy," by Major C. H. Douglas. You have received no reports of sales from us for the reason that the work is out of print. *We destroyed the plates in* November, 1921, *and at the same time destroyed the remainder of the stock.* The sales of the work had practically ceased before that time.

Faithfully yours,

HARCOURT, BRACE AND CO.

Finally, as an amusing instance tending to support the first theory, the following letter is of interest.

10, Adelphi-Terrace,
W.C.2.

To .....

Oakland, California, U.S.A.

Dear Sir,

I do not recommend Major Douglas's scheme. It seems to me that, like most practical business men, he imagines that credit is a substance and that it can be eaten and drunk, worn, and built into houses. The truth is that when a bank gives you credit what it really gives you is the solid commodities represented by the current balances and deposits of its clients. If a bank has a thousand clients, each of whom makes it a practice never to allow his current balance to fall below, say, a hundred dollars, then that bank has a hundred thousand dollars to play with, and it lends these goods to men to trade with. Of course, the profit to the banker is enormous if he is a good judge of a safe borrower. The moral is that banking should be naturalised.* No scheme that proceeds on the illusion that what a banker lends is a sort of hot air called credit has the slightest chance of success.

Faithfully,
(Signed) G. BERNARD SHAW.

[*Error (!) in original.]

A Prophet from Holland.

I.

By Arnold Eiloart.

Frederik van Eeden has been acclaimed in Germany as a poetic genius, who by his mastery of tenderness and of terror is akin at once to Hans Andersen and to Dante.

The present work, *The Happy World*,* gives another aspect of his many-sided nature. Its inspiration is that passion for freedom which is the motive power of the Social Credit movement. It sets forth a philosophy balanced and humane, simple and profound, as that of Edward Carpenter, in a style now glowing with the moral fervour of a Ruskin, and again cool and clear in the white light of science as if another Huxley spoke.

The author maintains that only from a true philosophy of life can grow the power that shall free the race and lead to the Happy World of the future; not, indeed, that we must wait till every one is thus enlightened, but the leaders must realise the fundamental truths of existence.

Van Eeden's own path to truth was the clearer because from the first he was brought up as a free-thinker; not merely to see the false in one creed, but to see the true in all; not merely to be free from bondage to one religion, but to be free of all religions:—

> Every morning I saw my father reading books like the Vedas, the Bhagavad Gita, Kant or Plato. And, of course, there was no question of any compulsion or one-sided influence on my views.
>
> At fifteen, influenced by the writings of Strauss, Heine and Multatuli, I was a full-blooded free-thinker, atheist, and materialist. . . But the very freedom to which I had been accustomed saved me . . . I simply tried to hold fast to the truth. And as soon as my growing nature and my more practiced reason began to feel the materialist dogmas as fetters, I broke them and found my God.

Very characteristic of the man's freedom and balance was the way in which he came to use the word "God."

> There was a time when, although I had long since outgrown materialism, I did not venture to utter the name, God. I had ridiculed the offensive misuse of this name. . . . But then I had to think of another name that I could use, and I spoke of the Great Light.
>
> I have come to see that this was petty, and, to use the right word, provincial.

For, he argues, in all ages and in all lands there has been one nation of the wise and good. If I belong to their nation I must use their language, not a dialect of my own:—

> Shall I then, moving among these, the great and the good, seek out like a little conceited child some other name for that which they all felt and named?
>
> They knew God and gave him names according to their language. They spoke of Harmarkis, of Ammon-Ra, of Brahma, of Tao, of Zeus, of Deus—and our word for this is God. . . .
>
> When I recognised that the ridiculous and annoying misuse of this name by the undeveloped childish mass of mankind was a constant phenomenon, but that the wise and great, the real race of man in its full development, had always used this name consciously and with dignity, I was ashamed that I had not yet found courage to follow the usage of the noble who stand so far above me.

Accepted in this way, the name of the Deity, which fetters the thought of so many men, seemed to liberate van Eeden's. With him it expresses at once truth and his enthusiasm for truth. And he holds that no one who lacks this enthusiasm can lead the way to freedom. For

> the greatest possible freedom results only from a communal submission to the highest possible authority, that is the authority of truth, God's authority.

Beside this religious aspect of freedom may be set his doctrine of social equipoise, which gives a scientfic aspect.

> A human being imbued with natural feelings must perceive that the smooth progress of the life of the community depends upon an equipoise of all the individual members, as symmetrical, *i.e.*, as just, as possible. There must be no individuals who compel the stream into this course or that. The stream must flow in the direction determined by the free action of the millions of individual units.
>
> Hence the idea of Right, the right direction, which holds for all, and is determined by all in common. Hence the demand for freedom, for the unrestricted development and expression of each unit, hence the regard for *personality*, for the individual, subject neither to violence from others, nor to any limitations imposed by others. Hence the dread of violations of conscience, the dread of bigotry, of mental domination or suggestion.

This idea of a true social equilibrium as the permanent state, the just state, the happy state for all and for each, recurs throughout the book:—

> The race *desires* this state and will attain it with the same indubitable certainty with which every animal- or plant-species attains that end-form which is the most advantageous for it.

Because it lacked this basis the art of Greece flourished, at its greatest, for only a few hundred years, whereas Egyptian art endured, with minor fluctuations, for thousands of years. For the Greek commonwealth was an empty show lacking the true bond of social unity. There were slaves to do the heavy work, there was personal enrichment at the cost of the community, and the simplicity of personal life was superseded by extravagance and dissipation. So that the equilibrium of the community as a whole became ever more unstable.

The Egyptian, on the other hand, *who did not use money*, always had enough for his own simple wants, and had only to enrich the State, the Prince. For the people were perhaps the most religious in the world, and the palace, like the temple, was a religious edifice. (And we may add that the absence of money confined the Prince's demands within limits, which, huge as they were, were moderate compared with those of modern finance.)

It is, in short, the combination of communal prosperity with individual simplicity which gives the best conditions for enduring artistic eminence as well as for the happy world of the future.

The main flood of van Eeden's philosophy is fed by two great streams, one of history, as we have just seen, the other of natural history, chiefly biology, whereof his parable of the field of corn may be quoted as a typical example:—

> The testimony of the least of human beings has value for all. . . . For it is with the social bond as with a cornfield when wind and rain bend the corn-stalks this way and that, and cast them down. To find their right direction we must not regard the highest and strongest ears. But every new shoot, be it weak or strong, shows afresh the right direction, because it is in the nature of every species to grow towards the light.
>
> And here we may find the explanation of the little understood Beatitude of the poor in spirit, and of the saying of Jesus that we must become as little children in order to behold the Kingdom of Heaven. The poor in spirit and the children, these were the little hidden stalks and the young shoots, not yet stirred by the wind of the times, the only ones by which we could recognise what was right and whither was the tendency of human nature.
>
> Here, too, one may see how, in a free society such as we desire, every individual has to bear himself. In order to keep a field of cornstalks upright, one would have to bind them together in sheaves, unless every stalk was firmly rooted and independent. That is to say that there is no middle way between slavery with the bond of authority, and independent individuals nourishing themselves from their own roots, and not supporting themselves on one another.
>
> Every stalk stands free, and yet they all mutually support each other, for without its neighbours the single stalk would soon be broken. Together they resist even the most violent storms.

But perhaps the most effective use of this analogy is the following:—

> Frequently the question is raised, what should be our rule of conduct: egoism or altruism, selfishness or love of the community?
>
> Neither, my friends.
>
> The cornstalk does not grow inwards, neither does it grow towards its neighbours, but it grows towards the light. . . . The motive is the love of God.

On the question of money van Eeden has some striking things to say. In reading them it must be remembered that he wrote before the introduction of the New Economics:—

> Aristocracy has become plutocracy, the power of nobility has become the power of the purse—the most frightful and pernicious form of power that has ever existed. The money-power is more repulsive and more shameful than the power of the fist, because it is more cowardly and more fraudulent.

Again:—

> If I offer a rich gentleman a few groschens, he is offended, angry, will not accept them. Why? . . . It is an atavistic survival of the idea that money implies merit, and that, therefore, it is a disgrace to possess no money. . . . . Quite right if he really *deserved* his money . . . . whether through noble qualities or through useful work. But unfortunately *getting* money is a very different thing from *deserving* money.

What is proved by such incidents is that between this rich man and the author there is, as regards their professed sense of right, no difference:—

> He too wishes to live honestly by his own merit and his own power acquired in virtue of his noble qualities or of his useful work. He does not want to be maintained by others, he does not want to accept presents, he does not want to oppress his fellow-men for his own advantage.
>
> And that he proceeds nevertheless complacently to sin against his own moral code, that he in fact prolongs his existence in a way more contemptible than that of a mediaeval knight or corsair, this is possible only through an almost incredible self-deception, which is supported moreover by mass-suggestion and by corrupt customs and laws.

It is not that the rich man questions that Right is more than Might. He recognises that to the full, but he tells himself and others that his money-might *is* a right. He does not see that this means that the gross and superficial might of fraud and violence is to triumph over the real and deep-seated might of merit:—

> And yet between right and might there is on closer examination no difference. Here, too, the opposites meet. Love is at once the highest Might and the highest

* "Die freudige Welt." By Frederik van Eeden. German version by Else Otten. (Schuster and Loeffler, Berlin and Leipzig, 1907.) Pp. 322. 8vo.

Right. It is the false might of fraud and violence which even to the present day we see triumph over love. But we know that this cannot last.

We know, too, that every day the evil lasts it becomes more difficult to remedy: —

We must not content ourselves with a gradual development, with a slow evolution and the maintenance of the existing order. Not for one moment must we forget that a violent degeneration is becoming ever more rampant, that it has penetrated in the deepest and most fundamental directions, that our race is in a mighty and a dangerous crisis, in a life and death conflict, a battle between disease and health, and that up to now there is no order which must not be changed as rapidly and energetically as possible.

And of this disease the chief symptom is this:—

At present it is the chief occupation of every human being to acquire as his personal property that which was communal property and should remain so. This is done by every one, high and low, poor and rich. It is a crime against the natural feeling which stirs in every one of us.

On the other hand:—

Every one likes to have something he can call his own. His own fireside, his own property. Why should it be taken from him so long as it injures no one? After all, such a right of possession is quite compatible with complete respect for the communal property. We are not such persons as the first disciples of Jesus, and "to have all things in common" is an idea which in our time seems unattainable and undesirable.

I have no space to discuss in detail the author's remedies, but it may be said that the first principle which he would impress on the worker is: "Work no longer for those who do not work, but for one another, for the workers."

First of all it is necessary that those who see this and wish to bring it about should unite. For communal production and communal possession there must of necessity be a community; and it must be a community of those who all feel this necessity, who are all opposed to parasitism.

The future economic grouping will no longer have to do with nationality, just as little as in countries of several languages, like Switzerland and Belgium, it has to do with language.

In other words, there must be an international communal society.

Towards Leisure.

IV.

By F. H. A.

"SCIENCE AND LABOUR."*—II.

The general dubiety with which scientific advance is regarded is evidenced by the frequency with which one hears the remark that it has constructed a Frankenstein. Even in the discussions at this conference one can easily detect an uneasiness; a halting confidence; a suspension of judgment as to the results of the work already brought to fruition. Industry is being whirled along in a flood of co-operative scientific endeavour which is beyond the control of the scientists and industrialists who seek to turn its achievements to account. Mr. Hugo Hirst, of the General Electric Company, points out that the research laboratory is now an essential department of the modern industrial concern; that there is no alternative to forcing scientific development other than eclipse; that even though the provision of research facilities is costly, yet such prizes as are won are the only props against failure. He notes that the effect on labour as the basis of subsistence is serious, but copious clouds of language are always at hand.

"Who would exchange the post of an engineer on a modern Atlantic liner for that of a galley slave chained to the oar of a Roman trireme? . . . By bringing machinery to the help of almost every operation, an opportunity is given to the worker not only to develop his muscles, but also to be in touch with the technical and scientific principles which control his operations."

Sir Oliver Lodge is conscious that the chief problem before science is that of labour. It is rather unfortunate—"Human beings are not always reasonable—they may get misled by agitators"—but science promises so much, means so much, that doubtless the immediate difficulties will be surmounted by good sense. "The interest of the worker should be kept in mind, for after all, what are we working for but the improvement of human life." Agreed! but is the human right to life always to be conditioned by human labour? Sir Oliver concludes that "it is quite unlikely that fifty years will elapse before the energy locked up in the atoms of matter and the ether of space is tapped and applied to practical purposes." Is that a threat or a promise to human life?

Major Church remarks that "scientific discoveries applied all over the field of industry have enabled each person on an average to be about fifty times as productive as one person living one hundred years ago." Unfortunately, in another speech, he is loth to let his scientific perception diminish his excessive enthusiasm for Labourism. "Civilisation exists for the exploitation of the natural resources of the world . . . so that the things which are made by the people shall be used by the people who make them." What! are the human requirements of food, clothing, and shelter, also fifty times greater than one hundred years ago; or can we also feed kilowatt-hours on loaves of bread?

Sir Daniel Hall declares "you cannot turn to any part of the world where agricultural produce is being turned out, and find farmers in a flourishing condition." He recounts the experiments of Lawes, the effect of testing out the Mendelian hypothesis by Bateson and the successes of Biffen, all of which have enabled the yield per acre of agricultural land to be increased by 50 per cent. since the year 1830. But, he adds:

"Actually you find from the 'eighties down to the present day there has been no increase in yield from our land, although even greater amounts of fertilisers have been at our disposal, simply because there has been an economic factor at work, the opening up of new countries, which has caused the production of heavy crops to be less remunerative than a more extensive cheap production of comparatively light crops. There has not been the amount of pay, as it were, attached to intensive production that would justify it, so that continued increase in the yields per acre due to fertilisers has been limited by the economic factor."

The same economic factor, indeed, which has limited the claim of human life on the potential product per acre!

Sir Hugh Bell suspends judgment on the problem.

"I have many a time to say to my workpeople, 'I am going to try a new experiment. I am not going to tell you what it is because I know if I did tell you you would endeavour to thwart it. But I am in full sympathy with you for this reason—that all improvements in the way of economic production mean a reduction in the number of men employed for a particular job. . . . That is satisfactory from my point of view, but it is not satisfactory from the point of view of Tom, Dick, or Harry, who think that if I introduce this improvement their employment will disappear.' Labour asks for sympathetic consideration of the workers' point of view. There it is in all its futility—sympathy for a point of view which never doubts that work alone can establish a claim to life. The whole of Nature is urging man to use its abundant powers and begin to live. Only Mr. Tawney doubts the facts. 'The age when Nature was pouring wealth into our lap has vanished.'"

That explains many of his contributions to the Conservative philosophy of Labourism!

Lord Ashfield breaks boldly through this play of tip and run, in a speech which deserves quoting in full."

"My subject is Labour and Science in Production. If the fundamental question is stated plainly, can there be any discussion at all that work should be carried out as efficiently as possible, and with the least expenditure of human energy?"

He recalls the development of the L.G.O.C.

"In 1904 the two-horse vehicle met the 20-horse power vehicle (you will notice how different is the measure) in deadly rivalry. In 1910 the transition came, horses speedily disappeared and with them the men who were unable to keep pace."

The story is one of alternate displacement of labour and its reabsorption by expansion of the service.

"Washing machines were installed at the garages, . . . these increased the output of each employee and resulted in the dismissal of a large number of people. . . . Then a machine was installed for doing a particular job, which, with four men in charge, performed in twenty minutes what previously had taken one man two days to do. The overhaul of an engine was reduced from 85 hours to 29 hours. This led to an expansion of the fleet and almost the same number of men as were dispensed with on the engineering side were reabsorbed. But you will realise that the men engaged were not the same persons as those discharged. . . . While there can be no question that the adoption of the most scientific and skilful means of executing work must be beneficial, it does not follow that the new benefits can be distributed over the old workers."

Lord Ashfield leans heavily—too heavily indeed—on the idea of mutual adjustment of labour displacement and reabsorption.

"We can see now that the machine in all its manifestations was a wonderful contribution of science to industry, and the reward of industry was the enormous expansion of its markets for the cheapened products."

We know, however, that there is no such automatic balance; that there is no law connecting effort with reward; that the "rewards" of industry, though potentially rich, are in fact failing to be an inducement. Both the "rewarders" (the public) and the "to-be-rewarded" are foiled in their wishes by the extraneous control of the certificates for registering the service. Lord Ashfield broadly hints at such:

"I could wish that the development of the technique of trade and commerce had kept an equal pace with the technique of industry, for of all the dislocations and maladjustments that now trouble us this is the prime cause. The structure of credit upon which the trade and commerce of the world is carried on is a very delicate affair. No one quite understands the reasons which govern its growth and shrinkage; no one quite understands the ways by which it reacts in expanding and contracting the volume of manufacture and, with it, the amount of unemployment. We cannot yet regulate it as we should like. We cannot yet control it as we ought. If science could discover a curative treatment for the economic ills that beset us, how many of the misfortunes of to-day could be avoided! It is more science and still more science that we need."

We trust this book will receive the attention it deserves from Labour. The mistake of Labourism could not have clearer statement. Science is unquestionably driving us willy-nilly away from the Work State to the Leisure State, and we are rightful inheritors of the wider individual freedom which comes from the increased ease with which human life can be won from Nature. On the other hand, the opinion seems to be confirmed that "business" is more likely to extricate civilisation from anti-humanism. Except for some unorthodox passages in the speeches of Major Church, there was no indication of a grasp of the situation; no independence of thought, no purpose other than doing a good turn for the Party, manifest in any of the speeches of the Labour representatives. It was Lord Ashfield, the capitalist monopolist, who stated the issue plainly.

"In conclusion I want to return to the subject of leisure. That is the gift of the machine. We have reached the eight hours' day, the forty-four hours' week. Our working hours are ceasing to be the greater part of our life and the all-absorbing. Once we served where the machine now serves and we are become free. . . The answer to the difficulties of politics and statesmanship, as well as those of industry, can only be won through scientific method, scientific analysis, scientific pursuit."

How far Labour is from this realistic conception will be gathered from the pronouncement of Mr. Sidney Webb that "*law* is the mother of freedom." Just exactly what it is not.

Reality in Economics.

I.

By V. A. Demant, B.Litt., B.Sc.

The New Economics might well be termed "Economic Realism," for its essential challenge to orthodox economics is that the latter bases its whole structure upon a confusion between economic realities and economic symbols. The distinction is fundamental, and has been emphasised by Major Douglas: "You are carrying on a trade in tickets, using the tickets themselves as the means of trade; and it is impossible for that reason alone, if for no other reason, that there can be any relation between the effective demands of the people and the productive capacity of the productive system." (Canada's Bankers, etc., p. 96f.) If I do a piece of work and spend my earnings on a railway journey, there enter into the process only two economic realities, my work (production) and the railway journey (consumption). These two are related by two economic symbols, my earnings and the railway ticket. I am not concerned ultimately with the figure values of either of these symbols; what does concern me is the distance I can travel as the reward of so much labour; it no more concerns me if I receive twice as much for my work and pay twice as much for my ticket, than it would if I had to carry two tickets instead of one in my waistcoat pocket. That is why from the standpoint of Economic Realism a standard of value and stabilisation of currency are meaningless. Our case against present-day Economics is that it allows the inherently natural relation that should obtain between two economic realities, Production and Consumption, to be distorted and broken by the elevation of a mere economic symbol, money, into a reality, the subject of a system with independent "laws" to which all other economic processes must be subservient.

An example of this confusion is to be found in the current use of the expression: "The Law of Supply and Demand," which, as a heritage from the last century, when, it was said, you could make a parrot into a good economist by teaching it to repeat the words "Supply and Demand," is given and accepted as an explanation of the level of prices. The confusion is not confined to the unreflecting public, for Henry Clay, e.g., in his "Economics for the General Reader," after emphasising that market values are expressed in prices, proceeds to say that value (i.e., market value price) depends on supply and demand, meaning, of course, the supply and demand of commodities (p. 292). In his chapter on prices and foreign exchanges, however, he enunciates the ordinary quantity theory that the level of prices depends upon the supply and demand *of money*. "The level of prices *is* the value of money. . . . The value of money depends, like the value of everything else, on the relation between the supply of it and the demand for it" (p. 215). It is in the confusion between these two entirely different meanings of "supply and demand," which appear to exist simultaneously in the minds of economists, that is to be found the difficulty of persuading a supine public that the root of their deprivations lies in a maladministration of Finance. The public generally believes that the "law" of supply and demand in commodities is at work, and it is being continually told so, and therefore it holds that the amount of goods forthcoming is all that could be expected; hence the class war over the relative shares in the supply. The New Economics deny that "supply and demand" is at work in regard to commodities, and maintains that it ought to be, and points out that as potential supply is far in excess of effective demand, the "law" in its natural course would raise the standard of living for everybody by lowering prices; the cause of the perversion is that the "law" is at work in regard to money, just where it ought not to be, because money is only an economic symbol. We are

* "Science and Labour." (Ernest Benn, Ltd. London. 6s. net.)

faced with the most formidable kind of psychological resistance in that we are offering the people of the world something which they believe they have already got—namely, an amount of real wealth determined by supply and demand. However much they may be dissatisfied with its distribution, the amount of real wealth available is for them represented by the figure values of the available financial symbols. The New Economics demonstrate that financial policy *mis*represents the real economic situation by causing the "law" of supply and demand to be applied to the financial symbol money instead of to economic realities, goods and services.

The Douglas price-regulation formula:—

$$\text{Price} = \frac{\text{Cost} \times \text{Cost of total Consumption.}}{\text{Value of total Production.}}$$

is not, as might appear at first sight, a highly artificial device, but is the natural expression, in mathematical form, of the transfer of "supply and demand" from the realm of finance to "supply and demand" in the realm of goods. As the value of the financial unit enters into every factor of the fraction the result is not affected by it; it is purely a symbol by which we can express the relation between demand (Consumption) and supply (Production).

The present economic price formula is:—

$$\text{Average Price} = \frac{\text{Effective Demand.}}{\text{Goods in Demand.}}$$

(Control and Distribution of Production, p. 18.)

Here the factor of money value enters only in the numerator of the fraction (effective = backed by money), and the result is therefore absolutely determined by that value. That is to say, the amount of goods received per individual depends on the value of money (which, in turn, depends inversely on the supply of it), and not on the supply of goods.

II.

How has it come about that this "law" of supply and demand is still accepted as applying to the symbol money, in spite of a general sense that it naturally applies to economic realities, goods and services, and in spite of a fairly general knowledge that the greater part of the world's payments are made in a medium, credit, which is not a commodity as regards its origin?

The social psychologist might, no doubt, regard this superstition as a psychological survival from a long period of civilised history when the media of exchange were themselves commodities, i.e., had a value apart from their exchange properties, like cowrie shells and gold which had a magical value as "givers of life," or like the slabs of compressed tea in use as currency in Asia and twisted ingots of iron in Africa. The more one realises, as historical research is establishing with greater clearness every day, the historical unity of the various elements in the civilisations of the world, the more one might be inclined to accept the psychological explanation of the fiction of money as a commodity. Its general acceptance would, moreover, be strengthened by the deliberate and considered endeavours to maintain it in the public mind, such as, e.g., the whole series of devices to persuade the uninitiated that the war loan was subscribed out of savings, the sudden withdrawal of gold from circulation because "it was wanted," and the recent melodramatic references to bars of gold being carried or about to be carried in ordinary closed vans from the vaults in the Bank of England to temporary premises while that august institution is rebuilding over the space of two years.

But in spite of possible psychological survivals and official encouragements deliberately planned to sustain them, it appears from discussions and objections to the New Economic thesis, that the 'Idée fixe' of money as a commodity is maintained in the public mind by an unconscious devotion not so much to the theory itself, as to the social implications of it; and it is in these implications that we must seek the psychological springs of resistance to our propaganda.

The most important of these is the scarcity theory. It must be remembered that Civilisation had a definite historical beginning, and this was marked, among other things, by the inception of wealth-producing as distinct from mere food-gathering. For reasons only indirectly and incidentally connected with the development of food-producing, its early history was accompanied by a sustained campaign to ransack the available parts of the earth for gold and other precious substances. These two processes were essentially connected in the minds of the people who originated the civilisations of Egypt, India, Central America, etc., the elements of which from Egypt permeated the Mediterranean and gave their character to all the culture centres of Europe and have had a marked influence on the mentality of civilised man. The human mind is essentially a practical instrument whose structure is mainly determined by the urgency of the problems of life. Thus the mind of civilised man is the result of a definite historical process which has been, in its economic aspect, a struggle with the *problem of Production*. Scarcity has been the economic enemy. Owing to philosophical and religious conceptions in the Ancient World, the first and most striking steps in the overcoming of this enemy were accompanied by a growing reverence and demand for precious substances, which owing to this purely fortuitous or historical connection, soon became regarded as most efficient media of exchange. Thus mankind's *Production Problem* and the *Commodity view* of money have evolved simultaneously and been closely interconnected for historical reasons only. It is, however, one of the commonest logical fallacies which beset the human mind to regard facts which have been historically connected, as being logically or essentially connected.

So it is probable that the hold which the *Commodity Theory of Money* has upon the mind of modern man is due to the fact that it has historically been part of his mental equipment almost throughout the whole period of Civilisation in which the main economic problem has been *Production*. That the fear of scarcity is deep rooted and instinctive rather than rational, is clearly seen in the insistent cry for more production on the part of responsible people who rationally know, and tell us in the same breath, that the problem is to get the results of production sold. The intrinsic value, for other purposes, of the historic media of exchange, which we have seen is incidental, has, owing to the same logical fallacy, been similarly considered to be of their essence as valid exchange symbols. This illusion has hitherto remained undisturbed largely because the commodity view did not interfere materially with distribution so long as the difficulties of production and the obstacles to acquiring the media of exchange were overcome at approximately the same rate. The complete bewilderment of individual consumers to-day and their growing distrust of Society as a whole, is, we believe, due to the fact that when the invention of the steam engine and the progress of science solved the *Problem of Production* the *Currency Problem* was virtually shelved by means of the device of loan credit, an entire departure from the Commodity theory as regards the supply of money, while its control by Finance is maintained by group suggestion that, as regards distribution, it is still subject to the same laws as the old media of exchange.

Solovyof's "Justification of the Good."

II.

By Philippe Mairet.

It is in *shame* that Solovyof finds the real root of morality; it proceeds from the essential and distinct power of human or self-conscious being, to see itself as if it were another. Shame proves more conclusively than anything else that there is a discontinuity between organism and human consciousness. Why has man an inherent shame of all his organic functions, and particularly of that of sex? How comes it that Being, which has pushed its steady way through the whole gamut of organic evolution to attain its highest expression in human self-consciousness, begins at that very point to reject the way by which it has arrived. "Why," asks Sterne, "when we go about to make a man, do we put out the candle?"

This primordial quarrel of consciousness with its own origin and nature is a fact no one can deny; nor does any hypothesis fit the facts but this—that the purpose for which consciousness was developed was not an organic purpose, but something final—an end in itself. And Solovyof affirms that this is the case; that the purpose of Nature is already (albeit only potentially) realised in man himself. Man is able to reunite himself with the primordial power which created him *through* the organic process, and so to become the flower and fulfilment of it; his function is not to continue that process, but to consummate it.

There is no escape but to regard the propagation of his kind as a secondary function of man, and, in the highest relation, a real retrogression, the end reverting to the means. He ought to flower to the fullest in his own higher individuality. To refuse this, his only possible cosmic function, and to revert to the biological process of life, even in order to produce new human beings, would be an error; but in fact this reversion takes place for an even more mistaken motive: man's lower egoism, fearing the ecstasy of the fulfilment of his essential nature as a consciousness-centre of the universe, falls back upon the lower, unconscious and untransmutable ecstasy of mere organic process, because that is the only substitute offered by nature.

This may be called an ascetic doctrine; and truly, so far as Solovyof, in common with all religious thinkers, takes the world and organic life to be inferior, in the sense that they are so much material for the spirit that dwells in consciousness. Yet the material, and the unconscious, are no less important, for they are precisely what the spirit has to bring into consciousness. The task of perfect humanity is by no means the suppression of the Unconscious, but total *ex*pression of its content upon the plane of consciousness. In consequence sex not only remains, it is even asserted—as marriage—and the exaltation of lover's love with its sense of great significance and exaltation, is also understood. Woman, as the highest possible expression of material nature and its unconscious wisdom, has still to be perfectly espoused by man. But the perfect and ultimate union will be no ordinary "marrying and giving in marriage," no means to another physical generation. It will be more like an explosion of humanity, both sexes equally, into that "pleroma" and consummation of consciousness of which art, music, and the highest knowledge are now sometimes revealed as indications. Until then, however—until man realises in consciousness, all that woman knows in her unconsciousness, making it hers also in reality, children will continue to be born—as they ought to be—to achieve the work their fathers have failed to accomplish.

I submit that this doctrine is the only one which at the same time maintains uncompromised the categorical imperative of man's superhuman valuation of sex (clearly revealed in his shame), and also upholds all true idealism which is possible concerning love, marriage, and children.

Asceticism is recognised by Solovyof in its only legitimate sense—as a necessary factor in moral progress, when man, for clear and definite reasons, limits or denies the demands of his animal nature. The material world, including man's own organism, may actually overcome and enslave him. This is abnormal. Or he may struggle with it, externally and internally; and this is, in a sense, normal and healthy in human affairs. But there is the third possibility, that man may overcome material nature, both his own body and its environment, ruling them with free will and intelligence. This is ideal.

Now, Solovyof is the most truly orthodox of religious thinkers in this, that he does not limit this third possibility to subjective perfection. He does not say, like too many mystics, that it is impossible to destroy evil anywhere except within oneself. A Christian, and not a Buddhist, he recognises the struggle with external evils, and even the contest with material nature for the livelihood of the race, as also a holy warfare.

The process of human history is a definite progress, communistically, not individually. Not that there are better individuals now, in the essential sense, than there were two or three thousand years ago; but "the number of ethical demands commonly fulfilled is greater now than formerly"—a statement which serious students of history are unlikely to dispute. And man is ethically bound to contribute to this increase of good. The subjective realisation of perfection, through inward struggle, is not more essential than the progressive expression of the Good in the communal life of men; through humane law, through just economic institutions and through science.

Thus Solovyof affirms that war may be a moral duty, in this agreeing rather with the Bhagavad-Gita than with either Buddhism or "quietist" forms of Christianity. Once humanity is conceived as an integral whole, it becomes a moral duty, which none can gainsay, to prevent the stronger sections of it from tyrannising, against justice, over the weaker; nor is it right to plead that forgiveness or prayer will turn the wicked from his ways, when innocence is in urgent danger of material injury and we have material means to prevent it. The chivalry of Christianity reappears in Solovyof, and the world is in no danger from such militarism; though I believe that, upon this point, Solovyof displays a few curious weaknesses of argument.

That humanity is one organic whole, that there is a human purpose visible in the historical process, and an aim which is also an end, in the human struggle—these are the ideas of value, of priceless importance, in Solovyof's work. It is necessary to present these more fully, and also to indicate his conception of leadership and spiritual organisation, to give any really useful account of what is already translated into English. But it may certainly be affirmed that, if Europe and the white race of mankind is ever to have a philosophy and conception of its own part in life which will enable it to live out its own nature and express its gifts, that philosophy will coincide more nearly with Solovyof's than any other so far given to us.

AGAINST MARTIN.

By D. R. Guttery.

"Ah! praise no more to me your clever men,"
Said Martin, tossing high his haughty head;
"'Tis none but they have ruined France." . . . "Why then
Do you not try to save it?" Thomas said.

—*After* ALBERIC DEVILLE.

The Theatre.

By H. R. Barbor.

MR. COWARD WHIRLS ROUND.

We are all vorticists nowadays. At least we were all vorticists until, a few years ago, there arose a new cult that revered not Wyndham Lewis. "After vorticism, vifticism," as the Philistine remarked pungently.

Vorticism being then dead, it is fit that this particular conflux of ideas should have the burial service read over it in the playhouse—the place where ideas are never known till they are mummified. Not that the distinction of canonising it theatrically falls to Mr. Coward, although he has called his play "The Vortex." Shaw it was who set his She-Ancient in *Back to Methuselah*, longing to be delivered from the body of this death and to merge into the vortex of pure abstract intelligence.

Mr. Coward's vortical quests are of a very different kind. He is not concerned about intelligence. Affection is the be-all and the end-all of his philosophy, one gathers.

Young musician—all high-class jazz and high-brow Scriabin—returns home from Paris, engaged to shingled young woman. Fiancée's modernity is of the well-mannered, not 1917-Club brand. Modern girls, like girls of all times, easily slip from new back to first lover. But modern girls, unlike girls of former generations (since savagery at any rate) make no bones about publicity in respect of their amours. So the young musician is jilted by his Jill, who annexes the former partner of her joys now sharing joys with young musician's mother. The mother's is apparently the title-part. She is the "vortex." ("I don't seem to remember the precise definition of 'vortex,'" said a serious-minded man in the foyer after act one. "Female of maëlstrom," murmured the perplexed critic sympathetically.) The young musician talks about the vortex in the last act, when he forces his mother to confess.

The relations between mother and child have massed in the minds of all sorts of people since psycho-analysis became the jargon of popular novelists, and it is not surprising that a pushing young man, with a promising career in the theatre catering for suburbia, should jump to the possibilities of that Freudian battering-ram, the Œdipus-complex. The play for this, and no other, reason has been compared by some critics with "Hamlet." True there is a similarity in that Mr. Coward takes over the Shakespearean device of sending his youthful neurotic hero to his mother's bedroom there to exhibit his phobia against his mother's behaviour. But Shakespeare never made the jejune mistake of trying to persuade the audience that the youngster's attack would counterbalance the sex-adventuring of the mother.

When will these young novelists and playwrights recognise that underlying the behaviour of women like Queen Gertrude and the vortically disposed lady of Mr. Coward's inconclusive piece is the simple biological fact of sex-appetite? Any G. P. could knock holes through all the arguments of these would-be philosophers. The woman liked to have men, and, God warrant us, Miss Lilian Braithwaite's heroic struggle to keep the Life Force in countenance (albeit she had A. Bromley Davenport's spiritually futile simpleton for her husband) deserved the gratitude, if not of her neurotic son, at least of the social world, in which, by which, and for which she and myriads of her kind, live, move, and have their being —and, mark, for which plays like "The Vortex" are written.

Mr. Coward's error is one of tact as well as one of unintelligence. For it is tactful to bring the lady to a recognition of her errors, and the audience to an assurance that all will be well thereafter. Hamlet in the "Closet Scene" does not expect any such permanent change in his mother. Shakespeare knew appetite for what it was. He did not Balliolise and bowdlerise humanity to the flat level of distilled water and pasteurised peptones. Says Hamlet:

> "——but go not to mine uncle's bed.
> Assume a virtue if you have it not . . . .
> . . . . Refrain to-night,
> And that shall lend a kind of easiness
> To the next abstinence."

Little hope in that, say the wise ones.

No nice motherliness from his dangerous-aged mother would have solved Hamlet's problem. Neither is the solution of Florence's eroticism to be sought in a transfer and modification of her emotion son-wards. Dramatically, the real touble in the Lancaster family arose years before between the mother and the father. With a surer character sense than our author possesses, Mr. Davenport (who played the father perfectly, literally perfectly) had seen that it was a tragedy of the past, not of the present. His minor and Florence's major natures could not harmonise, and Nicky's neurosis was the result of the father's failure to prevent the mother from carrying on her pranks into the fair, fat, and vortical forties.

This palaver about maternal responsibility is, as the Royalty box-office no doubt will prove, an intriguing subject for the speculations of half-baked suburban intelligences. But drama is made of sterner stuff, and a young man who behaves as Nicky is made to behave needs treatment of quite another kind than motherlove to reclaim him to the primal decencies. And, anyhow, he's a poor spectacle, jazz and dope and high falutin' clipped consonants and all.

Miss Braithwaite's performance, a splendid comeback for an actress who had almost allowed us to forget that she could act, was in the best tradition of high-bred comedy playing. Her beauty and that delicious air of ineffectuality that she wears with such distinction give to the part nearly enough to justify their wastage on such a play. Mr. Coward, made up like a Chinaman, has his own ideas of how neurotic dopers behave, and one wishes he was as good a dramatist as he is actor.

Reviews.

The Church of England. By the Right Rev. A. C. Headlam, D.D., Bishop of Gloucester. (John Murray. 12s. net.)

These charges of a Bishop to his clergy are of no interest whatever to the modern mind, except possibly as the swan song of Protestant Anglicanism. They are entirely devoid of any great religious idea or philosophy whose detailed application to ordinary life would alone make an episcopal charge of some value. The Bishop destroys any idea of a "Church" by a curious "Social Compact" theory which would include all aspiring dreamers of high things who think it respectable to belong to a state spiritual benefit department. The characteristic of the Church of England, according to this Erastian Ecclesiatic, is its "wise moderation," which means the total absence of any dominating spiritual idea. One wonders why the idea of "the Church" is retained at all; and in the only possible answer Protestant Anglicanism is revealed for what it is: Ecclesiasticism minus Catholicism, a husk emptied of the only religious philosophy which ever gave it life. R.I.P.

Autobiography of John Stuart Mill. (Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press. Cloth 2s.; leather 3s. 6d. net.)

A cheap edition of this interesting and valuable autobiography, which is also the record of a great movement, was long overdue. The original edition, first published in 1873, of which this is a reprint, is not often met with in the second-hand catalogues, and is always quoted at a fairly high price. Mr. Harold J. Laski, in his introduction, refers to the excisions made by Mill's stepdaughter, Helen Taylor, which are obvious in the printed text as first published, and adds that he has been unable to obtain permission from the present owner of the manuscript to reproduce it verbatim. As the omissions are concerned with Mill's relations with his father and his wife, there would appear to be no sufficient reason for gratifying idlle curiosity. As Mills himself says:—

> "Whoever, either now, or hereafter, may think of me and of the work I have done, must never forget that it is the product not of one intellect and conscience, but of three."

Which should be enough for us. There must be quite a large number of educated people, who have not had an opportunity of reading this important autobiography, who have now an excellent opportunity of adding to their knowledge of a very remarkable man who, as Professor Saintsbury says,

> "attained an influence perhaps greater than that of which any English philosophical writer has been able during his lifetime to boast."

The appendix of hitherto unpublished speeches adds materially to the value of this new edition.

"Otai" Native Sketches and A Thought or Two. By Richmond Haigh. (Juta and Co., Ltd., Cape Town.)

As several of these sketches appeared originally in THE NEW AGE, this slender but interesting booklet does not require elaborate introduction. The relations of the white population with the African native races form the main theme, and the incidents described indicate both insight and sympathy on the part of the author. Dealing with the inevitable missionary question, Mr. Haigh very aptly remarks that

> "It is what they observe of White conduct and practice that will influence the blacks in favour of or against Christianity, not what is preached to them."

There are also some very shrewd criticisms on the creation of criminals by an unimaginative and narrow administration of justice, a matter of great importance which Mr. Haigh does not think can be safely entrusted to the "ordinary politician." We agree with him.

Pastiche.

THE DAWN?

By Old and Crusted.

Haply, the river of Time——
. . . . . .
As it draws to the Ocean, may strike
Peace to the soul of the man on its breast—
As the pale waste widens around him,
As the banks fade dimmer away,
As the stars come out, and the night-wind
Brings up the stream
Murmurs and scents of the infinite sea.

. . . and somewhere through these lessons there must reach the children some of the "murmurs and scents of the infinite sea." (Mr. Baldwin on Education.)

It is something to the good to have a Prime Minister who thinks in terms of Matthew Arnold. One wonders whether the above was a deliberate quotation, or just the natural, unconscious adaptation of the words of a great poet, by a great statesman, to fit a great occasion. Let us hope it was the latter, and that the head of the Government is so imbued with the spirit of the apostle of "sweetness and light" that his desire

> "to see secondary and University education brought within reach of all children who were fitted to take advantage of them"

will culminate in something more tangible than a lofty aspiration. As he adds, "I stand by that," his words have the right ring, and we perchance are justified in saying, "This is the dawn." But he will have no easy task. The impervious breed of the Philistines is still with us, and has changed but little since Matthew Arnold described it:

> "Testy, absolute . . . a little ignoble and very dull to perceive when it is making itself ridiculous,"

as it invariably does when it meddles with education. There will be the usual outcries against increased expenditure from indignant ratepayers and reactionary City Fathers, accompanied in all probability by more propædeutic ululations from the Very Revd. Ulema, who would let the fifth child of the family grow up in ignorance, rather than add the cost of his education to our already insupportable burdens! O, Economy, what crimes are committed in thy name! Then there are the Fascisti of Finance, cynical and disillusioned, who will turn on him with the same specious arguments as the old Vizier droned out before the King in Bokhara—he who would bury in his own "fretted brick-work tomb" the man "his pity could not save."

. . . three kings, ere thee,
Have I seen reigning in this place.

But who, through all this length of time,
Could bear the burden of his years,
If he for strangers pain'd his heart
Not less than those who merit tears?
. . . . . .
There are the lepers, and all sick;
There are the poor, who faint alway.

All these have sorrow, and keep still,
Whilst other men make cheer, and sing.
Wilt thou have pity on all these?
No, nor on this dead dog, O King!

Well, if it be so, let him answer them in the words of the King:

> O, Vizier, thou art old, I young!
> Clear in these things I cannot see.
> My head is burning, and a heat
> Is in my skin which angers me.
> But hear ye this, ye sons of men!
> They that bear rule, and are obey'd,
> Unto a rule more strong than theirs
> Are in their turn obedient made.
> . . . . . .
> Even the great honour which I have,
> When I am dead, will soon grow still;
> So have I neither joy, nor fame,
> But what I can do, that I will.

Yes, but he must also will the means to the end if, as he hopes,

> "before we reach the middle of this century the country will have dealt effectively with the problem of children between the ages of 12 and 18,"

adding very pertinently indeed,

> "It is not merely a school problem. It is an industrial problem."

Quite so, though it is to a far greater extent a financial problem. And who knows it better than he and his brilliant, versatile colleague who is even now busy preparing the next Budget? What will be the outcome? Another triumph for old Mumbo-Jumbo and the high priests of sound finance, or are these two eminent statesmen destined to act as sponsors at the baptism of that very healthy infant, Social Credit?

Is it to be as Douglas says:

> "One more retreat into the Dark Ages, or the emergence into the full light of a day of such splendour as we can at present only envisage dimly"?

We shall soon know.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

A WORD TO MY CRITICS.

Sir,—If the general policy of THE NEW AGE allows of my replying fully to my critics I shall be glad to do so.

Meantime, I would beg their kind consideration of the following points:—

(1) The only thing they know about the principles I stand for is that my proposed basis of monetary issue would be public utility work. They are therefore in the position of a critic of the Douglas theorem who knew nothing of the "just price." If they like to kick themselves for being too previous, they may do so.

(2) The only criticism of the one point I have made is Mr. Auger's: He complains that my proposal to distribute water, heat, light and power gratis to all users in unlimited quantities shows a lack of consideration for existing interests. Of course it does; all interests based on the maintenance of high prices are to be swept away. Not to see this is to be an ass; to stand in the way of its being done is to be a "selfish pig." I am sure Mr. Auger will be a gentleman and give me his help.

(3) The gold proportional rate is entirely extraneous to my financial plan; the latter will have to be judged on its own merits.

(4) Other critics try to show (a) that my plan (as far as they know it) would solve unemployment, though not in a permanent manner; and (b) that I might succeed in establishing low prices for everything at the outset, but that those low prices could not be maintained.

But they are utterly incapable of knowing whether what they say is true, because they are in total ignorance of my whole plan.

(5) Giving full replies would necessitate the complete unfolding of all the financial and economic principles I stand for; I can only do this if the Editor of THE NEW AGE thinks it consonant with the general policy of his journal to allow me to do so.

One of my critics shows such indiscriminating catholicity of opinion that he couples together two such widely divergent plans as that of Major Douglas and that of Professor Soddy. Critics may occasionally be criticised.

RENE CHARLES DICKENS.

THE RIGHT WAY.

Sir,—No doubt many people do hold the view which Mr. Crafter supports, and the widespread belief that it is the only view possible led me to write as I did. It is also quite a debatable point how far the confirmed habits of thought and action of the adult can be changed, and I ventured to think that the most likely way to succeed is by change of environment. I have chanced to meet with several cases in which a man has improved vastly with a change of environment, and the experience of the war seems to point in the same direction. War conditions gave men (and women, I may add, lest my readers should have forgotten that "the masculine includes the feminine") a chance of real responsibility of which many availed themselves, and the slump in manners which has followed the war is largely due to the fact, which Mr. Crafter notes, that as the economic power, the only power in these days, is in the hands of the leaders, any attempt by the rank and file to be other than "servile" is out of the question. But these, though important enough matters from the hand-to-mouth point of view, are really of little importance, for everyone born before the turn of the century will have left the stage from one cause or another in 30 or 40 years' time, and the real question is what the younger generation is doing, and here, I think, the facts are with me. From all I hear, it seems that in these days young people know very well what they want to do and do it, without asking or taking advice on the matter, as they sometimes did even so late as 20 years ago. I would suggest that what they want to do is not what Mr. Crafter would like them to do, and that their present habits, which he deprecates, are the reaction to conditions in which the only way of being "positive" is to cut someone's throat or pick his pocket. Twelve or thirteen years ago I wrote a series of articles in THE NEW AGE on "Some Problems of Sex," which dealt with the possible trend of Things in General, and, though I may have a parental bias, I feel that subsequent events have shown that my estimate of what was "in the air" was not so very far wrong, though without the stimulus of the war it might well have taken 50 years to "come through." And it must be remembered that what is "in the air" is the important thing, as all intelligent students of history recognise. I do not think Mr. Crafter will like the articles, but with their help, and perhaps that of some kind friend, he may be able to guess where the Right Way lies.

M.B. OXON.

DEBTS AND GOLD.

Sir,—There seems to be a chorus of approval of the suggestion made by Mr. Darling that England should make a great effort to pay off the American debt in fifteen years instead of allowing the interest to mount up during the sixty years allowed by the agreement. But the debt is a gold one. Everybody—even Sir Josiah Stamp—seems to be agreed that gold is going out of fashion, and if this is so its value will be falling all the while, until long before the sixty years have passed it will be worth perhaps only as much as copper. Why then should we try to pay while its value is still high? Perhaps some financial expert will explain.

MISOCHRUSIST.

[*Owing to pressure on our space further letters have to be held over until next week.*]

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