THE

NEW AGE

INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER"

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

Speaking of the general strike at Plymouth on May 16, Mr. Cramp expressed the belief that there would not again be a strike of that character, for its logic, if carried out to the end, meant that the strikers starved and paralysed themselves as well as everybody else. But to show that an act is illogical is no guarantee that it will not be attempted again. In Plumstead there is already cheerful gossip about "another strike in six months." Irresponsible chatter it probably is, but nevertheless a significant suggestion that the surrender of the T.U.C. was not initiated from below. The rank and file who bore the stress of the fighting had more grit than the leaders who assumed its direction: in fact, the day after the calling of the truce there were more soldiers in the field than on the day of the truce: the momentum was gathering, not slackening. A common paralysis is no bogey to a mass of malcontents, so it *be* common. A better argument is to point out to them that the starvation never is common; the "enemy" feeds always.

* * *

It would have been interesting to hear what conclusions Mr. Cramp, so logical along this line, had come to on the question of the future of trade unionism. Granted that a general strike is futile, is a particular strike futile? It would seem so. In the first case, the worker starves himself and everybody else: in the second he starves himself and nobody else. It does not look too good for the striker either way. Yet one seeks in vain for any suggestion from Mr. Cramp that the workers should discontinue contributing to strike funds. Since he expressly complains that the recent strike has cost the N.U.R. £1,000,000, would it not be as well to remove all future temptation to strike by ceasing to collect funds for that purpose out of the workers' wages? Apparently Mr. Cramp regards such funds as useful to have even though useless to spend. "The railway unions," says the *Star's* report of his remarks, "had saved their lives by the action they took regarding the agreement." "Saved their lives" may be paraphrased as "cut their losses." The "life" to be preserved is always that of the institution, never of the human beings who construct it for their protection. *The railwaymen are dead: long live the National Union of Railwaymen.*

* * *

This is leaving out of account the death of the miners. Mr. Frank Varley, M.P., a member of the Miners' Executive, says that the colliers have been "badly let down" by the T.U.C. in suddenly ending the general strike. He calls it an "abject surrender," and threatens a "reckoning day." By all means have a reckoning day, but not if the reckoning is going to be dissolved in a flood of recrimination. There is a large question to be settled. The trade union movement must come to a decision whether the general strike failed because strikes, as bargaining weapons, are now inherently useless, or whether it failed because it was mismanaged. On the answer depends the issue whether the movement continues to be a trade union concern or resolves itself into a savings bank and investment trust. There is no intelligible middle course that we can imagine. Shortly the movement will see what happens to the miners' wages. If they are reduced, the last argument for the principle of strikes—*and strike funds*—will have been laid low. We notice that now the menace of the general striker has been eliminated the *Daily News* is out-posting the *Morning Post* in its militancy on the wage dispute.

> "We have never had any sympathy with Mr. Cook's proclamation that he will accept no reduction in wages whatever under any circumstances."

No sympathy. Has the Archbishop of Canterbury stolen it all?

> "It is nonsense. *He will have to do so, and so doubtless will a great many other people.*"

Ho, ho! That's the stuff to give 'em. Nonconformity is putting off the "baggy trousers" which THE NEW AGE once attributed to the late editor of it, and is winding puttees on its legs, hoping thus to pass for a seasoned soldier in Lady Bathurst's regiment. As for the management of the *Daily News*, we appreciate its problem of reconciling breadth of view with breadth of circulation, and concede that the

reduction in the price of the *Morning Post* to one penny for twenty large pages last Monday week (against twelve small pages of *Daily News* for the same sum) and the consequent jump in its sales must have jolted a few cash registers round Bouverie Street. Is the *Daily News* going to bring its price down to a halfpenny? No? Then we have no sympathy with it. It is nonsense. It will have to do so, and so doubtless will a good many other papers.

* * *

The *Star*, upon resuming normal publication on May 17, published a special article by its editor. It can be summed up in the formula of the "No. 1" turn at the music-hall (before the "stalls" arrive): "Here we are again"—to which the obvious reply is, "Yes; well—what about it?"

> "We have found it difficult to realise that a paper which had once stopped could start again, but here we are, looking very much as if nothing had happened, and one of the lessons we have learned is that the public is just as much disturbed as we are by any interruption in publication."

Then follows a description of the troubles and difficulties (successfully overcome) of keeping up publication during the strike, and so filling the aching need of the public for the *Star's* message. The "lesson" learned is bunkum. In normal times any journal must keep up a continuous appearance, not lest the public refuse to forgive it a miss, but lest they forget it. When they all suspend publication the public misses them; and when they all resume the public buy them according to previous habit. But let one of them lag by a day behind the rest, and it will soon learn that the public are like Time and Tide.

* * *

All this fits in well with our theory, last week, of the secret history of the general strike. Everything was made so *safe* for the "capitalist" newspapers. They were all suppressed together for eleven days, and their vacant places kept warm by two improvised and *temporary* official organs. Can anyone imagine the tacticians of a strike organisation which meant stern business neglecting to exploit the possibility of setting the Press fighting the Press. To put the whole Press out of action simultaneously was to keep it in action permanently. That illustrates one of the weaknesses of a general strike—"all out together." It looks imposing enough, but so do all impostures. There was a very compelling reason why the suspension of the *Daily Mail* was made the occasion of the rupture of negotiations with the T.U.C. by the Government. For on the day on which the *Daily Mail* failed to appear, *all its competitors were appearing*; and if the general strike had not immediately come to its rescue it would have suffered permanent injury to its circulation. Or one may look at the episode from another angle. Why did the *Daily Mail* alone (other journals were "interfered with") decide not to appear rather than to alter a couple of passages in its leading article? Principle? Not when it risked its readers' trying out some other newspaper. We suggest that it was foreknowledge that the strike was inevitable. In that case the risk was small, for the public would be left ten days or so during which, having no newspapers but the improvised ones, it would slowly forget its one day's patronage of rival organs, and would revert after the strike to its usual choice of journal.

* * *

There will, moreover, be special significance to readers of THE NEW AGE in the recollection that the very journal which thus alone adopted such an uncompromising attitude in defence of its right to say what it chose, is of all journals the one which has most consistently and vehemently preached the superiority of American institutions over those of Britain. Was it not the *Daily Mail* which so strongly advocated the re-electrification of this country, to be carried out under the supervision of American experts? And, more recently, was it not the *Daily Mail* which organised the visit of British Trade Unionists to the United States to gape in wonder at the achievements of an industry adequately fed with producer and consumer credits (although, of course, this is not the lesson the *Daily Mail* suggested)? There is no escaping the suspicion that the conspicuous attitude of its editor towards his disaffected employees may have had something to do with the question of responsibility to interests across the Atlantic. If we wait, perhaps we shall see. In the meantime, we note that this journal charges one penny for sixteen small pages. It is too much, relatively to the price of the *Morning Post*, a journal, moreover, to which the following testimonial is on record by the late Lord Northcliffe in his "Newspapers and their Millionaires" (1922):

> "I said to the old journalist (let me call him Senex): 'Who is the most powerful woman in England, outside the Royal Family?'
>
> "'Lady Astor, M.P., of course!" he said.
>
> "'Lady Astor!' I replied; 'it is true that she controls the *Observer*, but, in my opinion, Senex, the most powerful woman in England *without exception*—other than Royalty—is Lady Bathurst, the beautiful and accomplished director of the *Morning Post*. You may not always agree with the enormous headlines, but you will admit that, right or wrong, the *Morning Post* is bright, consistent, sometimes flighty, BUT ALWAYS ENGLISH.'
>
> "Senex, at first surprised by the suggestion, agreed with me, as will every thinking person."

That judgment is four years old. Whether it is still held, probably only Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and his friends could tell us definitely; but from many present indications we are inclined to endorse its accuracy.

* * *

Comments upon the strike are multiplying fast. The *Daily Mail* gives summaries of typical views from all the Dominions. Seeing that these views must have been based on censored press cables from England, they may be taken as read. In a different category are the remarks of some of the Labour leaders themselves. Mr. Lansbury states in his journal that immediately before the capitulation of the T.U.C. it had received information that the Cabinet had decided to arrest the members of the General Council and of the local strike committees. If that is true, the T.U.C., by calling off the strike before the decision could be carried out, went out of its way to let down the trade-union movement; for those arrests would have consolidated it more closely than any exhortations of revolutionaries could have done. We doubt whether there was the slightest intention to carry out the threat: it would have set up a tendency to decentralisation in leadership—a tendency which we pointed out last week was the one thing which both parties to the struggle feared above all things. Mr. John Wheatley, M.P., writes in the *South Side Standard* (Glasgow) "A Survey of the Great Surrender":

> "The workers have sustained a smashing reverse. It was not inflicted by their bosses nor due to their own weakness. It is a most astonishing result to a most magnificent effort. The struggle will surely rank as the greatest and most bungled strike in history.
>
> "From the first moment of the struggle, and indeed before it, prominent Labour leaders were whining and grovelling. The real tragedy was that in its hour of trial the Labour movement was deserted by those in whom it had placed its greatest trust."

The moral again is—de-centralise your leadership. We are as firm in our conviction as we ever were that the weapon of the strike is futile when used by Labour to win economic emancipation through a victory over the industrial capitalist. But it can be

quite otherwise when it is used in support of a joint Labour-Capital clean-up of the financial jugglery which has for so long deceived the worker and his master into believing that they are predestined enemies. Even so, the strike would have to proceed on a different plan from any that has yet been followed. There are other ways of revolting against economic repression than by the mere withdrawal by the employee of his service from his employer. That can only result in throwing both of them deeper into debt to the credit-monopoly. We do not propose on this occasion to define any of these possible alternatives, but we will say in general that decentralisation must be the principle of them. In the Labour movement, decentralisation not only of leadership *but also of funds;* instead of the "one big union with one big purse," the reversion to many smaller unions *each with a purse of its own.* And decentralisation must be applied to the *contents* of those purses. Open the "one big purse" to-day, and what do you find? Money? Not a chip to speak of; but a forest of scrip—shares, bonds and what not. "Oh, but these are worth money—they can be changed into money at market rates," the trade unionist will reassure himself. Yes; they can — *so long as there is no strike!* If trade unions wish to exercise economic power for any purpose at all they must *renounce the luxury of interest and dividends, and keep their money on current account.* A few thousand small trade union purses filled with cash, and each purse under the separate and local control of each union, constitute a potential power transcending a thousandfold that supposed to be resident in a national "fund" of dividend-earning investments. A purse, if it is to be used as a purse, must be a purse of stolid cash, not a portfolio of elusive bonds. Just pull yourselves together, all you young leaders in the movement, and consider this money question in relation to your own rough-and-ready test of what is good for the worker. Have you not always proceeded on the intutional principle of declining to do what the "enemy" suggests that you should do? Very well. At the very top of the "Capitalist system" are the banks. Now what, above all things, makes the banker beam? A large proportion of fluid assets (cash) to other assets (loans and investments). That is so, is it not? Then do you not see that an *investing* Trade Union Movement is playing directly into the hands of the banking system? Fluid assets are *power*. Yet day by day the trade unions are gathering from their members this power—this principle of independence and initiative—and feeding it into the mouth of the banking system. Think this over, and you will undoubtedly reach the conclusion that the next democratic business of trade unionists is to compel a thorough overhaul of their leaders' financial policy. In this connection we have heard two rumours. One dates back some months. It was to the effect that the funds of one very powerful trade union had been augmented by £80,000 as a result of buying rubber shares on tips received from a well-known and popular peer of the realm. The other is recent. It dates back only to the commencement of the general strike. A tip was then given to certain leaders to invest union funds in railway shares. Whether they were to utilise strike funds for the purpose, or whether they were to buy "for account," and rake in the profit for "Socialism" (!) on the rise before settling day, we do not know. If the rumours are true (and there is, at least, nothing improbable about them), while no imputation lies against the personal integrity of the principals in these affairs, there is ground for strong criticism of their judgment. They would be good managers of a Labour investment trust, but since the trade union rank and file certainly do not take that view of the main function of their movement, they ought to have an opportunity of knowing what goes on in their name. If the individuals who pay their dues and levies week by week are not allowed to appraise and revise the financial policy of their unions, they had better stay outside them.

* * *

Mr. Baldwin's proposals for settling the coal dispute have been rejected by the Miners' Federation. The Press, which was purring yesterday over dangers left behind, is, as we write, squalling over dangers now to come. These scribes make us yawn. Look at their attitude. The coalowners and miners have a sum set them on a slate. They keep passing the slate to each other. Neither can get the sum right. At last, in desperation, they let go the slate and fall to fisticuffs. Others join in, and a small riot ensues. A gentleman called Samuel comes along and separates them. Joy in the Press. "The fight is off." Everything is to be forgiven and forgotten. Just so. Samuel has picked up the slate and disappeared with it. But as soon as the coalowners and miners have recovered some of their breath, Samuel's friend Reading turns up and politely hands them the same sum on the same slate. Not a figure has changed. There are a few expert onlookers who say that the sum cannot be worked out. They are so certain of this that they want to ask what sort of teacher it was who set it. But the Press is too busy to report this kind of gossip. Why should it, when all that is needed is a handshake and two new slate-pencils? However, we are pleased to see that the miners objected, among other things, to the idea of an "independent chairman" on the proposed wages committee, because the issues were too important to be left to his casting vote. That is a right attitude and ought to be persisted in as strongly as is the resistance to the principle of wage reduction. Besides that, if we want a Vice-Regent to settle our industrial and social economy we need not import him from the East: the British Constitution has already provided for one in the office and function of the Archbishopric of Canterbury.

* * *

Across the Channel there is gossip about a possible change of Government in France. M. Peret, the Finance Minister, faithfully maintains the continuity of financial policy; he sighs about the debt, but signs nothing. It was disclosed last week that the Government had asked the Bank of France to allow the gold reserve to be drawn on to guarantee credits for the support of the franc, and that the Council of Regents, including Baron Edouard de Rothschild, had refused. We would like to see some French Minister raise the question of the ownership of this gold. It does not belong to the Bank. Bank buy their gold, it is true; but the financial credit with which they buy it they create for the purpose by the costless method which we described in our issue of May 13. They got the gold for nothing. To the extent to which they claim it as their own, to that extent *they have been subsidised.* Queer state of affairs, is it not, when one reflects back on the fact that Britain was paralysed for eleven days for having subsidised the mining industry?

* * *

Mr. Lloyd George contributed an article to the Hearst newspapers during the strike, and is being taken to task here for writing it. The sudden collapse of the struggle gives point to the banter of the *Morning Post* over his *Evening Standard* and the failure as a prophet. (He had given reasons for expecting a prolongation of the struggle.) But it would be as well for his critics to get clear of the pit-props before they shout too loud. The struggle continues, and until it is composed, no wise statesman will assume that it cannot again reach formidable dimensions.

Church and State.

Mr. Churchill has given some judge an opportunity too good to miss of asking who is the Archbishop of Canterbury. It is to be hoped that the judge will not put the question to Mr. Churchill if he is impatient of waiting for an answer. On Monday, May 10, 1926, when the general strike had been in action almost a week, Mr. Lloyd George enquired, in the House of Commons, why a very important letter, written by the Archbishop of Canterbury on behalf of all the churches of the country, was excluded from the broadcasting announcements, and not published in the *British Gazette*. Mr. Churchill replied, according to the *Times*, that neither the appeal of the Archbishop of Canterbury nor the remarks of Cardinal Bourne in a different sense were published. If one was printed, Mr. Churchill explained, the other should be printed. "Generally speaking, the policy of the Government had been fully, clearly, and repeatedly explained by the Prime Minister and others, and that was the policy which the Government organ was steadily supporting."

If Mr. Churchill betrays such paucity of respect for the unwritten constitution, cultural and political, of this country, as his reply indicates, he is not entitled to expect from the irresponsible and unconscious multitude any respect whatever. His argument that the government organ had the right of setting a negative by Cardinal Bourne against an affirmative by the Archbishop of Canterbury exposes the mind behind the government organ as a cultural vacuum. Altogether, apart from the content of the two messages, each of which was important enough in its place, the relationships of the two divines to the nation and the State are entirely different. No person who fails to appreciate the difference can pretend respect for either tradition or the constitution.

Under the presidency of the Archbishop of Canterbury a meeting of the leaders of Christian Churches was held at Lambeth on Friday, May 7, when the general strike had continued four days. A resolution was agreed to expressing the view that the time had come for conciliation, and setting out definite suggestions for peace, including the resumption of negotiations on the miners' case with the miners at work. The message of the Archbishop of Canterbury, accordingly, was not merely a personal statement emanating from his own Christian spirit for the guidance of members of his church; it was the contribution to peace of all the churches, at a time when the political governors were losing their wits. Cardinal Bourne's declaration appears to have been uttered, so far as information is available, at High Mass in Westminster Cathedral. Although it certainly reminded all Roman Catholics of their duty to uphold the established Government—on the ground that the Government is the properly constituted authority—it contained neither prayer nor suggestion that the Government should harden its heart against the conciliation proposed by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Judged by content, therefore, the Archbishop's message, being a precisely formulated basis for the re-starting of industry, was more entitled to grace from the Government's temporary monopoly of publicity than the Cardinal's, which every Roman Catholic priest was fitted to deliver within his parish to those for whom it was intended. The Archbishop's message, in addition, carried far greater representative force. It was not addressed, with the authority of his office, to the members of his church; on the very contrary, it proceeded from the church, was backed by other churches, and directed to the Government and the nation.

Consider the matter, however, in the light of what the Archbishop of Canterbury stands for as a personage. Dispassionately regarded, without any offence or imputation against the Roman Catholic Church, Cardinal Bourne in no degree speaks for a national church. In this country his church is not established, but tolerated. Granted a complete Roman Catholic re-union, of course, his position would be vastly altered, but it would not become quite that of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The latter, as the Primate of the national Church, is the head of a body, twenty-six senior dignitaries of which are peers of the House of Lords. When the Dean and Chapter of a cathedral appoint and ordain, under the Sovereign, a Bishop of the Church, they are probably also admitting a member to the Upper House of Government, on grounds entirely unconnected with the financial arrangements of political parties. The Archbishop of Canterbury, in short, contributes to the State the national expression of Christianity in its bearing on the particular matter in question. The suppression of his appeal for peace and his definite suggestions of terms constituted a gratuitous affront to the Church, the Archbishops, and the Lords Spiritual. The Government ought to make a pilgrimage to Canterbury to apologise.

During war between peoples of different nationality or race, a certain extravagance of speech and foolishness in accusation is partly excusable on grounds of ignorance. In family quarrels the extravagance and foolishness is as much greater as it is less excusable. Whatever may be forgiven, however, in the irresponsible multitude blindly protesting against pressure whose origin it does not understand, like a baby pestered by a pin, it is impossible similarly to excuse the responsible and privileged classes, one of whose duties is the maintenance of culture. "A good war halloweth every cause," the misunderstood Nietzsche cried. He would have spoken more clearly in the negative: a bad war disgraceth any cause. Let us dismiss the notion that the strike seen from the Trades Union Council side was either war or magnificent. Nevertheless, from the Government side it was described and handled as the outbreak of a civil war. When a Government either believes or pretends itself on the edge of civil war—war with its own people, whom its duty is to protect—it can suppress the voice of the Church if it is mad enough. But there are no moments in history when it is more important that the Church should be heard; when every man and woman in the land should be able to listen to the authentic voice of the national Church treating the crisis in the light of the universal religion. To close the mouth of the Church then is to invite a bad war.

RICHARD MONTGOMERY.

PRESS EXTRACTS.

(Selected by the Economic Research Council.)

"H. Parker Willis, Professor of Banking at Columbia University, has been appointed chairman of a governmental committee of inquiry into banking conditions of the Irish Free State."—*Wall Street News, February* 6.

"In the United States there are now thirty labour-owned and controlled banks and investment companies, eight having been organised during the last five years."—"*The Financial and Commercial Chronicle,*" *March* 6.

"As regards the continuance of financial assistance after April 30, the Cabinet has practically made up its mind that it will be impossible to leave the industry to its own resources when the subsidy period ends. . . . *It is suggested that a free gift of money, like the present subsidy, cannot be repeated, but the financial help should be regarded as a State loan to be repaid as soon as the industry has rehabilitated itself.*"—"*Daily Telegraph,*" *March* 19.

"When a bank grants a loan or overdraft or discounts a bill the immediate effect is, normally, a pro tanto addition to its total of deposits, the borrower being credited with the amount of the accommodation. Naturally, the borrower will make use of at least part of the credit immediately by drawing a cheque against the bank. The payee of the cheque in turn will deposit it for collection at his bank. *Thus the original credit will create a deposit, whether at the bank that granted the credit or at some other bank.*"—"*The Statist,*" *March* 6.

Art and the Unknown.

By C. M. Grieve.

II.

The greatest artist at any given time is the creator of the greatest art as just defined in proportion as it defies Ideal Specialists and demands the Ideal Observer.

As the cleared space increases the relative importance of each Ideal Specialist to the Ideal Observer decreases. The greatest artist is the greatest critic.

Neither his art nor his criticism need be expressed.† The greatest (non-artist) critic is he who feels most intensely the necessity of overcoming the incomprehensibility in question, and that the more intensely in proportion to his intuitive, and correct, realisation that the resolution of it calls for the Ideal Observer rather than for any Ideal Specialist or any series of Ideal Specialists.

It is impossible for the artist to achieve the incomprehensible to him, but he may not know how he knows.

The critic may show him that; but that has nothing to do with art.‡

The critic's function is to make art comprehensible, and so transform it into education and/or entertainment.

His ability to demonstrate his greatness as a critic, therefore depends upon the extent or difficulty of the supply of art available for his purpose.

A subsidiary function is, therefore, to stimulate an increase of either of these.

His value lies in the rapidity with which he can perform his function for the most incomprehensible art; his greatness on the extent of the circumference of the cleared space upon which he operates.

His value as a critic is not, however, determined in any way by the number of people for whom he makes the art with which he deals comprehensible. The intimate association of the most important criticism with advanced art precludes more than an extremely limited public for either.§

Both operate beyond the furthest limit of education, although the ultimate achievement of both is to advance it.

"Popular art" is a contradiction in terms.

"The educative value of art" is a confusion of functions.

Criticism is inferior to art because art is for it a means to an end—the end of the art to which it is applied.

This inferiority is least discernible when criticism confines itself most to the subsidiary function referred to above; or when it co-operates indissociably with the creative spirit in the artist himself.

Herman Bahr quotes Goethe as pointing out, in his "Data for a History of Colour," that there are sciences which must transcend themselves and become something higher—that is to say, Art. "Since nothing whole can be created either out of knowledge or out of reflection, because the first is lacking in Inwardness, and the second in Outwardness, we are forced to think of Science (*Wissenschaft*) as Art, whenever we expect a sense of entirety from it. . . . But in order that we should be able to fulfil such a demand we must exclude no human force or faculty from scientific participation. The profundity of intuition, a firm contemplation of the present, mathematical depth, physical accuracy, the acme of reason, the keenness of intellect, the phantasy moving and full of yearning, a fond joy of the sensuous—none of these can be omitted in order to seize the propitious moment, and exploit it in a live and fruitful sense, that moment which alone can give birth to a work of art, no matter what its content may be."

Appendix:—Types of nonsense in criticism. Cecil Gray's contention that poor poetry suits composers better than great poetry. James Agate's statement that Duse's talent "must be deemed less than supreme in that it needs masterpieces to feed on."

† "Kunst ist Gabe, nicht Wiedergabe."—Herewath Walden.

‡ "It is terribly difficult to accept influences which are necessary, and yet use them only as a means toward the end of shaping one's own being from within, and not to keep on carrying these elements as foreign bodies in one's system, however enthusiastically one may have accepted them at first."—Otto Braun.

§ "A new synthesis of intellect and spirit has become necessary. A synthesis which is directed towards establishing a new balance of the various parts of man, not with the backward, but with the most highly-developed elements."—Hermann Keyserling.

A Heretic's Word-Book.

ALMSGIVING.—An excuse for making a virtue of preventing the poor from helping themselves.

* * *

ARISTOCRACY.—That which always used to be, as contrasted with *democracy*, which is always going to be.

* * *

AUTOBIOGRAPHY.—An easy substitute for a work of art: when all else has lost interest there still remains one's self. *Autobiography* (*American*): See *indecent exposure.*

* * *

BEDROOM.—When love enters the door civilisation flies out of the window.

* * *

BIRTH.—A romantico-realist adventure carried out regardless of consequences, and under conditions of the utmost indecency, by comparison with which no subsequent act can be called either astonishing or immoral.

* * *

CHARITY.—Making a virtue of parting with what one cannot use and doesn't want.

* * *

CONSCIENCE.—(1) The still small voice that tells us we have not the power to choose the other thing if we choose this. (2) The fear that the devil, after giving his pleasures, will present his bill.

* * *

COURTESY.—Foreknowledge that one may not be top-dog to-morrow.

* * *

CRITIC.—One with leisure to discourage the workers.

* * *

DEATH.—The last act of what the player considered a tragedy and the audience a farce.

* * *

DEMOCRACY.—The pretence by each individual that he is Atlas.

* * *

DETERRENT.—Cruelty inflicted on offenders slightly exceeding what the party inflicting it would be ready to bear for the pleasure of committing the same offence.

* * *

DEVIL.—A revolutionary leader.—See *Christ.*

* * *

DRAWING-ROOM.—An asylum to which any lunatic is admitted provided he is harmless.

* * *

ENGLISHMAN.—An almost extinct species noted for the seriousness with which its decisions had to be considered. It was never certain that the creature would not do what he threatened.

* * *

ENGAGEMENT.—The forfeit of all the beautiful women of the world for the attainable one.

* * *

EPITAPH.—A record of a person's virtues true in proportion to brevity.

* * *

ETIQUETTE.—Ability to look mournful on bidding good-bye to an ugly woman.

* * *

FEAR.—The realisation that somebody may have been watching after all.

* * *

FEMINISM.—A political philosophy based on the theory that women can be converted into men by cutting their hair, flattening their heels, and refusing to think between.

* * *

FIDELITY.—Virtuous pride at forgoing what one either cannot get or is not strong enough to support.

A. N.

A Vagabond in Denmark.

By Leopold Spero.

XI.

BEHIND THE SHUTTERS.

The chief really distinctive point about the second city of Denmark is that the post office is nearly always shut. The main post office, that is to say. Whether there are any other post offices in the town is problematical. No doubt it is possible to discover, but nobody really knows, because to go to the post office with the letters, to those whose activities are carried on in the outskirts of the town, has the same taste of adventure about it as going up West for the young man from Surbiton or Clapton Park, with the additional thrill of uncertainty.

Here is, however, a city in which frivolity dare not show her face. The spirit of the traveller who has come in by 'bus across the rolling plains of central Jutland is first depressed by finding that the gay and irresponsible vehicle suddenly runs him up a narrow alley and flat against the wall of a nameless and disconnected garage. No explanation is given for this intrusion into the privacy of someone else's backyard. There he is, and out he must go, through a distant archway indicated politely enough by the conductor, and so find himself in a narrow, smooth-paved street that leads him suddenly into the open, under the shoulders of the cathedral, and in sight of all of Aarhus that is worth seeing, the harbour and old Toldbod, and the buildings that were built before the swarming populations of France and England and Germany left little, helpless, stark, iron-bound Denmark shivering far away at the end of the statistical procession.

What shall one say of Aarhus, save that it fails entirely to live up to the vague romance of its name, which is old and pointed like the cathedral, and bears about itself the aroma of forgotten tales. Here are old houses leaning together and whispering to each other, as if to keep apart from this new hotel, this plate-glass windowed emporium of ill-fitting suits, this winking, blinking, aggressive display of agricultural machinery, bursting with the sense of the new Denmark's prosperity. But who takes any notice of the old things that no longer pay, in this climbing, aggressive thoroughfare, that runs out suddenly to end at nowhere in particular, save amongst rambling, fresh-built ways that run between high ramparts of red brick flats, like the raw promise of some new Western township of the United States. On the right there is a park, one of those cold, hand-made, unsatisfying public gardens in which Scandinavia delights, with a statue of Dalgas, a Victorian figure in beard and top-boots, carrying a walking stick and looking every inch a public man, an Ibsenish, Calvinistic, ill-tailored, well-intentioned First Citizen. Dalgas must have done a great deal for Denmark, to be commemorated thus obtrusively. He frowned at her reluctant soil, and shamed it into productivity. An excellent fellow—but somehow I prefer his neighbour, Peter Sabroe, who stands farther on the other side, with his arm protecting a little girl. For whenever one sees the figure of a child in Denmark, living, or in sculptured stone or bronze, one name stands before the imagination, the name of the man through whom Denmark will always live in the hearts of children all the world over.

But Andersen had nothing to do with Aarhus, or the shops would not be shutting at six. Or if they did shut, as you walk along the street, you might see shadows through windows, the souls of inanimate things come to life, after man has left them to themselves, and taken away with him to his high tea in the suburbs all the grisly pre-occupations of business, the stern and preceptorial hours between nine and five, that stand like grim sentinels at the doors of imagination, and will not let a glimpse be seen of all that lies behind.

What is one to do with Aarhus after six o'clock, save walk up and down the high street like these separated lads and girls, who may not walk together because the spirit of John Calvin is watching them, and the spirit of Hans Christian Andersen is hovering far away in happy Odense?

From Aarhus to Skanderborg the train bustles over flat pastures, set low amid the rising wooded slopes, whereon far away on either side the cattle stand like toys, motionless, unreal. This is a *hurtigtog* we are travelling in, and you do not need to know Danish to realise that a train called by such a name must brush everything out of its way, scorning even this enterprising hound, who seeks to pace it along the accompanying country road. You do not often come across a *hurtigtog* in Denmark, especially off the main line between Esbjerg and Copenhagen. Such a grand affair, real coal burning in the engine, and a contempt for at least a few unfortunate stations upon whose platforms the peasantry stand, open-mouthed in admiration and pride to see how their custom is scorned by this busy agent of superior commerce. The red and white houses, Nybo and Rast, with their red-currant bushes and tempting cherry trees, count it not the least among the privileges of their tenancy to be there when the *hurtigtog* hurtles by, whistling his important arrival, and screaming his contemptuous departure. And the fathers of the hamlet spit reflectively in the wake of that vanishing importance and turn back to the hoe, or the glass of lager on the friendly wooden table under the trellis. The great business of the country, think they to themselves, still goes on day by day for their behoof. As though the hoe were not business great enough for Denmark, and the glass of beer at sundown its happiest and most sufficient reward.

Now comes the waiter from the restaurant car, and sets the table by the seats for tea and coffee and sweetened rolls and butter, for those whose journey is too frequent or of too little importance for a regular four kroner lunch. Such viands as these invite to friendly discourse, and your Danish countryman never imagines for a moment that his outlandish tongue should not be understood. So this masterful old gentleman in the corner calls the stranger to bear him out in his argument that one kroner and sixty-five öre is too much to pay for what he has drunk and eaten. He insists that you follow him through the calculation as he works out each tiny nickel and copper. He won't pay, that he won't. But he has eaten the rolls and drunk the coffee, so what is to be done? How shall the State profit by turning off its train a guest full of State-owned coffee and rolls, disputable in value perhaps, but still unpaid for? In another country, maybe, hard words would be used; but in Denmark, old age is respected, even when it is wrong-headed and obstinate. And so there is more talk, persuasion, and patient explanation, until at length the bill is paid with a final grumble. And then the stranger must hear the whole unintelligible story again from the waiter's side, and pay for it with an extra tip on his own account.

The *hurtigtog* rattles on along the southern shore of the fjord to Fredericia, with its bright and white church, with the red-tiled roof that looks so new, though the people of the parish have slept in that comfortable churchyard for two hundred and fifty years. Here is the Little Belt again, at its narrowest, and here the bustling ferries run from Jutland to kindly Fyn, the fairest and richest and best endowed of all the Danish islands. And here, because so many travellers make it their habit to hurry through elsewhere, treating the old town as nothing better than a Scandinavian Clapham Junction, one traveller at least will alight and pay his best respects to serene dignity and placid self-importance.

Ascetic Commercialism.

By N. E. Egerton Swann.

Mr. John Lee has a considerable reputation as an able business-organiser; and, unlike most captains of industry, he gives much thought to the wider economic bearings of business enterprise. He is further a Churchman, and most anxious to bring all industrial and commercial life to the test of Christian principles. Naturally the judgments of such a man carry great influence in the ever-widening circles of Christian people who are seriously troubled in their social conscience. It is the more to be regretted that he has felt moved to deliver, in the current issue of *The Pilgrim*, a severe attack upon the whole outlook of what, for convenience, we are almost compelled to call "Douglasism."

The following sentences will give the whole heart and essence of his own outlook: "If we render it possible for the world to consume more without safeguarding that power of consumption by some spiritual discipline, we may produce an orgy of consumption which will be a spiritual degradation" (p. 295). "It is by no means an unhealthy spiritual exercise to translate our purchases into the terms of self-sacrifice, and especially the self-sacrifice of work. . . . To be in a position to gratify all our desires . . . in itself is not the sphere in which the soul is likely to grow nearer to God" (pp. 295-6). "It may be that, measured in the scales of spiritual worth, it is by no means to be regretted that production has gone beyond the limits of consumption. It may be that in spiritual appreciation we are not ready for a more widespread consumption. The discipline of industry may conceivably act in this way" (pp. 296-7). "The process of industrial organisation may be one of the purgatorial fires through which man must pass before he is ready for a better world" (p. 300).

Now, it is easy to see that at bottom this is quite of a piece with that 'intramundane asceticism," so peculiarly characteristic of Calvinism, which Dr. O'Brien has so well described in his "Essay on the Economic Effects of the Reformation." This concentrated men's thoughts and activities on the fulfilment of their secular vocation, which (it was taken for granted) was normally industry or trade. At this each man, whether as worker or capitalist, was to keep ceaselessly grinding away. The capitalist, indeed, was to aim, as a high religious duty, at making as much money as he could, and the wage-earner was to aim at becoming a capitalist, if he could find any possible opportunity of doing so. But the successful capitalist was not to *spend* his money beyond the most simple and abstemious standard of living. He was to keep reinvesting and reinvesting it, that production might flourish and increase. Production for production's sake was reared aloft as a god upon the high altar of Calvinism. Its traditions provided the ethical and spiritual sanction for capitalism in "the stress it lays on production, compared with its comparative neglect of consumption." Thus capitalist and worker alike were left helplessly and hopelessly bound to the ever-rolling wheels of the Juggernaut-car of limitless and fruitless production. "Asceticism"—so Dr. O'Brien quotes Tröltsch—"lays the foundations of the tyranny of work over men."

Mr. Lee has drifted quite out of the Catholic tradition. That has, indeed, far too often been itself excessively ascetic. But with an all-important difference. Just so far as it has encouraged asceticism, it has done so solely in the interests of an intense concentration upon the spiritual. Its asceticism has always been a genuine contempt for worldly things as such, as compared with the unseen and the eternal. It has never given any countenance to asceticism practised precisely in the interests of so gross a form of worldliness as the accumulation of wealth for its own sake. And while, too often, it has urged a wholesale asceticism upon all as the very essence of religion, yet there are very divergent phases of Catholicism to be found in history. It is possible, with some measure of support from within the orthodox tradition, to put upon the ascetic vein in Catholicism the not unreasonable meaning that, among the manifold varieties of individual vocation, some few are called to witness, by an extreme heroism of unworldliness, to the claims of the unseen and to concentrate utterly upon the life of devotion. To those to whom this exceptional call does not come, the more humanistic forms of Catholicism would not grudge a single, in itself, pure and innocent enjoyment, and would actively applaud the cultivation of art, the drama, and the beautiful in life generally. Catholicism, in short, in so far as it has been this-worldly at all, has been far more lenient towards a hearty and human money-spending than towards money-making; it has regarded consumption as a much more spiritual activity than accumulation.

No doubt Mr. Lee would protest vehemently that he desires the freest possible consumption, provided it be *worthy* consumption; that all he has written looks forward to a consummation when the time *will* be ripe for mankind to spend abundantly on the best things. But it is difficult not to feel, throughout his article, a vein of perverted asceticism, which is not *really* anxious for that day to arrive, which prays to God, "Give us abundance, *but not now*." "In ability to purchase," he says (above, as he explains, the standard of necessities of life) "may have its spiritual value" (p. 296). The brave and cheerful endurance of *any* unavoidable evil has, of course, its spiritual value, and thus is the evil in the world largely redeemed for us. But to *create* needless deprivations, or needlessly to acquiesce in obviously reasonable ones, by way of self-sacrifice for self-sacrifice's sake, belongs to the religion of Browning's Caliban rather than to a high spirituality.

At any rate, Mr. Lee recommends a direct reversal of the only sensible method. "Of what use," he asks, "is it to distribute the power of purchase until men and women have learned what are the things of worth? Of what use is it to evade unnecessary work when men and women are so far from knowing what free leisure is?" (p. 300). We have, one had been supposing, long ago come to the conclusion, that shorter hours, education, votes, what not, must be given to people in the hope that they *will* learn by degrees to use them well; any other course is as reasonable as expecting them to learn to swim before they go into the water. On the whole the method justifies itself. The great numbers of Trade Unionists in the North who revel in tutorial classes, and the high standard attained by many of them in such subjects as history, in spite of their having had no secondary education, are alone enough to vindicate the reduction of hours. How much greater would be the results, if a distribution of credit gave these people fuller access to books! Of course, they are a minority. But such a heightening of personality for the few is warrant enough for giving *opportunities* to all. And for the rest—any enjoyable activity that is not actually vicious is a good—though it may be very low in the scale of goods—to those who are not capable of anything higher. If the ordinary man wants League football, cinemas (such as most of these are to-day), wireless (such as most broadcasting programmes are to-day), and so forth, it is so far a good thing that he should be able to have them. And if some indulge in really vicious ways—well, others cannot attain the good of which they are capable without the liberty for all, which some are sure to misuse. It is of little spiritual value to eliminate sin (or rather some particular manifestations of sin) by taking care that people shall have no chance of indulging in them. Mr. Lee, in short,

shows a distrust of the ordinary man that is rather Calvinistic than Catholic. In particular, work in itself is not by any means so unqualified a good as he would make it out to be.

But in part, his differences from us lie in purely economic judgments. He points out how capital development in the past has been founded on unequal distribution (p. 297). But this is a commonplace in Douglas circles. The fact is of solely historical importance. Real capital has now been piled up in such vast aggregations that its conservation and development have become almost automatically assured. The problem of production, on its technical side, is solved. The day *has* now come when the all-important matter is consumption.

Some, however, of Mr. Lee's criticisms seem to rest on a misapprehension of our economic contentions. He declares that, in spite of "an advance in the equal distribution of income," "in no grade of society to-day is there the ease and confidence, and cultured leisure of the nineties" (p. 298). But a more equal distribution of an aggregate income, altogether inadequate and, even if somewhat increased, still immeasurably below the level of our potentialities, is not what we want. Secure to every family the real income now possible, and there would certainly not be the "fever and worry," and "the difficulty of meeting demands," which Mr. Lee deplores (p. 298).

Again, he declares that he fears "most legislative remedies" (p. 300). But he fails to observe that the Social Credit policy is precisely the least legislative of all the programmes in the field, and that, even in so far as it requires legislation, this would be completely non-coercive and non-confiscatory. Some of his concluding words might be taken to imply that we are proposing a compulsory sharing up of actual wealth now possessed by the rich. On his own showing, in his best touches, he ought to be with us.

Music.

It is a season of pianists so far, for all the most interesting announcements and appearances are by them. The latest new-comer is Stanislas Niedzielski, who aroused one's interest by playing over the wireless the Chopin F minor Concerto. He is very young, and has already a big and powerful technique and a freshness and individuality of outlook and manner towards the music he plays that are very welcome and stimulating. He is decidedly an artist to watch. One would rather he had omitted some very dull and commonplace routine-music of Marczewski and Rozycki, and played instead some of the remarkable and interesting work of Szymanowsky—such as the second Sonata for instance. His Debussy was much too definite, matter-of-fact, and heavy handed—Debussy resents this treatment as scarcely any other composer—but his Chopin was very good—free from unnecessary nonsense and exaggerated interpretation-chasing.

But of all the younger pianists so far the outstanding figure is Nicolas Orloff, who in addition to a superb technical mastery, is a fine, thoughtful, and deeply musical interpreter. Finesse, grace, and style are his to a degree approached by none of his contemporaries since Solito de Solis—while breadth and power are by no means lacking. His programme, although it consisted of very familiar and in some cases almost threadbare works, was uniformly so finely played with such musicianly and sensitive understanding, that one can hardly pick out any particular thing, except perhaps a quite superb piece of playing, crisp, dry, clean, and vivacious, compact of elegance and subtle, finely tempered rhythm, in a Scarlatti Cappriccio. He made one listen (as an encore) with interest and even pleasure to a work which one usually thinks will drive one mad if one hears but once again—the A flat Polonaise. His playing, also as an extra, of the delicious and amusing Liszt-Verdi "Rigoletto" paraphrase—an enchanting piece of florid Baroque—has not been equalled by anyone since Cortôt.

KAIKHOSRU SORABJI.

Drama.

The Government Inspector.—Barnes.

Contact with the wider world is now maintained chiefly by the narrower world of suburbia. To get to know anything about Russia one must go either to Poplar or to Barnes, which implies that East and West are not such poles apart as they have been pretended. Frankly, I prefer the revelation of the West. Mr. Komisarjevsky's expression of Gogol's comedy on Russian politics round about eighteen hundred pleases me a good deal more than the Communist interpretation of Russian politics to-day as the world-politics of the bright and happy future that is dawning. If Russia is the most favoured among nations the reason is probably less that she will come to maturity first than that she remained a child to the last.

The town-governor and municipal officers of a Russian provincial town recollected suddenly what a disgraceful state their charges were in when they heard that the government inspector was coming. Learning at the same time that a young stranger was putting up at the inn, and keeping himself very much to himself, they assumed the worst. The inspector must be among them, an actual witness of their negligence. There was only one thing to be done—face him in his den, recognise him, fête him, and lie to him with ready money. "And if he asks anyone what has become of the hospital for which the money was provided five years ago, tell him it was started, but was burnt down." Every Englishman appreciates what a lot of trouble may ensue upon a little misunderstanding. The stranger was not what he was mistaken for, but an adventurer at the end of his resources. He was not averse to ready money, good wine, the town-governor's pretty wife and daughter, or anything that came his way. Just after his departure—in the fear that the impersonation might go beyond a joke—the officials congratulate themselves on outwitting the Petersburg Government, and the town-governor's wife on betrothing her daughter to the great personage. In the midst of the celebrations the Postmaster rushes in breathless to read the adventurer's intercepted letter to a literary friend. Whereupon the assembly learns a good deal neither to its credit nor to its advantage, and almost before the missive is finished the herald of the real government inspector is among them.

Novelties in production are Mr. Komisarjevsky's special line. One of the novelties in this production came as a shock. It required one and a part of the five acts to pull one into the spirit of it, when I accepted it as a great stimulus to the imagination. To the English, of course, that is a shock. The various rooms in which most of the scenes took part were set on a round platform in the middle of the stage proper, skeleton garden arches serving to give the impression of doors and windows. When the arches were on our side of the auditorium we were outside looking in; when they were at the back we were inside. Not only was this whirligig very frequently turned round, but the players were frequently panting round it. I wondered whether, after all, the giratory traffic system was a Bolshevist idea, and I had to confess a certain degree of probability in the fact that it *is* an idea.

The scene was unchanged throughout; only the platform needed to be turned round. As a consequence, the tediousness that might have resulted from the fact of five acts was avoided, two just reasonable breaks being allowed for the appreciation of London's superiority over New York and similar places. Those who were willing to accept the roundabout as gaily as most of the actors did, in the spirit, that is, of children who take two chairs for a liner, a carpet for the ocean, and the rug for a new continent, came away with the pleasant feeling of having been all over the town so as to miss nothing of the farce. The whole comedy was taken in the irresponsible manner of farce, with the exception of Alfred Clark's town-governor, who made me wish to see the play done again as comedy.

Mr. Claude Rains, the bogus Government inspector, is himself greater in comedy. At our first meeting with him he looked more like a cherub than a rogue-adventurer. When he came to make love to the governor's wife and daughter under the governor's nose in the governor's house, however, building up the lie of his greatness until even the governor looked puzzled, he kept his audience unconscious and hilarious. Up to then he had mimed; he had made us doubt that even by prearrangement his real rank could be mistaken. Then he conquered. During this act, when Alfred Clark might have rested, his features were a study. His explosion, on Claude Rains's exit: "Of course, he invents a little . . ." was a treat. Hilda Sims and Stella Freeman, as the governor's wife and daughter, entered merrily into the game. In a word, the actors appeared to enjoy themselves thoroughly, except Alfred Clark, and the

audience enjoyed it all thoroughly, too—especially Alfred Clark. Only one other part was played in the naturalistic style, the rogue's servant, by Mr. Charles Loughton, who gave us a bit of lively comedy. The Russian lower classes are commonly presented either to be despised or pitied. Mr. Loughton's was hardly to be envied, but it could be enjoyed.

The finish of the play was a welcome change from what we are now accustomed to in English comedies. Instead of first stumbling, then limping, then ceasing to go on, the piece ended in a fine climax. As the herald of the real government inspector announced himself, the corrupt officials, who a moment before were hugging themselves, froze as though they had suddenly thought of Siberia.

The Great Lover.—Shaftesbury.

Last time "The Great Lover" was produced in London Mr. Moscovitch played Paurel for so long that he became an established institution. Anyone who has beheld the acting of Mr. Moscovitch once cannot help longing for the experience again. Having enjoyed it again in "The Great Lover" I can only express my wish to try it again in a great play. To see the great more than once is a natural and commendable desire; to revive the institutions of the past is equally a natural desire, but it is rarely commendable. It is, I am sure my psycho-analyst mentors will agree, the next worse alternative to repression of the desire. Even Creation ought not to be repeated.

There are plain reasons why the Great Lover is not a great character and why "The Great Lover" is not a great play. As every mystic knows, the irresistible force is very small beer without the immovable object. Being universal, this canon also applies to art, and in the drama section of art it is paramount. Paurel solved his problems with such ease that one suspects him of having worked them all out before, in which event he ought to have been solving other problems. There are bigger worlds to conquer, if I may whisper it unchivalrously behind their backs, than the world of women.

With all its weakness, the play nevertheless, apart from furnishing a canvas for Mr. Moscovitch, indicates how far drama has advanced in a downward direction since it was written. Granted that Paurel is a great lover quantitatively rather than qualitatively. Granted that for him the essence of love is not constancy nor intensity, but variety. "It is contrary to the nature of love," he might say with Montaigne, "not to be violent; and it is contrary to the nature of violence not to pass." For M. Paurel was French, like Montaigne, and it is contrary to the nature of this changeful people, as its philosophers note, to change. Granted that what little M. Paurel wants he does not want long—not, that is, when he gets it—it at least does not turn sour after it drops into his hands. Unlike the participants in the most up-to-date plays, he is a lover and not merely a seeker after sexperience for his soul's sake, or some other doubtful pretext. His qualification to be a lover is that he is interested in something besides the possession of women. He is a great artist, a great operatic singer. The women members of his audience are infatuated by his Don Giovanni. The reason may, of course, be simply that every woman secretly desires a number in the regiments overcome by Don Juan. To be conquered by this gentleman has never meant the disgrace of betrayal, but has rather been deemed a distinction; almost an unique testimonial to charm and beauty. But I choose to believe also that women love to be loved like the birds that sew not, with great song, so that the artist is a lover merely as a sort of secondary right. If this view is romantic and untrue it is worth holding, because it ought to be true, and has, therefore, a future.

Although I realise the dangers for common men when a Don Juan is about I am glad that Paurel was such a one, since it enabled the orchestra to give us Mozart's Overture—where we might have had "No No Nanette"—in addition to a number of other selections, vocal and instrumental, as the concert bills say, from the opera. In fact, the stage effects and settings generally were finely done throughout. Paurel's dressing-room was the work of years, in which one could look back over his whole career.

Mr. Clifford Heatherley's Stapleton, the Stage Manager, was worthy to associate with Moscovitch's Paurel, as was also Mr. E. H. Brooke's performance of Paurel's valet. Mr. Heatherley really convinced us of the mythical difficulties of keeping the wayward team of operatic stars from pretending themselves comets and everybody else squibs. Of Moscovitch, suffice that Paurel, admiring his own reflection in the glass, would configure not himself but Moscovitch. The male cast as a whole was good, better, though it may sound incredible, than the women. Hector Abbas, with a small part of German conductor of the orchestra, delighted the audience with his troubles owing to the Musicians' Union, which "while you are talking, Mr. Stapleton, is making new rules." Miss Ena Grossmith's rendering of the patron of opera anxious to be made love to even at lunch-time, was good, but Miss Marjorie Gordon's Ethel Warren, Paurel's grand passion, was not what we expect from her in the constellation of the "legitimate" stage. When Paurel, his voice broken and his triumph dwindling to cold history, gave her to her younger lover just in the morning of his glory as the sun of the future, Miss Gordon failed to make the smoke of sacrifice ascend. Paurel's subsequent flirtation by telephone with the patroness of opera, instead of making us sympathise with him for clutching at the first woman that offered as an opiate, inclined us to congratulate him on a celebration.

The Ringer.—Wyndham's.

A really good British detective play, even though the author and, by some strange coincidence, the most interesting character, are both Scots, was essential to vindicate our national honour. We are now entitled to reassure ourselves that we can create criminals in England. If they happen to be romantic and sentimental criminals, there is much excuse. As Mr. Edgar Wallace, author of "The Ringer," seems to have perceived, America, having monopolised all the world's gold, ought to have monopolised all the world's crime, Mr. Wallace is accordingly obliged to find some other motive for his murderer than the love of money, and elects to make him a knight-errant on behalf of morality. In short, the criminal is the hero, which is enough to make the fortune of almost any play. The whole power of the Press has prepared the land for it.

Although I am not a Scot, I will behave in Rome as the Scots would, and will not give Mr. Wallace away. It ought not to be necessary, really, for Mr. Wallace, instead of hiding his criminal's lair until we have made a search for the lady, brazingly flaunts the lady before us in the first act. Like the magician of the three card trick, he points the lady out to us before he begins. Yet at the end of the first act, as again at the end of the second, I heard nearly every character in the play charged by one member of the audience or another with the alleged crimes. If the stalls had been filled with special constables, the whole cast, detectives, policemen, and everybody, would have been under arrest.

The play suffered under the handicap of having been adapted from one of Mr. Wallace's novels, but it successfully overcame its origin. Thoroughly well put together, it did not flag a minute from start to finish. I earnestly wish that the dramatists of ideas would serve their apprenticeship to play-construction as readily as crook-play writers. Why should the fellow whose only object is to give me thrill and puzzle me surpass in craftsmanship the one who is bent on calming and enlightening me? Perhaps there is some quality in the nature of melodrama which makes for efficiency—Mr. Shaw was better at melodrama, though his followers refused to recognise it. Shakespeare, who did melodrama with a good English style, would be idolised elsewhere as he is at the Old Vic. if the public were told what sort of plays he did. The fact is that in a melodrama the characters do something. Aiming at a play of ideas an author dare not let his puppets do anything lest he be accused of melodrama.

The cast was first-class. Mr. Leslie Faber, the Scottish doctor, had most to do, and his lines, with one or two exceptions—his reference to Aberdeen, for instance—were as good as his deeds. Mr. Franklin Dyall, as the lawyer who had adopted the practice of defending burglars in return for their swag, and who could put them away if they became a nuisance as effectively as he could get them off, gave a thoroughly good rendering. The lighter intervals were in the hands of Sam Hackitt, performed by Gordon Harker, and Mrs. Hackitt by Naomi Jacob. Sam was the decent sort of ex-convict, urbane and class-conscious, that even the stalls and boxes are always pleased to meet. Mr. Harker's Sam Hackitt will attract the public for a long time. I enjoyed him immensely.

PAUL BANKS.

LAMENT OF GOD.

Now in unutterable loneliness
Must I go on. The vision of mankind
Grown into godhead with the eternal mind
Is vanished. Man remains a toy to dress
And play with; puppet dramas, to express
The clash of worlds, the war of atoms; blind
Forces he worships because he will not find
Within himself the ultimate holiness.
Though with an infinite patience men have scanned
The universe, and, with mechanic skill,
Have quickened metals and inspired the clod,
Yet are they slave to a material will.
Kingdom and power alone they understand.
They cannot see the glory that is God.

COLIN HURRY

The Shadow of the Cross.

By "Old and Crusted."

If we could conceive a visitor from another planet coming amongst us, and being set down in the midst of our Western civilisation at the present day, there is one feature of our life which, we might imagine, could not fail to excite his interest and curiosity. . . . He would have noticed at every turn in our cities great buildings—churches, temples, and cathedrals—and he would have seen also that wherever men lived together in small groups they erected these buildings.

—Benjamin Kidd, *Social Evolution.*

Some there be, men of the Rube, that worship the sacrifice to the gods. . . .

Knowledge he wins who has faith, who is devoted, who restrains the instruments of sense; having won knowledge, he speedily comes to supreme peace.

He perishes who has not knowledge or faith, who is all unbelief; neither this world nor the world beyond nor pleasantness is for him who is unbelieving.

—*Bhagavad-Gita, or The Lord's Song.*

If that visitor from another planet won his impressions of our civilisation from a touring-car or the windows of an express hurtling through the shires or home counties on a fine mid-April day, he could not fail to be charmed by the perfect setting of our country churches, as well as puzzled by their number. As far as the eye could reach, whether it be square tower on hill crest, or slim spire piercing coppice and orchard, there is never a village, scarce a hamlet in

"the ground's most gentle dimplement (as if God's finger touched but did not press in making England), such an up and down of verdure,"

without its grey time-honoured House of God. These venerable shrines are not only a central feature of the landscape, but are perpetual reminders that the things of the spirit are as essential to the life of man as the bread by which he subsists. Not all the crude distortions of the Catholic faith, which have devastated the religious life of England for the last three hundred years or more, have succeeded in destroying these ancient shrines and driving from the hearts of the people that yearning for "atonement" with perfection which became a living possibility under the shadow of the Cross on the first Good Friday.

Deans and journalists of the devouter sort are everlastingly bemoaning in pulpit and Press the decay of religious observance, and if they judge by external signs only they have evidence enough to support their plaint—especially that acid remnant which mistakes a sour Sabbatarianism for Christian practice. And there are vulgar outrageous things that jar on the most tolerant, even on

"souls, like mine, covered four inches thick with the flesh of the old Christian,"

as Sancho said. For example: on Maundy Thursday a "picture house" in the market-place of a great Midland city exhibited a flaming placard bearing the words, "The Loves of Mary Stuart. Good Friday only." Could bad taste and callous indifference go further? But there are compensations. Every now and again one gets a glimpse into the heart of man which reveals the strength and vitality of the old Faith.

One of these significant flashes of insight was accorded us just lately, and thanks are due to the *Church Times* for drawing public attention to it. The new Viceroy, Lord Irwin, was due to arrive at Bombay on Good Friday, and intimated his intention of postponing the official reception and going straight to Church. For this he was taken to task by a provincial newspaper, which regretted that an Indian Viceroy should prefer "his prayers to his official dignity," a cheap sneer that provoked a fine retort from the *Church Times*:—

"Even responsible newspapers rarely seem able to understand that there are people, sometimes highly placed, but generally undistinguished, who take religion seriously."

Now, had Lord Irwin been a subtle, cynical careerist, instead of a Christian gentleman with a high sense of duty, he could not have planned anything more calculated to strike the Indian imagination than this unaffected act of faith. That it appealed to the section of English society in India which still maintains the high traditions of the race is borne out by letters in the *Church Times*, cordially approving of the Viceroy's action and emphasising its importance. For it is important. To deal sympathetically with the problems arising from the clash of religions in a land where intense fanaticism and deep spiritual fervour are inextricably interwoven, it is necessary that a man be strong in his own faith. It makes all the difference if he who has to hold the balance between warring cults approaches his difficult task in a spirit of reverence and understanding for ancient creeds, and does not merely exercise a casual tolerance based on indifference and contempt.

We are told that the Indian Civil Service no longer draws its recruits from the pick of the Universities. For some reason or other it does not offer the attractions it did. To the careerist perhaps not, but, may it not, under the inspiration of a leader whose final test of values is the measure of the Cross, open the way to a life of sacrifice in the service of the peoples of India, which will appeal to young men—more numerous than the cynics would credit—who have graduated in the same spiritual school as Lord Irwin? The number is steadily growing of those who realise what a wonderful weapon the Catholic Faith is for fighting the evils some faint-hearted cavillers hold to be incurable. These are they of whom Newman said in his Easter Day sermon:—

"There is nothing impossible to us now, if we do but enter into the fulness of our privileges, the wondrous power of our gifts. The thing cannot be named in heaven or earth within the limits of truth and obedience which we cannot do through Christ; the petition cannot be named which may not be accorded to us for His Name's sake. For we, who have risen with Him from the grave, stand in His might, and are allowed to use His weapons."

It is no exaggeration to say that the future peace and happiness of the world depends on the men who sway the destinies of the British Empire during the next few decades. The United States of America might have joined in the great task, but, in her own vulgar phrase, she "quitted." The thirty pieces of silver were irresistible. She has her reward. But whether it be in England or India, wherever men of English blood "bear rule and are obeyed," either in high official positions or as leaders of parties, the issue for good or evil will hang entirely on the kind of men who fill those positions.

The popular Press so loud and brazen knows little and cares less for the steady growth of the Catholic Faith amongst the pick of our English stock. It simply does not understand—and that is why some sneered at Lord Irwin and failed to grasp the far-reaching possibilities of this remarkable appointment. It is not the first time in history that a great event has passed comparatively unnoticed.

Taboo.

We moderns are much amused by the stupidity of those primitive races who are subject to the awful superstitions of the Juju temple and the dread Taboo of its medicine men.

That something which fastens itself upon the minds and spirits of the savage races is of tremendous power, and sways and fashions the lives of believers to an almost incredible degree. In the South Sea Islands or in Darkest Africa a whole district with passable roads may be put under Taboo, and the trembling native will go round about for miles; will face the hidden dangers of the jungle—of the arrow that flieth by day, or the pestilence that walketh by night—rather than brave the awful mystery of the Taboo Place. He will hunger and toil and thirst to the very point of death rather than eat or drink of anything on which has fallen Taboo.

And yet! What is Taboo but a mysterious, intangible something appealing to his superstitious regard for established customs. It evolved from the past and was handed on to him by his ancestors as something to be feared to an infinite degree; something upon which sacrilegious hands must never be laid. A symbol of things unseen but terrible in their powers of evil.

Such musings on the crude beliefs of savage races lead us naturally to ask whether Civilisation has freed itself from fetish worship.

We look around in our own land and behold with pride towns and villages each with its spires pointing heavenwards; we hear the bells which for generations have called our fathers and mothers to Beth-el, and we rejoice to think of our freedom to worship the Great Father of our spirits in a land of liberty and light.

But there are times when we are not so sure of the fulness of our liberty. We came from the fertile fields waving with harvests only to walk in the shadows of want, where hunger stalks through the streets and the people have forgotten to be happy. We gaze at the well-filled shops and warehouses, but the children we see are ragged and dirty and hungry.

There is somewhere in our land a something which, amidst manifest abundance, says to those who are in want, "This is enchanted wealth, none of you shall touch it; none of you shall be the happier for it!"

It is Taboo!

. . . .

Here is a factory filled with plant for the production of woollens or cottons, and here is another where bread may be made. But inside the buildings half the plant stands idle. And outside at the gate crowds of willing men and women stand begging to be permitted to make these things.

Alas! Taboo has fallen upon men and machines alike, and the governing or misgoverning impotencies of Britain stand idly by. In their hearts a deep misgiving that all is not well in this unhappy place, and on their lips soft, mysterious whisperings of "Taboo."

In the Council Chamber which adjoins the Temple of the Juju there sit men full of loud-mouthed futilities who will argue for weeks, for months, for years, to prove that the fetish must not be angered, that dread consequences will fall upon anyone who dares to set in motion the machinery of production upon which has fallen the dread Taboo.

In the sacred groves of Theadneedle Street mysterious priests in silk hats gather daily to worship and to mutter their incantations. There the sacred rites of Loans and Interest, of Balances and Dividends are performed.

Outside may be heard the rumblings and threatenings of hungry millions, but within all is peace and calm. The High Priests have spoken the word, and with bated breath it passes from city to city—"Taboo."

Throughout the land there are deep caverns, where half-naked men delve for coal, which will give the power to move the idle plant in factory and shipyard; but from the sacred Grove there comes the dreaded word. Then the High Priests offer sacrifices, and the Juju is temporarily appeased. But soon the High Priests say the sacrifices are too exhausting to be continued; that the Juju will not always be appeased by them; and sullenly return to their Holy Books!

From every corner of the land come echoes of the despairing cries of children, robbed of their birthright, while the sullen faces of rebellious men and women scowl upon each other. Worker looks menacingly on the face of worker; master looks menacingly on the face of master, whilst each stands ever ready to fly at the other's throat. All revile each other as the cause of their woes. But in the midst of them all there still stands the Sacred Grove, where the dread symbol of their distresses flourishes under the waving palms.

But now, one has arisen who—himself emancipated from the thraldom of the Juju—has dared to name the dreaded name. He has been in the Holy of Holies, and has seen with his own eyes the THING that must not be named.

Having seen it, he has named it. And we, with him, do name it—"HIGH FINANCE."

PHILIP CARLYLE.

Tales from Tchoang-tzeu.

THE SECRET OF LONG LIFE.

The Duke Wei of Tcheon, receiving in audience T'ien K'aitcheu, said to him, "I have heard that your master, Tchou-hien, has studied the problem of the preservation of life. Will you tell me what you have heard him say on that subject?" "What can I tell you?" said T'ien K'aitcheu, "I who am but a door-keeper in the house of Tchou-hien?"

"Do not refuse me, Master T'ien," said the Duke; "I insist on being satisfied."

Then T'ien K'aitcheu replied, "Tchou-hien said that in order to preserve his life a man must do like the shepherd who, when a sheep strays, beats it to make it rejoin the flock, where it is safe."

"What does that mean?" said the Duke.

"It means this," said T'ien K'aitcheu. "In the principality of Lou a certain Chan pau lived in the mountains, drinking only water and having nothing to do with men. Thanks to this régime, at the age of seventy he was still as fresh as a child. A hungry tiger met him and devoured him. The doctor Tchang-i was very clever. Rich and poor, all desired his advice. At the age of forty he died of an infectious fever, caught at the bedside of a patient.

"Chan pau nourished his vital spirit, but allowed his body to be eaten by a tiger." Tchang-i took care of his body, but let his vital spirit be destroyed by fever. Both made the mistake of not beating their sheep; of not looking after their own safety. Confucius has said: "Not too much isolation! Not too much to do with men! The happy mean, that is wisdom." When on a dangerous road accidents happen fairly often, men warn each other, and take necessary precautions when passing there. Yet they do not warn each other of the dangers inherent in eccentric conduct or diet. How unreasonable this is!

[From the French translation of Dr. Wieger. Done into English by A. L. M.]

Reviews.

Turbott Wolfe. By Wm. Plomer. (Hogarth Press. 7s. 6d.)

The overseas tradesman faced with the problem of sexual relations with a native is no new character in fiction, but Turbott Wolfe is more than that. He starts life in South Africa ostensibly as a Colonial shopkeeper, but actually as an introspective idealist with curious ambitions. At first he would co-ordinate all the arts, but in common with greater men than himself he fails. To whom shall he turn in his loneliness? His European neighbours are dull or vicious and he is drawn into "too much sympathy for the aboriginal." He analyses his emotions for a native girl and finds he is in love with her, despite the fact that he "suffocates from a sensation of universal black darkness . . . a sacrificed white lamb in black Africa." He keeps a journal of emotions and tortures himself with the idea of the "great forbidding subcutaneous law." But nothing happens. She marries a black cousin and he is free to move on to the next ambition—an alliance between Europeans and Africans called "Young Africa," and based upon miscegenation. It is a story of inevitable failures into which a fair criticism of officialdom and missionaries is woven. As a balance to those Colonial novels where immaculate Englishmen wear haloes and sprout wings amongst "niggers" this book is refreshing, but the atmosphere is too consistently "black." There does not appear to be even one decent laugh in Africa.

The Question Mark. By M. Jaeger. (The Hogarth Press. 7s. 6d.)

Mr. Jaeger tells us in an admirable introduction that he has "always found it impossible to believe in the perfected men and women of other Utopians," and that in his study he will give us human nature as we know it. He succeeds. A twentieth-century bank clerk finds himself in a future England, where, despite free electricity, elimination of wars and disease, and other marvels, people have virtually not changed. They have less to do and more time "to be," and as a consequence the community is divided into "emotionals" and "intellectuals." The old labels have vanished only to be replaced by others. Perhaps the best written part of the book is where a new Messiah appears before an over-emotional crowd and the cynical governors of the country, but there are excellent ideas throughout.

Here Come Swords. By Coutts Brisbane. (The Bodley Head. 7s. 6d.)

Whether we guess that Pietro is the rightful Duke, that he shall marry the fair lady, and the villain be thrown out of a certain Italian state, or no, there is certain to be a tussle before all this is achieved. It would make an excellent film, for Pietro is a medieval Douglas Fairbanks, nimble in hair-breadth escapes, and equally handsome, but then we should miss the delightful conversational manner in which the book is written. "Like as if," "Seeing as how," "t'other peeper" almost make the people our friends, but would not do for captions, although one chapter heading, "Booze," would surely set us ready to sniger at a drunk monkey.

THE PATHETIC FALLACY.

Not satisfied to perpetrate
Magnifications of himself
In iron and steel, and educate
The savage in desire for pelf,

To prove himself his neighbour's lord,
And subjugate his fellow-men,
To slay in public with the sword,
And slay in private with the pen,—

Man further asks that nature shall
Incline a sympathetic ear,
And at the fitting time let fall
A warm consolatory tear:

Require Diana to perform
Her evolutions for his sake,
And, sad, expects the thunderstorm
To echo to his every ache,

And communes with the earth, and seeks
A consanguinity in stones,
Apostrophising mountain peaks,
And plaguing Neptune with his moans,—

Happy if only he rehearse
His woes to some mute auditor—
This pivot of the universe,
This egoist, this eternal bore.

A. S. J. TESSIMOND.

JOURNALISTIC WORK.—German journalist wants the help of an English gentleman, with knowledge of economics, for correction and improvement of his English style.—Apply to Mr. G. E. O. Stein, 40 Park-drive, Golders Green. (Speedwell 4788.)

Finance Enquiry Petition Committee

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It is not connected with any particular scheme of financial reform, and its object can therefore be consistently supported by everyone who believes that the fundamental cause of the economic deadlock is financial.

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Write to **THE SECRETARY, Finance Enquiry Petition Committee, 324, Abbey House, Westminster, S.W.1**

The Social Credit Movement.

Supporters of the Social Credit Movement contend that under present conditions the purchasing power in the hands of the community is chronically insufficient to buy the whole product of industry. This is because the money required to finance capital production, and created by the banks for that purpose, is regarded as borrowed from them, and, therefore, in order that it may be repaid, is charged into the price of consumers' goods. It is a vital fallacy to treat new money thus created by the banks as a repayable loan, without crediting the community, on the strength of whose resources the money was created, with the value of the resulting new capital resources. This has given rise to a defective system of national loan accountancy, resulting in the reduction of the community to a condition of perpetual scarcity, and bringing them face to face with the alternatives of widespread unemployment of men and machines, as at present, or of international complications arising from the struggle for foreign markets.

The Douglas Social Credit Proposals would remedy this defect by increasing the purchasing power in the hands of the community to an amount sufficient to provide effective demand for the whole product of industry. This, of course, cannot be done by the orthodox method of creating new money, prevalent during the war, which necessarily gives rise to the "vicious spiral" of increased currency, higher prices, higher wages, higher costs, still higher prices, and so on. The essentials of the scheme are the simultaneous creation of new money and the regulation of the price of consumers' goods at their real cost of production (as distinct from their apparent financial cost under the present system). The technique for effecting this is fully described in Major Douglas's books.

The adoption of this scheme would result in an unprecedented improvement in the standard of living of the population by the absorption at home of the present unsaleable output, and would, therefore, eliminate the dangerous struggle for foreign markets. Unlike other suggested remedies, these proposals do not call for financial sacrifice on the part of any section of the community, while, on the other hand, they widen the scope for individual enterprise.

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