THE
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INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER"
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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

Last week saw a new low record in the value of the French franc. Having touched 190 it improved to 185½, but this recovery is not to be regarded as indicating a change of sentiment in the City, which, says the City Editor of the *Daily News*, is pessimistically "'talking' francs down to still cheaper levels." This hesitation in the general downward trend of the franc was due (so the same journal comments) to sudden buying by dealers who wished to cover "forward" sales made by them at lower rates earlier in the week. The weakness extends to Belgian francs and Italian lire, a situation which the *Daily News* summarises as follows:

> "The Latin Exchanges are at present extremely sensitive; even relatively small purchases making a sharp impression on the rate. Mere enquiries are enough to send the rate one franc one way or the other."

That comments of this sort can be truly spoken about these exchanges is a reminder of the danger of allowing the money policy to be divorced from industrial policy. There is no longer any pretence that the value of the franc reflects the comparative economic stability of the French people relatively to that of other countries. By all common-sense standards pounds should be at a discount as against francs; for whereas in this country production is largely paralysed, in France it is going on unimpeded; and for every person idle in France there are 4,000 idle here—not counting the locked-out miners.

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The strike of subway workers in New York should make readers of British newspapers rub their eyes. True, it is a small strike, but the surprise is that there should be a strike at all. What is the matter with the fellows? Don't they like the secret of high wages? Last Saturday they were reinforced by power-house attendants, one-third of the staff walking out. The management, in reporting this, states that these men were immediately replaced. Whence? The yarn going about over here is that everybody is in a job, and loves it so much that only the possession of a motor car tempts him to knock off of an evening.

The destruction of the American naval arsenal at Dover, N.Y., puts Japan one notch ahead. It was, so it is confidently stated, *struck by lightning*. This is the same explanation as was given to account some time ago for the *simultaneous* explosions at two other naval depots in the United States situated *some miles apart*. In between these anti-American "acts of God" (if we recall the sequence rightly) came the disaster to the Japanese navy *by earthquake*. Providence now appears to owe America the next score. We shall see. The armaments race between America and Japan is certainly proving an obstacle race. While no one can avoid earthquakes (assuming that it *was* an earthquake which put Japan behind) one would have thought that the effective insulation of explosives in store under peace conditions was well within the wit of such electrical geniuses as the Americans. Either they do not know everything across the Atlantic—or they do not report everything.

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The Eight Hours Bill was passed a few days ago. Almost at once the Press commenced to mourn the passing of the Eight Hours Act. Meanwhile there was a Nürnberg riot in the House of Lords and a Midsummer Night's Dream outside. Wagner and Shakespeare are the only Parliamentary Correspondents worth listening to in these times. Mr. Chesterton makes some pretty comments in the current issue of his journal on the puzzlement of the Labour members over the phenomenon of the two Mr. Baldwins—one might almost say the two Bully Bottoms. He says:

> "There is no Prime Minister; there are no Ministers; there is no Cabinet; in that docile traditional conventional sense in which the simple Socialists and others still accept it. There is an exceptionally reasonable and good-natured gentleman named Baldwin, who is the bearer of this official name, as many other decent English gentlemen consent to be called grotesque names like Red Dragon and Blue Mantle. But the leadership once implied in such titles has stiffened like heraldry. *The thing that rules England to-day is the Banker who is at the back of the Industrial group; and even that only rules so long as the Banker is at the back of it.*"

Then follows (in another article) an appeal to Mr. Baldwin to risk the destruction of his Party, and to

conquer his apparent fear that if he does so the only alternative will be "the formation of a definitely Monopolist Party to oppose the growing Labour power."

> "He is wrong. *There are many men in all the three parties* who are opposed both to Capitalist and Collectivist Monopoly, and would gladly follow a leader who showed that opposition and was prepared to enforce it."

* * *

We congratulate Mr. Chesterton on his analysis. It is true. His appeal, bold as it is, is feasible. There are more members of Parliament than even he thinks who are ripe for service under a leader who stands for a Consumer Policy. So far as economics is in question, it is speaking prophetic truth to say: "There are no parties." In a short time it will be a manifest truth. Never in the history of politics has there appeared so much *uncertainty* in class and party controversies—so much *fear of victory* on every side. What can this portend but a truce, and then an alliance? The situation reminds us of two small boys—both unwilling—both nervous—being set on to fight each other for no other reason than to decide a third party bet. "Go on, you can beat him," is vociferated in the ear of each, so that for the very din neither can collect his thoughts sufficiently to object: "Yes; but when I do; what then?" At the opening of a previous coal strike some banks lent money to the Miners' Federation and others lent money to the South Metropolitan Gas Company. That is the rôle of the financiers: to make bets with each other, and hold the coats of the pugilists. And when the fight is over, when both victors and losers leave the ring with "cauliflower" ears and "cherry" noses, all they get is their coats back—coats lighter by the abstraction of a small contribution towards the expenses of the entertainment. Similarly in international affairs. Currency exchange quotations are the bankers' starting prices for the coming War Stakes. It is for a united England to turn round on these backers and tell them that she has scratched her engagement to run.

Through Savings to Prosperity.

Mr. Sharrock, Chairman of the Liverpool Board of Elder, Dempster and Co., Ltd., the West African shipowners, is the latest publicist with a remedy for our economic distress. Addressing the Liverpool Shipping Staffs' Association on July 3, he rapidly sketched the history of the British people.

> "Remember, it was our people who taught *other countries* how to win cheap coal, how to invent and make machinery and engines, how to build railways and ships, and how to manufacture cotton goods. . . . And while we were doing all these wonderful things we were at the same time opening up and developing the great colonies and dominions of Canada, of Australia, of New Zealand, of South and West Africa, and other places. Yes, it was the people of these little Isles of ours who did all this, and, incidentally, built up the British Empire. Truly a remarkable breed of people! What courage and strength, what patience and genius must have been . . ."

Yes, yes. And now?

> "Meanwhile the great national problem of *how to find profitable work for over* 1,000,000 *unemployed* is being ignored. . . . It is time the British workers . . . agree to use the great power and influence they possss to facilitate and foster the production of wealth."

It will be observed that what is really puzzling Mr. Sharrock is the fact that these little Isles, having fitted up every country in the world with machines and organisation to manufacture everything for themselves, are not being asked to start and do it all over again. The only explanation he can think of is that

> "The British people have turned aside from their glorious destiny——

(to build the Empire twice!)

> "——and are throwing the whole industrial life of the nation out of gear while they squabble about the slogan, 'not a minute on the day, not a penny off the pay.'"

But that is no explanation. Why do the British people squabble about this slogan? What is behind their demand? Merely their desire for more leisure and more goods. Mr. Sharrock has proved, in his pæan of praise, that there is no physical impediment to its fulfilment. An island that can stock the world with the means of production can assuredly stock itself with products, and can do so in a fraction of the time necessary for the former task. If a baker in a town paid his hands for making ovens and baking appliances as well as bread until he had fitted up everybody else in the town to be a baker, he would then be at the end of his "export trade" whether for ovens or bread. All he could do would be to switch his men's energies over to doing his own repairs and making more bread for themselves and him. And, of course, he would have to take hours off the day and add loaves to the pay in order to prevent his output exceeding the measure of his and his men's capacity to consume bread.

Common sense would dictate this—unless, indeed, it happened that his grandfather lived with him and kept all the money, only lending it to him on condition that he agreed to keep his men at work all day and to pay them no more than would just feed them. Such a baker would typify industrial England; and his grandfather the Bank of England.

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Mr. Sharrock's remedy, however, is just the opposite:—

> "Let them [the workers] form themselves into, shall we say, a 'British Workers' Savings and Investment Association' . . . we will suppose that 10,000,000 agree to support the Association by making an average payment into the funds of, say, 5s. per week."

In one week, he says, fresh capital would be available for investment to the extent of £2,500,000 per week, or, say, £130,000,000 altogether in the first year.

> "In ten years these funds . . . would have increased to a total of £1,300,000,000, and at the end of 20 years the capital collected would be £2,600,000,000. This is without taking any credit for dividends or profits, or for any increment in the value of the investments. . . . In ten years the net dividends received from the investments of the Association, even at the average low rate of 4 per cent., would amount to £52,000,000 per annum and in twenty years the income would amount to £104,000,000 every year."

Mr. Sharrock's arithmetical calculations are correct. The trouble with his proposal is: (a) The level of wages generally does not permit of an investment surplus. The cost-of-living index figure does not recognise such a cost. (b) The saving of £2,500,000 a week by the workers would mean £2,500,000 a week of revenue taken away from industries serving the consumers' markets in this country. For a week or two these industries would have to write down prices in order to dispose of their now surplus production, after which they would naturally reduce their volume of production. Having incurred actual losses they would seek to recover them by an increase of prices, added to which their standing charges would have remained unaltered and would compel them to raise prices on that ground alone. (c) The transference of the workers' savings to capital account in export industries (which must be intended) would mean either an addition to existing capital charges on industry, or else it would merely enable industry to pay off old debts. In neither case would the operation necessarily lead to increased production by the industries in which the savings were invested. Increased production waits, not on investment capital, but on orders. In this instance the orders would have to come from abroad. There is no guarantee that they would be forthcoming, but every probability that they would not. (d) As a general economic proposition it is becoming increasingly recognised that the re-investment of private earnings increases the total cost of all production relatively to the total of private incomes, out of which alone can costs finally be defrayed. Hence (e) re-investments *automatically reduce the fund out of which they can collect a dividend*—and this is quite irrespective of how much or little production takes place under their supposed stimulus.

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Mr. Sharrock, being engrossed in shipping, is less likely to appreciate the force of these internal financial consequences than are other observers. He assumes that so long as England works harder, consumes less, and exports more, the money end of the problem must come out right. He is stated, in the typescript of his speech sent us by Messrs. Elder, Dempster and Co., to be a "financial expert," a term which only too often expresses merely the ability of a man to use existing financial facilities to the best advantage. But this is not a sufficient qualification for attempting a general remedy of the industrial problem. In fact, it is a handicap; for the principles of a national finance-economy are not an extension of those of factory finance-economy, they are an inversion of them. For instance, a firm can realise a money profit, but a whole nation never—unless its banks create and give it extra money. A whole community can only make a profit in terms of production. It can only *realise* that profit in terms of consumption. Therefore a policy directed to promoting increased home consumption is the only one that will induce everyone to co-operate in increasing production. Mr. Sharrock must think again.

Financial Law and the Poor Law.

The Board of Guardians (Default) Bill has passed its third reading by a majority of 195. By the end of the week Mr. Neville Chamberlain's department will be administering the Poor Law in West Ham; and not only that, but will have power to suppress any other Board of Guardians without getting the consent of Parliament. Labour members, and Sir Beddoe Rees, opposed this, but Mr. Chamberlain justified it on the ground that when action is decided on it should operate at once. Mr. Arthur Greenwood made some good points relative to the charge of "electoral corruption" in West Ham. He referred to the fact that in one ward in West Ham only 2,596 people went to the poll out of 16,000, and further declared that those who receive relief are in such a hopeless state of mind that they have abandoned all interest in elections.

However, the essential feature of this transaction is that it is a fresh direction in which finance is detaching the administration of money from political control. Mr. Neville Chamberlain can now say to the bankers, like Mr. Snowden did, "I am your Minister." We showed recently how they were usurping Parliament's function in respect of tax collection, intercepting the particular taxes they required to meet their debt service by taking control of industrial monopolies and fixing prices; now we see them directly administering local expenditure. They would no doubt reply that the West Ham Board of Guardians flouted the law. Doubtless it did. Nevertheless, in doing so it was performing a righteous act. There is no legal scale of relief in operation at present which is not an iniquity to anyone who watches and sees how few steps a pound note can totter towards the price of a man's keep.

West Ham owes £300,000 to the bank, and £2,000,000 to the Ministry of Health. This represents a total sum of £2,300,000, distributed to the community in excess of rates collected from the community. It ranks with the coal subsidy in one of its aspects, and with the American instalment-purchase policy in another. The theoretical objection to it is that it is inflationary in its effects. Against that objection is the practical consideration that it has bought peace, not to mention that it has allayed hardship among the unemployed, and, in the process of relieving them, has automatically eased the difficulties of tradesmen and others who have supplied the means of life to them. Every pound given away by the "profligate" guardians has defrayed trade costs somewhere to the amount of one pound. The unemployed have been, as it were, financial agents through whose hands this relief to industry has flowed. They have passed on *money* (which the manufacturer is starving for) in return for *kind* (which the manufacturer is itching to dispose of), and so have earned their keep just as truly as financial houses which collect and pass on (less a much more ambitious discount) subscriptions to capital issues. *Every consumer is an essential agent in the credit cycle, and is entitled to remuneration in that rôle as well as in his rôle as a worker.*

Reviewing the situation nationally, it will be seen that Boards of Guardians have been unconsciously protecting the community from the banks. The more closely that public administrators come into contact with the difficulties of individuals at the bottom of the social scale, the more they are impelled to reverse the policy of financiers at the top. "We must have deflation rigorously carried out," says the centralised authority. "Yes," replies the non-centralised agent, "but it can't be carried out." "But that's nonsense," persists the authority; "it is based on a sound and true financial concept." "That may be," reply the Guardians, "*but it won't work.*" "You mean that you can't make it work," is the final answer: "very well, we will put someone in your place who can." There is only one reply to this omniscient and autocratic challenge, and that is: "All right, *you get on with the job.*" The West Ham Guardians have made it, and we hope that every union in the country will do the same, as and when challenge comes to it. Let those who must have chestnuts get the blisters.

All talk about the "fundamental principle of the constitution that local government shall be vested in the elected representatives of the people" is futile so long as national government is vested in the cosmopolitan court of the Bank of "England." We suspect that Mr. Wheatley, who moved the Labour resolution from which we take the above quotation, knows this as well as we ourselves do. At any rate, the *Daily News's* Parliamentary Correspondent comments that he spoke to the resolution

> "in a speech so wide in its sweep as to enter regions beyond the ken of all but theorists."

—which, we presume, explains why the readers of that journal were carefully preserved from the confusion of reading what Mr. Wheatley really said. Still, we must not blame the *Daily News* overmuch: its business is to temper the brain-storm to the cocoa-cup.

The Bank of England's protégés will now make their appearance in West Ham, and we shall await with interest the *Daily Mail's* reaction to this instance of the "multiplication of salaried officials." In the meantime it will be the duty of the evicted Guardians to point out to their constituents the consequences of the threatened reversal of their past policy, showing them that hitherto the Boards of Guardians have virtually been *placing orders with manufacturers and traders* on behalf of the unemployed; that the new officials have come down to take away as many of those orders as they possibly can; and that there is no likelihood of their reduced expenditure causing a decrease in the rates, because the savings they may effect are already ear-marked for

the repayment of outstanding debts to the banks, either directly or via the Ministry of Health;

Further, the logic of the new position must be driven home. Now that the Poor Law is taken over by an external authority instead of by locally elected Guardians, the municipality is absolved from the responsibility of collecting any Poor Law rate at all. It is the apotheosis of impertinence for aliens to come into a local government area with the proposition—"Here, we are going to spend your money according to our own ideas, and propose to use your rate-collecting machinery to raise the sum we want." The obvious answer is: "No you don't. If you are going to spend over our heads, you go and collect over our heads. Hire your own collectors. Ours will collect the General Rate, and no more." This policy should be in the forefront of West Ham's municipal politics from now onwards. By the time of the next elections there should be a trained band of speakers ready to educate the ratepayers and to get a majority of councillors pledged to take up this attitude.

The existing financial tyranny subsists on voluntary contributions of public service. The quickest way to break it is to leave it to break itself.

The Economist's Bookshelf.

Money. By R. A. Lehfeldt. (Oxford Press. 2s. 6d. net.)

"A bank is primarily an organisation for putting those who have capital to spare into connection with those who want to borrow" (p. 37). Bank credit can be expanded without difficulty, but "contraction is not so easy, for just as loans make deposits, so repaying loans to the bank puts deposits out of existence" (p. 43). A bank manager is guided by the "amount of money entrusted to him by customers," but he "does not actually lend their money to other customers" (p. 43). One concludes that a bank is *not* primarily an organisation for "putting those who have capital to spare, etc., etc. . . ." Again, when a bank lends credit, "the customer provides the real value, the bank provides the liquidity, the acceptability that makes it serve as money." Thus, a bank now appears to be primarily an organisation to enable people to borrow *without* coming into connection with those who have capital to spare. Passing to Mr. Lehfeldt's "suggestions for improvement," he mentions Mr. Keynes' "bold" proposals for a managed paper currency, but doubts whether the authorities in charge of the currency are "yet worthy of such complete trust as would be needed." After this it is not surprising to be told that "there are also many quack remedies, not considered here." They certainly are not.

Currency: An Indictment. By A. S. Baxendale. (Cecil Palmer. 6s. net.)

This book, published last year, indicts the gold standard. For those whose interest in finance-economics is limited to the issue between the deflationists and inflationists, Mr. Baxendale's numerous quotations and statistics will be of the greatest service, and will doubtless be freely drawn upon by the ever increasing body of critics of the financial policy of the Bank of England. The greater part of the book surveys "Money and Trade" from 1846 till 1924. It describes the "history and motive of the Bank Rate." On the other hand the problems which would arise in the event of a reversal of the Bank's deflationary policy are not discussed. Probably Mr. Baxendale's motto is "one thing at a time"; and he need not be criticised for that. He has provided an efficient "speaker's hand-book." One quotation must suffice: "Official statistics indicate that prior to the war German industry was burdened with a debt amounting to approximately 4,605 million gold marks. . . . During 1922 and 1923 these debts were considered as practically wiped out by the depreciation of the mark. . . . In order to equalise the industrial situation internationally, the Dawes Committee therefore recommended the placing of a mortgage of 5,000 million gold marks on German industry." This passage is reproduced by Mr. Baxendale from an article by Mr. C. C. Miller in the United States Department of Commerce.

The Condition of England.

By Grant Madison Hervey.

I.—REFLECTIONS ON THE STRIKE.

The supreme problem and struggle of this age is to convince all men that they *are* men, and not beasts. But papers like the London *Daily Mail* and the Sydney *Bulletin* are written and edited on the assumption that men have ceased to exist. For the Macleods of Australia, as for the Rothermeres and Beaverbrooks of England, only beasts walk the earth. And it was in a one-man revolt—a solitary strike against a Press-poisoned universe—that in November, 1923, I went voluntarily to prison for two years; in order, of course, that I might cleanse my hands from twenty years of labour for the *Bulletin*, and that I might disinfect my soul.

Sooner or later, all true journalists come to that pause. They must make their choice. George Fox, founder, indeed, of English Cadburyism, was such an one; and John Wesley, in part, another. My whole idea was: Could not the universe still possess a Man? Could I not, myself, make all the poisoned earth quite rich again, by asserting Manhood? That was my theory. "I will go into prison again," I said to myself, "and use it as a kind of stony bath for the spirit. I will hold a conference with God, if, indeed, there be a God, such as Moses held on Sinai. Afterwards, perchance, knowing that I have not sat down in soft places, the world of men who are similarly in rebellion against Universal Beasthood will be willing to listen to me; will pause for an hour to hear some account of my interview with God?"

One day a warder said to me, mysteriously: "Big things are happening in England. There is a Labour Government in London. Ramsay MacDonald is Prime Minister." I said nothing, but I thought a lot. And I went on swinging my pick. The months passed. Because of my exemplary behaviour, I was sent to another prison—it is situated eighteen miles from Taree, in northern New South Wales—where there are no walls. In that place there are no armed guards, either. One can receive books, papers, and magazines there, from all the world. So I drew on Boston and on London, mainly, for my supplies. I received THE NEW AGE every week; also the *Manchester Guardian*, the *Nation*, *Spectator*, *Saturday Review*, *Hibbert Journal*, Maxse's Mad Mullah of a *National Review*, the American *Forum*, Unitarian *Christian Register*, etc. I said nothing to the world. I stayed in that place for more than a year, and worked. I drew from the glorious beauty of the Australian Bush treasures of the spirit better than those of any Gethsemane or Mount of Olives. I lived practically naked, beneath a tropic sun.

It is in the terms of that mental and moral background that I propose to offer some reflections upon the Strike of 1926 in England.

They are directed primarily at A. R. Orage. Mr. Orage, by the misuse of his great talents, is fundamentally more responsible for the Strike, and for the present condition of England, than any other living man. The condition of England—what is it? Where is the super-masterman to give it its true name? It is the condition of economic small-pox. Without any suggested criticism of the present management of THE NEW AGE, I say that had Orage remained in England, and stuck to his job, even as I have stuck to mine in the Australian wilderness, England would be a different England today.

Writers must face their responsibilities. No man, once he has subscribed to the general tenets of THE NEW AGE, dare live as anything except a New Agent—a living molecule of that veritable and imperative New Age. I mean the coming epoch; of

which the paper itself is merely the shadow, and not the substance at all. It is now some twelve or fifteen years, I suppose, since first I signed an article for THE NEW AGE. I have spent six of the intervening years in prison. But, throughout the whole of that period, whether in jail or out of it, and no matter whether I saw the paper or not, I have regarded myself steadfastly as a sworn New Agent—as a Nihilist of the British Empire—determined to help inaugurate the New Age.

That is what I call the life of principle. That is the life of devotion to an ideal. True, it has not made me rich. But why should it? The whole engineering system of Beasthood is based upon the assumption that it is the first duty of man to own money. I deny that. I assert that the first duty of man is to own himself. Or, in other words, to BE a man. That done, one can exert pressure; one exerts, as it were, a Mosaic or a Jesus-leverage upon the universe. That neglected, not the wealth of 50,000 Henry Fords will suffice. Ford of Detroit is a failure, make no mistake of that. I do not care if his factories emit 10,000,000 cars per annum. That sort of thing, after all, is merely a blow-fly's idea of greatness. And, to me, accordingly, Mr. Henry Ford is simply the world's super blow-fly; infecting myriads of human beings with the will to slavery, in order that they may possess a car and so join the vast procession of those who live beyond their means.

(*Brisbane, Q., Australia.* 22/5/1926.)

Towards a New Social Synthesis.

By Maurice B. Reckitt.

IV.

A large part of the difficulty in working out and gaining adherents for a social programme that shall be at the same time radical and rational lies in the tendency of the average man to align himself as a blind champion or an undiscriminating critic of existing social institutions. He will not ask himself what is right and what is wrong in their spirit or their structure, and even though he will admit under pressure that there is much that is both, he will hasten away into his chosen pose of complacency or condemnation. Yet it is not faint heartedness (as many assume), but clear-headedness which dictates the necessity of discrimination and eclecticism in calculating the assets and liabilities of our existing order. A true "social balance sheet" will help to show us not only how we stand, but how we may best hope to move forward. The task of arriving at it is complicated by the fact that many things which in existing circumstances operate to injure society might be harnessed to its service. I have suggested already that this is true of such socialist bugbears as private enterprise and competition. It is true also of such institutions as the Trust and the Trade Union, both of which appear to exist to-day for the dual purpose of thwarting each other's activities and taking toll of the public. A Trust operating a policy of economic scarcity and making its gains largely by keeping goods in short supply is so flagrant a menace to the general interest that its social and economic advantages are largely obscured. Yet these are very real. The power to operate on a large scale, where the process involved is one to which such an organisation is appropriate, is beneficial not only in enabling the costs of production to be reduced, but in fostering the habit of taking large views. Similarly with the Trade Union: while the only opportunity that the workers have of controlling industry is the power to bring it to a standstill, the strike cannot be dismissed as the caprice or malice of incorrigible malcontents; it is rather the assertion of a free-will otherwise denied any outlet. But with the Unions passing from passive and combative bodies of wage slaves into active and co-operative guilds of workers in a "professionalised" industry, society will have gained a corporate asset of incalculable value. The Trust with its claws cut, the Trade Union with its soul released, can develop from a restrictive enmity into a co-operative unity. The faults they exhibit are not solely in themselves, but rather in the stars of the financial firmament which determine their fates on the industrial earth.

Not all our seeming "liabilities," then, are necessarily such; some may be translated into assets when the distorting influences of organised avarice, the "power complex," and the scarcity policy of finance are faced and overcome. It would be absurd to under-estimate the difficulties of such a task. The road to economic democracy will be uphill, and there will be lions in the path. But the road is practicable, and if we choose it carefully, the lions will be less numerous and less ferocious than those which have threatened the progress of social movements in the past. For till now the faulty strategy of the reformer has enabled plutocracy to fight under the stolen banner of property, and thus rally to its support thousands who were really its victims, and should have been its assailants. If we do but make that banner our own, we force the enemy to give battle under the flags of monopoly and scarcity—causes which are little likely to bring him reinforcements. The synthesis which I have sought to outline gives us the power to achieve the two essential conditions for success in the cause of economic democracy—isolation of the few whose sectional interests are fundamentally hostile to the public good, and a programme which can unite every legitimate interest and fulfil every valid hope. The universalisation of property through the dividend primarily; the opportunity for vocation, self-expression and responsibility in the development of the guild; protection from predatory exactions by the scientific regulation of price; means to the realisation of a leisure that shall not be merely a destitute idleness: such a programme, lucidly set out, convincingly explained and defended, will be difficult indeed to combat. It should enable a movement to be recruited from a far wider area than our Labour politicians have yet seriously attempted to reach. Their aim has been to "proletarianise" in philosophy and outlook a naturally reluctant middle-class; whereas the true method, for which we alone have the clue, is to divide society as high up as possible—just below the financial dictators and trust magnates—both dealers in "scarcity."

Is such an alignment impracticable? Can we afford to disregard public opinion, and trust to the threat of final crisis and breakdown to force our rulers to apply the technique of social credit to save a situation otherwise irremediable? No space is left to discuss such large questions, to which I must return therefore merely a bald and unconvincing "No." But whether or not I am right, I am certain at least that economic democracy in any true sense can never be the result of any such death-bed repentances on the part of those now in command. For it does not depend on any such, but on the assertion of will on the part of the many, and their refusal to surrender either to that avarice which is the poison of this age, or to the fatalist philosophy which allows such a paper as *The Times* to declare in an editorial that "circumstances compel us to live in a society which will only work if our efforts to reform it are strictly curtailed." There, perfectly expressed, is the outlook of the capitulating mind, which is the ultimate cause of our social enslavement, and from which our new synthesis implies, and must proclaim, a triumphant escape.

The True Inwardness of Catholic Sociology.

IV.

The Church's unwavering defence (subject to such conditions as we have noticed) of private property has had two main roots. In large part it has been due to the intimate manner in which property is implicated with the family and the home. The Church is absolutely pledged to the ideal of faithful monogamous marriage, and it is unthinkable that it should ever abandon this. It may indeed be an open question what ought to be its exact attitude towards divorce. It is arguable that some relaxation of its hitherto prevailing view on this matter might actually strengthen its hands in commending to the modern world its characteristic ideal. But it cannot for a moment countenance any real laxity in regard to the marriage tie. It forms an essential part of its total view of life that any sane society is only possible on the basis of a much greater measure of sexual self-control than the predominant mind of our day is at all willing to accept. Which party is right in this matter, the logic of facts will no doubt in the end convincingly demonstrate. Meanwhile it must be noted that the Church must, and will, continue to contend earnestly for the institution of the family.

But this practically carries with it the institution of property as an indispensable corollary. Family life necessitates a home; and those familiar with the life of our poor know how "the home" is their recognised name for such scraps of property—a few pots and pans and wretched sticks of furniture—as they possess. A home worthy of the name must be founded on some much more generous measure of property. On this ground alone then a Christian must reject pure Communism, and will do well to be suspicious of every form of Socialism, properly so-called. For this affords no adequate guarantee for any genuine property. *In principle* it is thoroughly inimical to it. Its fundamental formula of the collective or communal ownership of the means of production must either be interpreted so laxly that it is, in effect, explained away, and may as well be frankly abandoned altogether; or so strictly that the legitimate desire for ownership cannot be really satisfied within its limits. The Collectivist, in short, has already sold the decisive pass to the Communist.

If we turn to history, we find that the only experiments in Communism within the orthodox Christian tradition have been made by celibate communities. That way of life has always been upheld by Catholicism as a special vocation to which some are truly called; and indeed has very often been unduly exalted in comparison to marriage. Yet in practice the Church has always been compelled to recognise that the married state is the normal life for the majority of men and women. Hence Communism as a system of society is *ipso facto* ruled out. In modern unorthodox Communism there are two ways of trying to meet this dilemma. On the one hand there is a mode of thought which we commonly describe as Tolstoian. This condemns as radically sinful, property-holding, resistance by physical force, and sexual relations; it urges all men to strive resolutely to attain, as near as may be, to the ideal of having nothing to do with any of these. Now, whatever else may be said about this view, at any rate, it is not Catholic, being rather Manichæan than Christian. In any case, we need not treat it very seriously. For though widespread, from time immemorial, in the East, including Russia, it is, in its entirety, hardly to be found in the West. Its Western imitators, for the most part, make arbitrary selections from what is really a coherent and logically powerful philosophy, and insist on the first two taboos (or sometimes only on the second), while ignoring the third. Western Communism and left-wing Socialism would seem, in the main, to incline (though doubtless with very varying degrees of thoroughness and consistency) to a very different, but even more anti-Christian, solution—namely, a complete laxity of sexual relations, combined with the maintenance and control of children by the community acting as universal parent. This would seem, so far as can be judged by their proceedings, to be the ideal that is really at the back of the minds of the Russian Bolsheviks, to which they have made such tentative approaches as circumstances and the state of public opinion rendered possible.

However, there is another reason of a wider kind for the Catholic insistence on the right of property. This is that an adequate measure of property is an indispensable guarantee of the liberty of the individual. And for freedom Catholicism (in so far as it is really true to its deepest principles) must stand, since this is evidently involved in that sacredness of personality, emphasised so strongly (as we noticed at the outset) by some of the fundamental dogmas of Catholic theology. That (as regards the inherent logic of the Faith) freedom is a Catholic ideal does not admit of dispute. The Church's practical record, however, in history in regard to this ideal is, it must be confessed, of a very mixed kind.

The attitude of the Church on the whole towards slavery and towards serfdom—the milder form which, for the most part, slavery assumed during the Middle Ages—was very temporising and ambiguous. Eminent doctors, including Popes, and Canons of Councils enunciated the most splendid generalities as to human freedom. Thus the Council of Chalons (A.D. 650) declared, "The highest piety and religion demand that Christians should be removed entirely from the bonds of servitude." Similar statements were frequently made in the forms used for the manumission of bondmen. One of these runs, "as the human creature who has been formed in the image of our Lord ought to be free by natural right . . . let these men and women be free." And to a very great extent the Church did encourage masters to emancipate their slaves or serfs, as the case might be. But there is a heavy count on the other side. Thus abbeys and other ecclesiastical corporations were as a general rule forbidden to release their serfs, or at least very severely restricted in doing so, lest trust property devoted to religious uses should be depreciated in value. Further, authoritative opinion came to justify explicitly the institution of servitude. This line was taken by the two outstanding masters of Western theology, in the patristic and medieval periods respectively, Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. Their apologetic arguments were derived from pagan philosophy, and in this case they were certainly prevented by this from a genuinely Christian standpoint. The pressure of the *status quo* and of intrenched interests also no doubt pushed the Church and its leading thinkers powerfully in the same direction. But in face of the more general flourishes in a contrary sense which were commonplaces in the Church, one cannot but feel that there is something shamefaced about these pleas by which theologians wriggled out of their commitments, when they were challenged to honour them in regard to a specific issue. The general tendency of the *principles* of Catholicism in this matter is plain, and we may appeal to them from the paganised theories by which, when it came to detailed applications to practice, Churchmen sought to escape from a tight corner.

N. E. EGERTON SWANN.

"The Three Conventions."

By C. M. Grieve.

The contradictoriness and confusion of journalism and literature on all subjects is due less to the difficulties of the subjects themselves than to the lack of a standard—a point of honour—below which it should be impermissible for any writer to begin writing at all. We are all familiar with the tremendous proportion of printed matter engaged in doing nothing else than giving fresh leases of life to ideas which have long ago been exploded. Intelligences will never be equalised in such a way as to render unnecessary all manner of popularisations, each, as it goes down the scale, involving a greater and greater proportion of error. But it was never more necessary to make war on the idea that "everybody is entitled to his own opinion," with the associated principle of "Freedom of the Press" (in its generally accepted result). They are incompatible with a huge annual expenditure on compulsory education. As Ramiro de Maeztu pointed out some years ago in these columns, the organisation of opinion—the enforcement of a policy of progressive mental and spiritual cultivation—must also eventually become obligatory on civilised Governments. A question to-day is whether this is likely to be realised in time to save European civilisation. A recent writer, discussing Spengler's "Der Untergang des Abendlandes," says, for example:

> "Can it be that this fair structure of Western science, which has cost the labour of centuries to rear, which seemed so firmly seated upon earth and lifted up its pinnacles to heaven, is, after all, a baseless fabric destined one day to dissolve and leave not a wrack behind? and that the very magician who called it into being, the Faustic Intellect, will himself pronounce the spell that shall cause it to vanish? Spengler apparently thinks so. Modern science, he reminds us, *exists only in the minds of scientific scholars*—a restricted number of specialists. If they leave no successors, if the intellectuals of the future, baffled and despairing in the search for eternal truth, turn their thoughts to aims more concrete and easier of attainment, then our science is doomed to perish. Our scientific books may indeed remain stored away in libraries, but they will be a dead language, as unintelligible to the men of the new era as the science of the Hindoos or the Arabs is to us."

The disappearance of a civilisation will, of course, be nothing new in the history of the world. Several hundred years before Christ the Chinese were in possession of the secrets of processes in the manufacture of steel which we only "discovered" within the past hundred years—*de novo*, after centuries of progressive research and experimentation. In many directions Europe has not yet re-attained to knowledge and powers possessed in various lapsed civilisations. Must mankind always have this Sisyphean task? It is questionable whether in all the arts to-day, for example, little international coteries are not operating upon planes which it is not the destiny of any appreciable proportion of humanity ever to attain to—whether the arts are not necessarily tending further and further away from all but a very limited *intelligentsia*. Certain it is that for huge blocks of our people all our arts and sciences are non-existent. Conversing with these folks on any subject one can see them reach their "saturation level," as it were—can know (like a memory of a stage oneself has passed, but without the power to tell them *how*) that they are *constitutionally incapable* of going any further. It is as if a person living in the Fourth Dimension were to try to educate a three-dimensional person up to his own standard. This applies to every department of human knowledge to-day; the opinions of all but a few on anything are negligible. This, I take it, is what Orage means when he says that he gave up THE NEW AGE because he had come to the conclusion that there would never be a sufficient amount of the right kind of mentality in Great Britain to put into practice an incontestable solution of our economic difficulties and, through these, many of our other main difficulties.

My space will not permit me to do more than suggest that attitude as a background to a note on one of the most remarkable books of this century and many centuries. This is Professor Denis Saurat's "The Three Conventions"—a reprint, mainly, of his metaphysical dialogues as they appeared in THE NEW AGE ten years ago. It is a book worthy to stand beside such NEW AGE products as Hulme's "Speculations," Orage's "Readers and Writers," and Major Douglas's writings. It is like the last-named—and unlike the two first-named—in that it is complete; and does full justice to its author. Apparently it has not yet secured an English publisher. It is published in America at two dollars by the Dial Press (Lincoln MacVeagh). It is brilliantly introduced by Mr. Orage, who points out that:

> "so long as we conceive the world to be only in the process of Becoming, so long will it be inevitable that all our world-conceptions be in constant flux. . . . On the other hand, if we accept the *classical* view that the process of Becoming is not the Becoming of Reality, but only of our perception of Reality; in other words, that Reality always is, and that our appreciation of it alone is a process—many things, now necessarily unintelligible and meaningless, become at least potentially intelligible Knowledge, in short, becomes possible on the assumption that there is something to know, not merely in a remote future when Reality has become, but here and now. . . . Science to-day may be said to be advancing in all directions and therefore in none, for want of precisely the true conception of the whole, which a competent Metaphysic or Philosophy can alone provide. And it is doomed to wander and be lost in the endless labyrinths of Becoming, unless some Ariadne, with the plan of the maze before her, presents science with the guiding thread. In practical life, no less than in science, the need of a true view of the whole is perhaps the greatest need of our day. Psycho-analysis has revealed the fact that our characteristic emotional attitude towards life is determined by our conception of life. Such as we conceive life to be we feel it to be; and as we feel it to be we act and move and manifest our being. . . . And in the infinitely wider field of human existence if we, as men, mistake life for what it is not, conceive it as an unknowable Becoming in place of a Reality knowable in Becoming, the attitude evoked by the image will impel us to acts of correspondent error, life being one thing, our false imagination of it becomes the parent of everything false. The specifically pathological cases of the psycho-analysts are only the extreme forms of an almost universal pathology."

Mr. Orage goes on to say that he knows nothing outside of certain Sanskrit text-books impossible of intelligible translation, to equal in precision and concise comprehensiveness these essays of Saurat's. I do not understand this untranslatability. If these convey a clear meaning what is to prevent its re-expression in any language? I do not know Sanskrit, so I do not require to qualify my admiration for these dialogues by any such comparison. They can and will be translated into every language. I know nothing like them in any language for sheer simplicity. They are, as a result, extremely difficult reading. They abound in ideas of the first moment which are perhaps infinitely more insusceptible of common understanding, than Major Douglas's "New Economic Theorem," has proven. But, as I have already indicated, they are the product of a mind which has anticipated in many different and *deeper* directions that tendency of this age which has otherwise manifested itself in the *Credit Reform* Movement, in the new Neo-Classical tentatives in European literature, in the wide-spread repudiation of democracy—in all, in short, that seeks to avoid the abyss of "Bolshevism," and the Downfall of the Western World. It is a book to which it may

still take half-a-century or more for an effective minority of European intellectuals to arrive at; if they do so in that time, or in any time, well and good—if not, if we are destined to be submerged by our hordes of sub-men, the Deluge! The achievement of the former may depend now upon the speed with which those who have appreciated "the way out" in one connection or another—e.g., in the economic field, the members of the Social Credit Movement—can acquire an equal appreciation in a sufficient number of other connections. Various correspondents of THE NEW AGE have already expressed their sense of their need for this—the application of the new spirit all round. They will find what they want here in the most concentrated form. Just as the Douglas Theorem is as incomprehensible to most people as the Daylight Saving Principle was before its introduction—and would produce a not dissimilar effect, and one to which humanity would become as easily reconciled, were it, in its very different field, put into practice—so, in the nth degree, is this book. Compare it, for example, with Teat's "A Vision" (Werner Laurie, 63s.), with its preliminary fantasy, its exposition of the difficult geometry of *Anima Mundi*, its use of such properties as the Great Year of the Ancients, and so on. How grotesque, how far-fetched, how insanely ingenious all these esoteric properties, these paraphernalia of *romanticism*, these endless Chinese puzzle-boxes, are in comparison with Saurat's simple, short sentences, devoid of technical terminology of all kinds, his lucid *classicality* of utterance. It is all so simple; that is just where, as with the Douglas Theorem, the difficulty comes in. If European civilisation survives to the year 3000—and if it does its permanent and progressive survival will then have been assured—Saurat's great synthetic achievement will have been in appreciable measure among its saviours, and this modest little book will rank as one of the very few of like category produced between the fourth century B.C. and the twenty-first A.D.

A Vagabond in Denmark.

By Leopold Spero.

XV.

MAGIC AMONG THE BEECHES.

It is a shame, the way they treat Fredericia. Even these school-children are marching out of it this morning, as if it were no better than a stepping-stone, instead of a jolly little, independent town on its own. Lucky children, with their faces set towards the island of Hans Andersen. Lucky children, as they march on to the train ferry that will soon be taking them over to Strib. No wonder they sing—to be sure, in the ordered and tuneless German fashion, under the guiding hand of a somewhat melancholy-looking schoolmaster. But that cannot depress them, for what fun it is to be on a boat which carries a train, to have a real sea journey over a sea, all in twenty minutes, with so much adventure to be explored at every hand, the puzzling ways upstairs, the railway lines on deck, and the pompous guard who presently comes whistling his way through the railway carriages that are being pushed with such infinite care into their place. Rather nervous are these railway carriages on an unaccustomed element; but the better-class passengers, who have not been made to dismount and pack themselves into the ship, lean out superciliously from the windows, as if they were of a world apart. And small flaxen heads look back at them impudently enough from below or from above, for young Denmark is not impressed with the cosmopolitan voyager who invades these narrow seas. And now the engines begin to throb, the water swishes out from the waste, and it is good-bye to the lazy orange jelly-fish floating in the green stagnancy of the harbour, and out into the strait with its gay shores and dancing waves, and the smoke of factory chimneys over the sky, and the little villas perched up like toys all about and up and down.

Now we can see Fredericia from the water, and perceive that this lady has an importance and dignity of her own, and must not be treated, at least not by fair-minded philosophers with time to spare for the courtesies of travel, as if she were merely a central point for train and ferry to meet and part. Nobody takes such liberties with little Strib, nor with Middlefart, its bigger, graver, more important neighbour, with memories of Gorm the Old and Harald Bluetooth his father; Harald, who conquered all Denmark and Norway, and made the Danes Christians a thousand years ago; Harald, who built a tomb for his father and Thyra Danebod his mother, over in ancient Jelling, and covered them up with two great funeral mounds, and carved a pious memory of them in Runic characters on a great tombstone.

Now we come to port, and our queer and clumsy ship pushes the train away on to the land as if relieved and glad to have done with such contraptions. They have great jokes in Fyn the blessed, the well-beloved, the fertile and well-dowered, at the expense of the men of Jylland, those hardy Jutes whose discomfortable visits made our English shores uneasy when the Romans left and took their roads and their swords and their security with them. Jylland, or Jutland, as we know it, lives in secret resentment at the pretensions of the islands which deny it the dignity due to Denmark's mainland, especially now, when a fat slice of Schleswig has been added to its borders at the expense of Germany. Fyn, or Fünen, is not the chief offender, for it is Sjaelland, bursting with the metropolitan pride of Copenhagen, where they make most fun at the expense of the Scots of the Danish islands. Exactly the same jokes are made by the Zeelanders about the meanness of the Jutlander as they make here in the South at the expense of Aberdeen and Glasgow. They will tell you in Copenhagen exactly the same condescending tales of Jutland's barrenness in manners and culture. And Jutland has no Edinburgh to answer back. No jokes are made at the expense of Fyn, or the burghers of Odense would want to know the reason why. And well they may, we think, as we rattle along over this rich landscape of woodland alternating with fields of rye and wheat, and lush meadows, willow-fringed, and clumps of tall poplars and fruitful walnuts, and here and there the gleam of water shining in the distance. Round and flat and pleasant is Fyn, and round and fat and pleasant are its people. But pleasantest of all are the people in this town of Odense, through whose bright and cheeky suburbs we soon make our way, until we pull up at the plump station, and dismount to find ourselves faced, first thing of all, with a Park wherein stands a statue of that king who led his people to victory in 1848 and to disaster in '63, but never lost their love, which was his strength. What a bustle is here of asphalted streets and gleaming shops and tinkling trams, what self-importance, and, over all, what spirit of simplicity and kindness. And if we pause for a moment at this old house in the Norregade, the People's Museum, we shall find in its crowded rooms the secret of the Danish soul, its belief in itself. For here, among the oddments of carved wood, of wrought iron and of coloured porcelain, of tattered flags inscribed with obscure victories, with embroidery and pictures, here we shall see every man who did anything for Odense commemorated in some framed photograph or silhouette, the general and the admiral taking no

precedence, but set at random among the poets and professors and editors, Hans This and Carl That and Edvard the Other, all of them remembered because, in their quiet lives, at writing-desks in cool and secluded rooms like this, they lived their lives and did their daily work with pride in their city and love for their country. The cynic might say that there was nothing in this little house that could not be found in a corner of a provincial museum in England. But who shall gauge the value of that pride and tenderness which preserves every scrap of history, ancient or modern, every bit of wood of an old house or carven stone, letters and lockets with locks of hair, everything that will speak for voices that are dumb and recall the touch of fingers which once worked so lovingly for their fellow-men? No wonder the traveller leaves this little house ready to pay his reverence farther on, when he goes from the main street down a cobbled lane of low and red-roofed cottages set all awry, Hans Jensenstrade, and there, without looking for the number, knows the house where Andersen was born, because there are yellow-haired children sitting on the doorstep talking and playing, five little maids in pink frocks, with round, blue eyes that look up and laugh at every passer-by, so that even this young man, with his push-cart, must stop to pinch their cheeks and shake his head in fun at their games. In this tiny house at the corner of Bangs Boder, low and whitewashed and humble, is preserved everything of Andersen's that can be found, but most of all the toys he played with when he dreamed his dreams of beauty long ago. Odense is the oldest of all the Danish towns. The German Emperor made a city of it with a bishop nearly a thousand years ago; a king was killed here by his rebel peasants who would not pay their tithes; and famous men have passed this way throughout the centuries since. But for all its 70,000 inhabitants, its gay and prosperous market, its trams and railways and clanging, winding streets, Odense never touched the heart of the world until that day in April, 1805, when the great story-teller saw the light. Here in these tiny rooms are the pictures he cut with childish fingers, the chairs he sat in and played with, his clothes, his keepsakes, his first manuscripts. Here, where he worked at the cobbler's bench, was nourished the soul that spread its glory into the hearts of children everywhere. And here the children come when they are grown up, to recapture the scent of that fragrant memory.

Let us go, then, from Hans Jensenstrade out on the tram through the trim streets and shining suburbs to the woods he loved. There among the beeches of the Virgin we may lie and watch through the interlacing boughs above the white clouds that scud like happy children across the blue sky. Such peace, such stillness falls upon the soul, such dim delights revisit this place, suddenly to be dispelled by the clangour of loud music, where over in the clearing an electric piano echoes from its shelter in a woodland restaurant, where now the mothers are coming with their youngsters to sit at the scattered tables and take their picnic lunch. But the road through the woods goes by here, and sweeps down across the little bridge over the reedy river to a winding meadow between the reaches of the forest, where children play like flowers—such tiny children, some of them, that you would think they could scarcely stand or sit by themselves. But there they are, set in the waving grass like lovely blooms, crowing and laughing and waving their hands just as Andersen saw them a hundred years ago.

The place is not changed, the people have not changed; for the magic hand of the poet has touched them, and in the light of what he has written the meadow by the Beeches of the Virgin will always be the same, though children come and children go, and even summer must depart and the waving grass of the meadows lie still under its white coverlet of snow.

Music.

The Passing of the Public Concert.

II.

In so far as composers are concerned I can see nothing but good from the elimination of the public concert. At present composers depend largely for performance upon their will and ability to fawn upon, flatter, and feed some conductor, executant, or singer—it would scarcely be believed what insolence and humiliation some of our leading composers have to endure tamely from these people (I speak with the knowledge of experiences that have been confided to me) or else upon the slightest sign of indignation or resentment risk the loss of a performance. Or he, the composer, can at much expense get a performance by giving a concert himself—a futile, thankless, extravagant, and foolish business, or he can perhaps by buying some dozens of tickets have his work included in someone else's programme, which looks very nice but doesn't get very far with the known reluctance of performers to working at anything outside the familiar repertoire, except those who are stunt purveyors, i.e., "feature" the playing of new or unfamiliar works, and who are generally such bad players that no man with any self-respect would allow them to lay their paws upon his work. But now, for the expenditure of no more than the cost of one concert, he can have his work satisfactorily recorded—and behold him then independent of the caprices of performers, for henceforth a performance of his work needs but two prerequisites, a gramophone and a copy of the record. No more ideal way of getting to know a work can be imagined—and then the pride of possessing, so to speak, a performance of rare and out-of-the-way work, one that never has been or is never likely to be heard in one's locality—like the superb Mahler Second Symphony—which, thanks to the Deutsche Gramophone Gesellschaft, one can hear when and where one wills.

En passant I take this opportunity of drawing the attention of all readers of good-will (musical good-will) to this great work—one of the greatest things in modern music—I do not hesitate boldly to say. Those who do not know its date will doubtless bray about Strauss's influence until they discover that it is years before the principal Strauss works. There is nothing whatever in common between the two men, the one, Mahler, being an intense idealist and a passionate *exalté*—the word is used in no depreciatory or denigratory sense—and the other a supremely brilliant *arriviste* remaining at bottom the plebeian vulgarian, and so do his musical defects of breeding become more grossly palpable with the advance of years—and since studying Mahler rather closely during the past year or two, it is forced upon me how completely and emphatically his amazing symphonies put the Strauss tone poems in their place—a long way to the rear.

To resume. With a decrease in the quantity of concerts, their quality will, I think, of necessity improve—and something of a very high quality will be needed to lure people away from the ever-increasing excellence of the music that they can have by stopping at home in a comfortable chair, from their own gramophone and records and from the wireless—which, though at present still very poor, has rapidly progressed. With the virtual disappearance of the public concert will come about another most excellent development—the elimination of the journalistic critic with all his subterranean activities, his own irons to heat, fish to fry, "circles," "rings," and so on, to push; for, presumably, no editor is going to pay any one a regular salary expressly to report events that might not happen more frequently than once a week, but will rather make special features of his critical articles by getting writers of ability and distinction to contribute, as when, at present, a famous chess-player is engaged to describe some tournament, or a well-known chemist, biologist or what not, to write upon his special subject. The self-imposed necessity of publishing as many concert notices as possible and as quickly as possible after the respective events reduces the whole practice of daily newspaper criticism to a farce; and when to that is added the type of man upon whom this work usually devolves—one generally without the slightest trace of imagination, sympathy, musical sensibility, or wide culture—the thing becomes an obscene farce.

But perhaps one of the most salutary consequences will be the enormously increased difficulty of entry into the musical profession, and the scarcity of opportunities for the peacocking of vanitous incompetence on the part of those whose impudicity and impertinence prompt them to this kind of self-exhibition. At present seventy-five per cent. of the people making noises with their throats, scraping on fiddles and 'celli, poking at or wriggling over pianos, and defiling paper with their pens, could be euthanasiatised with an enormous advantage to the wretched Apollo and his true and faithful followers. . . . But who are they? . . . That

is a question it would be highly indiscreet to attempt to answer! Some might suggest that they revolve around a certain well-known Sunday newspaper; others again might describe them as the nebulae and star (?) clusters of the Third International Festival. All one can hope is that neither is true. In order to hasten still further the disappearance of the concerts that afflict us, I suggest a conspiracy of silence on the part of critics regarding all concerts below a certain importance and standard of excellence—that the presence on a programme of the Waldstein-Appassionata, etc., etc., etc., the Etudes, Nocturnes, and Ballades, and all the rest of the threadbare répertoire should be a signal for the audience to rise and quit the hall in a body—that all programmes containing them be boycotted by the Press unanimously during a term of years, say seven as a minimum, and that a recognised Society of Concert Agents and Concert Hall Managers be formed, pledged to veto all inferior concerts, and any agent or concert hall manager guilty of letting his hall to the type of thing with which we all are too familiar shall be expelled from the society along with other penalties. . . . I suggest bastinadoing with thistles and stinging nettles as both elegant, recherché and effective, to be applied both to concert agent and concert giver without distinction of size or wealth or sex—also an Association of Concert Goers who would pledge themselves to bombard with opprobria, both verbal and tangible, any delinquents. This would be an admirable beginning—other and stronger measures, if necessary, could follow later.

KAIKHOSRU SORABJI.

"Pudding Times."

By "Old and Crusted."

When George in pudding time came o'er,
And moderate men looked big, sir.

When Gillray and Rowlandson drew their full-blooded caricatures, were they guilty of gross exaggeration, or merely giving free play to a little mischievous elaboration of the familiar appearance of the well-fed statesmen and divines, aldermen, and country gentlemen, as they lived and moved through the rollicking days of the eighteenth century? It is a fair question. A glance at the family portraits hanging on the walls of many an ancient manor house affords full proof that these rubicund gentlemen were no strangers to good living. The raw material of caricature is there in ample measure; a roguish touch of the brush is all that is needed.

After worthy Dr. Syntax had passed a night "in sound repose" at the Mitre and renewed acquaintance next morning with his old college friend, Dicky Bend, the two cronies adjourned to dine in Hall, where the famous disaster overcame the fish and roast beef; to the infinite dismay of a hungry Don, who forthwith prepared to "go elsewhere for dinner." The Head, however, reassured him; for, said he,

> "We are but ten: and sure there's plenty;
> I order'd full enough for twenty.
> I see, my friends, the haunch unspoil'd,
> With chickens roast, and turkey boiled;
> The ven'son pasty is secure,
> The marrow puddings safe and sure;
> With ham, and many good things more,
> And tarts, and custards, full a score."

Ordering "enough for twenty" would appear to have been a common practice in those "pudding times," and helps to account for the heavy jowls, swagging paunches, and apoplectic necks so common in the satirical prints of the day. And what dishes that ordering comprised! The chance discovery of an old cookery book dated 1751—the fourth edition, by the way—throws a flood of light on the subject. The full title of the book is: "The Art of Cookery made Plain and Easy; which exceeds anything of the kind ever yet published." "By a Lady." There is a quaint ingenuous charm combined with much sound common sense pervading the work of this very practical woman. In her introduction she says:—

> "If I have not wrote in the high, polite Stile, I hope I shall be forgiven; for my Intention is to instruct the lower Sort, and therefore must treat them in their own Way. For Example; when I bid them lard a Fowl, if I should bid them lard with large Lardoons, they would not know what I meant. But when I say they must lard with little Pieces of Bacon, they know what I mean. So in many other Things in Cookery, the great Cooks have such a high Way of expressing themselves, that the poor Girls are at a loss to know what they mean."

Now Mrs. Primrose herself could not have put it better; also she would doubtless have agreed with "a Lady" on the subject of French cooks, for whom that downright person had a profound contempt, they being both extravagant and not easy to understand; but, as she caustically remarks, "if Gentlemen will have French Cooks they must pay for French tricks"; and—are times so much altered that we cannot agree with her final fling:—

> "So much is the blind Folly of this Age that they would rather be impos'd on by a French Booby, than give Encouragement to a good English Cook."

Those be brave words, dear Lady, brave words! I vow I can see her writing them, seated at a gate-legged table drawn close to a latticed window, and all the scents of June a-blowing in at the open casement. Her dress plain, but good, and exquisitely neat; her shapely arms bare to the elbow, with just a trace of flour on them; for has she not this moment come in from the kitchen, where she has been supervising the preparation of one of those succulent dishes beloved of honest John, sprawling in his great chair opposite? There is a smile of content and amusement on John's broad, ruddy face as he watches the puckered brow of his "Priscilla"—or was it "Prue"?—adding one more gargantuan recipe to her goodly list. Perhaps it was how "To dress a Pheasant à la Braise," which will serve passing well as a sample of how they lived when George II. was King:—

> Lay a Layer of Beef all over your Pan, then a Layer of Veal, a little Piece of Bacon, a Piece of Carrot, an Onion stuck with six Cloves, a Blade or two of Mace, a Spoonful of Pepper, Black and White, and a Bundle of Sweet Herbs; then lay in the Pheasant, lay a Layer of Veal, and then a Layer of Beef to cover it, set it on the fire five or six Minutes, then pour in two Quarts of boiling Water; cover it close, and let it stew very softly an Hour and a Half, then take up your Pheasant and keep it hot, and let the Gravy boil till there is about a Pint; then strain it off, and put it in again, and put in a Veal Sweetbread, first being stewed with the Pheasant, then put in some Truffles and Morels, some Livers of Fowls, Artichoke-Bottoms, and Asparagus-Tops, if you have them; let all these simmer in the Gravy about five or six Minutes, then add two Spoonfuls of Catchup, two of Red Wine, and a little piece of Butter rolled in Flour, shake all together, put in your Pheasant, let them stew all together with a few Mushrooms about five or six Minutes more, then take up the Pheasant and pour your Ragoo all over with a few Force-Meat Balls. Garnish with Lemon. You may lard it if you chuse.

Certainly you may, but it hardly seems necessary. As a specimen of good plain cooking adapted to the skill and intelligence of the average "poor Girl," it would be bad to beat. After that titbit of culinary economy one turns with lively interest to Chapter 3, specially compiled to prove how expensive a French cook can be.

> "They will use," says Priscilla, "as many fine Ingredients to stew a Pigeon or a Fowl, as will make a very fine Dish, which is equal with boiling a Leg of Mutton in Champaign."

There is no doubt about it, the dear lady was a thrifty soul at heart, despite her lavish little ways with pheasants. Moreover, she was sturdily patriotic, and could not abide those French interlopers who,

> "in their own Country will make a grand Entertainment with the Expence of one of these Dishes; but here they want the little petty Profit; and by this Sort of Legerdemain, some fine Estates are juggled into France."

It is that "little petty Profit" which vexed her frugal mind rather than the extravagance of French recipes; from which I gather she did her own marketing, so the poor "Girl" had but little opportunity of showing what an English Cook can do in the way of "Legerdemain," when given a free hand with butcher and grocer. And there would have been brave pickings, for Priscilla was no bad customer where meat is concerned, as witnesseth her preparations for making stock for "Soop"—"Portable Soop," she calls it—which begin with "two legs of beef about fifty pounds" and many other things in due proportion. Compare that with the finicking, parsimonious methods prevalent in middle-class kitchens in these degenerate days, and you will admit that if Carlyle was right and the eighteenth century had "nothing grand in it, except that grand universal suicide, named French Revolution," at least it understood the art of good living and did itself very well. A placid hedonist, endowed with a good appetite and a sound digestion, would not have been unhappy in the year 1751 with Priscilla to cater for him.

Drama.

Down Hill: Queen's.

Mr. David L'Estrange obviously constructed the nine scenes of "Down Hill" to afford an opportunity to film fans of seeing Ivor Novello very much in the flesh; so much in the flesh that he washed his legs on the stage, reminiscent of a Dutch painting. The division into three acts was artificial, dependent only on the accident that three is a convenient factor of nine. Immediately an author begins to think in terms of the kinema, all his inborn concern for technique, reason, probability, character, and the other necessities of life and the theatre, abandons him. Picture-goers have been effectively trained to expect certain things, a millionaire's banquet, a wet night on the embankment, and a bedroom. Provided these are thrown open to him nothing in the way of drama matters. Film audiences appear to be the least critical in the world, their fastidiousness not being offended by serials in women's papers, magazine-stories, nor by the most vapoury tissue of millionaire fantasies. Only children are critics at the pictures, and it is significant that the few kinema artists with the name depend on children for their fame.

The studious parson's son who could lift his nose out of his books was a strange creature, notwithstanding the fiery reputations of parsons' children generally, to get the village confectioner's lively daughter into trouble. One can understand her desire to blame the virile young athlete of open face and upright body, whose prowess in the football team more than compensated for his dullness in class, especially as the boy's father was rich. Such a boy might conceivably let himself be blamed, and the Head might conceivably tell him that it was better it should be the vigorous lad of character, who had to support the disgrace, than the weakly son of a poor parson. All that the parson's boy appeared to be good for was to demonstrate the advisability of a return to celibacy.

Once away from this first scene nothing else was conceivable. I could not believe that the young sport who could not tell a lie father would at once begin to go down hill. Instead of seeking a job as a painted chorus boy he would have achieved greatness as a professional footballer or a prize-fighter. The one person in the world to whom he would not have made love would have been Phyllis Monkman's star-lady at the theatre. If he had won, as he did, the Calcutta Sweep, he would have lost his new riches not in going the pace with an advertisement for lingerie, but in English farming or something equally stoic and heroic. From woman and wine to dope, and then to being a professional partner in a Paris dancing club, and finally to suicide on the Thames Embankment was an utterly impossible course for him, and would not have been tried but for the necessity of bringing the parson's boy, now manly and redeemed, to save his life and take him to Canada. It reflects, by the way, upon the changed morality of our times that in this highly moral play the parson's boy apparently did not father his baby or marry the confectioner's daughter.

Since the nine scenes were obviously governed by film conventions, one ought to find in them at least nine morals. First, then, there is the solemn homily to young ladies on pointing the accusing finger to innocent young men; second, fathers ought to meditate upon the terrible effects of calling their sensitive footballing sons liars. One has, in addition, to conclude mournfully that sudden wealth turns the strongest hearts and weakest heads, and to acknowledge great temptation to join the Plymouth Brethren at once, having seen what degradation befalls a young man, however clean of heart and truthful of eye, who commits the sin of going on the stage. Luckily, remembering that for once the absence of art may not of necessity be due to the greater survival value of morals, one may simply wallow in a passion for Ivor Novello, whatever he may do.

Reviews.

Grange Street. By S. P. B. Mais. (Grant Richards. 7s. 6d. net.)

The trouble with Mr. Mais, whose careful and beautiful writing ought to be the despair of many a better seller, even if it isn't, seems to be that in the presence of the conventional plot, he loses his nerve, and runs off on some interesting, but not too well domesticated hobby horse, such as the devastating imbecility of stunt journalism, or tells his characters to go away and play. True, if your hero is a publicity merchant in the West End, he gives you a fine pulpit from which to cry out upon the abuses of advertisement. But a novelist who can create such real and red-blooded people as there are here, ought to keep them together for all his 400 pages, instead of killing the liveliest of them off, and letting the others wander all over Dartmoor and the South Downs, putting the litter into literature. After all, there is something to be said for plots. Even Dickens, the master of characterisation, dragged one in occasionally. But Mr. Mais kills Vellacott, his villainous Devonshire preacher, on page 272, kills a figure worthy of Dickens himself, and mars a thundering good story by over a hundred more pages, in which the writing, always scholarly, careful, and eager after beauty, is employed in an aimless search after forgotten puppets of his earlier chapters. It would be far better for the library public if Mr. Mais would conform sufficiently to make a best-seller of himself, cynically, deliberately, but at least in the cause of good English.

Penny Wheep. By Hugh M'Diarmid. (Blackwood. 5s.)

Mr. M'Diarmid's ambition, as expressed in one of these poems (they are all in Scots) is to sing to the tune played by the whirlwind on the bleached ribs of a war-wrecked world—no small ambition; yet the only one possible to a poet to-day, if he would not fiddle as impertinently as Nero; and Mr. M'Diarmid has achieved a very considerable measure of success. His utterance is short and sharp as a soldier's in battle; and he has had the luck—though no man would account it luck who was not artist enough to prefer real achievement to size of audience—to inherit a language which, after having had a literature, has, by falling out of fashion, escaped the enervating effect of separation from the common people. The most striking poem among many good things is "The Quest," the song of a passion primitive in its fierce strength, but of a quality possible only to a highly civilised man.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

THE JEWISH QUESTION.

Sir,—H. B. S. L. has, no doubt, an intuition that the inhabitants of Scotland have "some natural kinship with the Hebrew Scriptures," or perhaps the notion is derived from the music-hall—in any event, there is no scientific basis for any such view—but that, of course, is something for the Scot to worry about. If, according to H. B. S. L., he does go about, however, with a load on his conscience because he knows his religion to have been borrowed from the Jews, and if his race is only saved by this knowledge, then at last we have the true explanation of "The canny Scot." It is but the outcome of the repression of an urge to pay for what his forefathers have borrowed. It is not impossible, though highly improbable, that "some Jewish financiers" are "moved" by the idea of everyone in the world becoming, willy-nilly, members of one theocracy—though even Major Douglas has not gone as far as that yet—with the financier or financiers (some, meaning one or more) at the head. But until every Jew can get unlimited bank overdrafts and preferential insurance rates and conditions, simply on proof of membership of the "chosen," I must decline to include them all among the ruling financiers or their henchmen in the world's administration to come.

As H. B. S. L. says, I don't know the minds of these financiers—if I did then making a living would be very much easier, and I would be happy to share the knowledge with H. B. S. L., THE NEW AGE, and the followers of the New Economics. But, alas! I am one of the "Chosen People" who has not been "called."

What the average Jew thinks about two whole chapters of Isaiah depends upon what intellectual figment is set up as the average—the choice is remarkably extensive, though not more than environment leads one to expect. Taking the ordinary £3-per-week-and-four-children English Jew, he has not read them since he left Cheder and his theology is confined to reconciling ritual observance with the necessity to feed his family and give them a decent education, under adverse conditions, and usually of a type too high for his means. The "Higher Criticism" provides as many interpretations as there are critics, and if H. B. S. L. would like a bibliography, I shall be happy to supply it.

It is too delightful to note Major Douglas's naïve contempt for the Jews in the sweep of his notes on "The Debate of the Coal Mines Bill." However, to adapt the salient passages: "Unless Mr. Baldwin is concealing his policy, he will go down to posterity as the greatest enemy, not merely of the British working classes, but of the whole British nation. I do not know anything about him, but his name would suggest that he is not a Jew but a Christian. And he proceeds as might be expected."

For Mr. Baldwin substitute "Morgan," "Churchill," "Strong," "Caillaux," "Briand," "Norman," etc., and for "British" and "British nation" substitute "world," as required.

A. P. ABRAMS.

Caricatures by "Cyrano."

I.—LORD ABERCONWAY.

II.—LORD KYLSANT.

III.—RT. HON. REGINALD McKENNA.

IV.—SIR ALFRED MOND.

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