THE

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

In a recent issue we discussed an article in the *New Republic*, written by Professor William R. Shepherd of Columbia University, criticising the encroachments of the United States in the Caribbean area. In doing so we referred to the common cause against Mr. Kellogg's "imperialism" in Nicaragua, made by the *New York World*, the *New York Times*, Mr. William Green of the American Federation of Labour, and certain Senators, which had apparently suppressed the agitation for military action promoted by the Hearst Press. The *New Republic* interpreted this as evidence of the weight of healthy public opinion; to which we replied that it was generally realised by our readers how public opinion was made, and suggested that some big interests must have been at work to make it safe for Professor Shepherd to come out with his onslaught.

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A correspondent now writes to remind us that Columbia University is endowed by Kuhn Loeb and Co. (Messrs. Schiff, Paul Warburg, Otto Kahn, etc.) and the Guggenheimer group. Together these represent, he comments, Jewish-American financial policy as opposed to U.S.A. financial policy represented by the Morgan group. Internationalism versus nationalism. The difference between these groups is not, at any rate consciously, a clash of principle. That is to say, both stand for the protection at all costs of investment capital; they quarrel simply on the question of ways and means—as to when the military shall appear on the scene. The issue is a live one potentially. Finance depends on the use of soldiers in the last resort, in a somewhat similar way to that in which Labour depends on the strike as a last resort. That is: *premature* use of force in both instances is *bad tactics*. In any case there is always a danger in letting the military loose; for soldiers represent politics, not finance. And then the taxpayer begins to listen in. For choice the High Financier would much rather suppress opposition to his policy secretly by means of his own. Hence arises his general objection to armaments, even though on occasions he needs to use armed force. If only it were made impossible for any State, large or small, to use violence (and as a necessary corollary, impossible for any section of people in any of these States to revolt against constituted Authority) the Financier could settle all his problems without the help of the Politician. That this is his ideal is manifest in the world-wide pacifist propaganda put out by him for popular consumption. After everything bad has been said about the "militarist," there does remain the fact that when he is on horseback a financier seems to him just like any other civilian. In certain emergencies he has even been known to pay his army's way by improvising money. A dangerous fellow indeed. One to whom financial principles are something to be equally trampled upon with "conscientious objection" if they come between him and his job. No; let him be retired. Let him turn his stirrups into ploughshares and go back to the land on half-pay. There in his rustic leisure he can help to make shears for the consumer-wool-clip.

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A British cruiser, the Colombo, has been sent from Bermuda to Nicaragua. American opinion professes not to understand why. It is pointed out that American forces now in that country are three times as numerous as the whole Nicaraguan army, so that resident British nationals can be assured of their safety, whatever fighting may occur between the Government and the revolutionaries. Sir Esme Howard, our Ambassador at Washington, has explained that the warship was sent for the sake of the moral effect its presence might have. It would serve as a place of refuge for British nationals, should need arise. The *Daily News* reports that American Liberal opinion (i.e., the Kuhn-Loeb, American-Federation-of-Labour, etc., etc., attitude) is inclined to see in this incident an attempt of British Imperial-

ism to support American Imperialism. The truth is the opposite. The two are at daggers drawn. Senator Borah shows better appreciation of the situation in remarking that since there are a few Italians in Nicaragua he would not be surprised to see Italy ceasing her Mediterranean watch and joining in the Nicaraguan affair. He asserts that the only people who demand American military intervention there are the few who secured mahogany concessions from President Diaz, and know that the Nicaraguans would turn him out if he were not protected by American bayonets. From which one may conclude that the "Liberal" financial interests we have referred to are not deeply involved in mahogany.

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If that were all, the mystery of the arrival of a British warship would be inexplicable. But it is not difficult to explain. President Diaz is proposing to sign a Treaty with the United States; and Britain objects. The situation is precisely the same as when Germany sent the gunboat to Agadir shortly before the war to end war. According to the draft of the Treaty the United States would "protect the interest" of Nicaragua for 100 years "guaranteeing her sovereignty and independence." The United States would be empowered to intervene to assure "free elections" in Nicaragua, and "for other purposes." During the next 400 years (corporations live for ever; that is why they have no soul to survive them) Nicaragua would concede to the United States the right to develop the country so as to "assure its financial rehabilitation and the public health.". These items are taken from a Reuter cable which proceeds:—

> "The President of the United States would recommend a financial adviser who would be an American and would have power of veto over expenditure. Another American would be appointed as the collector of all revenues."

Having thus ensured the independence of Nicaragua the Treaty contemplates an American railway loan of £800,000, the transformation of the Nicaraguan army into a constabulary under United States Marine officers, and lastly a provision that Nicaragua shall not enter into a treaty with, or lease or sell territory to any other Power without the consent of the latter country. Thus Nicaragua's sovereignty is ensured as well. The idea that British Imperialism is supporting this sort of things looks a trifle thin. The moral effect of the British cruiser's arrival is not meant to be felt in Nicaragua, but throughout Latin America, on whose support the outcome of Anglo-American hostilities will be definitely affected. It is a symbol of British support of the anti-United States A.B.C. Alliance.

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The British Note of protest to the Soviet Government is similarly misleading. Nobody cares a rap for the formal general denunciations of British capitalism and imperialism on the part of Soviet statesmen. What gives the Foreign Office "nerves" is the suspicion that this harmless criticism covers a dollar-subsidised project of practical intervention in the Chinese trouble. It has seriously to be considered whether the Kuhn Loeb attack on American imperialism is not meant for the consumption of Chinese students; that notwithstanding the apparent clash of Liberalism with Mr. Kellogg in the United States, the parties behind both have a common understanding that China must be taught to say "Sam's the friend, not John." Britain has only to be involved in staining the stained-glass windows of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank with British and Chinese blood to relinquish to the United States the lead in the manoeuvring for moral position in the next war—not to speak of what trade sacrifices will be suffered as an interim result. The peace of the world is balanced on a knife-edge.

An "excerpt from the Congressional Record for Saturday, January 8, 1927," displays the Columbia University in another role. The publication is entitled "Indebtedness of Foreign Governments to the United States," and is signed by members of the Faculty of Political Science. They urge the cancellation of Europe's debts to America, on the main ground that insistence on repayment is causing Europe to form an economic coalition against the United States. As to the effect of such cancellation on America's prosperity they point out that annual receipts from debt payments during the next four years will be less than 5 per cent. of present commodity imports or commodity exports: that they will be less than one-third of one per cent. of "our" total national income: that they represent a difference of only two dollars a year to a typical income-tax payer with a net income of $5,000 (90 per cent. of the Federal income tax being paid by persons with that salary or less). They spoil the grace of their advocacy by pointing out the impossibility of estimating Europe's capacity to pay during the next sixty years, when, every day the relative prosperity of the several nations is changing. It is as though they said: "We shan't get their money, we cannot—nor would not, oh, no—land marines in Europe; so let us excuse them." The chief weakness in the argument is the assumption that the Americans will maintain their existing standard of prosperity above Britain's. This will depend on how long the Bank of England's policy is influenced by Wall-street—a state of affairs which Mr. McKenna's recent speech suggests will not remain unchallenged for long in this country.

Communism and the General Strike.

No account of the Great Strike can be complete without including a survey by the Communist Party. (All accounts hitherto have suffered from such omission.) Therefore no excuse is required of Mr. R. W. Postgate, Mr. J. F. Horrabin, and Miss Ellen Wilkinson for publishing, so late as in January, 1927, a history* of the events of May, 1926. It has been written "from material supplied by *Plebs* correspondents in all parts of the country," a good deal of it being extracted from confidential reports, references to which are given in a bibliography at the end of the book. Naturally it has to traverse ground already familiar, but its commentary on the strategy and tactics of the strike leaders and the strikers is new. Several pages are devoted to a classification of the chief towns in regard to their responsiveness to strike mobilisation. Class I. includes those where the response was between 90 and 100 per cent. of complete solidarity. Class IV., at the other end, comprises places where the strike broke down. Two diagrams are given, showing typical plans of organisation of strike committees, one set up at Methil by the local Trades Council, and the other operated at Merthyr Tydfil. Every important fact and point is annotated as the summary proceeds, and the work as a whole has a character much the same as, for example, an expert naval strategist's analysis of the Battle of Jutland.

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A close paraphrase of the authors' general conclusion would be to say that the workers' generals entered on the campaign without maps, and withdrew from it as soon as their captains had improvised some: also that the strike was declared finished at the point where the strikers' morale approached complete consolidation. The authors deliberately refrain from attacking persons; they say that if the facts

* "A Workers' History of the Great Strike." *The Plebs* League, 162a, Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1. Price 1s. Postage 1d.

presented do not apportion guilt or credit, no added words of their own can do so. They point a general moral:—

> "It is not a question of 'incapacity,' still less of 'treachery'; it is the refusal to realise that the whole working class is *engaged in a bitter struggle for its standards of life* in which no quarter will be given by the other side . . . and unless . . . the trade union movement is to be committed to the policy of *assisting Capitalism to get out of every crisis* by accepting reduction after reduction in wages, our leaders must frankly prepare for a struggle on a class basis." (Our italics.)

Communists have a right to complain of Labour leadership. On their analysis the inevitability of the class struggle is established beyond controversy. Postulate "Capitalism" as a self-determined integrated monopoly of money and machinery and there is no escaping the conclusion that the workers' only hope lies in the creation and exercise of a *force majeure* based on a monopoly of their labour, and used indifferently against the employer and the financier. Yet the orthodox Labour leader, ignoring the Communist analysis because he cannot deny it, persists in acting as though there were a *via media* —"peaceful bargaining." Bargaining, as an alternative to force, is no use unless it relates to proposals involving mutual advantages to the parties concerned. But what has Labour to offer to Capital? Nothing but the mendicant's hat. So it is not surprising that as fast as Labour doctrinaires kick Communists out of the front door of Congress they are beckoned down the area steps into the warm kitchens of the local Labour Parties and Trades Councils to discuss realities with the people who are daily scalded and burnt by them.

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All this follows from the postulate that Capitalism is a self-determined indivisible institution. But this is not true. The producer-capitalist, in victimising the worker, is handing down a burden laid on him by the credit-monopolist. We assert that, under the present rules of finance, Capital would ruin itself if it dealt justly with Labour. Our attitude is frequently misunderstood. The Capitalist suspects us of being confiscationists, and the Communist regards us as side-trackers of direct action. We are neither. Our case is that economic emancipation depends upon one thing only—a change in the principles of credit-finance. These principles will not be changed by the credit-monopolists except under pressure. It is primarily the duty of the producer-capitalist to apply the pressure. He it is, and not his employee, who has the leisure and experience to learn why and how. Just so long as he is too lazy or too cowardly to do his duty he deserves to be kicked, and we hope he will be kicked, by the workers. The Communist is therefore right in advocating the doctrine of "the boot," and we would not have him alter his methods for a moment. Nevertheless, we would ask of him that while he continues his militant tactics against employers he shall realise that he is attacking mere agents and not principals. Labour's right to challenge Capital is not; "*Give* us a greater portion of *your realised wealth*," it is: "Go and *get* for us and yourselves a greater portion of *our common unrealised wealth*." This wealth is available, though not in visible form; and certain changes in the credit-system can bring it quickly into existence. Here is a proposition involving mutual benefits to employers and employed, and therefore the basis of a bloodless bargain. If through obstinacy or any other motive Producer-Capitalism chooses to remain a shock-absorber laid round a defective financial system, we hope that Communism will administer plenty of shocks for it to absorb. If in the process industry were to collapse, the responsibility would lie on Capitalism. But industry will not collapse. The means of averting that danger are now known to a sufficient number of people possessing the power to adopt them when they are scared into doing so.

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The Communists, by themselves, are powerless to create a scare. It is only in conjunction with other forces of revolt against credit-finance that Communism is hastening the solution of the economic problem. In fact it can be argued that Communism is delaying as well as hastening the collapse of Capitalism. The argument hinges on the quotation we give above where the writers complain of the Trade Union movement as "assisting Capitalism to get out of every crisis" by accepting wage reductions. As a particular proposition relating to British capitalism as a trade competitor against external capitalisms, this is plausible enough. But as a universal proposition it is not. The proof lies in considering what would happen to Capitalism generally supposing that Labour generally agreed to work for no wages at all. Looked at from this fundamental point of view people like Mr. Thomas are a greater menace to Capital than are the leaders of Communism. It is a peculiar method of getting industry "out of a crisis" to deprive industry of the workers' orders. For is it not precisely a lack of orders which constitutes the present industrial crisis?

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If we were leading the Communists we should employ their tactics, but should announce a different objective. Like them we should attack orthodox Labour leaders, and should throw grit in the machinery of producer-capitalism. But we should make it clear that there were certain terms on which we would desist. We should announce that we were not fighting the producer-capitalist "Germans" as such, but the finance-capitalist "Junkers." We should say to Capital: "Give us guarantees that you will challenge the financial monopoly to explain and defend its policy, and we will call a truce. It will last for a limited time only, and in that time you must do something, or the fight will be resumed." And if Capital required us to make our reasons public for this strange demand we should of all men be the most delighted. Merely to enumerate the economic possibilities in regard to the feasibility of which we should ask that financial experts be required to submit themselves to cross-examination, would whet the appetites of all but one per a hundred thousand of the population.

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Whether Communism listens to us or not is of no great moment. The end of the Old Economic Dispensation is at hand, and the pioneers of the New are stirring everywhere. Let him that is a Communist be a Communist still. The workers, on whose behalf he fights, will not cash his efforts in the particular currency he has designed for them. Yet they will assuredly get the cash; upon which every single-minded Communist will be content to let the political credit go.

PRESS EXTRACTS.

"France is already heading for the industrial crisis which is one of the costs of currency reform; it is clear that, with each further point the franc now gains, the risk of a sudden and uncontrollable breakdown becomes seriously greater."

Manchester Guardian Commercial, Dec. 9, 1926.

"If Mussolini lives to carry out his plan of deflation, the lira may be brought back to its mint par of 19.3 cents. But one may well question whether the glory so gained will be worth the misery it will cause. For a policy of deflation is almost certain to result in paralysing business. For, as the value of the lira appreciates, the price of articles must decline. . . . Less than a year of such declining prices and paralysed business was enough for Norway. That country has ceased its effort to deflate its currency, and has given its energy to stabilisation instead."

William Hayes, in *The Bankers' Magazine*, Oct., 1926.

Money and Mystery.

In the West one says that cleanliness is next to godliness. In the East they say cleanliness is a condition of godliness. "Surely health is the pre-requisite requirement of spiritual life" speaks the title-page of a review* of Yogic culture. Which means that the poor in health shall not see God. That is worth memorising; especially when prefixed by the concept of wealth as a pre-requisite requirement of health, and, let it be added, money as the pre-requisite of both. It seems far-fetched to conceive a paper currency-token as the magic carpet on which man shall be caught up into the seventh heaven of the unutterable, but once define money truly—as a symbol of temporal Faith, and the concept assumes a logical form. First that which is natural, said Paul, and then that which is spiritual. The artless lover of Manon Lescaut, reproached by a companion for continually seeking money, replied, "Yes, my dear friend; I feel, like you, that one should despise worldly wealth, but I also feel that one should at least have enough of it to be able to despise the rest?" Wealth is a flow, not a store, adds another witness—of much more rigid conduct than the last—Professor Soddy. Man can only bathe in it as it passes; to dam it is to dry up its source. To sum up these reflections: as money wealth is to physical health, so is physical health to spiritual wealth.

Now, what the economist sees in Money the Yogic philosopher sees in Water. If we say that money flushes the stomach and maintains the human organism; he would say that water flushes the colon and refines the perceptions. So the Review under notice begins by explaining physiology and anatomy, with the ultimate object of expounding spiritual mysteries. Its plan is to suggest, in terms of science, the stages by which man can reach out from his physical nature to the things beyond it. Without committing oneself to belief in the mysteries held to be attainable by Yogic culture, one must at least recognise that this is the right method by which to attempt to inculcate such belief, namely by logical steps from the known to the unknown.

And so, upon first turning the pages of these volumes with the expectation of undergoing a nightmare of mystic cubism, the reader finds himself, to his surprise, presented with well-produced diagrams such as he might find in any current elementary physiological or anatomical text book. These, in conjunction with an exceedingly lucid English text, assist him to lay an intelligible physical foundation for whatever incredible wonders may ultimately be built on it. Space forbids reference in detail to more than one chapter—namely that explaining about the alimentary tract, and especially the configuration and function of the colon. In the West the use of the enema is a matter of common knowledge and practice. But the power of making the colon itself function like an enema is not familiar. This chapter describes how, by certain exercises of abdominal muscles, a vacuum can be created in the colon, which enables the subject to perform flushing *per anum* at will. The rationale of such flushing is explained, but need not be discussed here. What is new in a work of this character is the use made of radiographs to demonstrate the effect of various Yogic exercises on the functioning of the colon and intestines. A subject takes a "meal" of Barium Sulphate, and after an interval performs a given exercise; after which an X-ray photograph is made. By this means the internal movements of this opaque meal are visibly registered.

Where all this information is leading is of no present consequence; the value of it is that it is fact and not theory. The care and caution shown by the authors of the articles must inspire confidence. While exhorting the reader to follow the practices, they point out the dangers involved in them, whether inherent, or whether consequential on premature or prolonged resort to them. The four numbers of the review under discussion cover the year 1924, although they were received ony a month or so ago. Presumably later issues have been published.

The appeal of such works must necessarily be restricted, for the practical value of their teaching is largely destroyed by the lack of leisure in human lives under the present economic dispensation. Yogic culture in all its stages would occupy a lifetime. The pre-requisite to its general systematic practice is a world in which economic production shall take place without human co-operation; a fact which emphasises once more the soundness of THE NEW AGE'S insistence on setting the solution of the economic problem in front of every other.

* "Yoga Mimansa." A Quarterly Review of Psychophysiology, Spiritual and Physical Culture, etc., with their Application to Therapeutics. (Edited by J. G. Gune at the Yoga-Mimansa Office, Kunjavana, Louavla, India. Single copy 4s. Annual Subscription 15s. Back volumes 17s.)

Joseph Conrad and Poland.

LORD JIM'S BURNT SHIP.

By Marie Dabrowska.

Translated from "Pologne Litteraire," by Ina Beasley.

Poland makes no pretensions to appropriating Joseph Conrad. She can, however, claim for herself the right to illuminate certain phases of his inspiration, which have remained beyond the understanding of the rest of Europe. Polish criticism takes this right, not for the purpose of establishing property rights, but in order to cast more light on that distinguished writer and on his creation, so truly human, heroic, and moral. In an interview granted to a Polish publicist, Mr. Marius Dabrowski, in April, 1914, Conrad expressed himself in these terms:—

> "English critics—for I am an English writer—in commenting on my writings always add that they find there things unintelligible and incomprehensible. You alone can comprehend this incomprehensible, understand this unintelligible, for it is the Polish element in me." (Tygodnik Illustrowany; 1914, nr. 16).

I would not dare to undertake so great and arduous a task. My wish is only to draw attention to aspects of the intimate life and work of the master, the examination of which may lead more easily to understanding. Everything in Conrad which appears obscure or disquieting to the English and the French—the exotic charm of his tales—is still always ascribed to an ill-defined "Slav spirit." In order to define the origin of this "Slav spirit" in Conrad, English and French critics trace it conveniently in his literary kinship with Russia, and in particular with Dostoievsky. Affiliation with literary influences so completely foreign to Conrad leads to erroneous interpretation of his works—based as they are on principles of worth, honour and strong moral will, quite unknown in Russia.

As Conrad himself so judiciously remarked, the explanation of the hidden merits of his work lies in his own complicated and varied individuality. Without stressing the gift of "spiritualisation" peculiar to Conrad, and also to his characters, if we wish to know in what the psychological inspiration consists; it is preferable to rely not on a vague "Slav spirit" but on the definite facts of his early youth, and on his knowledge of Slav literatures, not stopping at Dostoievsky alone; in short, on a study of the bonds linking Conrad with Polish society and literature, and of their influence on life. When Conrad left his native land, the foundations of his intellectual culture were already laid; these basic principles he had absorbed in Poland, nowhere else. To estimate the intellectual and ethnic acquisitions introduced abroad by Conrad, it is necessary to take into account what he brought with him from Poland—in wealth of this order.

Conrad has given critics definite intimations in his recollections, where he affirms the antinomy of the famous "Slav spirit," passing current in literary circles, with the Polish temperament. Agreeing with this estimation, in place of another search for an imaginary affiliation between Conrad and Dostoievsky, it is fitting to make a profound analysis of his kinship with Polish literature. Joseph Conrad possessed a perfect knowledge of Polish literature, particularly the earlier; he accepted its influence with enthusiasm; and acknowledged it repeatedly, for example, in the interview quoted above, where he said,

> "The Polish element in my work comes to me from Mickiewicz and Slowacki. My father used to read 'Pan Tadeusz,' and very often used to make me read it aloud. I used to prefer 'Conrad Wallenrod' and 'Grazyna' to 'Pan Tadeusz.' Later I preferred Slowacki to Mickiewicz; this is why: Slowacki is the quintessence of the Polish spirit."

This kinship of soul is felt above all in connection with the great Polish Romantic movement. The heroes of this movement, conscious of the tragic responsibility of their actions, and the tasks undertaken, bend their powerful individualities to the commandment "serve well the good cause." The sentiment of responsibility is the rigid principle which his heroes and Conrad himself obey. Passing from one task to another, still more difficult, in his private life and as a writer, Conrad acquitted himself in everything, if not always with equal good fortune, at least with the same integrity. The idea of responsibility became the very atmosphere of his life, it breathed through all his work. Even unconsciously Conrad impressed it on all his creations with an overruling force. From the sentiment of duty and responsibility towards the accepted task, from things belonging rather to the domain of pure reason, Conrad created as it were a fifth element. He created an instinct.

Making use of all the tricks of a refined art, Conrad adorned the severe problem of responsibility; he put charm into tragedy, things instinctive and elementary. The satisfaction of this instinct gives to the heroes of Conrad the joy of dealing only with the very essence of life; complete enjoyment, for it is lifted beyond the border lines where happiness touches on suffering. The refusal to obey this instinct renders existence unendurable, just as hunger or the absence of love. This attitude is of more worth than many triumphs to Conrad; yet its inhibition is the tragic core of his life.

Having directed his fate solely towards the ideal which he carried in himself, Conrad, by his life, added a chapter to the history of human literature. He lived as any man worthy of the name should live; liberty, honour, the idea of responsibility, love of the divine principle in creation, no matter where it was found, these filled his days. This type of ideal life is one of the beacons marking the progress of civilisation in Poland; Conrad snatched it from the abyss of slavery, and gave it to the world; the peace of his life was the ransom for this victory.

In reality, something in his life remained in contradiction to his instinct for fidelity and loyalty; he had abandoned his native land at the time of its greatest disasters. Without doubt the moral ethics of Conrad inclined him towards fidelity to causes deliberately accepted rather than to those bequeathed by tradition. It is difficult, however, to define for Conrad the limits of that implied agreement; Poland crosses them many a time. She was more than an inherited tradition. She was a fitting field for the aims followed by men on the plane of Conrad.

He never renounced Poland; in the course of the interview mentioned he declared, "Your immortal flame burns also in me; it is only a gleam, but it is not extinguished." His innate honesty did not allow him to call a gleam—flame. This little gleam weighed heavily on that meticulous conscience, and manifested itself strongly in many of Conrad's stories, among others in those two masterpieces of literature: "Lord Jim," and "The Rover."

Like Lord Jim, Conrad could not conduct to its issue the dramatic episode of his youth. Nothing can bring to an end a conflict situate on this plane; in vain would one search for an excuse and justification for it in virtues greater than the love of country; Jim—Conrad will always be on the look out for a suitable opportunity to settle accounts or undergo his punishment; but the real opportunity will never arise.

Poland has recovered her independence; she is powerful enough to dispense with the sacrifice of those who have abandoned her. Polish translations of Conrad's work are equal in beauty to the original. Loyally, Poland renounces him in favour of English literature. The fire on Lord Jim's boat is extinguished; she sails under full canvas; whoever formerly wished to flee from it—has fled. Nothing is remembered, no one demands a reckoning. Things more important than a young man's destiny have been accomplished on the earth. The proud old man—modest in his celebrity—could now re-enter his first fatherland and make it a gift of his generous heart. This return was, it seems, decided upon. I like to think of this project taking hold of Conrad's mind and dictating to him the last work published during his lifetime, "The Rover." The influence of this nostalgia makes itself felt throughout the story of the rover Peyrol. In spite of profound dissimilarities, as much psychological as due to environment and epoch, the story of Peyrol, his gloomy and affecting childhood, his voluntary exile far from his country, his passion for the sea, in the end his return and death in defence of that deserted land; all this seems a paraphrase of Conrad's life.

In examining the question thus stated all idea of patriotism and repentance must be excluded from it; nothing justifies us in this. Conrad was a patriot, neither as one is in these days of ours, nor according to the conventional meaning attached to the term. He was an international, a cosmopolitan of the noblest kind. More than countries he loved men and the labour of the spirit, this unique right, this sole *raison d'être* of man. In the name of this love, Conrad gave himself to the boundless ocean, without the frontiers of fatherlands. But—it must be stated yet again—in the midst of his independent life, Poland appeared to Conrad not as a sentimental "corner of parental earth," but as a responsibility disowned, as a duty rejected. Placing oneself at this single point of view one understands how such a man, surfeited with glory, living in such a country as England, arrived at the burning desire, at the absolute need of a second meeting, during his life, with Poland; perhaps even conceiving the idea of accomplishing for her an act similar to that of Peyrol. Distant and invisible Poland accompanied Conrad throughout his life; thus accompany us duties unaccepted, tasks unachieved, rising up before us in our last hour—as the shepherds of his native land rose up before Peyrol. If the desertion of this land was a fault, it has been redeemed by a work of sheer and inestimable value, which could never have been written under other circumstances. For great works are born tragically from the gifts of their author, from his virtues and from his errors.

Views and Reviews.

PUBLIC HEALTH.

Smallpox, for reasons more probably connected with public hygiene than with vaccination, is no longer a family ogre. With typhoid and other zymotic diseases the record of the medical profession, again with the help of the public health authority, is a credit to good sense, cleanliness, and isolation. To cure or stamp out a particular malady of civilisation, however, is also to give civilisation an excuse for going to that excess which entails other diseases. Influenza carries off more lives than smallpox. Cancer is a more present threat than the plague, although the responsibility for cancer may be far more individual than that for the plague. It is hardly possible for a poor city-dweller to visit his doctor for any reason without risking the tentative diagnosis of consumption. The medical profession is afraid of consumption; it has neither succeeded in renewing the lease of civilisation by finding a cure, nor plucked up courage to tell Society rather than the individual victim how evil is its way of living.

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Prevention is better than cure when cure is impossible. Yet the medical profession, in spite of its new cry for preventive medicine, knows that it must tear civilisation out of its city death-traps in addition to teaching hygiene to the countryside if it would prevent consumption. Society is trying to maintain a hundred pounds of steam with a fire-box built for ninety, and burns itself out. Social revolutionaries to-day, as in the nineteenth-century epidemics of cholera and smallpox, have spoken with greater authority than the stewards of public health. Since the end of the European war the number of people killed by tuberculosis alone in England and Wales exceeds 300,000. These are not old men from whom society has received its debt; they are largely young people to whom society had not paid enough to establish the debt.

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The total accommodation of sanatoria in England and Wales, twenty-one thousand, is sufficient to provide beds to die in for only half of the forty-one thousand who annually succumb. As Mr. David Masters shows in his very readable and well-informed book* we neither prove our faith in the sanatorium system nor abandon it for the sake of some more hopeful system. The sanatorium, jealous for its records, is prone to welcome only patients for whom there are good prospects, and to leave the worst cases to decay in their homes to the detriment of their families. When the miserable patient has lived in the sanatorium, under conditions of care, sanitation, feeding, and graduated labour such as his whole previous life has not been able to give him, he is sent back to the wretched conditions which found his weak spot before he was further weakened by the actual disease. Sanatoria certainly for the time being isolate the sufferer from his friends; they bless him temporarily with a mode of life in which consumption could not have attacked him. But they return him from the hillsides or the sea-coast to a slum.

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Mr. Masters tells the story of Laennec's discovery of the stethoscope, his tube of rolled sheets of paper for listening to one part of the lungs at a time, with the touch of an artist. With the stethoscope and the confirming X-ray photograph it is now possible to tell whether the patient's lungs are going very soon after getting hold of him. But the patient is often harnessed to a family; he must go on in harness though he drop dead. The most intelligent and most hopeful experiment undertaken in full knowledge of this real difficulty in treating the consumptive is the colony at Papworth, Cambridgeshire; "This settlement owes its success to the foresight and courage of Dr. Vrarrier-Jones, an administrator of a high order." Here are seventy cottages housing seventy tuberculous men and their families. These men do the work they are fitted for, working no longer than their condition warrants. They build their own cottages, make their furniture and clothes, paint their signs, and are solvent with the world through their leather-bag industry. Their new experiment is book-binding, from which much is anticipated. Mr. Masters expresses pointedly his one regret—that the health-giving quartz-glass provided for the animals at the Zoological Gardens was prohibitive in cost for the buildings required by these men, women, and children. This settlement, which accepts patients *irrespective of the extent of the disease*, was capitalised partly with the help of the Prince of Wales's Fund and the Golden Ballot at £120,000. The revenue from leather bags alone has grown from £3,700 to £15,000 in the year. As Mr. Masters says this is not only more human but more profitable than sanatoria. Other settlements, also for ex-service men, are doing excellent work at Preston Hall in Kent and at Barrowmore Hall in Cheshire.

* * *

The author treats of the success of the light treatment in consumption other than pulmonary, but again it is a question of expense. The case of pulmonary tuberculosis, however, is still open to the world. After unflinchingly discussing in detail the history of cures, from tuberculin to sanocrysin, which so often seemed like allying the doctor with the tubercle than with the patient, Mr. Masters turns to Spahlinger, for whose discoveries he is an enthusiastic missioner. Spahlinger, although originally a lawyer and not a doctor, has given his life to the discovery of a serum which would really cure consumption. Whether he has succeeded still remains to be seen, but a case has been made out for the most detailed and immediate enquiry. Authority was sufficiently convinced in England some years ago for the advisers of the British Red Cross Society to offer Spahlinger £30,000 for a monopoly of the treatment for the British Empire, but Spahlinger advised them that the sum was insufficient to pay his creditors, safeguard his laboratory, and meet the expense of producing the quantity of complete serum required. An account of Spahlinger is at present timely and will be welcomed by many students. The present movement of the Press to discredit the man signifies nothing against him. In 1925 Sir Bruce Bruce-Porter, as broad-minded a physician as there is in Great Britain, said that if he were personally afflicted with consumption he would at once hurry off to Geneva and make every effort to obtain the Spahlinger treatment, and Mr. Masters quotes a great many other authoritative testimonials.

* * *

As we have not wisdom to take the right steps for the treatment of consumption—the gold treatment was not entirely false, in that a sacrifice of the gold in South Africa would release a sanatorium to accommodate all the consumptives, not in the Empire alone, but in the world—the onus is on the doctors to produce the remedy, and to accept it from anybody who finds it: doctor, magician, quack, or lawyer. The only lay-press reference to Spahlinger, except the Lancashire and Cheshire branch of the B.M.A.'s resolution to ask for enquiry, have been as uninformed and prejudiced as the *Daily Mail's* Yadil exposure, since when Yadil has cured a number of people diagnosed consumptive by their medical attendants. To put the Spahlinger treatment at the disposal of the world would involve expense. The treatment of consumption is an economic question, which is why the spirit at this day does not tackle it in any efficient manner.

R. M.

*How to Conquer Consumption. David Masters. (The Bodley Head. 6s.)

The Quest of Values.

By Janko Lavrin.

VII.—THE "DECADENTS."

I.

The label "decadent" is vague, and, like most vague labels, it has been much misused. Yet a proper approach to the decadent type can be of great value, because it necessarily touches upon many sore points of the present-day mentality as a whole. Without trying to define what decadence is, we are on fairly safe ground if we say that its chief symptoms are uprootedness, scepticism, inner disintegration, and chaos. These features have, of course, several gradations and aspects. And their most interesting aspect is, perhaps, that one in which they are welcomed by certain people as a boon, even as a kind of privilege. For there are "decadents" who realise that there is one thing which is much worse than inner chaos, and this is the peace of self-complacent inner stagnation.

As if afraid of such "peace," they welcome their inner pains and problems. They prefer to lacerate and to stir up their souls by artificial means, even by vices, rather than succumb to the greatest of all vices—that of inner drabness and stagnation. Devoid of real life and fire, they galvanise themselves by all sorts of mental drugs and substitutes. On the one hand, they see no perspective of a creative ascent of life; and, on the other, their own taste does not allow them to degrade themselves to the self-sufficient "bourgeois" smugness, and to ignoring everything that goes beyond this smugness. They are doomed to turn in their "vicious" circle, sponging upon their own despair, from which they often derive a kind of negative ecstasy.

Having no reliable continuity in their inner selves, they often lose all sense of continuity in their external existence as well. They become walking collections of disjointed thoughts, intuitions, and impressions. In fact, they are typical (and therefore rather irresponsible) "impressionists," both in art and in life. In many cases they become just chaotic ruins; but one must have at least some substance in order to become a ruin. Emptiness cannot give birth even to chaos; and great chaos is often a proof of rich material which has gone wrong.

II.

We must not confuse with these tragic decadents their apes and literary camp-followers. What in the former had often been the result of a genuine profound inner drama, became in the hands of the latter a caricature, a pose, or a kind of fashionable sport. Who does not remember the band of posing "æsthetes," erotomaniacs, secondhand mystics, suburban supermen, and even provincial satanists of the *fin de siècle*? The surprising thing, however, was that many of them had taste and talent; they could say everything in a polished and refined way. The only trouble was that they had nothing to say.

So they became "eclectics," that is, versatile intellectual marauders. But as one cannot go on living by continual marauding (at least in matters of mind and intellect), their poverty had to come out sooner or later, however much they were trying to conceal it behind glittering forms, "precious" words and egotistic poses.

The egotistic self-worship of these elegant virtuosi was particularly striking, and in most cases it was due to the fact that they had no selves. One asserts everywhere and at every movement only what one does not believe in, although one wants to. In this respect the egotism of their greater prototypes was deeper, more complicated, and at times even heroic. For as if feeling the danger of a complete dispersion of their disintegrating personalities, they adopted egotism as their last shelter and as a self-imposed artificial focus. As their taste often refused to respect anything in the present day humanity, they tried to respect at least the tragedy of their own isolation, of their "exclusiveness." It was not conceit, but pride, to which they clutched in order to "save" themselves for a time, to endure their own inner loneliness. Yet those who had been perfectly frank with themselves, had to realise sooner or later that even this kind of egotism leads nowhere, and that the individual self can grow only in the name of over-individual impulses and values. It was at these cross-roads that several new "shelters" became possible.

III.

One of them was a deliberate acceptance of ready-made higher values, in spite of one's scepticism. This was at the bottom of Dostoievsky's and Tolstoy's "Christianity," while Nietzsche tried to manufacture a higher value and vision of his own. A return to Roman Catholicism, or to some acknowledged form of mysticism became for a time very popular—from Huysmans to Papini. The oversweet "mysticism" of dreamy old maids *à la Maeterlinck* does not count, of course, because it is too much of a spiritual lemonade; strong minds which want to forget themselves, require stronger intoxicants.

One of such intoxicants is provided by the Eastern, particularly Buddhist, Philosophy. There is, perhaps, no greater danger to the European Spirit than *undigested* and half-understood Eastern spirituality; and only the most sober, as well as the most balanced, minds can digest it with benefit. The frequent result of the Eastern thought grafted upon weary Europeans is a distorted attitude towards reality and towards the individual self—that attitude of least resistance which we see in both Schopenhauer and Tolstoy. To be brief, instead of ennobling and spiritualising practical activities, one simply rejects them as a manifestation of Maya. An act of this kind is usually accompanied by that dangerous "self-denial" which is prompted by the well-known and tempting formula: If you wish to get rid of the pain of your self you must destroy the self and dissolve it—dissolve in Nirvana, in Nature, in the Group-soul, in the Unconscious, in "Dionysos," or even in the undifferentiated sexual Libido (Rozanov, for example!).

It is not necessary to enumerate all those modern Europeans who have tried to naturalise various aspects of the Buddhist Nirvana—in their own image. Suffice it to say that the *static* spirituality of Buddhism may become one of the strongest temptations of the best and profoundest European minds at a period of such inner weariness and lack of orientation in which we are at present. It is, in fact, one pole towards which the European decadence is gravitating. Its other pole could be, perhaps, defined as a passive surrender to lower centres of human consciousness.

IV.

This lowering of human consciousness can go in different directions. One of them consists in the growing cult of the chaotic and primitive sexual libido, which often makes the civilised man revert, as it were, to the orgiastic savages. Another direction is that of standardised uniformity as a "simplified" substitute for real harmony (of which we are incapable). We can standardise ourselves either by going forward—to robots—or by going "back to Nature" with Tolstoy. In this respect, too, our advanced civilisation and prehistoric savages seem to touch each other. The revival of primitivism in

art and letters (dadaism, etc.), as well as the role played in them by the "negro," is symptomatic. But even here we are doomed to remain deliberate experimenters whose "simplicity" is in itself the acme of sophistication. Gauguin may have found a lot of new motives among his exotic savages, but, despite all his attempts at becoming a savage himself, he remained to the end an over-civilised Parisian decadent.

Yet modern man is ready to adopt anything in order to "simplify" his inner chaos, to forget his self, and to whip, at the same time, his over-tired nerves. Jazz is a proper symbol of our age: a bridge between our hyper-trophied civilisation and the savage negro—via New York. The out-of-date aesthetes, satanists, etc., have been replaced by so many other "ists" and "isms," which are but new names for the same process of individual disintegration.

But alongside such types there *are* "decadents" who possess a genuine longing for a beautiful and worthy existence. This longing may, in the end, make them stronger than their own inner tragedy. If so, a new intellectual and spiritual elite may gradually crystallise out of them. Was not Nietzsche one of those decadents who *dare* to become their own doctors? In curing themselves they will cure life from many evils. For the best remedy against general decadence is a man who has gone through it, and overcome it within himself.

The "Just Price" and Redundant Money.

Recent enquiries from new students reveal misunderstandings of the reasons for, and the effect of, the Just Price discount. There is no need for it, say some. It will cause an accumulation of money against which there will be no goods available, say others. These two objections are one. They arise from the agreed facts (1) that the present selling price of any article is the sum of the costs incurred from first to last during its manufacture; and (2) that all these costs represent past payments to individuals in the form of incomes. So that for every £1 of price charged to consumers £1 of income must have been previously paid to consumers. Therefore, in the long run consumers' incomes must be sufficient to repay industry all its costs without the aid of extra consumer-credits. Such is the contention of critics. Faced with the observed fact that their theory does not work out in practice, they explain it by saying that this is because the total of consumers' income is not evenly distributed; that a large proportion of it goes to a few people, who spend only a fraction of their share on consumable goods, while the rest goes to many people, who spend it all and find it insufficient. Nevertheless, say these critics, the shortage of the many is counterbalanced by the surplus of the few: personal incomes as a whole still remain equal to industrial costs as a whole.

Their concept of a completed credit cycle runs like this:—

1. The banks create £1,000 of credit and lend it to Industry.
2. Industry expends the £1,000, which sooner or later becomes consumer income.
3. Industry's costs are £1,000.
4. Consumers can pay the £1,000 back to Industry and defray its costs. If they do ——
5. Industry can thus repay the banks, upon which ——
6. The banks cancel the £1,000.

According to this theory, if consumers as a whole expend all their income on consumable goods, industry can keep functioning on its sales-revenue from consumers, and there will be no need for consumer-credits to be distributed.

Let us examine this, making the assumption that all consumer incomes are spent as the theory requires. We have now to isolate and survey such a credit-cycle at the point of its completion. By the terms of the hypothesis the situation is as follows:—

1. The £1,000 is no longer in existence.
2. The consumers have paid all Industry's costs.

Now bring in the physical consequences of the use of the £1,000.

3. The consumers will have received the consumable part of Industry's total production. Call this "goods."
4. Industry will have retained the rest. Call this "factories."

For it is clear that when the above credit-cycle is completed, consumers must have paid the whole cost of the factories built during the period in addition to the cost of the goods supplied them during the same period. To deny this is to deny the hypothesis under examination.

So far so good. But the trouble has to do with the next credit-cycle. The physical conditions will differ in that these factories will now begin to take part in production. The point arises: *does Industry propose to make any charge in respect of them or does it not?* If it does not, the second credit-cycle can be completed like the first. But otherwise the price-income circle cannot join up: and it will be left unclosed by whatever charge is to be levied in respect of these factories.† Thus, we are able to say to the propounders of the theory: "Yes, Industry can continuously recover all costs from consumers' earnings; but only on condition that these consumers *pay for capital charges once, and once only.*"

In a world-industry under one control and one accountancy system this condition could be observed without difficulty during the process of costing and pricing. But to-day we have to deal with the fact that there are millions of business organisations at work, each setting a tiny credit-cycle moving, but each without the time or knowledge to detect and correct the error that creeps in to ultimate *Price*. So the error must be corrected *on their behalf*, and (for practical reasons) by a method which will *not interfere with their present system of estimating their costs*.

This the Price-Regulation scheme does. It leaves undisturbed the accumulation of duplicated charges in the books of all these organisations, and waits to adjust them at the point where consumers call at the industrial counter.* It creates and gives to these consumers sufficient new credit from period to period to balance the total of these overcharges *as and when* levied in *ultimate* prices.

There is no inherent reason why credit gratuitously distributed to consumers need accumulate. Once accept the premisses (1) that Industry has surplus goods to sell, value, say, £1,000, (2) that Industry owes the banks £1,000, and (3) that consumers have no money; and it is clear that £1,000 gratuitous credit, issued to these consumers, will be cancelled as soon as they have bought the goods.

It is as difficult for the new student to accept the truth of these premisses by direct observation as by conceiving Industry as a whole as a single concern. In the first case, conditions are so complicated

† Supposing the original credit had been applied equally between the making of factories and goods. The consumers would have received and paid £1,000 for goods costing £500. Now suppose Industry to value the factories at cost, £500, and to charge this up in the next cycle. Assume the same amount of credit is issued, £1,000. Industry's total price would now be £1,000 money cost, plus £500 book cost; total £1,500. But consumers would receive only £1,000.

* This is the reply to a reader who suggests that price regulation need happen only at the inauguration of the Social Credit régime, and will be unnecessary thereafter.

that he cannot see what is happening as a whole.* In the second, what he sees happening as a whole is so manifestly stupid that he cannot conceive its happening in detail.

When once you establish the fact that Industry as a whole charges its capital costs more than once to consumers (and you rule out the idea of gratuitous direct credit-issues to consumers), you will see that industry must borrow extra credit equal to the capital charges so duplicated, and pay it out to consumers (as wages, etc.). It must pay consumers the money to pay back. And in every new credit-cycle of this kind there would be an increased volume of industrial borrowing of bank-credit, accompanied by a commensurate growth of industrial debt. The fact that at the close of each cycle Industry would (ex hypothesi) repay its debt to the bank, is unimportant. It would have increased its accumulation of factories and its valuation of them, and would need to borrow more money at the opening of the new cycle than it had repaid at the end of the previous one.

In practical affairs this remedy cannot be applied for long. Sooner or later the banks call a halt; whereupon Industry, now being unable to collect money equal to its accumulated cost-figures (even in instalments) writes them down—thus in effect distributing a subsidy to consumers at the expense of its shareholders.†

As an aid to understanding the problem as a whole, Cost can be considered as distance travelled, and Credit as the wheel that has travelled that distance. If the diameter of the wheel increased at each revolution so that its circumference was always equal to the distance travelled, Credit and Cost would be identical. But the credit-wheel does not change; it simply revolves. Hence, while a given travelled Distance (Cost) may accurately be described as *representing* so many wheels each having performed one revolution, it obviously does not imply the *existence* of that number, or any number above one, of wheels at the end of that distance. A record of money distributed by Industry in the past is not a record of money accumulated by consumers now. To put matters right, consumers ought always to be enabled, as a body, to buy everything that Industry can put on the market, by paying a total price equal to the money they happen to possess. If this involves Industry in loss, that loss represents past unnecessary duplications of industrial cost, and these duplications *have been imposed on industrial accountancy* as a concomitant of the banks' policy of premature credit-destruction. The remedy is the creation and distribution of new gratuitous credit to bridge the shortage.

ARTHUR BRENTON.

* A firm constructing a factory or other capital asset pays out money to consumers who spend practically all of it on goods. They do not buy them from that firm, but from other firms. So while Industry *as a whole* gets all the money back during the period of the above construction, the firm in question does not get any, and must charge consumers with the whole cost over a future period. If Industry were run as a single accountancy unit this would be unnecessary. In a physical sense Industry would have acquired during that period all its permanent assets at the "cost" of supplying the goods delivered to consumers. That is why, in terms of finance, the New Economist maintains that the true cost of *all* production over any period does not exceed the cost of actual consumption during the same period. Any surplus (new plant, unsold stocks, and so on; less physical wear and tear, physical waste of material, etc.), remaining to Industry at the end of each such period Industry has got for nothing. But the firms who own this surplus have not got it for nothing. They are out of pocket and in debt by the amount of money they have expended. The Price Regulation method would, in effect, buy the surplus with new credit and give it to consumers. Of course, consumers do not need factories to take home, but in an economic sense they consume factories when they consume the products of factories. Having originally paid away all their incomes for the *production* of factories they have no money to pay for the *consumption* of factories.

† Cf. Armstrong's and Vickers' reconstructions. Also the parlous position of the railway companies with their huge capital and negligible dividends.

No More Frontiers. . . .

"At last," I thought, as I took my place in the restaurant-car of that "Compagnie Internationale des Wagons-Lits," whose sonorous name alone evokes in me a vision of romances yet to come, "at last I am in another world, if only for a few hours." . . . Looking up, my eye caught a sign on the door: "Nestlé . . . le Trésor des Mamans." This was too bad. Was the language of Racine made for this? All the same, I had to admit the attraction of the picture accompanying this legend . . . the picture of a charming, desirable young woman, who had that "je ne sais quoi," which stamped her as indubitably French. And yet, and yet, there was something about her that reminded me of the land whose shores were now behind me. In a flash I saw the secret. She had kept that schoolgirl complexion.

Silently cursing American artists, I turned away. I had not come to France to study American insipidity, but to regain contact with that other civilisation I had known so well. I glared sullenly out of the window at the fleeting landscape, only occasionally marred by advertisements of—Oh, my God!—"Pneus Dunlop," "Cigarettes Camel," "Thé Lipton." I resigned myself to another long wait. Paris at least would not disappoint. Ever-changing, she would still be the same.

Arrived in Paris, I went straight to the Quarter, where, I knew, old friends would be waiting. Louis was the first I met. Shaking hands with him, I could not help saying: "On voit bien que tu as visité l'Angleterre. . . . Comment Donc? . . ." Mais ce pantalon large de 60 centimètres? . . . "Tiens, tu ne savais pas que c'est la mode ici depuis plus de six mois. D'ailleurs, je crois que ça vient plutôt de l'Amérique!" . . .

In "La Source," where we took our coffee, we were soon joined by more old friends. They, too, were wearing bell-bottomed trousers, horn-rimmed spectacles, trench coats. But soon the questions about my life at present, the memories of old times, the rapid conversation dispelled the unpleasant impression. I asked what there was to see. I had, indeed, looked already at the lists of plays, films, and art exhibitions in the papers. But my friends would understand better what would interest me. For they, too, were "Les Jeunes." They, too, had known the glory of Montparnasse. Various suggestions were made, half-heartedly, of plays which were "not bad"; of the "Salon des Indépendants" which *might* be interesting. None of them interested me until little Gabriel spluttered out, in his usual excitable fashion: "Il y a un film épatant que tu devrais aller voir. C'est Harold Lloyd dans 'Ne t'en fais pas!'" I stared at him in amazement. . . . Finally it was decided that I should dine with Louis that night, and afterwards we would go to some theatre together.

We dined in that little place in the Rue St. Jacques, which was and still is, even in its exaggerations, the type of the students' restaurant. The talk was animated, the wit excellent, the songs we sang after dinner the same. I felt at home again. I was still in that old world when we stepped out into the street, and made our way to the theatre. So much so that we were in our seats before I thought to ask Louis what it was we had come to see. With a gratified expectation of approval, he replied: "C'est une pièce

que tu connais peut-être et dont tu as certainement entendu parler: 'No, No, Nanette.' Moi-même, je l'ai déjà vue deux fois, mais ça m'emballe." He was so evidently serious that I was glad the orchestra started up at that moment.

The conductor was of a type I had seen before—in English music halls and American films. But he was popular! And then the show began. Nothing, it seemed to me, nothing on this earth, could be less calculated to appeal to a Parisian audience. I was delighted to hear a charming Parisienne in front of me saying to her husband: "Comme c'est bête! Je regrette ma soirée." But, in honesty I could not discount the tumultuous applause from every part of a house in which, assuredly, I was the only foreigner.

Walking back with Louis, I gently expressed my surprise that a play so decidedly American should have such a success. He stared at me: "Mais n'est ce pas qu'elle a eu un succès fou à Londres aussi?" "Yes, I admitted, but, after all, London is, if you like, a suburb of New York, whilst Paris. . . . "Oh, pour ça, mon vieux," he replied sententiously, "l'art n'a pas de frontières."

WILFRID HINDLE.

A Vagabond in Denmark.

By Leopold Spero.

XXVII.—ON THE QUAY VIVE.

Now where do they all come from, these fussy little steamers that lie rubbing their noses against the quay? North and south, east and west, spread the islands, large and small, where obscure people live happily, and each no doubt thinks his island as big as Sjaelland itself, if the truth were told. But your Dane is a neighbourly fellow; and likes to see the world, more particularly his own world of quiet, landlocked seas, and simpering fields and guardian forests of low pine, of little towns that beckon to each other across the water, of sand dune and sprawling river, and tumbled heath and orchard tended lovingly, of pert villas and white half-timbered squares of farmhouses, where the trees stand sentinel to ward off evil from the cattle in their byres. Small profit he shall have to the higher account of his imagination in this country of two cliffs and a hill, where the joy of travel is in its varied movement, not in any grand change of scene. But movement and variety colour these pleasant airs, for does not each dim island half-discerned beckon with the finger of romance, and each departing steamer carry the armies of adventure to the shores they seek far away? From Aalborg in the north, from Elsinore and Copenhagen over by the Great Sound, from southerly Möen with its much-advertised chalk cliffs, from rugged, storied Bornholm, which seems to be in another age and another hemisphere, from these distant havens as well as from nearer Nakskov in Lolland, and Rudkjobing, just away across in Lange Land, they hurry to and fro, the little steamers, working furiously all day to keep Denmark together and make a single piece out of all its broken bits.

And though these peasants and market women, these stout and alpaca-coated commercial travellers, even the children who must for very adventure's sake go to school in another island, would make up a sufficient traffic to keep many muscular little engines throbbing away across the waters, the Dane himself is a thorough patriot in travel, and must be forever hurrying over and between his islands on bicycle or his car. And how on earth enough steamers are provided to carry Ford and Citroën, and Mr. Morris of Oxford, and Mr. Adler from Germany, as variously as their helots intend, is an eternal puzzle to the brain that is vagabond and cannot comprehend the earnest passions of organised transport on the grand scale.

But what an added calm of travel is here, where you may wander up and down along the little quay, and look your craft over critically, comparing points, accepting this and rejecting that, your choice of journeys so delightfully indifferent that you may decide to go to Falster because you like the look of the boat that is going there, or give Lange Land a miss because the cut of her ferry's jib mislikes you. True, from the hieroglyphics chalked on boards by the after-saloon, and by the signs of awakening interest aboard, and the leisurely procession of custom up the gang-planks, to sit on the seats with its market basket on its knees, or attaché case stowed comfortably behind its legs, it would appear that sooner or later one choice or another will be forced upon you. But here are half-a-dozen ships, so what matters it if one departs, leaving you the other five for meditation and lordly selection? Anyway, there is lunch to be considered, and these friendly tables invite you from the other side of the road.

There is one cosy and encouraging thing about the Danish innkeeper. If no custom is apparent, he himself will take his seat at the best table, with his wife and children and a friend or two, and call his own head waiter to set the kitchen staff in operation, so that there shall be no rust or waste even though there is no profit. Maybe this is a subtle device to encourage a hesitating *clientèle*. And a very effective device it is; for it has drawn you to take your seat, and be served with a sweet and solid and unorthodox soup, and with a cut of brisket garnished with pickled cucumber, and a bottle of lager to make you sleepier than ever. There was a time when Denmark knew daintier and more elegant feeding than this, when the Smörrebrod she served on her steam ferries was the renaissance of artistic trifling with fish and dried meats and experimental eggs-and-salad. Ay, but that sort of thing is all forgotten in the limbo of increased prices, and now you will fare more crudely and more expensively. In Sweden the high gods of the table are still worshipped, by congregations of surprising number when one considers how rarified by expense is the atmosphere of those high hills to the eastward far away. But Denmark has given up such aspirations, and tightens her belt to meet the exigencies of harder times. Her plan is now to sell to the hungry Briton in his clamouring markets most of the food she raises, living frugally herself and putting every spare shilling into better machinery, into cattle foods and manures, electric installation, and most of all into the business of teaching the already capable Danish farmer how to become, every day and in every way, just a little better and better.

Ah me, what heavy reflections are these, and what a heavy lunch! The sun is quite temperamental to-day, the noise from the shipyards has subsided, and there is hardly any living thing to be seen save a few stolid burghers munching their sandwiches on board the boat for Lange Land. The traveller's eyes droop, his ears close like the petals of some lazy, tropic flower, his arms stretch out on to the table, his head falls forward. . . . And then a hand, a heavy, podgy hand is laid upon his shoulder. And as he tumbles out of his dream, he sees the stout proprietor, shaking a scandalised head at him.

"Sorry," says the traveller. "I must have fallen asleep."

From the depths of that vast corporation comes a not ill-humoured rumbling of protest.

"You cannot sleep here, at such time. My people will think you are dronk."

And in case you are "dronk," if not worse, the bill is pushed suggestively before your eyes, a bill as tough as the brisket itself.

Drama.

Community Festival: New Theatre.

During one of the intervals in the successful festival of the amateur societies associated with the British Drama League, Lord Eustace Percy, in a speech the brevity of which was as welcome as unexpected, claimed the success of community drama as evidence of the efficiency of his department. To a less implicated observer folk-drama is a comment on the dullness of education by deserters, who, lacking ambition to become either clerks or Cabinet Ministers, play to enjoy themselves. In this final competition six teams representing the élite of a hundred and fifty came from the six geographical areas and presented as many pieces. My regret was that the judging could not have been done beforehand, and the performances given in rising order of merit. Tempting the audience to appoint a bookmaker reduces the event to guessing the psychology of judges.

I indulged in a little betting, saving the tax by doing it with myself. I backed the Welwyn Garden City for first, putting it third in my private list. I backed the Scots and the Yorkshire people for second and third tie, privately setting them first two. My betting was based on the compulsions under which judges must work. I have written of the winner, "Mr. Samson," by Charles Lee, before. There is both fun and pathos in it; it puts both judge and audience into a good humour, and criticism off its guard. But it is really no more than a sketch. Elsie Colson's Caroline Stevens, one of the maiden sisters between whom the genial wooer could not choose, was as beautifully played as before. The other sister took some time to get the wave-length of the big New Theatre, a trouble for several competitors in their first few minutes.

The Blairgowrie and the Leeds teams were the only ones who acted native folk in native dialect. Arbor Henderson's Campbell in "Campbell of Kilmhor" was so fine that only another or two in their cast of six—and soldiers—were wanted to make them certain first. Had the rest been as good as Henderson and W. Inverarity as Dugald Stewart England would have been conquered, and the clan of Campbell redeemed by its aesthetic worth. Leeds were handicapped by playing first. These, a cast of four, gave a play written and produced by the actor who took the title part, Melchisedek. I was greatly struck by their sincerity. Two of the parts, the one by James R. Gregson, the author, and the other by George Beaumont, were spoken and acted in a manner that many professionals might profitably envy. The third man was good when he settled down, but the one woman in the play wasn't at home.

This really is folk-drama, which has no need to be socially saved by the name community-drama. This moralising between the fireman and his cronies by the ovens of a steel foundry over the bodies of some unwanted kittens for which logic substituted babies was not declaimed; the speakers conversed as though oblivious to an audience in the quiet tones of men for whom the world no longer exists. Yet dialect notwithstanding, they were audible throughout the theatre. But the author dodged his problem; the unwanted baby brought by the disgraced mother died to save either the application of logic or its transcending. Another fault was that Melchisedek himself had too big a share of the fire. The rest were backers-up. The great merit of this team was the pure dialect idiom that would die out with the present old folks of the county through the influence of the city and polite education; they are preserving something more valuable than the manner of their dialect—the richness of its metaphor and idiom.

The judges said at the end that 10 per cent. of marks had been given for choice of play, the balance for presentation, team work, and setting. That 10 per cent. interests me. I suspect that choice of play dominated the marking, and that suitability or otherwise of play made marks cheap or expensive. Birmingham played Yeats' "Land of Heart's Desire" for last place. There seems to be something in the atmosphere of Birmingham that provokes such other-worldliness. Brummagem Irish and work beyond their range cost far more than 10 per cent. Bristol took Tchehov and fifth, while Liverpool strove heroically for fourth under the burden of an impossible piece out of Gilbert Cannan's "Miles Dixon," in which the ne'er-do-well paramour of a farm-worker's wife and the injured husband, little but their lamps visible, ranted in hyperbole in the back-yard about their respective merits. The very real talent of the Liverpool players wasted itself in darkness on rubbish.

Leonce and Lena: Playroom Six.

Many times since I saw "Leonce and Lena" I have thanked the star which led me there. It reflects no lustre on the English theatre that the play had to wait for this gesture of the Playroom Six for both translation and production. Georg Büchner, the author, died in 1837 at twenty-five years of age, having gone up like a sky-rocket. Geoffrey Dunlop, the translator, was also the producer. The theme is simple. In one royal house a prince, weary of the obligation of idleness, has one true friend, a rogue and vagabond. In another a princess, weepingly protesting against her betrothal being an affair of State—monarchs being in a sense nobodies—leans on her loyal, loving, Duenna. That this prince and princess should run away from their palaces, and meet, after weary wandering, at a common public-house was not unlikely in a play; that they should be married in masks, the old king persuaded by the rogue that they were mechanical dolls legalising the union in effigy, on the analogy of being hanged in effigy, and immediately afterwards quarrel over each other's deceit touches old strings. But the play was not a fairy-tale; it was a jungle of satire, poetry, and nonsense, rich and luxuriant like a jungle, with a flood of tropical colour. Büchner was called the Shakespeare of the nineteenth century; and Shakespeare must have been his model, except for the satire; the imagery, however, recalled for me "The Shaving of Shagpat." It was impossible to prophesy where one would be next instant, declaiming poetic nonsense to the clouds, or quoting Napoleon and Solomon. A quotation in a play usually offends me. But I could not resist the apposite use, to sweep away false romance, for "heroism stinks of brandy and dies of dysentery." If such a feast for the senses as this play cannot tempt a big theatre it ought to find its public in the fireside medium.

Coleridge taking pious care of Shakespeare, offered to prove that the comic interludes of Dogberries and their like were interpolated by Elizabethan actors for the groundlings' sakes. Büchner took the side of the vagabonds, retained them throughout the play, and revealed their wisdom, at the same time keeping it as nonsensical as he made the pomp of royalty. Alfred Wild's Valerio, the self-conscious tramp, and Prime-Minister-to-be of the kingdom of Papa, hardly accorded with the present acting vogue. It was robust and joyous, and I enjoyed it immensely. The whole production was an improvement over this theatre's first effort that justifies fully its attempt to lassoo the stars. Barbara Dillon, her Irish name notwithstanding, has so good an English speech that her influence ought to be of great benefit. Winifred Oughton as the Duenna was also worthy. On productions such as this the Playroom must become indispensable to the English theatre.

PAUL BANKS.

Review

Rambles with Anatole France. By his secretary, Sandor Kemeri. Translated from the Hungarian by Emil Lengyel. (Benn. 16s.)

Madame Kemeri (or should it be Madame Sandor, on the analogy of Bela Kun, Hunyadi Janos, and other Hungarian rhapsodies?) came hurtling into M. France's life when he was least able to defend himself. Madame Caillavet was dead, and the Master had little to live for. But this enterprising lady journalist from the banks of the Danube soon brightened him up, and so we have this undistinguished transcription of his less memorable afternoons, translated first into Hungarian, and then back into an English of no particular charm or distinction. The original Magyar version may have been supple and light and steely, as any book on France should be, but nobody would guess it from this volume of the ordinary. There have been many books published about France since his death, and some of them make one realise what a very serious business dying may be. This is by no means the worst of the bunch. But *Non cuivis homini contingit adire Corinthum.* People who write about Anatole France ought to be sure in their own minds, before putting pen to paper, that they possess some of that ironic self-comprehension which will instinctively reject anything inferior in quality to what the Master himself would have passed fit for the printed page.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

AN ANALYSIS OF PRICE.

Sir,—In common with your other readers, I am indebted to Mr. A. W. Coleman for his lucid article under the above title.

But he has either overlooked, or failed to emphasise, what is really the main point. He says: "The total money issued to the community = the nominal financial cost of total production." Unfortunately this is not true.

The nominal financial cost of total production = the total money issued to the community *multiplied by the number of times that money passes through the cost accounts of the production system,* which is a very different thing. It is the same difference as in paying for a 6d. loaf of bread with 6d., and paying for it with one penny, offered six times. The subject is dealt with at length in my paper delivered in January before the Liverpool Engineering Society, "The Engineering of Distribution."

C. H. DOUGLAS.

HAND-TO-MOUTH BUYING.

Sir,—In connection with your Note on "hand-to-mouth" buying in the United States, a paragraph in the *Manchester Guardian Commercial Review* of 1926 has some interest (p. 40, col. 1). The opinion is there given that this practice, which started during the War, depends on efficient transport, and is extending to nearly every kind of business, has the advantage that it flattens out the cycles of depression and prosperity, makes for a more regular running of production, and avoids the cancellations of contracts which are frequent when buying is done for long-distance delivery.

H. C.

MUSIC.

Sir,—Some time ago I engaged your Music Critic in warm discussion, so that it is a pleasure to write in a different spirit. Not being very highly qualified in music I have followed Mr. Sorabji's canon during the last year or two, and invariably I have found what he praises undoubtedly praiseworthy, and what he damns damnable.

Last Sunday, after cursing the rain, I picked up the headphones in desperation. Somebody was playing a piano. Oh my hat! who was this?—what superb chords; what brilliant passages; what wonderful theme working. If it is credible in connection with wireless transmission, I sat entranced.

"The Wy-liss Ork-istra will now play"—to the devil, thought I, and picked up the paper to find who this extraordinary pianist was. Solito de Solis!!!

And I who have heard Pachmann, Moiseiwitch, Cortot, Myra Hess, Pouishnoff, Harriett Cohen, and the rest without a thrill, was transfixed—and through the medium of a crystal set.

FAITCHA.

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