

THE NEW AGE

INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER"

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

Mr. McKenna's presidential address to the Midland Bank shareholders this year was more political in character than heretofore. He gave an excellent synopsis of America's credit policy since the war. His chief conclusions were that America had found out how to pursue her policy irrespective of the flow of gold to and from other countries, and that she could maintain control over the world level of prices. American banks had been "careful to regulate the amount of bank cash in accordance with the needs of business." And the American banking system as a whole could and did deliberately deprive some of its gold of its "credit-creating" property. In these ways and others the American price-level had been prevented from rising or falling outside a fairly narrow margin. Speaking of finance generally, he said that the central object of credit policy was to keep prices from moving.

It is useful for the public to know that the credit system can adapt itself to "trade requirements" and adjust its cash accordingly, rather than that trade requirements must be denied because of inextinguishable cash holdings. It takes them at least one step towards realising the ultimate truth that credit policy can and should be adjusted to consumers' requirements. In the meantime the very structure of *price* compels the credit system to keep it still, because directly prices move in either direction some section or other of the community gets hurt. The Social Credit policy, on the other hand, would be to remove certain elements of cost from the structure of industry's price, and to make these up by gratuitous subventions of new credit. This would begin a sequence of progressively diminishing retail prices; without inflicting monetary losses on manufacturers or traders. The industry's total profit would then rise in correspondence with the increased quantity of consumable goods it sold. "Its earnings

would expand *because* prices fell, and the consumers' standard of life would rise at the same time. With our enormous accumulation of productive capital and its potentiality of continuous expansion we can make more and more goods with less and less expenditure of human energy and time. To do that would undoubtedly be regarded by reasonable men as *economic* stability. The *financial* reflex of this stability should manifest itself in the phenomenon of continually falling prices charged against continuously maintained incomes, or of unexpanded prices charged against continuously increasing incomes. Which if the two it is to be is a matter of convenience of administration. But that it shall be one of the two is a matter of principle. The true index of "stability" is not how much money anything costs, nor how much money anybody gets; but it is, as children say at school, *how many times* any retail price "goes" into any personal income. One pound of Price goes into four pounds of Income four times. So does ten pounds into forty pounds. People are not interested in the *pounds*—which are merely figures to *read*; but in the *times*—which are things to *eat*. What they ultimately want, industry can easily provide. But what they are forced to use intermediately to get it, the credit controllers pretend they cannot supply. These experts plead the inevitability of *price inflation* if they expand credit. Allow them this premise, and the necessity of their policy of restriction can be demonstrated irrefutably. But deny it—challenge their central axiom—and all their arguments become irrelevant. It is perfectly easy to have a falling price level in an area of expanding credit.

The *Poor-Law Officers' Journal* of January 20 repudiates the strictures of the Ministry of Health's Inspector on the Manchester Guardians. Mr. Maslin, the Inspector in question, had adduced the fact that there had been a decline in the number of registered unemployed since 1925, and a simultaneous increase in the numbers of unemployed relieved by the

Guardians as being a proof of laxity in Poor Law administration. In answer, the above journal replies that during this period the Government began to restrict benefits under the Unemployed Insurance Acts, and that its Departmental policy favoured considerable increases in the "uninsurable" class. Naturally, it says, people knocked off insurance benefit have recourse to the Guardians to relieve their destitution.

"There has been, in short, no laxity of administration; all that has happened has been that the Government plan to throw off a minor burden from central funds on to the shoulders of local authorities has been successful."

That is a true summing up of the situation. The writer of the article proceeds to survey the comments of the London and Provincial newspapers on the Report. He complains that they have concentrated attention on Mr. Maslin's attack, but have ignored the considered reply to it published by the Manchester Guardians, and instances the *Daily Telegraph*, *Morning Post*, *Daily News*, *Sunday Graphic*, *Manchester Daily Dispatch*, and the *Westminster Gazette* as showing an attitude which he describes as an "anti-Poor-Law complex." The concluding paragraphs of his article deal with the subsequent action of the City Council, which has devised a scheme for anticipating certain local public work in which the unemployed shall be absorbed at customary union wage-rates, the Guardians to pay to the Council such sums as they would have had to pay in relief had these men not been so employed. Thus, a man receiving 51s. 9d. per week for twenty-six weeks would cost the Guardians £45 10s., and the Corporation £23 12s. 4d. But after the Conference at which the Council and Guardians decided to do this the Lord Mayor of Manchester pointed out publicly that the Government at present refused to make any grants in aid for such public works in areas where the amount of unemployment was less than 10 per cent. of the population. On the latest Labour Exchange figures Manchester would fail to qualify for grants; but the Lord Mayor explained that a large number of unemployed were not registered, and suggested that Manchester ought to continue to press the Government to provide at least a grant equivalent to three-quarters of the amount paid by the Corporation in wages, on the principle that the unemployment problem was a national one.

One of the most striking indictments of our present finance-economy lies in the enormous waste of time in which it involves citizens of all degrees. In any ordinary business, if you saw continual committee meetings being held in the workshops you would rightly blame the directorate. And perhaps an even stronger indictment against the present system is the increasing tendency for the directing brain to neglect its proper function and meddle in routine jobs. Conditions have not yet reached the stage where Mr. Montagu Norman and the Big Five Chairmen of the banking system take turn and turn about as private detectives in Selfridge's showrooms, but they are unmistakably shaping themselves on that principle. Directly you devise a system which imposes impossible tasks on your subordinates it is only a matter of time before they will force you to go and perform them yourself. The spectacle at the present time of Government officials administering the Poor-Law is one symptom of the process, and the near prospect of bank nominees administering Company Law is another. That all this is a negation of the democratic principle is true enough, but, not worth affirming. The point is that this evil is a logical necessity arising from the two fundamental axioms on which high financial policy is based. They are: (a) all financial credits must be issued as loan-credits, and (b) all production costs must be charged in prices. Everyone who lets these, or either

of them, pass unchallenged, is passively inviting the establishment of a coercive autocracy. He is asking for castor-oil.

The progression from prime cause to ultimate effect covers, in order, (1) bank loan-issues; (2) the time conditions of their repayment (i.e., at notice); and (3) industrial costing methods, which must necessarily be so devised as to recover money from the public as fast as the banks are likely to demand repayment of their loans. If you conceive Britain working under the most auspicious circumstances so far as non-financial conditions were concerned—for instance, as a national co-operative society in which every citizen was a member with an equal share in the concern—the defect would still persist. Suppose the Society borrows £100 from the bank and pays it out to its members as wage-earners. If the bank comes along in a week and wants its money back, the Society will have to charge them £100 for, perhaps, only one-tenth part of a total production having a cost value of £100: if in two weeks it might be able to distribute one-fifth for the £100: if in ten weeks it could (in theory) distribute it all for the £100. (Of course, this argument assumes that the members could somehow or other maintain themselves alive during these alternative waiting periods before they bought the goods.) The point here is that the bank can so time its demand for repayment as to control the quantity of goods the members can buy from their own Society with all their money. The transaction is exactly the same as if the banker had lent £1 each to the members (assuming 100 of them), and said to them this:—

"Now club together and assemble materials, make tools, grow corn, and whatever else you like. But at any time I may instruct the manager of your society to collect the £100 from you. When that happens you must give up your money and in return you can eat whatever is eatable. The rest you must leave. In any case you would not be able to eat it."

Now, granting for the sake of argument that there were good grounds for this premature intervention of the banker to get his money, the obvious course would be for him to say to the members:—

"Now, I have got from you the full £100, but you have received only (assume) one-fifth of the total production you have brought into existence by using the £100. Therefore, I will consider you as being creditors of the bank to the amount of £80, and I will create and issue this to you in free credit when you want it, which will be in instalments at a rate corresponding to that at which you convert your remaining stock of materials to your private uses, and it becomes available for purchase."

Now this £80 represents the "something for nothing" which the Social Credit proposal for a free Consumer Dividend (to supplement industrial wages, salaries and dividends) is supposed to involve. It is obviously nothing of the sort. It is simply a distribution of deferred earnings. In this particular illustration such actual distribution of credit would not be necessary; for the Society, by virtue of its very structure, would not be financially compelled to charge anything for its surplus stock: all it would need to do would be to raise a second loan sufficient to complete its conversion. If it paid, say, £50 to complete the conversion, it would charge £50 for the completed articles.

Now in modern industry the remedy is not so simple. Because of its subdivisions into specialised activities it is bound to buy and sell within itself much of its stock. Every firm buying or selling such stock must necessarily cost it and price it. In this way the above typical £80 would be recorded in fractional amounts in thousands of factory ledgers. Not only that, but each single firm takes a risk which our hypothetical society does not, namely,

that it cannot rely on getting back in prices the whole of the money it pays out. So there arises a dominant impulse to charge "all the goods will fetch." So, between all of them, there results a position which is exactly as if the Society had valued its stock at £80, had added that amount to the £50 it distributed, and had tried to get £130 out of a membership who held only the £50. They do not realise what they are up against: but there are people who do, and they are the people who are in control of the credit system, who freeze up consumption in their attempt to "keep credits fluid."

This typical missing £80, in daily life, is not wholly included in the prices directly charged to the consuming public. It is also concealed in rate and tax demands. Public expenditure is proxy buying by political agencies on behalf of consumers. Against this background we can usefully consider what is going on at Abertillery (Mon.) as we write. Some time ago the District Council found its exchequer empty, while the ratepayers were behind with their rates by about £120,000. The Council applied to the Ministry of Health for a loan to carry on with. The Ministry agreed to sanction a loan of £15,000, but on condition that the Council delegated its whole power over financial policy to a Committee nominated by the Ministry, and renounced all right to interfere with its administration. The Council had to agree, and the committee was appointed. It consisted of a gentleman called Mr. Sidney Pask and two others. Last Friday the *Daily News's* Special Correspondent in Abertillery contributed a panegyric of Mr. Pask and his committee, which goes by the name of "The Big Three" in the locality. Mr. Pask is a man who will "stand no nonsense"—

"Whitehall has a great regard for Mr. Sidney Pask and his work. . . . I am told that Mr. Neville Chamberlain has his eye on this new-found genius. He is doubtless watching the Abertillery experiment with a view to its adoption in places where local finances are in need of elaborate reorganisation. . . . During Mr. Pask's six years on the Council he was for long one of the ordinary plodding members, who did his work quietly and evaded publicity. . . . Except that he has no bodyguard he might be a king walking through the streets of his capital."

The "genius" of Mr. Pask appears to consist in the fact that in twenty-six days he has wrung £20,000 out of the arrearists under threats of legal coercion. But there is more to follow.

"Further economies to be effected will, I am informed, include fewer officials with lower salaries; fewer Council workmen. . . . The 250 school teachers who have been given notice [this was because they refused to assent to a reduction of salary] are preparing for a stiff fight, should it be necessary, when the notices expire at the end of the month. In the case of victimisation I am told that the teachers' organisation will guarantee victimisation pay for five years."

Nobody can find out what the Committee's exact intentions are. It refuses information even to the elected members of the District Council. Abertillery has been completely disfranchised.

"Economy" advocates naturally acclaim Mr. Pask's success. But there is another side to the picture of his recovery of £20,000. It was reported by the *Daily News's* Correspondent in a previous communication on the subject that the defaulting ratepayers had been able to pay up only by mortgaging their dwellings and selling articles out of their dwellings. If that is true on any large scale (and it sounds so) what has happened has been a transference of a debt from the District Council to individual ratepayers. Notice that a municipality is not accorded the privilege enjoyed by limited companies. All its losses as a going concern are recoverable from its ratepayers individually when it goes bankrupt.

Their liability is unlimited. We are not suggesting that this should not be so; we merely point to it as a fact whose significance is that in no way can the consumer escape the full incidence of *Price* on his income, whether it comes via a rate-collector or a tradesman. He must pay in full until he has no money, and then he ceases to be a consumer at all—except on the workhouse level of existence. It is hopeless to plead the inhumanity of this policy before responsible administrators of it unless you can first show them how its supposed necessity arises. Mr. Pask, no doubt, thinks that if a collective debt accrues there must be an equivalent collective sum of money somewhere to meet it. He is unaware that *Debt*, as such, represents, not simply *unrecovered Price* but *irrecoverable Price*; and that it arises, not through improvident spending, but through unscientific costing. It represents the typical £80 of which we have been speaking. So, by reason of his imperfect knowledge of realities he preserves a good conscience. "Harsh things are being said about him," remarks the Correspondent. Of course they are: but Mr. Pask will see neither justice nor reason in them. If he should be made to suffer reprisals it will be he the persecuted and not the people he pursues. At present he is the master of the situation. To the local Trades and Labour Council which demanded certain action from the District Council—

"Mr. Pask replied, in his blunt way, 'I am taking no instructions from a gang of Moscow rowdies.'"

True. He is taking instructions, in the last national analysis from the Bank of England, and in the last international analysis from the Federal Reserve Board of America. So long as he holds his job he can insult anybody he likes with impunity; Abertillery is a microcosm of debt-stricken Europe; and we leave our readers to draw their conclusions from the analogy with special reference to Major Douglas's speech at THE NEW AGE Dinner last Saturday.

Let us turn to another grim episode which happened last week. The *Daily News* absorbed the *Westminster Gazette*. The object of the amalgamation, as announced in a leading sermon in the first issue of the combined newspaper, was to consolidate Liberalism in view of the great struggle before it. Liberalism, as we suppose our readers have learned in the Gospel of the great Report, has come that the people "may have life," and that they "may have it more abundantly." In deference to some of the high sponsors of Liberalism the authors ought to have explored the Psalms and given us the following excerpt from a "Deposited Old Testament": "This poor man cried, and Lloyd George heard him, and delivered him out of all his troubles." However, though everybody still has his life so far as this newspaper merger has yet affected it, there are at any rate three hundred individuals who already have it less abundantly and are plunged into a sea of troubles. Three hundred operatives of all sorts in the printing trade have been dispensed with. Nor were they any too considerably dealt with in the manner of their eviction from their jobs. So tightly was the secret sealed that on the morning of this auspicious Day of Emancipation these men had actually taken up their positions at the machines, frames, and what not before they were told that their services were not required—even for that day's work: they could take off their aprons and go. The rest of the newspaper offices only got to know of what was to happen through being rung up from all over the place by seekers after new jobs to whom *It* had happened. Pask-fodder.

Well, the Liberal "Consolidation" gets a fair send-off with this subsidy of £75,000 or so a year

from Fleet Street—a pretty decent saving in the cost of eyewash mixing. The devisers of this policy had better get a larger tub, or improve their production methods, for they will need to supply a larger quantity or a stronger quality of output to get people to admire a scheme which begins its re-organisation of British industry by depriving shopkeepers of seventy-five thousand pounds' worth of orders a year. As we said only last week in connection with a similar circumstance at Armstrongs, the injured parties are not only the immediate victims, but behind them stand shopkeepers, factors, wholesalers, and manufacturers, all of whom will in turn lose revenue and profit through their dismissal. If the printing trades unions possess any statesmen they ought constantly to press this aspect of the evil, no matter what action they may take to deal with its incidence on their own members.

Major Douglas's speech at the THE NEW AGE Dinner took his audience, as he himself commented, "over heavy ground." It was a speech after the manner of Homer's *Iliad*, with the difference that he assumed his hearers to know all about the struggles of the Greeks and Trojans, and therefore directed their attention rather to the policies of the Gods. Not the clash of armies at Troy, but the clash of cultures in Olympus, was the centre of his discourse. The two antithetical cultures were the *group* spirit on the one hand and the spirit of the *individual* on the other. The local habitations of these spirits were separated by the Atlantic Ocean, and their respective names were North America and Europe. America and *Robotry* at issue with Europe and *Personality*. Major Douglas devoted his remarks in the main to an exploration of this issue. They included a survey of the forces which could be mobilised at the present time for and against the ideal of the supremacy of the Individual over the Group. That the ideal would be achieved he was "absolutely certain," but the manner and time of its victory were a matter of speculation. Whether another world war must supervene he would not express a final belief; but insofar as it was possible, humanly speaking, to measure the balance of the conflicting influences at work, he was very definite in warning his audience that they would be wise to base their own policy on the hypothesis that war was inevitable. If he could render them any assistance in that matter he would at any time be glad to do so. He regretted that he was not able to speak in a more cheerful strain, but urged that an optimism based on anything other than a dispassionate analysis of the realities of the situation would be fatal to their common objective.

The above is our own paraphrase of the speech, and is derived from the impressions we received from it rather than from its formal terms. We have no time, nor is it necessary this week, to discuss its significance and implications. But we must remind ourselves that our belief in the ultimate supremacy of the individual involves the belief in the possibility of the miracle. Every breathing creature contains in his own being the potentialities of miracle. Any one perceivable force. Not so groups. No group ever worked a miracle. In a deep sense the mere fact that the power of a group is approximately *calculable* is an assurance of its weakness when opposed by the impulses of free spirits however few. As Major Douglas once said: "There is nothing which organised finance fears more than personal initiative." Take two instances of the incalculable as it works. A grindstone of a certain diameter can be assigned a life of so many years by calculating the rate of its wear by friction in use. But in a second it

may burst and be nought. A dumb man trips over the stairs and nearly breaks his neck. Instead he breaks his long silence. He speaks. Here we see instances in both inanimate and animate nature of the phenomenon of a "cause" associated with an entirely unrelated "effect." In something of this sense we believe in miracles; and whatever readings we must take from the meter of Probability we shall continue to write these Notes in the faith that no person living renders the last obedience to the Law of Probability. "Trust in God and keep your powder dry" is an apparently cynical saying; but to us it is profound wisdom.

Spacious Days.

A FUTURIST FANTASY.

By "Old and Crusted."

"How facile and direct . . . is this life of the senses and the understanding, when once we have apprehended it! Here, surely, is the more liberal life we have been seeking so long, so near to us all the while. How mistaken and roundabout have been our efforts to reach it by mystic passion, and monastic reverie; how they have deflowered the flesh; how little they have emancipated us! Hermione melts from her stony posture, and the lost proportions of life right themselves."—*The Renaissance*. Walter Pater.

The doors of the "Plough" stand wide open—as they have, day and night, all through the summer months, ever since the Renaissance of Liberty swept all absurd restrictions into the limbo of departed nuisances. It is no longer a crime to quaff a pint of ale at four o'clock on a sultry July afternoon or fortify oneself with a rum and hot milk before going a-cubbing on a nippy autumn morning. If it be doubted whether England was ever rightly "merrie" in the days of Chaucer and the Tabard Inn there is no question about it at the Plough in these spacious days of the second and greater Revival of—learning how to live. On this particular June evening the guest-rooms, the wide loggia and shady gardens of this famous hostelry are thronged with a joyous crowd of men and maidens, children and old folk, all eager to satisfy the healthy appetite and honest thirst begotten of a long day in the open, under a blazing sky; for there has been a cricket match between the village and the neighbouring generating station, still known as the "colliery" to the people who have witnessed its metamorphosis from a filthy smoke-belching, soul-destroying rubbish heap into a clean, efficient and sightly distributing centre of light and power.

The brave old Plough has come into its kingdom at last. The rambling Tudor hostelry that had provided good entertainment for man and beast through the years of pack-horse traffic, lumbering waggon and stage-coach, came very near complete ruin during the century of railway tyranny. It owes its preservation to family tradition which, for generations, had kept up a close connection between Hall and Inn; not merely as a dower-house for retired butlers, but as an extension of the "big house" during the shooting and hunting season. To be quartered at the Plough had been hailed with joy by certain of the Squire's guests, and rich were the legends of the merrymakings when young bloods and old poachers gathered round a fire of oak "toppins" in the sanded parlour. If it had been a joy in those overshadowed times, what is it in these spacious days of the new freedom, when the humble wayside inn has become the social centre of the children of abundance? Thanks to an architect endowed with vision the inevitable extensions have been carried out in complete harmony with the original building. Certain Victorian accretions—the work of an enterprising brewer whose

taste was as bad as his beer—have been ruthlessly swept away. One spot remains untouched: the bar and adjoining parlour. Here old Garge from his comfortable window-seat can keep an eye on entrances and exits and dispense good advice on all questions of creature comfort. He has long since handed over the active management of the inn to his son Bill and his wife, but on matters of high policy he still exercises a benevolent despotism. Behold then mine host, comely and hearty despite his four-score years, stretched at his ease as befits a man of his assured position, watching with a twinkle in his eye his granddaughter Phoebe artfully combining the duties of vicereine of the bar with a promising flirtation with Jim the Second—captain of the victorious "colliery" team.

Now, the defeat of the village eleven spells the forfeit of a bottle to Jim "Senior"; and Garge is patiently awaiting the arrival of his old friend to liquidate the debt. Mr. James Wagstaffe, like many others of the younger pitmen, has developed a pretty taste in claret, thanks to the celebrated Burton-Bordeaux treaty, which is now sending sea-going barges laden with beer lumbering down the Trent on their way to the Garonne, to return with their holds filled with the produce of Medoc, Pauillac, and Margaux. Hence the contents of a bottle of a celebrated vintage—carefully decanted at the bin—now reposing at Garge's elbow, along with a dish of olives, a bit of ripe Cheddar, and a plate of crisp biscuits. Two plain, thin-stemmed goblets complete the preparations for a symposium, which will begin with a libation on the altar of friendship and end in an amicable wrangle as to the respective merits of Burgundy and Bordeaux.

Just as young Jim had succeeded in upsetting a pint tankard, in a partially successful raid on Phoebe's left cheek, his father's firm tread echoes down the stone passage, and the familiar figure, a trifle heavier since last we met, but still erect and vigorous, passes into the sanctum, full of apologies for keeping his host waiting.

"Sorry, Garge, but there's been an emergency meeting of the building committee, and I couldn't get away before."

"What was it all about, lad?" replies the innkeeper, waving Jim to a seat, and pushing the decanter across the table.

"Why, yon gimcrack cottages in Rebels'-lane; we come to the conclusion as there was nowt to do but pull 'em down. Just fancy, buildin' a house for a married man w'out a wine-cellar and a nursery! You'd think there were neyther babies nor burgundy in them days."

"Well, they were none too plentiful in the silly 'twenties, as you ought to know, Jim—and—here's to you," says Garge, holding up his glass and winking at his chum over the brim.

There is a moment's silence whilst the two wine-wise veterans take a prolonged, and it must be admitted, rather sibilant sip.

"Yes, that's the goods," sighs the ex-miner, "but I reckon there's not much of it left?"

"No," replies Garge; "it's the last of a grand bin, but there's another of Léoville Lascases to start on that will run it pretty close. Come over on Sunday, and we'll test it wi' a slice or two o' sirloin. Nowt like beef—underdone—for tasting claret."

"With thee, lad—and thou can't add a glass of yon old tawny Cockburn to help the cheese down."

Garge bursts into a hearty guffaw. "You're not gained much in modesty Jim—you're still the same lad as dropped yon felly fra' Lunnon i' the Cocker Beck twenty years ago, for sayin' as the 'workin' clarses' was lackin' in thrift and given to drink. I had a rare job wi' him afore he was fit to start for th'

station! I guess it were the fust time he'd tasted mulled ale—let's hope it cured him of what Doc calls hydromany."

"I was sorry for it afterwards," replies Jim, musingly. "He was a decent little man—accordin' to his lights; had his livin' to get like the rest on us—and he was none too well paid for the bit o' writin' he did for the Sunday p'apers. It took Sergt. Barker all his time to hush it up—an' that reminds me, where is Silas to-night?—it's about his time I'm thinkin'."

"Uncle Silas sent word to say that he would be at the smithy until late to-night," breaks in Phoebe, popping a flushed face out of the window of her sanctuary. "The lads mean to get the grille for the south aisle finished before the Bishop comes to consecrate the guild chapel, and Uncle thinks they cannot possibly do it without his help."

"Well, he wor allus a poor constable, but a good smith—chuckles Mr. Wagstaffe—an' 'twill be a fine piece of work when Silas says 'satisfied.' What wi' the new rood-screen an' the paintin's on the walls—'frescoes' young Seth Mills calls 'em—there won't be a church 'twixt 'ere an' Southwell to beat orn'."

"Thou art raight lad," replies Garge emphatically.

The guests have all departed. By midnight the last reveller has called a cheery good-bye to mine host and gone soberly home. No coarse hilarity, no vulgar abuse of sound liquor stains the purity of the summer night. Excess is very rare in these spacious days. Men are no longer tempted to snatch eagerly at fleeting pleasures. Now that toil has given place to creative work, a clear eye and a steady hand are the rule—not the exception.

Over manor and farmstead, cottage, and inn, there is deep peace. The household of the plough has long since gone to rest, and still Garge lingers in his oaken parlour—alone with those far-off memories which are so much more real to old people than the events of yesterday.

As the mysterious breeze that heralds the dawn sets the briar branches tapping on the window panes, the old man rises from his seat and walks slowly to the open door. Long and intently he gazes at the horizon, where the first flush of rose is already visible. "Yes," he mutters, "another beautiful day for 'em all. . . . Many a night in my time I've feared to see the sun rise . . . and now . . . well, well, . . . who'd ha' thought it?"

"After Nov. 6 and until a new order, any ceremony, manifestation, celebration, inauguration, anniversaries, great or small, centenaries, as well as speeches of any kind are prohibited, because the Government and municipal authorities must attend to their public duties; also because we must make economies, especially of time, and must avoid overtaking the population with holidays."—Decree of Mussolini published in *Commercial and Financial Chronicle*, October 22, 1927.

"The effect of the new legislation for Cuban sugar control is to give to the Cuban Government the power of arbitrarily determining the size of the crop and to place in its hands complete power as to the disposition of the surplus. It is proposed first to estimate as closely as possible the Cuban home consumption and requirements of sugar to cover these and to allocate a sufficient amount to turn over the balance to needs. It is then proposed to sell in other markets. . . . Export Corporation to be sold in many respects the late McNary. The plan resembles in many respects the late McNary-Haugen bills in this country, which proposed to dump our agricultural surplus abroad, at a sacrifice if need be, in order to sustain prices on the remainder consumed at home."—*National City Bank Review*, November, 1927.

Drama.

Four One-Act Plays: Arts Theatre.

Not very long ago the Arts Theatre Club presented a bill of three one-act plays which together made a satisfying experience. That programme, however, was more carefully composed than the present one. It began with an equivocal comedy by Shaw, gave the major portion of its time to a tragedy of character—by Eugene O'Neill—and ended with a farce that complimented the audience's intelligence. The plays chosen for the present occasion, first "Lithuania," by Rupert Brooke; second, "The Fascinating Foundling," by Shaw; third, "Simoom," by Strindberg; and last "The Land of Heart's Desire," by Yeats, are incapable of binding themselves together in a whole. Apart from the fact that the Shaw trifle should have been given either first or last—if at all—the play that actually took last place seemed to have been rehearsed least.

"The Land of Heart's Desire," however, is so weak that it almost excuses the weakness of this production. It contains hardly a grain of dynamic substance. In every performance I have seen it has been rendered as poetic dialogue of the vaguest mystical order. Not a figure in the play is given more than the mistiest of shape. A dramatist has a right, of course, to make use in a play of dim ideas and inexpressible superstitions—to interpret the twilight of human consciousness. But the result must be dramatic, and not, as it is in this case, a poetry recital among characterless agents who can find nothing better to do with themselves than sit tight where they were when the curtain rose, and who move the audience no more than themselves. The spiritless fight against the pagan fairies put up by the Bruin family, under the command of the priest, for the life and soul of Mary Bruin, insults the fighting qualities of Ireland. Such little action as there is untrue. When Father Hart takes down the cross because it frightens the strange visitor at least one person in the audience invariably feels an almost ungovernable impulse to take it from him, and hang it up again so that the fairy can go back to the woods, Mary to her book, and the play into oblivion. When Father Hart threatens later to fetch the cross back again, he does not stir from the side of the table, as though the very action would cut short their lives. Mary Bruin needs no sympathy. The family into which she had been born contained so little love, hate, or life, so little clash of personalities, that she was sensible to go to elfland.

"Lithuania," by Rupert Brooke, although it also fails for want of characters—only two out of the seven people who appear arouse a vestige of personal interest—does not suffer for want of action. It is as defamatory, however, as "The Land of Heart's Desire" against the country named, making it look as though the plays had been chosen as propaganda against the rights of small nations. The play opens with the entry of a stranger into a hut in Lithuania, pleading that he has lost his way and begging a room for the night. Under the influence of wine he shows his money. While this weary stranger sleeps the family, under the pressure of their own poverty, gradually convince themselves that so much money on such a man cannot have been come by honestly—the one touch of truthful observation in the play. Mother and daughter then urge the father to kill the guest in his bed for money to see them over the winter, but the father, held back by a spark of the compassion that mere men feel towards one another, cannot work himself to the deed without going out for vodka. His daughter is tougher. While the stranger sleeps she hacks off his head with a blunt

chopper, whereupon the father returns with a party, speechless but merry, and the friends who have been drinking at his expense announce to the mother that the stranger was recognised earlier in the day as her long-lost son. The only evidence that she had had a son was that she did not contradict them. Alfred Gray made a sincere and heroic attempt to make a somebody out of the father, and in her quieter passages Gwendolen Evans awakened a personal interest in the daughter. Elsewhere, however, she adopted the same tone as the other players, that of Grand Guignol. If to horrify the audience was the intention of the production it was mistaken. Horror draws to itself only the worst quality of audience, which had far better be allowed to go on seeing a woman sawn in two than be attracted to the Arts Theatre. The theatrical general principle perhaps least of all subject to exception is that, while farce demands over-acting and comedy may support it, tragedy demands under-acting.

The Strindberg play, "Simoom," which occupies only a minute or two over quarter of an hour, has the distinction of carrying brevity to a fault in that the situation is not fully prepared. It may be that the producer played for horror here as well, though I do not suspect him of doing. The play is so short, however, that unless the intimacy of actors and audience is perfected in a minute or two the end comes before the audience has found out where things belong. The theme is a picture of the hate vented by Biskra on a French lieutenant who could so misunderstand the Arab temper as to believe her incapable of permitting a Christian idolater and invader to take refuge with and make love to her. With hatred as dry and hot as the wind, she calculatingly lends her thought to intensifying the mental ravages of the Simoom in the Frenchman. She increases his thirst and diabolically contorts the delusions in which he might have died happily in order to embitter his last moments of agony. The play calls for great acting from Biskra, the lieutenant's part not covering such range of mood. Gwendolen Evans was not quite so convincing in her hatred as her lines were. Sometimes, instead of being a vixen she gave the impression of kittenishness. But she should certainly do the part again.

As for Shaw's "The Fascinating Foundling," not even the foundlings could take it seriously. It is a play which might fitly be licensed for drawing-rooms but not for theatres, or the idea might serve as a peg for one of Mr. Shaw's masterly letters to the Press in which he gratuitously instructs the public in logic. Horace Brabazon, who might be described as the to be fascinated foundling, is a ward in Chancery who bullies his way into the Lord Chancellor's sanctum to seek parental guidance and influence in getting a job as an actor. He meets there Anastasia Vulliamy, another ward, who queries the Chancellor's clerk's gibe at her birth by reminding him that she was not left on a doorstep in any ordinary thoroughfare, but in Park Lane itself. Why so experienced an author as Mr. Shaw did not give the Chancellor presence of mind to refer Horace to the Lord Chamberlain for a theatre job, and Anastasia for a husband to the Lord Chief Justice, or, failing him, the First Lord of the Admiralty, is not clear. The idea was not sufficiently explicable for a play, so that the time had to be filled out by the Lord Chancellor and his clerk, Mercer, discussing politics, the one bright spot in which was the Lord Chancellor's explanation of why he, a conservative, employed a clerk who was a radical—to wit, that it would take too high a salary to make him a conservative. The thinness of the play was redeemed by Alfred Gray's very fine Mercer.

PAUL BANKS.

Music.

Gerald Cooper Concert: Aeolian, January 24.

This was a recital of songs of Fauré and Debussy by Mme. Croiza, who is esteemed very highly in Paris as a singer of modern French songs. I shall, however, have more to say of this later, when I come to consider the singing. Gabriel Fauré, as no doubt my readers are aware, is regarded by French musicians as one of the greatest song writers; in fact, it is hardly too much to say that in their estimation he occupies a place with regard to the French song somewhat like that of Schubert to the German Lied. The rebirth of French song which afterwards grew to such beauty in Debussy and André Capet (whose exquisitely beautiful songs are almost completely unknown to our audiences) is generally regarded as having taken place with Gabriel Fauré. But with a pretty wide knowledge of this composer's songs, and after a dozen or so specimens heard on the afternoon in question, it is difficult to see in these Fauré songs anything essentially different from or better than the French drawing-room ballad, with its stale perfume, stuffy atmosphere, and artificial sentiment, of which the songs of Jules Massenet are the arche-type. If anything, I find those of the Massenet preferable. His sentiment and *sensibilité* ring less false, and to me at least seem neither so sophisticated nor so laboured as in Fauré, while melodically and harmonically there is very little to choose between. A comparison of the very popular *Crépuscule* of Massenet with the almost equally popular *Après un rêve* of Fauré will show this in a striking manner. But there are, it seems to me, many other instances in which the comparison is equally valid. The change to Debussy was an enormous relief, although, so monotonous and wearisome were the singer's methods that it was not possible for me to tolerate more than two of the dozen specimens of which the second half of the programme consisted. It is safe to say that every one of the songs sung by Mme. Croiza I have heard better sung by several English singers and enormously better by two or three—notably that brilliant and gifted artist, Miss Olga Harty (whose virtual disappearance from concert life in England is a matter for very great regret, and whose admirable singing of modern French songs is always remembered by those who heard her in her recitals of some years ago), by Mr. Theodore Bayard, another very gifted artist, and by Mr. Bertram Binyon—of all of whom we hear far too little. As a singer, Mme. Croiza is indifferent; her noisy, forced breathing, audible at the extreme end of the hall; her pinched, hard tones on nasals; her bad and constantly varying tone quality (but at the same time entire lack of command of tone colour), and her faulty phrasing were a continual vexation of the spirit. The lady has no compensating merits nor interest as an interpreter. She has, like so many of her type, a few vocal tricks which are trotted out over and over again; and she flattens out all she sings to the same dead level of monotony. Power of colouring the voice she has none, and the exaggeration and forced emphasis of her methods applied to music whose most adverbial quality is its "restraint" and reticence were often most offensive. This was particularly noticeable in the Fauré *Mandoline*, which lacked any vestige of the sprightly gaiety demanded by the song "with gaiety and animation," was declaimed like a minatory text of Isaiah from the pulpit. In moments of climax such singing as there was disappeared into the semi-hysterical quasi parlando so much affected by French singers of the type.

Gurrelieder, Schonberg: Queen's Hall, January 27. This was the towering event of the season, and nothing of equal importance is likely to be heard

for very many days. We shall all, of course, be sickened to death at the inevitable yells of "mere Wagnerian pastiche" from those who cannot see the originality, power, and genius of the mind using a superficially Wagnerian method of expression, and cannot see that it is only very superficially Wagnerian and used in a way quite different from Wagner. Apart from these things, if we ask ourselves: how is the work made?—is it a well-planned, masterful structure?—has it absolute mastery of all its means?—does it move inevitably and with conviction and power?—has it the authentic glow of great music?—what possible answer can there be, except to the *possédés* of Stravinsky, but a most emphatic affirmation to all those questions? The score is a miracle, a polychromatic marvel of every conceivable tint, a glowing fabric of incomparable richness and imaginative beauty. The sonority obtained from the huge body of strings (nearly a hundred strong) minutely and intricately subdivided, often desk by desk, is something absolutely new and enchanting to the ear. Familiarity with the gigantic score only makes one wonder and admire the more at the perfect clarity of the most complex passages in performance, under the masterly guidance of the composer himself. There is, for the first time in modern music, in this work a just balance between strings, wind and brass, owing to the multiplication of the latter against the subdivided, albeit enlarged, string section. The amazing nature of the texture of the music, its wonderful polyphony, so intricate and closely drawn and yet so natural, easy and free, is only to be fully realised after much study. Those not knowing the work could only surrender themselves to the sheer magnificence of its sound pure and simple, *sans y regarder de plus pres*. Here, indeed, is texture in excelsis; and the work is one colossal refutation of the nonsense of people who talk about the Schönberg as being mainly "vertical." The performance, all things considered, was a remarkable one. Herr Schönberg had a complete grip of the immense forces under his control, and the absolute certainty of what he wanted, and the ability—within the capacity of English orchestral players—to get what he wanted out of them. He is a masterful and able conductor. The outstanding soloist was that splendid artist Miss Stiles-Allen, who not only brought her beautiful voice to the music of *Tove*, but a fine sympathy with, and understanding of, the wonderful music she had and moving performance to sing. A very beautiful and moving performance that immensely increases one's already great admiration for this singer. Mr. Parry Jones worked hard at the also very difficult music of *Waldemar*. But imagination and sympathy with anything are not that gentleman's conspicuous qualities. Miss Gladys Palmer was competent but unexciting as the *Voice of the Wood Dove*. Two very admirable performances were those of Frank Phillips as the *Peasant* and the long, difficult *Sprech-gesang* section given to the *Speaker*, Arthur Wynn. Good, too, was John Perry as *Klaus the Fool*. The choir rose well to what was asked of them, particularly in the gorgeous final *Sunrise* chorus, in which alone is the entire choral force, male and female, used, bringing the astonishing work to a fittingly magnificent close. But one trembles to think what this mighty work must have sounded like via the multitudinous and multifarious horrors called loud-speakers up and down the land: an intelligent and conscientious Government would forbid the manufacture of most of the abominations we hear as corrupting to the ears of the people, and blasphemy against music, but our Government is too busy plundering us to think about anything else. KAIKHOSRU SORABJI.

Denis Saurat.

By Neil Montgomery.

I.

Denis Saurat is both a typical and a surprising product of modern France, typical in that his weapon is a keen, incisive, and subtle intellect, and surprising in the work he has made that intellect perform. For, with Saurat, intellect is rather the chisel of the builder than the scalpel of the dissector, and therefore, contrary to the general trend of French intellectualism, which has been towards a sceptical levity in regard to religious and philosophic questions; it is precisely in these that Saurat has found his chief interest. His principal works thus wear a peculiarly paradoxical air. Actually in advance of his contemporaries, he appears to be dealing with questions belonging to the century behind them, or else, while actively engaged in developing intellect in its appointed course, he seems to have deserted the camp of the Intellectuals for that of the Mystics.

No one who studies him closely, however, will hold this view long. The conclusions he reaches, it is true, show considerable similarity to those of the various schools of mystics, but the paths by which he reaches them are totally different.

The gifts which faith brings to the religious man, Saurat has won for himself by the exercise of his undaunted mind, and on his travels he has gathered many other strange flowers. This does not mean that Saurat has not had moments of inspiration, but it is certain that even without personal knowledge of the "Ideas," Saurat would have discovered the possibility of their existence in others, and the main lines of his philosophy would have been substantially what they are. His nearest of kin among French writers are Pascal and Hugo, but his very brother is an Englishman, John Milton, and it is therefore not surprising that some of Saurat's most interesting and original work should be concerned with the interpretation of these men, and especially of the last two. For he is a poet as well as a philosopher, and as his colleague, M. Sully-André Prynre recently pointed out, to excite Saurat's keenest interest a thinker must express his philosophy in poetry, and his poetry must be philosophic; hence Saurat's essay on "The Functions of Philosophic Poetry."

It was thus inevitable that among English poets Milton should appeal to him above all others, and after Milton, Blake—not only because of his close affinity to a comprehension of Milton, but also because Blake is a philosopher-poet of no mean degree, and in his own right. Yet Blake is definitely below Milton in Saurat's estimation, since he was a rebel against Intellect and on the side of Desire and his attitude—for instance the child-like, almost Franciscan, quality of "Piping down the valleys wild," or of "Tiger, tiger, burning bright," unthinkable in either Milton or Saurat—interest Saurat so little that he does not mention them. They are outweighed in his mind by the wantonness and capriciousness of Blake's temper.

Milton then is the ideal poet, and appeals to Saurat even more than Shakespeare. Saurat even goes so far as to claim Milton as the greater poet of the two, although, as he himself says, he has the grace to hide his confession in a footnote. One feels also that, for similar reasons, he would have preferred Proust to Meredith, were it not for another and even more fundamental tendency of his own mind. Deeply rooted in his mind lies the conviction that the best work must be healthy. The intimate connection of genius

with disease, whether the relation be one of cause, effect, compensation, or all three at once, becomes daily a more obvious and interesting phenomenon, but Saurat knows that in the end disease hinders creation, and that the best work demands the highest health.

Consequently, at the beginning of his study of Proust, Saurat compares him unfavourably with Meredith, but at the end he formally and categorically recants in favour of Proust. The end of his analysis thus appears, at first glance, to contradict the beginning, but this is really an illusion. For Saurat knows that opposites need not be mutually destructive unless they coexist upon the same plane. When they are on different planes antitheses may be complementary. They then form a symmetrical whole, each being a reflection of the other. This conception of the fundamental symmetry of things goes very deep with Saurat. He thus shares with Proust the intellectual ability of combining into one synthesis ideas apparently incongruous and contradictory. We shall find this habit of thought appearing in many forms and aspects, but for the moment it will be enough to point to the fact that it has enabled Saurat to harness in one team the wild horses of Eternal Becoming and the Eternal Return which tore Nietzsche in two.

Thus, if Saurat's intellectualism has prevented his need for God from seeking expression along religious lines, and has forced it on to the plane of metaphysics, it allows him to embrace many possibilities which the religious man proper may not entertain upon pain of losing his faith. "Man," said Protagoras, "is the measure of all things, of those which exist and of those which do not exist," an axiom which lies at the root of Saurat's whole system of metaphysics, and which forms the "limiting case" of that symmetry to which I have alluded. Not only is existence symmetrical as a whole, in and by itself, it is also a part of a wider synthesis and symmetry. Existence has its opposite equal, its reflection and counterpoise in Non-Existence. And a being may be just as real to Saurat when non-existent as when existent. These two, indeed, are but the alternative phases of rest and activity through which a being passes eternally in the process of growth and self-realisation.

This recalls the modern physicist's conception (recently commented upon in THE NEW AGE) in which matter is regarded, not as a continuous entity, but as a scheme of atomic patterns flashing rapidly in and out of existence. Saurat, developing this idea to its logical conclusion, has brought even Godhead under its sway. God, also, may with equal truth be said to exist, or not to exist. He exists in the universe as the flower in the seed. But He is also no more to be found in the universe, by objective methods, than is the flower in the seed. The existence is potential (though all-important) in each case; and as with the flower and the seed, so with God and the universe, each is potential in the other. Further, just as the reality behind the plant—behind all plants—is one and indestructible, so the reality behind God and His existence—behind all gods and all existences—is One, Infinite, Incomprehensible, and Impossible in Itself. That is the Absolute.

Thus Saurat solves the problem with which Milton wrestled, but which I cannot feel that he ever overcame; the problem of giving complete freedom both to God and to man without those freedoms interfering with each other. No doubt it was this solution which Milton was feeling after when he chose from the Kabbalah the conception of the "Retraction" of God, and made of it his central mystery. But Milton nowhere makes it clear that this retraction was to be of so fundamental a nature as to entail the withdrawal of God into complete nonentity. Yet without

this, as Saurat has seen, the idea is worthless, while pushed to its ultimate length it solves the problem.

If God is non-existent, man is free from His Will, yet man can only achieve his maximum liberty in fact, by the creation of God—by the death of man and his transformation into God. Thus the maximum freedom of man entails, and is only possible by, the liberation of God. Nor does God's foreknowledge, being non-existent although (or because) perfect, interfere with man's free choice. It becomes manifest at the moment when God enters existence; and then it appears as His "heredity." All this is potential in Milton, but in Saurat it gains expression. Saurat is thus the flowering of the Miltonic Tree. And Stendhal's gibe, that "God's only excuse is that He does not exist," becomes, in Saurat's hands, a serious cosmological explanation.

This aspect of Saurat is unlikely to appeal greatly to the modern mind, with its profound weariness and discouragement in God and all God-problems. Modernity has largely deserted the mysteries of God, for the mysteries of the soul, and the dominant interest of the day is not Theology but Psychology. Yet here, also, Saurat has things of value to say. He is chiefly interested in the transition of the study of inspiration from the realms of mysticism to the sphere of practical psychology—from the attitude of Plato to that of Balzac, Proust and Valéry (and in English, Stephen Hudson). Moreover, when the psychoanalysts have achieved that complete inversion and transvaluation of all their present values, which is necessary if their valuable work is to survive and grow, they will find this band of "Ideal Psychologists" waiting to welcome them, and not least among them Denis Saurat.

(To be concluded.)

Twelve.

"Shakespeare strikes twelve every time."—Emerson.

EXTRACTS FROM "THE NEW AGE."

Edited by "Sagittarius."

"This trick consists in suppressing the fact that money to-day costs nothing to create. Whether in cheques or pound notes, it is all paper. The quantity of money is limited entirely by the rules the banks make in their own interests, and with no regard to the needs of the population nor of the ability of industry to supply those needs if it were provided with extra money under proper conditions. Yet this power of making and issuing money properly belongs to the Government itself, but has been farmed out to the banks, who now starve the Government itself of it."—*The Government and the Soldier's Pension*. Editorial.

"It has to be acknowledged, however, that many trade union officials have nerve-racking jobs to do. They live by perpetuating their own popularity, and under the strain of keeping factions together many of them break down."—*Current Political Economy*.

"Nietzsche and de Gobineau, by restoring manliness to man, have helped to cleanse the intellect of Europe."—*Views and Reviews*.

"The years of post-war depression have not wholly exorcised the dreaded 'new spirit' and the growling opposition to 'unemployment benefits' is a manifestation of the fear."—*Letters to the Editor*. Hilderic Cousens.

"When nobody can be voted into the workhouse, and cheese will instinctively desire to vote."—*Notes of the Week*.

"Let experts in any other science contradict each other, and everybody says: 'They do not know their subject.' But let two banking experts do so, and everybody says: 'I do not know their subject.'"—*Notes of the Week*.

"When will the people awake to the realisation that our nominal Government should stand first of all for the safety and well being of the members of the community and use its abounding real credit to maintain and enhance such well being?"—*Letters to the Editor*. J. E. Tuke.

"As, among others, Count de Gobineau observed, the Renaissance was more than a rebirth of learning. It was a rebirth of personality, a re-affirmation of the majesty of man; it was marked by the revival of a joyful paganism, by a liberation of vitality which concerned itself little with questions of sin, morality, or eternal salvation."—*Views and Reviews*.

Verse.

By A. Newberry Choyce.

THREE EPITAPHS.
FOR LINNETH.

Her breast was furnaced with such fires.
O heart! how shall we understand
Since she was thus and thus, and now
She is but ashes in Death's hand.

FOR A DEAD APPRENTICE.

We bound him to a carpenter
To learn how a strong box is made;
But now God makes our little man
Master of many a shining trade.

FOR CHATTERBOX.

Here lies a little gossip,
Would tell us everything she'd heard;
And now she has immortal news
And will not ever breathe a word.

AND MAYBE 'T WAS.

"Lep along, lep along,
For mortals be the merest things;
Lep along, lep along,
We swear it by the Queen's wings!"

Coming home from Derry
Last Saturday at ten,
I saw the fairy people,
Fairy maids and men.

Maybe I was o'er-tired
Or maybe over-wise,
But O the shining bodies
Swooned sweetly in my eyes.

I mind the merry fancy
The little creatures sang;
I mind how on the Monday
I told it to the gang.

But herself swore 'twas staying
At Derry fair till ten;
And maybe 'twas. Come Sunday
I was so mere agen!

FINALE.

I shall have done with you one day
As slaves are done with servitude;
Loose the long chain and creep away
Into the spent heart's quietude.

I shall have done with you . . . ah me!
As birds when Summer's spell is o'er
Come for the last time to some tree
And sing . . . O heart! . . . and sing no more.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

DE GOBINEAU AND THE RENAISSANCE.

Sir,—I am most grateful to R. M. for his review of the new pocket edition of Gobineau's "Renaissance," which Messrs. Allen and Unwin have brought out—all the more so, as his is the first exhaustive criticism of a book that has long been considered a standard work of European literature. I beg to be allowed though to answer a few points which R. M. raises concerning Gobineau and Nietzsche, as well as against my own modest contribution to their work.

1. R. M. thinks that it was wrong to reprint my long introduction which appeared in the original edition of 1913 without revising it. My answer is that I reproduced this introduction without one word being changed, in order to show that there were authors of the pessimistic and realistic Gobineau-Nietzsche school who foresaw the coming era of wars and rightly suspected where all the nationalistic, democratic, and Christian values prevailing in the pre-war period would lead to. Hence my polemic in this introduction against Germany, as against the country where these values predominated most, the country which my introduction, on page 46, threatens "with a certain fall and defeat on account of its pride." R. M. thinks that I should have added to this old introduction an essay from the point of view of the present day. I am astonished about this reproach of omission, for I have actually done so: the book contains a preface, dated Paris, 1927, which only has four pages, but, as R. M. rightly remarks, the time left to Europe for bracing itself is short, and a writer should not make a wrong use of his occasion.

2. R. M. takes exception to a criticism of mine which appears in the old introduction. To the end of a quotation from Gobineau's "Pléiades" I added the following remarks of my own:—

"There is a Christian ring about this passage, is there not? Yet it cannot be Christian, and it is not Christian, for the very reason that Gobineau practised what he preached, which the Christian, at least if there is a shade of healthy instinct in him, never does. And Gobineau practised what he preached, though he, as an aristocratic writer, as a leader of humanity, had no need to do so, though he had full liberty to claim exceptional rights on account of his exceptional duties."

R. M. thinks that, if I had revised the essay, I would have redrafted this passage. This, however, is by no means the case, for I absolutely hold to my pre-war opinion. Christian ideals, in my opinion, are utterly utopian and impossible, and whoever practises and not only preaches greater his faith and energy is: vide Christ Himself ("the Nietzsche). But the majority of Christians, being still Christianity and only do lip-service to its values and its morality: they then and thus survive and sometimes even prosper, but they survive as hypocrites, as conscious or unconscious hypocrites. I must, therefore, uphold my saying "that no Christian ever practises what he preaches" (for he would soon be dead); I must likewise draw the other conclusion from this that "whoever does so, cannot be a Christian." Gobineau, who practised what he preached, cannot have been a Christian: Catholic as he thought himself, the inner discrepancy, the sign of the true Christian, is lacking in him. This inner rupture, this gulf between theory and practice, has still been accentuated since Gobineau's death and makes the European the laughing-stock of the modern Asiatic, who, from Angora to Tokio, only respects the Christian message from above in the shape of gas-bombs and aeroplanes.

3. (And in parenthesis) the reason for the impossibility of Christ and His message, of His kingdom of Heaven or God, or Love, or Peace and Happiness, is his neglect of human nature, his oversight of human affections and passions. Christ's mistake is the same as that of the modern Bolsheviks, who likewise want to construct a "better world," but do not know the material which is necessary for such high-class architecture. There was once another Jew who knew more than Christ about this material: this was the great Spinoza, who was once banished by the Synagogue and the Church for his free thought and who is still banished (or misinterpreted) by the priests and professors of our own age. I recommend the saying of Spinoza to the attention of the reader—a saying from the "Ethics" (Part III., definition of affection 1) and which runs: "Cupiditas est ipsa hominum

essentia." ("Cupidity, i.e., desire, passion, will to power, is the very essence of human nature.") If you do not know this you cannot legislate for man, and still less found a religion of philosophy for him.

4. I am sorry that, not being an adherent of Freud, or Jung, or Adler (nor wishing to become a member of what I think a highly overrated school), I cannot follow R. M. into his own psychological jungle, where I am threatened by such monsters as "introvert," "extrovert," "Oedipus-complex," "inferiority-sense," etc.: but I am obliged to point out to him that no Freudian must call himself, as R. M. does, a Nietzschean, for a Nietzschean must be safe and sound on the question of Christianity, or, better still, Christianity must not be a question for him any longer.

5. With all this I must thank R. M. for his statements that "Europe, above all, needs a religion of *virtù*," a "revival of character" in short: "the Gospel of Superman." I likewise appreciate his statement that "Nietzsche and Gobineau, by restoring manliness to man, have helped to cleanse the intellect of Europe." It is my pride that I could be instrumental in bringing this message of manliness to England; and I only regret that my efforts were interrupted by a British Government's order of banishment from the country.

OSCAR LEVY.

FINANCE AND THE CHURCH.

Sir,—I am puzzled by your reference in the "Notes" of January 26 to the "irruption of Catholics into Protestant Churches," as instigated by high financial interests. Without contesting your main point in this paragraph, I find this particular instance a little mysterious. If by "Catholics" are meant Roman Catholics, is it implied that the Malines Conversations are due to the banking interest? To put it mildly, is not such an "explanation" superfluous? Do we really need to assume that the Malines influence is a malign influence, when the natural impulse of Catholics of every allegiance is to explore the possibilities of a unity which is so obviously harmonious with their faith and their tradition? If, alternatively, the growth of Anglo-Catholicism within the Church of England is referred to, this movement by its very vitality is causing quarrels rather than composing them, as the present disturbance over Prayer-Book Revision abundantly testifies. The idea of "eliminating from human psychology the will-to-argue" may be "cunning," but bankers must be bigger fools than THE NEW AGE is accustomed to take them for if they seriously imagine that they are capable of so fundamental an elimination. Finance holds out enough evil possibilities without our needing to add to them such fantastic bogies; nor do I think we strengthen our argument by attributing to our enemy developments which can be sufficiently accounted for without dragging him into the matter. Monomania is the prey of every reformer, and credit reformers have the opportunity of showing their superiority by preserving a sense of proportion which would give their propaganda that character of scientific analysis which it often boasts, but does not always display.

MAURICE B. RECKITT.

[We agree that *in form* our expression "irruption" could imply disparagement of the "irrupters," but we hold that our context excluded that interpretation of our intention in writing the passage in which it occurred.

We believe that we have given proof in the "Notes" many times that we have no such crude idea of the methods employed by credit controllers as Mr. Reckitt imputes to us. Once concede them the power to will the ends of life in all its phases, and they need not trouble to instigate the means—other people will be forced automatically to devise nobody need request the audience to retire.

With regard to Mr. Reckitt's reference to the Malines Conversations, our reply is that were it not for high financial policy there would be no need for such conferences. We believe that the impulse to trim away the mutual incompatibilities of creeds and rituals can be ascribed in a large measure to material causes. Suppose the public saw a Conference held between the two great football hierarchies to devise a Rugger-Soccer code. The only imaginable reason would be that playing areas had become so limited that followers of both codes were obliged to use one pitch. Then there would arise a terrific "theological" disputation about how oval or how round the ball should be, how and when it should be carried or kicked, whether the forward or backward pass should be prohibited, how one player should "tackle" another, and so forth and so on—every argument being solemnly put forward in the name of the "God" of

Football, the Spirit of the Game. If, in such a case, THE NEW AGE remarked that the banker was at the back of it all, it might sound foolish, but most readers would admit its probable truth.—Ed.]

THE PURITANS AGAIN.

Sir,—While no exception can be taken to the present-day moral of R. M.'s reflexions on "Vital Economics," the historical animadversions by which he prefaced it call for criticism. Writing without access to the volumes which would supply adequate citations, I beg to question whether the Renaissance had any "glorious and noble achievements in politics" (1), whether the Reformation had any essential connection in its origin with the Renaissance (2), whether Luther typifies the Reformation (3), whether the Reformation can be identified with Puritanism (4), whether the unpleasant phenomena of Puritanism were not equally rampant in pre-Reformation centuries (5), whether the aim and effects of the more vigorous Puritans were not to the substantial advantage of the common man (6), whether self-esteem or spiritual independence was not as potent a factor as fear in the origin both of Protestantism and Puritanism (7), whether fear was not quite as dominant in the Catholic and non-Puritan communities (8), whether the Renaissance was such a unique liberation of the spirit as he suggests (9), and—to cut the catalogue short—whether there ever has been any justification for considering Europe as an entity (10).

(1) Italy was a political and social inferno; hence Machiavelli; see Burckhardt, "Culture of the Renaissance." (2) The Reformation was the culmination of the heretical and critical movements against the theory of the Church and the workings of its machine; cf. the Albigensians, the Waldenses, Wycliffe, and Huss, all of whom, incidentally, went in for social politics. (3) Luther was anti-rationalist and State absolutist, but his followers turned rationalist and anti-absolutists, or one of these where not both. (4) Puritanism was characteristic of these islands. Calvin and even John Knox were not averse to Sunday games, and were the Dutch Protestants remarkably straitlaced? (5) Dr. Coulton's formidable volumes demonstrate the gloomy theory and practice of pre-Reformation Catholicism; contrast also Catholic Spain with Mohammedan Spain. (6) As stated in correspondence in THE NEW AGE a little while back, the English Puritans aimed at substantial alleviation of the lot of the common man, as have their descendants, the Nonconformists and atheists, but I have yet to hear of their opponents doing any such thing. (7) I believe that heresy against overbearing and inefficient institutions like the Medieval Church arose chiefly where, largely by thrift and more prosperous; cf. the Albigensians in Southern France, Lollardy in England, Protestantism in the prosperous German cities and in Holland, and the parliamentary supporters in the English Civil Wars. Worldly wealth often acts as a great encouragement to self-assertion. (8) See, for example, Miss Murray's "Witch Cult," wherein is portrayed the hostility between the Christian churches and the surviving nature-religions, and cf. the Northern Renaissance were other Renaissances, e.g., the Northern Renaissance and economics and credit is worth illustration. (9) The unity or entity of Europe is a theory resting on a severe delimitation of the meaning of "Europe" and the acceptance of a highly simplified (and official) version of the state of Europe in the Middle Ages.

Fear is not to be contrasted with some other category and condemned. Its condemnation is merited when it has no foundation in reality and results in repellent behaviour. When harvests were chancy, thrift was imperative. A judicious fear of the tse-tse fly or the influenza bacilli is a mark of common sense. If through fear of God the New Model Army of Cromwell restrained its conduct, so much the better for the villages of England where it passed. If the theology of Tilly's and Wallenstein's troopers had been the same, half Germany might not have been a desert for two generations. If Cromwell's and Ireton's "neurosis" had been replaced by the vitality of Rupert and Goring, all Europe might now be in the state of pre-Revolution Russia.

HILDERIC COUSENS.

"GO TO THE ANT."

Sir,—Referring to the current issue of THE NEW AGE, Mr. Fox's criticism of Christianity, may I remind him that things of great beauty have sprung from the scum and dregs of the world, so why not also a personality. For the past two thousand years the world has experienced a state of predominant paganism. If Nietzsche or Mr. Fox insist on calling it Christianity, which infers Brotherhood, that does not alter one iota the records of past experience.

G. W. CRAWLEY.

Sir,—The use of the masculine pronoun in connection with "the ant" at the end of Mr. Darwin Fox's most interesting article gave rise to the following speculations.

Is it only among communal insects that decrease in size, shape, and beauty has occurred since antediluvian times, and does this decrease never correspond with increase of anything but self-protective efficiency?

Has feminine segregation and feminine mis-rule any philosophic bearing on modern, or post-oriental invasion, physical conditions?

By post-oriental invasion I would suggest historic conditions in Western Europe and Great Britain since the advent of Christianity plus its accompanying Judaic infusion.

The latter has, to my mind, clearly overwhelmed the "Spirit of Truth," which was dwelt on by the Author of what is now called Christianity, though it is scarcely recognisable (as presented by the priesthood of to-day) as having a connection with the teachings of its originator.

It would be very interesting if a competent naturalist-philosopher-historian-psychologist would answer these questions and criticise the inferences.

M. B. DE CASTRO.

"CRUEL SPORTS."

Sir,—Your two fox-hunting experts seem to have been having quite a good time.

Solemnly agreed that foxes must be destroyed, they actually go on to discuss hunting as one of the means of so doing, though they must have been aware that even when the hunt is out to kill, under various restrictions, a single fox, the whole organisation is intent on preserving foxes alive, and that Lord Somebody-or-other, only this week, has found it impossible to eat his victuals with unorthodox vulpicides.

I bear the hunt no ill-will. Some, and only too few, of the most wildly happy moments of my life have been spent riding to hounds, but I dislike cant.

I myself am no "expert," but I have often heard, and think it most likely true, that if hunting stopped there would not, in two years, be a single fox left in any English farm, and covert country. The rustics round here, at any rate, know where every vixen has her cubs and all about her.

PHILIP T. KENWAY.

[A series of arguments was reported in the article. Mr. Kenway selects one of them, unwarrantably discusses it as the sole argument, and does so irrelevantly. The motive of the huntsmen has nothing to do with the cruelty of hunting. The designation "cant" is meaningless in this connection.—Ed.]

Sir,—I submit that what sportsmen think that the fox thinks and feels is not evidence, and a safer guide to conduct in these matters is required. St. Francis of Assisi once said, "Whatsoever a man doeth on this earth he doeth it to himself, whether it be good or whether it be evil," and a greater than St. Francis said that even a tiny falling sparrow does not escape the watchful care of Immanent Deity. The views of sportsmen on "vermin" are well known: the views of vermin on sportsmen and foxes interesting speculation. But if God loves sparrows and foxes it would be well for men to remember it. By a curious coincidence, after reading THE NEW AGE article, I came across the following in an old encyclopædia, "The fox in Britain is preserved from extinction chiefly for hunting purposes," which rather gives the game away. Is it proposed also to advocate the return of the noble old "sports" of cock-fighting and bear-baiting, or the introduction into England of bull-fights? It would be well to know where the line (if any) is to be drawn.

E. J. BROOM.

[Our "experts" were not huntsmen, but experienced observers of animal nature. Their view as to the fox not feeling fear was based on what they had frequently observed of its behaviour when running; and that is of higher evidential value than the imagination of the inexperienced. References to fox-preservation are irrelevant. The question discussed was whether there was needless cruelty in fox-hunting, and not whether the motive of hunting was kindness to the fox. Nobody has suggested it. Hunters hunt because they like hunting.—Ed.]

"TWELVE." The editor of this feature will be obliged if readers who think that a passage in any article, letter or poem appearing in THE NEW AGE is worthy of inclusion in the series will copy it out and send it to him, with the reference, just as set out in the paragraphs in to-day's issue. Address: Sagittarius, c/o THE NEW AGE, 70, High Holborn, W.C.1.

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