

THE NEW AGE

INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER"

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE	PAGE
NOTES OF THE WEEK	217	
The Vatican's loan in America. Sir Hari Singh and the first Kashmir railway. Blackmail as an instrument of government—Sir Charles Dilke—Robert Ross. The stamps-conversion case, Mr. Gregory's dismissal from the Civil Service following the "francs" case. <i>The Round Table</i> on naval policy and its proposal to reduce Britain's gold reserves.		224
A CAVE-MAN CRITIC. I. (Editorial.)	220	
<i>The Life and Genius of T. W. H. Crosland.</i>		
THE FRUITION OF SALESMANSHIP. By M. B. R.	222	
RURAL LIFE AND LORE. XV.—The Stoat. By R. R.	223	
DRAMA. By Paul Banks		224
<i>The Fourth Wall.</i>		
THE DESTINY OF NATIONS. II. By the Authors of <i>Coal</i>		225
RUDOLPH STEINER. By O. B.		226
<i>The Story of My Life</i> (Steiner).		
REVIEWS		226
<i>The Sea Devil. Parties of the Play. The Road to God.</i>		
TWELVE O'CLOCK. By "Sagittarius"		227
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR		227
From W. T. Symons and BM/SPTM.		
VERSE		223
By Joyce Reason.		

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

The first loan negotiated by the Holy See for sixty-two years is to be floated in the United States. It amounts to £300,000, and the Vatican will use it to build a new Propaganda Fide College in Rome. Cardinal Mundelein, the Archbishop of Chicago, is to sail for Rome shortly to complete arrangements. This news recalls an American proposal that a palace should be built for the Pope in Chicago, which we recorded in these Notes some year or so ago. Presumably the Latin nations did not care about the Pope becoming Chicago's guest; but that is no reason why he should not be Wall Street's client.

Sir Hari Singh, the Maharajah of Kashmir, has sanctioned the building of "the first railway" in his State. The *Evening Standard's* account says that this scheme has been "pending for the last twenty-five years." There has been a rumour that this was one of the conditions on which the throne of Kashmir was given to Sir Hari Singh by the British Government, but Mr. K. M. Pannikar, the holder of a new appointment called the Minister-in-Waiting, has explained that the permission was not given by Sir Hari Singh at the time of his selection, but during the régime of the late Sir Pertab Singh—an explanation which does not answer the point of the rumour. It would be interesting to know whether Sir Hari Singh agreed to the railway before he became known as "Mr. A," in the celebrated blackmail case here in London, or afterwards. When commenting on that case, we said something relative to the exploitation of vicious agencies by modern statecraft. We also suggested that the identity of "Mr. A" need never become known, but was allowed to come out in the European Press for State reasons. We imagine the sequence of events to have been as follows. The old king had resisted this railway for twenty-five years. He was getting feeble, and would soon die. He would have a successor whom the British would "select." Sir Hari Singh had been approached, and had made difficulties about giving an under-

taking to accept the railway. Subsequently he came to Paris, and there got into an entanglement which, if known in Kashmir, would enable the British Government to reject him on moral grounds as the new king. Hence his sudden acquiescence in the railway scheme. Mr. Robinson and the lady who ensnared "Mr. A" may not have been hirelings of the Secret Service, but, if they were not, they came on the scene most opportunely for the purpose mentioned. They certainly ought to receive an allotment of shares if our guess about the nature of their accidental (?) service is right.

The blackmailing from above of political personages is part of the technique of government. It is not a demand for their money, but a demand for their good conduct. Good conduct to-day consists in letting the financial class pursue their policy unimpeded and persuading the non-financial classes to fit themselves into the resulting situation as best they may. Show us a young politician who begins to show signs of responsibility, acuteness, courage, self-reliance, independence, and initiative, and we will apply them in inconvenient directions, and we will soon show you an ex-politician. Some begin to develop these qualities early, some late. Sir Charles Dilke shaped that way, and a celebrated divorce case cut short a brilliant political career. Lord Alfred Douglas had the makings of a ruthless shatterer of shams, and he, too, was eliminated from politics. Examples like this are few in history, but for the reason that only people of the highest courage ever challenge the blackmailers. Once accept the position, and if one is a useful man to them, then he can do what he likes in infraction of moral codes, and all the resources of the system will be mobilised to protect his name. One penetrating sidelight on the general subject appears in Mr. Sorley Brown's "Life of T. W. H. Crosland," which we review in another article in this issue. Crosland brought a specific charge of pederasty against Robert Ross, and Ross had him arrested for criminal libel. Crosland was

found "not guilty," which was tantamount to the jury's judgment that he had proved his case. This was in 1914. But not only was Ross not prosecuted—as had Oscar Wilde been previously—but he was presented with an illuminated address and a sum of £700 in March, 1915, in recognition of his services to art—the three hundred odd signatories being people holding some of the highest positions in the country. After the trial at Old Bailey Ross was obliged to resign the position of "assessor of picture valuations to the Board of Trade" which had been conferred upon him by Mr. Asquith. But in 1917—when the war was on, and nobody looking—he was made a trustee of the National Gallery, and a few months later Sir Alfred Mond appointed him Director and Manager of the Imperial War Museum, which position he held until his death in the autumn of 1918.

A few weeks ago the Judge who tried the Somerset House stamp-conversion case, in sentencing the prisoners, remarked how surprised he was to discover criminal practices among such high grades of the Civil Service. And now, on the heels of that case comes the startling punishment visited on Mr. J. D. Gregory, C.B., C.M.G., the Assistant Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office since 1925, and on Mr. Owen St. C. O'Malley, C.M.G., late Acting Counsellor of Embassy in China. The first is dismissed, and the second compelled to resign, while a third, Lieut.-Commander H. F. B. Maxse, a second secretary at the Foreign Office, loses three years' seniority. What they did was not criminal; but it was held to be improper conduct on their part as "public servants." It was gambling in francs. There was no question of their using official information for the purpose of gambling with certainty—as a matter of fact they lost money. While postmen are liable to instant dismissal if found betting or gambling in any form (even including football competitions) the Committee of Inquiry were circumspect in not excusing these high officials.

Putting together both the Somerset House crime and the Foreign Office irregularity, we may regard them as symptomatic of a quickening process of a general demoralisation. The saying "Like master like man" holds here. The whole economic system is a race-course, and he financial system is the book-maker. There is hardly a single item of expenditure outside purchases of articles for consumption that is not a bid for luck. The business man lays out money on an enterprise, the small investor puts money in the enterprise, the would-be employee spends money on educating himself as craftsman, engineer, chemist, clerk, salesman, manager, accountant, and what not in order to serve the enterprise. All, from top to bottom, gamble to fit themselves into an enterprise which the financier may smash up at any time. The only too frequent remark, "He was lucky enough to get the job" sums up the entire situation. In an economy deliberately devised to be, and eulogised as, a work-economy, there should be no luck about being able to earn an income: it should be a certainty. Because it is not a certainty, people are able to justify themselves for trying to make money outside the prescribed inefficient channels of what is called legitimate work. We are aware that there is more in gambling than economic pressure. It is an excitement in itself. If it turns out right it is a short cut to wealth and power.

Now, in view of the nature of the gambling here in question the punishment is poetic injustice. A high Civil Servant cannot feel it wrong to speculate when the statesmen who preside over Government Departments do so. With the Marconi case in his mind (to quote one visible out of a thousand invisible instances of the sort) Mr. Gregory probably argued that he

was entitled to speculate. "Ah, but he speculated in francs—a most improper form of speculation when the fluctuations in the franc were causing such difficulties to our French friends." Indeed. And what made francs the object of his speculation? Fluctuations in value. And who caused the fluctuations? Certainly no private speculator. He never appears until the fluctuations commence. Currency values are governed by bankers' manipulations. Not only that, but when the results appear and the speculator comes into the game the banker carries out the deal for him. Bank morals must govern all morals in the end, and if the normal permitted attitude of the individual bank-manager to the would-be gambler is no higher than: "Can you give security for your losses?" what can be expected of public servants or anybody else? It is humorous to note that the Board of Enquiry comprised three Treasury officials—i.e., three protégés of the banking system. On these grounds we endorse the judgment of Mr. Gregory's old colleagues that he leaves the Foreign Office without a stain on his character.

A correspondent writes to say that the *Daily Post* (Liverpool) and the *Journal of Commerce* of February 21 contained reports of Sir George Paish's views. Whether these reports related to his address at the National Liberal Club he is not sure, but they contain a passage which, to the best of his recollection, ran thus:—

"The financial crisis that is approaching will be more spectacular in its effects than was even the outbreak of the Great War."

A financial crisis of any sort is never a mere spectacle. You do not sit and watch it from the stalls: you experience it in the workhouse or in the trenches according to its magnitude. So the above passage is virtually a war-prophecy. Moreover, the authority for it does not rest upon any judgment of Sir George Paish's intelligence, for, as we have frequently pointed out, no spokesman for the financial system comes out and says anything of this nature in public without knowing that he is voicing at least a weighty section of expert financial opinion. The very fact that Sir George Paish dates the crisis for a year hence multiplies the force of this consideration, because such "scaremongering" is not conducive to the easy administration of financial policy as regards, for instance, disarmament, lowering of tariffs, and so on; it tends to stimulate and consolidate that very spirit of "nationalism" which the bankers have continuously sought to exorcise. We shall not trouble about the difference between Sir George Paish's time-limit of one year and our own hypothesis of two years. We are also aware that estimates of time have occasionally been suggested in the past, and have been exceeded, but every day that passes supplies new data which enable such calculations to be made with greater approach to exactitude.

The most striking symptom of conflict is the Anglo-American discord about naval policy. *The Round Table* for March makes this the subject of its first article. It surveys the history of Anglo-American negotiations since the Washington Conference. The main facts are familiar to our readers, but in a section of the article dealing with "The Next Step" the writer, after saying that the breakdown of the Geneva Conference has its bright side, because since then each country is letting the question of "parity" lie quiet, and is building what it thinks it needs without reference to the other, he proceeds:—

But it is important to realise that there will only be calm for a year or two, and, unless the statesmen use that lull to repair the mistakes made during the years before Geneva, the last state will be worse than the first. In 1931 the replacement of battleships and battle cruisers

begins under the Washington Treaty, and in 1936 this Treaty comes to an end. If replacement begins in 1931 there will be a huge expenditure of money on both sides.

If the Washington Treaty is allowed to lapse in 1936, there will be reproduced the very situation which arose between Germany and Great Britain when the first Dreadnought was put into the sea. Each Power will try to design a type of ship which will be able to annihilate the ships of the other side. Indeed, if it were not for the Washington Treaty which limits the size of the cruisers, the competition would have already set in. The new American cruisers would probably be 12,000 tons armed with 9-inch guns, the next year's British and Japanese cruisers would be 14,000 tons armed with 10-inch guns, and so on.

"We have, therefore, rather less than two years to try to reconsider the situation before competition in replacement begins—for ships have to be laid down in 1929 if they are to be ready in 1931—and five years before the existing naval programmes are completed, or the question of the renewal of the Washington Treaty arises." (Our italics.)

We invite our readers to interline Sir George Paish's prophecy with the italicised passages in the above quotation. Naval policy is merely an extension of economic policy, and clashes with financial policy in exactly the same way. The banker enjoins on industry the duty of bringing about an excess of exports. In the world of practical economics an excess of exports necessitates an excess of military strength. An excess of military strength means excessive expenditure of money. But the banker enjoins on the Government the duty of reducing expenditure. In a phrase, the deflationary theory of the banks creates a practical necessity for inflation directly it is administered. The banker is which he imputes indiscriminately against every former. He's the biggest ass of the lot. It would not matter about his tying the twenty-two-carat gold-standard in front of his own muzzle if it were not that we were all in the cart behind him. When Mr. T. W. H. Crosland was being cross-examined by Mr. F. E. Smith (now Lord Birkenhead) during the Ross libel action, he was challenged

Q.: "Have you taken it upon yourself to regulate the private life of Mr. Ross?"
A.: "Oh, no! I don't object to Ross making a pig of himself; but what I do mind is his making a sty of the world."

That graphically pictures the attitude of the world to the financial system.

From the quotations we have made we may speculate on how the financial crisis foreseen by Sir George Paish, and the initial naval crisis foreseen by the writer in *The Round Table*, may be precipitated in 1929. If in that year the Admiralty demand a "huge expenditure of money," what will be the attitude of the Bank of England, which by that time may have gained supreme control over British money—legal tender as well as bank-credit? The answer obviously depends upon who controls the Bank itself. Will Mr. Montagu Norman revise the Jamin Strong in London—or will it be Mr. Benjamin Strong in New York? Nobody knows which at this moment, nor has any political party inter-ested itself in the implications arising from intimate association between the Governors of the British and American central banks—an association in which Mr. Norman manifestly plays the subordinate part. So when the writer in *The Round Table* points out that British statesmen must make use of the two-year "lull" to "repair the mistakes, etc.," we suggest that the first mistake to rectify is that of leaving banking policy outside the scope of Parliamentary enquiry and debate. They have no excuse for ignoring Mr. McKenna's proposal for an investigation, for having turned the ledgers of the coal industry inside out they cannot say it is not their

legitimate function to take a look at the bankers' figures and analyse their stock-registers. The Bank of England is, of course, a private enterprise; but so is the coal industry; and it is now too late for politicians to evoke the principle of the inviolability of privacy in justification of their irresponsible attitude, especially on an issue of this magnitude.

The writer himself sets naval experts the lesser task of trying to consider what naval "parity" means. It sounds, oh, so simple to the layman; but listen to this summary of possible interpretations:—

"Does 'parity' mean the power of each navy to be on equal terms with the other in every ocean in the world? If so, it means the acquisition by the United States of naval bases in every ocean, or the sharing of all British and American bases by the two fleets on equal terms. Or does parity mean equality in the Atlantic, so that neither side can interrupt the vital communications of the other, so that the United States cannot cut the British lines through the Suez Canal and round Africa, or the British cut the American lines through the Panama Canal and to the Philippines? Or, again, does Great Britain claim in the name of parity the complete control of trade at sea outside the western Atlantic and the north Pacific? Or does the United States in the name of parity claim the right to have a navy which can destroy the British Commonwealth any time she likes? Or are there really two kinds of parity—parity in battle fleets and parity for the purpose of trade at sea?"

No wonder the writer says later on that there is "no solution to the Geneva issue" as it is looked at "from a purely naval angle." Having pointed out this truth, his value for our own purposes ceases. He tails off into a discussion of "political issues," thinking it sufficient to state that the interests of the United States and Britain are fundamentally identical, and to rely upon that for pulling us all out of the mess, forgetting that such identity of interests was as true in March, 1914, as it is in March, 1928. He touches economics in one sentence. "Both [nations] can only secure this result by raising the productive and therefore the consuming power of the whole of the rest of the world" (our italics). He inverts the sequence, following of course the orthodox financial doctrine. Where is to be found this complaisant "whole of the rest of the world" which will first buy capital equipment from Britain and America, and afterwards go on buying from them the products of similar capital equipment? Imagine a store selling a young lady a knitting machine and some wool to make a jumper and then expecting to sell her the jumper.

As if to emphasise our argument, another article in *The Round Table* is headed "A Plea for National Economy, Public and Private." All articles in this Review are anonymous, but this one has at its foot the words "East of Suez, December, 1927." It is largely a technical survey of Government Finance. In it there is an interesting proposal.

The plan is simply this, that the opportunity of the amalgamation of the Government's currency note issue with the note issue of the Bank of England should be seized, to effect at least a temporary reduction in the gold reserves locked up without interest in Britain.

The writer thinks that when amalgamation takes place there will be two schools of thought, one proposing that the amount of paper currency not covered by gold shall be reduced, and the other that it shall be maintained. He rules out the idea of the latter school's wanting it increased, because he thinks it will fear to be dubbed "inflationist." But he himself recommends the "bolder" policy of demand—self recommends the "bolder" policy of demand—ing "an increase of £25,000,000 in the aggregate fiduciary issue." ("Fiduciary"—bankers' jargon: derivation, Latin, *fidus* = faith: in this context, faith that a paper claim to a piece of gold will get you what you want so long as you do not want gold—which you do not—so everything is all right.) So

the writer proposes that the Bank of England shall dispose of £25,000,000 worth of its gold reserves, thus reducing, "temporarily, at least," "the total gold held in reserve in Britain by that amount" This would—

"... enable a sum of £25,000,000 to be transferred from the Issue Department of the Bank and added to the Reserve of the Banking Department, its place in the Issue Department being taken by Government securities transferred from... the Banking Department."

To deal with the "gold thus released from the Issue Department" various "alternative methods of book-keeping" are possible. The following advantages would take place:—

"The Bank of England would be buyers in the market, directly or through the National Debt Commissioners, of £25,000,000 worth of Government securities now held by the investing public... [and this would] improve the market... and facilitate the renewal of maturing debt" at a lower rate of interest. "In the second place, with the sale abroad of £25,000,000 in gold, the amount of new capital immediately available for investment abroad, either within or outside the British Empire, would be similarly increased by £25,000,000, and the country as a whole would be earning interest at the rate of at least £1,250,000 a year on an asset at present locked up unproductively."

In principle it appears that the Banking Department would deliver Government securities now in its possession to the Issue Department in exchange for gold. The Banking Department would export the gold as an investment in some other country. Then the Bank itself would buy Government securities at home with a new fund of notes presumably released by its Issue Department. Hence the Issue Department would part with £25,000,000 of gold plus £25,000,000 of notes in return for £25,000,000 of Government securities. If so, the "alternative methods" of book-keeping referred to are presumably devices for scrapping the double-entry system. Either that, or the Banking Department ought to deliver to the Issue Department the securities it subsequently buys in addition to the securities it initially exchanges. Not that all this matters a scrap, for the whole financial system exists on the fact that it can do anything with figures and a piece of paper and nobody be the wiser.

The proposer of this scheme defends it against a hypothetical charge of being inflationary. That is an easy task. The £25,000,000 expended will short-circuit back to the banking system in no time. The so-called "investing public" will not be invited to sell any of their holdings of Government securities: the Big Five banks can supply the whole demand many times over. If they sell £25,000,000 worth to the Bank they will simply cause a change in the character of their permanent deposits at the Bank, namely, from securities to notes. They will not necessarily get possession of any more currency than before. How far the scheme is really an inspired and not merely a spontaneous idea of the author's we do not know; but it has a bearing upon a noticeable phenomenon in recent financial transactions, and that is the common practice of all the great insurance houses during the last several months of reducing their holdings of Government securities and investing the proceeds in debentures and other kinds of direct mortgage securities. The question is, Who is buying the Government paper? Not Mr. Churchill, for it is a complaint of the writer's that "on balance the National Debt Commissioners have been sellers, not buyers, of Government securities." That the "investing public" are the buyers, we see many reasons for doubting. There remain the banks. Although it is not yet very clear why they should be doing this, at least they could safely tie their credits up in that way if they knew that a scheme was maturing which would untie them again—maybe at a profit. We must wait and see.

A Cave-Man Critic.

I.

When an eminent soldier dies they drape his coffin with the flag and crown it with his sword. On finishing the last page of Mr. W. Sorley Brown's exhaustive account* of the battles of this great Fleet Street warrior we felt that his most congruous emblem would have been a lily and a cudgel. Cross-land's mission in life was to smash literary skulls in the name of moral cleanliness. If his detractors should say that he was merely a poseur, the reply is that the pose entailed high courage; while so far as they should urge that he was an example of chronic pug-nacity, unconsciously seeking a moral platform for its exercise, much the same thing may be said about the soldier who "draws his sword for his country." In these sophisticated days a man who claims to be literary invites ridicule when he applies moral standards to art, and something worse if he should attack delinquents of a distinguished order. Crossland's attitude is most clearly pictured in his implacable opposition to Oscar Wilde—that a thing there was "no morality" in literature—that a thing was either written well or written badly. Nor was his protest in this and other connections merely the unreasoning reaction of a man whose "moral sense" has been vaguely outraged: he was always prepared to give reasons for the literary faith that was in him. His manner of "giving" them was not as the world giveth. He did not lay them out for calm inspection; he hammered them like iron studs into the talking end of his club and went out to smash heads. His victims may not have seen his logic, but of a verity they saw stars. The penalty he paid for this is plainly to be seen in the fact that probably not one person in a hundred thousand knows anything of him beyond that he was the author of *The Unspeakable Scot*, and, perhaps *Lovely Woman*.

One outstanding instance of his merciless manner is where he deals with John Masefield's *The Everlasting Mercy*. Mr. Brown gives an extended account of this controversy, initiated by Crossland in a letter to the *Saturday Review* of May 28, 1912. Apparently the editor had first sent this poem of Masefield's (and another of his, *The Widow in the Bye Street*) to Lord Alfred Douglas for review, but that gentleman, according to Mr. Brown, "did not give them the kind of appreciation that the *Saturday Review* wanted," with the result that "Douglas's review was rejected, and the task of reviewing 'the best literature of 1912'—vide Mr. (now Sir) J. M. Barrie—was then entrusted to a Mr. J. E. Barton." It was Mr. Barton's review which brought Crossland out rampaging in the "sedate pages" of the *Saturday Review*. The ensuing battle is full of excitement. Mr. Barton brought Shakespeare in to justify Masefield's traffic in "bloodys," "hells," "damns," and his continuous references to—"in Crossland's words," "illicit love, whoring, bastardy, and so forth."

Crossland accepted the challenge. "... of course, he [Mr. Barton] fails to recognise that the lust portrayed in Shakespeare is portrayed in its ordinary, abiding, and (as Shakespeare and other decent men see it) sometimes humorous relation to life, and not as a greasy surfeit for the libidinous. While, as to what are commonly regarded as William Shakespeare's two set efforts in this direction—namely, *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*—I shall point out that Shakespeare did not tack religious verses to them for the pleasuring of the pious; neither did he call one of them *The Plan of Salvation* or the other *What is Home Without a Mother?*"

Then later:— "Yet in the disguise of semi-religious poetry Mr. Masefield is to sell for profit, at two pitches, word pictures of the foulest and most depraved aspects of life in some unthinkable hell of a village, and the reviewer of a *High* * "The Life and Genius of T. W. H. Crossland." By W. Sorley Brown. (Cecil Palmer. 21s.)

Church paper is to call a critic 'malignant' who ventures to suggest that a device is toward"

Excerpts from Masefield are quoted by Crossland—as for example this episode in a tavern:—

"'I'm climber Joe who climbed the spire'; 'You're climber Joe the bloody liar'... 'I'm French Suzanne the Circus Dancer, I'm going to dance a bloody lancer.'"

"In what lines out of Shakespeare," comments Crossland, "would Mr. Barton justify this and other passages in the poem?" "And where," he proceeds, "in all Shakespeare will you find such a trifling and unnecessary frowsiness" as a line like the following:—

"And then men ask, 'Are Barmaids chaste?'"

The general question of whether art is susceptible of valuation by moral standards is outside the scope of this article. The central truth is that, right or wrong in his judgment, Crossland knew what he wanted, and went crashing through to get it. He wrote as the crow flies. So incessant was his grasp of the cudgel that on the rare occasions when someone offered him friendship he could not unclench his fingers to shake hands. Writing once to Mr. Sorley Brown he said:—

"I owe you all sorts of letters and all sorts of thanks. But I am so unaccustomed to friendliness that pleasant writing is a fearful trouble to me."

Perhaps the fiercest of all controversies was that which Crossland started by publishing his poem *The First Stone*. This was a merciless attack on Oscar Wilde's *De Profundis*, a book of "repentance," and, as such, avidly seized upon, sponsored and boomed by eminent Christian publicists. Written by Wilde in prison, it came into the possession of Robert Ross, his literary executor, who published what purported to be the whole work, and also to be a letter addressed to Ross. But Crossland discovered that, as published (Methuen, 1905), it was only a portion of the complete work—the pious part of it. He further discovered that it was addressed, not to Ross at all, but to Lord Alfred Douglas. He was able to examine the suppressed portions, and discovered that they constituted a malicious attack on Lord Alfred Douglas. He came to the conclusion that Wilde had intended the poem to become an instrument, in Ross's hands, for blackening Lord Alfred's character. Lastly, apart from motivation, Crossland adjudged the suppressed passages to exhibit evidence of moral perversion, and thus entirely to destroy the popular view that Wilde was a penitent whose "only sin" (according to one commentator) "was indolence." Accordingly he wrote *The First Stone*. In the course of this ferocious onslaught on Wilde's character Crossland pointed his attack by interpolating quotations drawn from both the published and unpublished portions of *De Profundis*. Mr. Sorley Brown reproduces the poem in full—it covers thirteen pages of his book.

For reasons of copyright the suppressed part of *De Profundis* could not be published by Crossland, and Alfred Douglas to get Ross to consent to publication so as to give him, Lord Alfred, the opportunity to meet publicly the scurrilous charges which they contained against himself and members of his family. Properly, of course, the whole manuscript should have been handed to him, since it was addressed to him. But Robert Ross instead deposited it with the British Museum, with the injunction that it was not to be made public until 1960. Lord Alfred's comment on this injustice, in a book of his own on Wilde, is quoted by Mr. Brown, and runs as follows:—

"How many manuscripts of this nature may already be lurking on the British Museum's shelves the wise authorities alone know. Fifty years hence it may well be that we shall have the pleasure of reading Mr. Lloyd George's inside opinions of

Lord Reading and his brethren, written in Mr. Lloyd George's own hand at the National Liberal Club in moments of irritation or depression after the Marconi affair. . . . and . . . Mr. Clement K. Shorter may have lodged his private and innermost view of the character and habits of Sir William Robertson Nicoll, Mr. Thomas Hardy, Miss Marie Corelli, and heaven and the British Museum alone know whom else besides.

"Of course, it is ridiculous to suppose that any of the persons I have mentioned possesses spleen and impudence enough to degrade themselves by doing anything of the kind. But the fact remains that the British Museum authorities are sitting at the receipt of custom, with open and itching palms, and that in Wilde's case they have received, and not only so, refused to disgorge when they were caught at it.

"They must surely have recognised that it [the MS.] is capable of being put—and indeed has been put—to the basest and most cowardly uses, and that it is, in essence, of absolutely no other use. For all that, it is still preserved, as though it were a literary gem of the first water instead of something which mankind at large would be quite willing to let die."

(To be concluded.)

NOTICE.

The M.M. Club meets on Wednesday, March 7, at 6.15 p.m.

"Many bankers feel that the central bankers' conference here this summer, in which heads of American, British, German, French, and Belgian banks of issue participated, is bearing fruit, as intended, in a sterling rate high enough to protect England's none-too-large gold reserve."—*Barron's Weekly*, November 28, 1927.

"Sir George Paish speaks with great authority upon financial matters, and when he said at Oxford last week that the spring of 1929, at latest, would find Europe faced with the impossibility of meeting her current obligations to the United States, he did not speak upon his own authority alone. . . . The accounts ought to be settled by increased European exports to the States, but in fact Europe is exporting less than before the war. The balance has only been struck with the aid of large and increasing American loans. These, of course, while affording temporary relief, only make the final problem the more embarrassing. Sir George Paish does not think that the American investor will be willing to bridge the gap for more than two more years at the outside. What will happen then? It is easy to speak of bankruptcy, but a nation does not go bankrupt in the same way as a private trader does. The pressure could only be exerted through a fall in the European exchanges upon America, and ultimately, in our own case, through the collapse of the gold standard and the re-establishment of a depreciated and inconvertible paper currency. If the problem is as acute as Sir George Paish indicates, America will find herself in the moral and material dilemma of having to choose between forcing Europe to return to the system of depreciated and unstable paper currencies, or removing her own tariff barriers, or foregoing some of her claims of interest. But there is another problem, similar in kind, which may demand settlement first. That is the problem of how Germany is to finance her increased reparation payments in a Europe which is as reluctant to take Germany's goods as America is to take Europe's. The problems are closely connected, and it is perhaps as well that American debtors should be forced to realise that America is no more unreasonable in her treatment of their goods than they are of Germany's."—*Manchester Guardian*, November 28, 1927.

"The business position in the United States remains an important factor in the shaping of economic conditions in Great Britain. . . . The monetary and credit position is, of course, a fundamental factor in the business outlook. . . . The key to the riddle of the monetary outlook is the Federal Reserve Policy."—*The Statist*, December 31, 1927.

"The next thing would be for the denizens of Downing Street to abandon the pernicious and perilous practice of crawling about the White House. Then the Governor of the Bank of England might usefully suspend those pious pilgrimages to the Federal Reserve Board of New York (that have reduced Lombard Street to the position of a 'Foreign Correspondent' of Wall Street, while the London money market is the convenience of the New York Money Power."—*National Review*, January, 1928.

The Fruition of Salesmanship.

The time has long gone by since our aristocracy disdained to soil its hands with trade, and nowadays even royalty is not above interesting itself in such matters. A Duke of the Royal House recently attended the dinner of the Incorporated Sales Managers' Association, and so far from contenting himself with a silent patronage of this prominent feature of our industrial economy, took the occasion to pronounce what is described in the Press as a "eulogy of salesmanship." Such a eulogy, according to the *Evening Standard*, is "not unneeded even in the modern world," and in its leading article explained why we must suppress our inclination "to look down on salesmanship as inferior to production." This article was interesting in several ways, though less (of course) for what was to be read in than for what was to be read between the lines. Even a platitude may become significant if we listen for its "overtones," and when we read that "both the making of an article and the selling of it are complementary and indispensable parts of the machinery, and neither can exist without the other," the circumstances in which the observation is pronounced almost invest it with the character of originality. After campaigns for the salvation of British Industry by expansion (with the slogan "Produce More") and by restriction (with the maxim "Produce Less"), someone has bethought himself of the difficulties of Business without Buyer. Someone has remembered Demand.

And yet the significant fact about the new campaign for salvation by salesmanship is that it is in essence one more attempt to "by-pass" the problem of Demand. It is acceptance of a situation in which Demand has ceased to expand spontaneously. How can one call that Demand which has to be coaxed from sulky resistance before it will co-operate in economic prosperity at all? Demand is that which comes with money in its hand; not that which turns away with money in its pocket because it is physically and spiritually satiated. Salesmanship for the few is the product of destitution in the many; and the "hypertrophy of selling agencies" is justly called in evidence by the Webbs to witness to the decay of capitalist civilisation.

Yet to read the *Evening Standard* one might never imagine that anyone in this country was refraining from satisfying his reasonable wants because the financial system forbade him the means to do so. Salesmanship "is the art of persuading people that they can have things which they have long wanted without hoping ever to possess them." And who are the "people" who need thus to be persuaded? Miners' wives in South Wales, riveters on the Tyne, ironworkers in the Midlands? Not much salesmanship is needed to persuade the working classes to eat meat more than once a week, or buy more than one pair of boots a year. It is not this "art" which the defenders of our economic system occupy themselves with so far as the great majority of the "people" are concerned, but the even more ticklish art of persuading vast numbers of people that it is reasonable for them to go without what nature and ingenuity can plainly contrive to provide. While the Business College is training its future salesmen to overcome the "sales resistance" of the opulent, the College of Economics is educating its students to expound the inevitability of scarcity to the destitute. For the latter, a minimum standard of life (with the accent on the "minimum"); for the former, a precisely opposite standard. One might perhaps call it the evening standard?

Yet the moral of all this is not that of the Socialist. He has no other idea than to distribute the purchasing power of the rich, remaining obstinately blind not only to the statistical inadequacy of this proposal (and, one may add, its practical impossibility), but also to the fact that it is unnecessary. The closing sentence of the *Evening Standard's* article contains an unconscious hint of the true path to pursue. Speaking of the individual salesman, it says: "it is now his main business rather to develop potential demand, to which there are no limits, than to grasp, to the exclusion of others, the largest possible share of existing demand." If this dictum be read as applying not to the salesman (in regard to whom its truth is distinctly questionable) but to the economic reformer, it offers the very clue of which our whole industrial system is in need. "Potential purchasers," says the article under discussion, "are, as it were, charged with the electric current which is required to make the wheels of industry go round, and it is salesmanship which establishes the connection." For "salesmanship" read "consumer credit," and the statement becomes a truism of the New Economics.

Yet this concentration of attention upon salesmanship may be very much to the good in focussing the minds of industrialists upon the problem of distribution. Moreover, salesmanship is a means whereby the integument of financial orthodoxy may be burst through without its sponsors realising what is in fact going on. Indeed, we see this process actually beginning in the spread of instalment purchase. When the *Evening Standard* says that "salesmanship is, in fact, the key to all the modern development of industry, and may prove to be a force leading, at any rate, to the material millenium to which mankind has always turned," it may be nearer the truth than might appear at first sight. The spectre of an industrial system marvellously equipped to supply human needs, stimulating new awareness of the scope of these needs by every art of "salesmanship," luring the masses to its shop windows, and then slamming the door in the face of 75 per cent. of them, cannot continue indefinitely. Producer, distributor, and consumer will learn their common need of one another, and need, like love, "will find a way."

M. B. R.

"Labour-saving machinery is being introduced into American industry at a rapid rate. The Census of Manufactures shows that the number of workers employed in factories in this country decreased nearly 400,000 between 1923 and 1925, although the physical output of these factories was considerably increased. This has not involved a corresponding increase in unemployment, however, because a large portion of the released labour has gone into non-manufacturing lines, such as garages and service stations, and furthermore, new industries are springing up to absorb any labour surplus."—Julius Klein, Director of the U.S. Bureau of Commerce reported in *Wall Street Journal*, December 30, 1927.

"A major price decline accompanying a period of remarkable fundamental prosperity has been the world's experience of the past two years. So closely associated have been prosperity and rising prices for a quarter of a century that this new trend is a paradox to the present generation. Explanations are commonly sought in the field of gold and credit. Yet beneath the maze of technical factors from which the general price equation is evolved stands one elementary but overlooked fact. Since 1925 production and capacity in the world have been substantially expanded. Coal shows nearly two-year interval, zinc about 16 per cent., tin around 6 per cent., and lead over 10 per cent. Copper output has increased as much as 7 per cent. in the two-year interval, more, and petroleum production is probably 8 per cent. greater in 1927 than in 1925. The textile field exhibits similar developments, also rubber and coffee."—*Commerce Monthly*, the Review of the National Bank of Commerce in New York, January, 1928.

Rural Life and Lore.

XV.—THE STOAT.

One day when I was a boy my father was taking me with him across the fields on his way to do a bit of ploughing. Our dog was with us. Suddenly I noticed a rabbit sitting at a spot a few yards in front of us. As the dog was running on ahead, I expected to see the rabbit bolt at any moment. But no; he didn't budge: and, to my surprise, stayed there until we came right up to him. I was going to lift him up, but my father stopped me. He said: "Let him bide, boy; a stoat has struck him."

I looked about, but I couldn't see any stoat. "Nor you won't," said my father, "till us moves away."

So we moved a few yards away to watch. There was the rabbit, sitting so still as it might be a stuffed animal. My father said: "You see that hedge?" and pointed to a place a good dozen yards away from where the rabbit was waiting. "That is where the stoat'll be, I reckon."

And sure enough, 'twas so. We had not watched for more than a few minutes, when the rabbit suddenly gave one single little screech and was silent. "Now you'm goin' to see the stoat, boy," my father whispered when he heard that sound. I looked back to the hedge, and on the instant out came the stoat, a pretty creature it was—like a ferret, but more slim and graceful—and he came along with short, pretty leaps up to where the rabbit lay.

What happened then I couldn't see exactly until afterwards. 'Twas this: the stoat made a tiny puncture just behind the rabbit's ear, and commenced to suck his blood. And now there were the two of them, still as stones, like two stuffed animals. We waited, I suppose, five minutes. Then we saw the stoat leave the rabbit, leaping back towards the hedge like a bouncing ball, and disappearing into it.

"Has he killed it?" I asked my father. "No, boy," he answered me. "He'll come back once, or twice, or maybe three times for another meal before that rabbit'll be dead." So we waited ten minutes for the stoat to be ready for his second meal. Suddenly the rabbit gave another little screech, and was silent. Once more, on that very instant, we saw the stoat come out from under the hedge. And then everything happened the same as before.

After that my father said we wouldn't wait to see any more, but would come back that way when we went home. So we did; and found the rabbit, dead. We took it home. And then it was that my father showed me the little mark the stoat had made. I had to look close to see it. . . . We had the rabbit for supper that night—for a rabbit killed by a stoat makes good eating, because he has been drained of all his blood.

Since then I have seen hundreds of such happenings as I saw that morning, and I have learned much about the ways of stoats; but it is still a puzzle to me how that little animal can strike a rabbit at such a distance. I have heard people talk about hypnotism, but I'm sure there must be something else. When human beings are hypnotised it is when somebody comes close and looks in their eyes, and makes passes or something. But a stoat can do his striking at a distance of fifty times the length of his own little body, and when you think how small his eyes must look to the rabbit at that distance—even if the rabbit can see them at all—you have to find some other explanation. From what I can make out it seems as if the rabbit is struck still just by knowing that the stoat is preparing to come after him.

It is not by sight. Sometimes I have heard the rabbit give his little screech, and the stoat did not

appear out of the hedge until a second or two after. Besides that, very often bunches of grass or small hillocks are between the rabbit and the place where the stoat comes out, and it is impossible for the rabbit to see him even through the hedge. The rabbit knows directly the stoat makes up his mind to come for his first (or second, or third) meal, without needing to see him at all.

The stoat lives in the open and kills in the open. He has no hole of his own, and never enters a rabbit-burrow in search of his prey. A good job, too, or else he'd clear a whole warren in no time. The only reason he ever enters any hole at all is to seek refuge. His plan is to wait for a rabbit to come out to feed: then he likes to work round so as to get himself between the rabbit and the hole. If I knew he *always* got between, I should guess that his striking of the rabbit had something to do with his having crossed his path. But I am not quite sure.

While I am thinking of it, let me mention something to do with the strange influence some animals do have on others. One day, in my early life, I was going home, and overtook a wagoner on the road. He was riding on his horse, and I walked beside him talking to him. In a minute or so that horse started snorting and shying. We steadied him and looked round for the cause—a piece of white paper in the hedge or something of that. But there was nothing. We went on, but the horse continued to show signs of fear. Then suddenly an explanation occurred to the old wagoner. "Here, Bob, you don't happen to have a ferret on 'e, do 'e?" And sure enough, so I had: the little creature was asleep in my pocket. A proper give-away if I hadn't wanted it known I was carrying such a thing; and you may safely bet your shilling that I never forgot it after.

A dog does not care to tackle a stoat. When a stoat is attacked he always keeps his face on the enemy: he leaps backwards, showing fight all the time. He is also provided with a sort of funk-hole, like a badger, and can send out a substance that stinks like anything. He is not a fast-travelling animal. He does not need to be, seeing that he can make his prey wait for him. He can leap along at about six or seven miles an hour—the pace of a man walking quickly. He is like a gipsy; he loves the air and the sky; so he makes his home and hunting quarters under hedges or stacks of faggots and suchlike places. So if ever you should come across a struck rabbit and find he's alive, you will see some shelter of that sort near by, and that is where you may be sure the stoat is peeping to see whether you are going to leave him his dinner or steal it.

R. R.

LOVE.

That woman there,
Staring with eager parted lips,
Shaken and thrilled with dizzy ecstasy,
Is deep in love.

In love with a sharp thin-edged half-moon,
With a turquoise and lavender-clouded shell-pink sky;
Against it stark trees silhouetted in smoky grey.

The frost-tanged air of an early autumn night
Is maddening wine of Eros,
And the tumble and rush of hidden water
In the dark-leaved valley down below
Flows into her senses and overwhelms her
Like the urgent murmur of a lover's voice.

She swoons with the magic and mystery and delicate
wonder of love.

But she is drifting in the current of the years:
And can she bear a child to mist on the hills,
To amber fading bracken and evening star?

JOYCE REASON

Drama.

The Fourth Wall: Haymarket.

At three o'clock in the afternoon all the guests at Arthur Ludgrove's country house party except two go off by motor to play tennis or to call upon their lady friends. Arthur Ludgrove, as was fully explained by his son and ward, is a retired secret agent who, twenty-seven years before, had caused two criminals to be put away, as imprisonment is euphemistically called, for twenty-five years, and who had told the story only the night before at dinner. Three-quarters of an hour after the party had left, in circumstances that make one marvel how Ludgrove ever caught anything but a tartar in his career, he is murdered by the two criminals, who are identical with the two remaining guests. These carry out the murder and arrange the room, even to the provision of a motive in the shape of a forged letter threatening exposure, in a manner convincingly indicative of Ludgrove's suicide. By happy accident the village policeman's son, "almost-Sergeant" Mallet, of Scotland Yard, paying a visit to his far more interesting father, the village policeman, is at hand with his motor-bike to demonstrate that among all the causes of death recognised by the police, natural, accidental, by murder, and by suicide, only the last can not be eliminated by a mind for reason and eyes for evidence.

But Susan Cunningham, bless her true little heart, had not been educated at Scotland Yard. She had brought herself up on detective-stories. Her natural endowment, moreover, embraced more than wisdom and understanding, since it combined with them blessed intuition. Meeting her fiancé at eerie midnight by appointment on the scene of the crime, she showed what fools detectives be; that they do not see the top-layer of the facts, although one of the guests must have it in his pocket; that they are too obtuse to perceive that time is not relative for everyday purposes. For seeing through collusive alibis dovetailed by expert undertakers the agile wit of a refined young lady with a flair for the overwhelming moral fact that Uncle Arthur was not the kind of man to shoot himself are far more use than the recitation of the entire text-book for ambitious young policemen. Next morning, as a result, the fiancé goes to town for more police—brute force being the only thing the modern girl-pupil of Sherlock Holmes can not supply—while Susan exposes the clever criminal as a bigger fool than the clever detective, inasmuch as he is both more vacillating and more vain.

Mr. A. A. Milne calls his detective story "The Fourth Wall" for no better apparent reason than that "it is through the missing fourth wall of Arthur Ludgrove's room that we see what happened." In the preface to "Mrs. Warren's Profession" Mr. Bernard Shaw, after his normal manner, ejaculated that in the conventional theatre we do not believe, we only make-believe. There was a time when it looked as though Mr. Milne was going to make us believe; when, in fact, he seemed well on the way towards a true drama embodying deep psychological observation of motive and consequence. Perhaps his adoption of the missing fourth wall, the very hall-mark of the conventional parlour-drama, is Mr. Milne's occult device for informing his friends that he is aware of his defection from the drama of belief. If his object was merely to prove to himself that he could do a melodrama as well as the late William Archer or the next man, he might have spared himself the trouble. We were ready to take so much for granted in return for an ascent to greater comedy. Although Mr. Milne has style and construction—in this detective play he picks up his loose ends very efficiently—this form throws all his weaknesses into relief. Minor virtues become obtrusive where major virtues are lacking. Thrilling

as the second scene of the first act is, for example, the opening scene ought to make Mr. Milne perform a penance. All the humour between the dull boy and the bright girl—he is writing a letter and asks her how to spell friend, *ie* or *ei*, says that both look idiotic, and blames his bad spelling or his cheap fountain pen—is Mr. Milne's hopeless effort to weave a cover over the fact that the two lovers are reciting the past lives of Ludgrove and his murderers-to-be so that the play can begin. Mr. Milne must have been desperate to use wool that all his editors would reject as available in their quinquennial files, and passed over at the last review.

Another weakness of Mr. Milne's craftsmanship is that the play and the story are obviously separate. Nearly all his frankness has to do only with the story. The play—everything calculated to stir the audience—depends on the repetition over and again of a single dramatic quality, and that usually in an inverted way. The author first bluffs his audience into a state of suspense, and disperses the dramatic crisis by divuiging something that the audience could not be expected to recognise when it occurred. In the first scene he exploits suspense after the party leaves by giving the audience reason to anticipate some event that does not happen. In the second scene he turns the tables on Ludgrove without any warning, but what Mr. Frank Cellier in the part of one of the murderers, Carter, gave away in obvious contempt for the simple trustfulness of the character he was about to murder. The second act, with its long cross-examination, arouses no suspense, and therefore becomes pure story. Where the two lovers piece the crime together Mr. Milne drives suspense hard enough—let it be acknowledged that here it is true suspense, rightly used, since the characters experience it—to suffice for any one whole play. In the last scene, however, suspense is overworked, unfairly, unfrankly, and with a persistence of anticlimax at its release that renders the murderer almost farce. While Susan is persuaded that the in a battle of wits, the audience is persuaded that the door is locked, only to learn, after somebody enters while pretending to look on the floor for a brooch. Again, the audience accepts Mr. Milne's assurance that Carter is not such a foolish criminal as to mistake an unloaded for a loaded gun, only to be let into the secret long afterwards of how Susan and her friend had removed the cartridges previously—"off." This is the method of screwing an audience up and letting it down. It is like conjuring with accomplices, or performing super-acrobatics on supporting ropes.

That the play goes along so smoothly is due to brilliant acting. What some companies would do with Sergeant Mallet's lecture from a detective-school crib arouses an anticipatory shudder. Mr. David Hawthorne performed something very near a miracle with it. The two murderers, Carter and Laverick, and their victim Ludgrove, were rendered with far more character and intelligence than the play endows them with by Mr. Frank Cellier, Mr. Spencer Trevor, and Mr. H. R. Hignett respectively. Miss Nora Swinburne, by making the young lady who combined detective story reading mania with Edgar Allan Poe's reasoning power entirely credible, triumphed over impossibility. As the village policeman, Tom Reynolds created a deliciously comic figure out of a few trite phrases several times repeated, a figure which could produce delight merely by its manner of saying *No*, or of changing its position in the chair as a comment on the proceedings. But his part, like every part in the second act, was composed in far too cheerful a tone for the occasion. It is true, I believe, that after country funerals, if the tea has been comparable with others within memory, the mourner-guests cheer up the

bereaved by drinking their spirits and telling them funny stories, but the light-heartedness of this act was within a few minutes of the tragedy being discovered. What mainly preserved the last act from farce or collapse was the air with which Mary Sheridan performed the part of Susan's friend—her cigarette-holder, by the way, is an unnecessary accessory, as she can act without such artificial aid to character; and if the play, as is the rule with Haymarket selections, is a success, the credit will be due to first-quality acting and Mr. Nicholas Hannen's production. PAUL BANKS.

The Destiny of Nations.

II. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ENGLAND.

Islam also is present in India, and that imperialistic religion, with its infectious force, its incapability of spiritual differentiation and development, is a world problem by itself. It may well be that the process of its sublimation is most hopeful in India, grave as is the complication it creates. No other religious impulse is so difficult to allay to the paramount claim of world-synthesis, unless it be the family idealism of the Jews. The influence of the Jews, however, might well be harmless, or even an element of value in life, but for the false financial dogmas we tolerate, which give to the scattered Hebrew race all the world-power it possesses—the power it uses to strengthen those dogmas' authority.

Facing these vast and momentous questions English statesmanship is weakened by the present consciousness of England's relation to Europe. The vitality, the sense of confidence in the Imperial mission, which Englishmen themselves can no longer conceive in a narrowly national spirit, requires a realisation that it is bound up with the civilising mission of Europe. The conception of Christendom is still our basic tradition and justification. England is the evolutionary force of the West, the world-penetrating point of Christendom, which Providence and Nature, besides her own indomitable initiative, have given to the world: and the Empire she has created could serve as the basis of the general ordering of the nations. For that strengthening conception of her work, of which her sense seems to be waning, she needs to be one with the mind and heart of the West. For this reason, not to mention others, her contact with the family of nations from which she springs and has derived her culture is her most vital external problem.

Yet not external altogether. It is indeed as much social as national. England could only regain the real confidence of Europe by a social regeneration. In her vague but obstinate sense of class distinction, and her fear to face the necessity of constitutional reorganisation, England fails to give any lead or inspiration to Europe, stifles every world hope such as that which she awakened when she freed the Colonial slaves. In the spirit of human equality she is behind the rest of Europe. Only by a social re-creation, not achievable without inner or outward crisis and a spasm of conscious will, could she re-inspire friendship, and against this she protects herself by every subterfuge and sham, inefficient reform. And the greatest bogey, the projection of all her social fears with which she sustains a neurotic fear of all vital reform is that great, invincible land Power of Europe, Russia.

It was given to Russia to make Communism a world-problem. By carrying out the first great onslaught upon the economic order of the world Russia was but translating into action an idea and impulse of the West itself. That fact should be faced and all that it implies. There would be little fear of Bolshevism but for our own deep suspicion that Capitalism is a swindle. Russia shows no sure sign, however, of being able to replace it; it is

doubtful if she ever had a full working-experience of the system. England, if any country, might alone evolve beyond its fallacies, and, by her technical wisdom and elastic power of adaptation, reach the first stage of that world realisation for which the West dreamed in vain, and Russia fought through agony to failure.

This could come from an England renewed in heart and reformed in constitution. The problem of the world rests, therefore, as it always does and should rest, upon the possibility of an unimpelled and spontaneous creation. This means, from the standpoint of each of us, that it begins with himself, that there is something which he alone can originate. But in a sense objectively true for the whole family of mankind, the lead is now with England in the very problem which Russia raised. The Russian cataclysm was half a product of blind destiny, and half a movement of exalted human understanding, darkening into the rage and frenzy of frustration. The element of ideality in its passion, the strain of world-haunting music in the uproar, are really well enough known to the sensitiveness and intuition of England, Press appearances to the contrary notwithstanding. England knows that the direction of the world is changed by the way its greatest despotism fell. But that change threatens to touch the industrial and social complex in the depth of England's own constitution. She hardens against any reform, pointing with horror to the Russian confusion, when a change in her own system, even in her own long preconceived sense, is what is needed from her, and the only way of averting further social convulsions. By refusal to seize the new opportunity of the world, England is falling into political stagnation and triviality, economic despair and moral isolation among nations. And her fear of revolution grows the more nervously it is suppressed.

It is paramourly a question of self-respect and of the glory of human reason whether the issue from this situation will be by conscious creation or by unconscious destruction. Elementary spasmodic effort of heart and intelligence is the only power that can initiate historic action in races or classes. Thus are the remotest problems of the human horizon related to the immediate and challenging deadlock in the social and economic life of England. We urge that a mind open to the obvious, receptively obedient to the evidence of the senses, cannot naturally envisage any centre of the world where a new word spoken for its universal freedom could have such immense consequence, nor any action in England that could be so vital as one which would invest the mystic authority now falsely ascribed to Gold, in human and communal right. America cannot do it, and with all her material power America's dependence upon Europe for ideas and moral guidance is constantly underestimated.

Upon the solution of the social problem in England depends the future of the oceanic Empire of the white race and much—incalculably much—of the future of civilisation and the world. It is the awful gravity of that incontestable world-meaning which makes the present deadlock in the nation's being so intense. However sure our faith may be that the prophecies of a liberated humanity will be fulfilled; however our souls are sustained by the many infallible proofs that mankind *must*, by its own deepest ineffable love, ultimately create the world for trans-individual consciousness, the future is darkened by fears that it may be too late to solve the conflict humanly. To solve it happily, giving up nothing but hate, illusion and mistaken fear; renouncing only the selfishness which impoverishes; may yet be in the possibilities of things. The crisis of the world hangs balanced here, in this conflict of social desires, in the ripest and most responsible collective Being on Earth—the people England.

Rudolf Steiner.*

In the '60's of the last century the child of an Austrian railway employee began puzzling over his relation to the sense world. For he was unable to connect it satisfactorily with another world, which was to him just as real; and he tells us in his autobiography how he said to himself at an early age—though not yet in precise words—

"the objects and occurrences which the senses perceive are in space. But, just as this space is outside of man, so there exists within man a sort of soul-space which is the arena of spiritual realities and occurrences."

At the age of eight or nine young Rudolf Steiner began to take an intense delight in Geometry, for here he felt himself to be actually living in this "soul-space"; at twelve he was reading Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*—secretly—under the desk at school. Throughout the whole of the first half of his life, while he was graduating in his university, earning his living as a tutor, and at the same time systematically acquainting himself with everything significant in philosophy and several branches of Natural Science, there remained always, at the root of all his activities, this burning desire to bring together what were to him, not so much an "inner" and an "outer," as two different kinds of "outer" world.

This is the main theme of the first half of the *Story of My Life*, but the variations, by means of which it is developed, comprise a rich gallery of portraits and brief critical studies—studies of the thinkers whose works he read, and portraits of those whom he met personally. Among the latter are Haeckel, Treitschke, Hermann Grimm, Eduard von Hartmann, Nietzsche, and a host of lesser-known German and Austrian writers, artists, philosophers, and psychologists. These studies and sketches are themselves so numerous and so interesting that a reader who was not previously acquainted with Steiner's work must risk losing among them the main thread of the biography—which is the author's own intellectual development.

Called to Weimar to co-operate in the editing of Goethe's scientific works, Steiner was quickly impressed by the affinities between Goethe's *Weltanschauung* and his own. Consequently his work here was of the greatest assistance to him in solving his own problem of *expression*. After turning aside to produce a short work on Goethe, he was at last able to complete, between the ages of thirty and forty, his own *Philosophy of Spiritual Activity*. This work, or rather the rounding off of the ideas which it embodies, was the crucial event in his life. Its content cannot, of course, be summarily presented, but its overwhelming importance lies in its identification of the "other" world (whether we call it the "Spiritual" or the "Unconscious") with the purely *conceptual* element in human consciousness. Steiner's two worlds had never been an "objective" and a "subjective." Hence, while he delighted in the beauty of the Hegelian system, he could never mistake it for reality. Now at last, in the *Philosophy of Spiritual Activity*, "concept" and "percept" were firmly disentangled and set opposite to one another for what they are—the former neither objective nor subjective, being the very essence of concrete reality; the latter physiologically determined and therefore subjective. Only when these two unite in individual experience, through the medium of a physical brain, does the "idea" first flash into existence. It was this subjective *idea* (the only "concept" which he himself could recognise) that Kant separated for ever from objective reality in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Steiner accepts this; but over against the subjective *idea* (Kant's "concept"), language, he sets the *pure* concept. A proper understanding of this distinction between the concrete concept and the abstract, subjective *idea* is of overwhelming importance because, being grounded in reality, it secures a man from the two arch dangers of contemporary consciousness—the tendency to lose oneself in empty intellectual abstractions, and the reaction to *atavism*.

Up to this point in his life Steiner had resisted all temptations to mystical practices or even utterances (temptations which to a man of his wealth of intuitive experience must have been terribly strong). Now, however, he had laid his foundations. He had studied Natural Science and convinced himself that there was nothing in it—though there was only too much in the slovenly thinking of its exponents—contrary to his own way of thought. He had also consciously related this way of thought to that of his philosophical contemporaries and predecessors. It was time to speak out; and he did so.

* "The Story of My Life," by Rudolf Steiner, London, Anthroposophical Publishing Co., 1928. 10s. net.

The *Philosophy of Spiritual Activity* points naturally, at its close, to a path of self-development, which is *intellectually* the precise opposite of mysticism, as that is commonly understood, in that its first demand is for a heightening and intensifying of *self-consciousness* (to be distinguished from self-interest). The initial means it indicates for this are strenuous exercises in that very abstract intellectualism which it proposes to transcend (for example, modern mathematics); and the aim it has in view is the carrying of *self-consciousness* back into the pure conceptual. Normally self-consciousness lights up only at the memory-idea stage of experience—or, slightly earlier, in phantasy and dream. Hence the paradoxical and flighty nature of "inspiration"; for, while we are united with the conceptual world, we lose our individual existence. We cannot therefore control what comes to us from it, not for the most part even remember. Steiner, however, insisted that, if the mind can grasp this paradox, the will can solve it.

Such a solution he now proceeded to outline from many different points of view in the form of a "path of knowledge," at the same time writing books and delivering lectures, in which the results he himself had attained were expounded. The title he chose for what he had to say was *Anthroposophy*. Few people in this country have as yet realised its significance or availed themselves of the more than Aristotelian wealth of new life which Steiner contrived, before his death in 1925, to pour into such diverse branches of study and existence as Education, History, Psychology, Social and Economic theory, and the Arts and Sciences.

The *Story of My Life* is not such a good introduction to Anthroposophy itself as the *Philosophy of Spiritual Activity*, but it is certainly the best exposition of the origin (1900) and early life of the *Movement*. To anyone who desires a closer acquaintance with Steiner's own personality it is naturally invaluable. The Anthroposophical Publishing Company is to be congratulated on the publication, but it is very much to be hoped that in a second edition the unduly shrill "Afterword" will be omitted and an index added.

Reviews.

The Road to God. By Dr. Wilfred Monod, B.ès.L. Translated by Mrs. R. C. Gillie. (A. and C. Black, Ltd. 6s.)

When will the writers of devotional books—those commercial travellers of God—really learn that His wares are much better than the shoddy samples they carry? This book, the product of a scholarly mind, with a real flair for quotation, becomes wearisome by its complete lack of any original idea, and its reiteration of such generalities and pious aspirations as flow weekly from almost every pulpit in Christendom. And this lack is rendered all the more glaring by contrast with the tortured strength of the quotations from Pascal which literally besprinkle Dr. Monod's pages. In a eulogistic preface the Bishop of Upsala tells us that the author can be "witty as a dancing sunbeam." But we have completely failed to find any of this solar *partee* in this book, unless such headlines as "Jesus, the Lay Preacher," or "Jesus Becomes Nonconformist," are to be accepted as such. But these are not so good as the story of the old Scot, who, when asked if he thought Christ was a Presbyterian, replied, "Weel, I'm no just shair o' Him, but I ken His Feyther wis." For those to whom the direct simplicity of the Gospels is too terrible, this watered-down type of Christianity may be of use, but although the writer is doubtless extremely well meaning, the "Road to God," we believe, is not one which can be paved with good intentions alone. The list of subjects given at the end of Biblical study is a curious mixture of useful hints, and grotesque suggestions, e.g., "Write out the majestic 'I am's' of Jesus, John vi., vii., and viii." (cf. Think of a number —). Mrs. R. C. Gillie deserves credit for a skilful translation.

The Sea Devil. By Lowell Thomas. (Heinemann, 10s. 6d.)

Count Felix von Luckner, called the "Sea Devil," seems to have captured not only the imagination of all young Germany to-day, though the war has been over for nearly ten years, but also the mind of the busy and active little photographer who crowned Colonel Lawrence King of Arabia. Lawrence will not be sorry, for a long time, he has been fed up with Lowell Thomas's giant who took And von Luckner, the great, good-natured giant who took the "Seeadler" through the blockade in 1916, and amused himself for the rest of the war with sinking £5,000,000 worth of Allied and Associated shipping, has none of Lawrence's apparent reluctance to tell his story to an interviewer. The *Sea Devil* descended with his tiny, dainty little blond wife out of the sky one fine morning when the

Twelve o'Clock.

[*"Shakespeare strikes twelve every time."*—Emerson.]

EXTRACTS FROM "THE NEW AGE."

Edited by Sagittarius.

"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."—*Notes of the Week.*

"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 personality may at any moment become the agent of incalculable forces. Not so groups. No group ever worked a miracle."—*Notes of the Week.*

"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."—Oscar Levy, *Letters to the Editor.*

"The views of sportsmen on 'vermin' are well known: the views of vermin on sportsmen might be an interesting speculation."—E. J. Broom, *Letters to the Editor.*

"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."—*Drama.*

"Merely to resist world-centralisation of financial control is not enough. The resistance must be based on convincing economic argument, or it will be considered to arise from mere obstinacy and will therefore fail."—*Notes of the Week.*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

THE APPROACHING CRISIS.

Sir,—It is the joyful mission of THE NEW AGE to simplify issues; to be brief; to show the common assumptions underlying views that appear widely divergent; to criticise from a centrality that re-values the large and small in public affairs; and to apply "acid tests" to "reforms." But this mission is poised upon a knife edge of truth, and if it tumbles into credulity or *over-simplification*, its divergence from the truth is more damaging than the many words of the verbose and orthodox.

These reflections are forced upon me by the simple credence given in the editorial of March 1 on "THE NEW AGE and the Approaching Crisis" to Sir George Paish's scaremongering. Why give credit in the realm of economics to one whom you would despise in this estimable gentleman's fears, what banality to "simplify" the situation of the modern world to the despatch of "a letter to the Prime Minister," asking what "provision against aircraft"; with ing for protection of the population against local manufacturers of gas-masks, etc. (if any)! When the real purpose of the suggested manœuvre is "by these means to whet appetites for orders and profits—and so direct business pressure away from deflation and in the direction of Inflation," a picture is given so remote from economic actuality, and from the workings of the human mind, as to spell sheer absurdity.

W. T. SYMONS.

[Mr. Symons is the author of a booklet entitled *The Coming Crash*. A "coming" crash must be supposed to be coming; so the only difference between him and Sir George Paish lies in the question: How soon? Is Mr. Symons in a position to assure us that a time limit of one year, or two years, is a grotesque under-estimate?—Ed.]

AN ECONOMIC FACULTY?

Sir,—It has occurred to me that it might be possible to form an institution of economics with associates and fellow membership, the former to be open to approved applicants, but the latter to be required to submit a treatise or pass some other test showing thorough acquaintances with economic theory and the financial system. Fellows could be privileged to write a contraction after their name; the institution could be registered under the Companies Act by guarantee, as, for instance, is the London Association of Accountants. Will any reader interested communicate with

BM/SPTM.

Lowell Thomas's were themselves flying about all over Central Europe, and thereafter he was a doomed man. His tale had to come out, and he told it to Lowell Thomas in his own sailor fashion, between the puffs at his cutty. At a time when we are being urged to remember the things the Germans did, it is pleasant to read of a man who did almost more damage single-handed against the Allies than any other combatant in the war, but never sacrificed a single life, and treated his foes not only with courtesy, but with thoughtful entertainment. For consider the following: "In addition to 400 bunks for prospective 'guests,' I had special *de luxe* quarters made for 'visiting' captains and mates. These were spacious cabins to accommodate two or three. We also designed a separate dining saloon for them, with an assortment of books and magazines in French and English, and a gramophone with late English and French records. War or no war, I still considered all sailors my pals, and had my own ideas as to how our prisoners should be treated. A sailor is a sailor, no matter what his nationality, and if I took any prisoners I wanted them to feel as though they were my guests." Von Luckner takes an exotic pride in showing that a German sailor can rise to British traditions of sea chivalry. Men of his type, to whom our ways of thinking are the ways they like and admire, are exercising a profound influence on the German youth of to-day, and Geneva will do well to consider that these are not the men to allow themselves to be exploited in the interests of war-mongering even by their own friends. You cannot read these pages of jovial destructiveness without feeling that here is a man who would prefer to be the friend of all the world. And since Lowell Thomas has let him tell his own story in his own way, moron and high-brow can read it with the same enjoyment.

Parties of the Play. By Ivor Brown. (Benn, 8s. 6d.)

Mr. Ivor Brown's "Parties of the Play" is an entertaining book, brilliantly and wittily written. Its manner is so light that it lifts the feet to the mantel-piece—though it directs them to the theatre another time—while its matter is common-sense. Everybody remembers the pile of books on the theatre which nauseate by their similarity, which all give exactly the same unmemorable platitudes about the Greek tragedy, the miracle-play, the morality-play, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Restoration, Comedy, the eighteenth-century, Crummies, Ibsen, Repertory, and Shaw, and come to an end as dull as the beginning. Mr. Ivor Brown did not learn at their school. His pearls are not even in a heap. Always he strings them in a way that holds the interest until he has finished. His major theme is the fluctuations in the struggle for power among author, actor, and producer, in the Greek theatre from the religious ceremony (producer in power), through the period when the professional speaker made the actor the centre of things, to the time when the poet-dramatist subjected all else to his object, gives us at the start an intelligible account which enables us to see an analogy between the theatre of Greece and that of later times. A terrific struggle as to whether the play should be made for the star-performer or the star-performer sink his individuality for the author's more abounding glory. There are, indeed, many signs in Shakespeare's plays that he fabricated parts for particular people, for a man who made a good friar, for another who made a good clown, and for two who made, respectively, a sprightly and a demure woman, as Professor Allardyce Nicoll contends in his *Studies in Shakespeare*. "Afterwards, of course, the producer became master of the theatre, an acknowledgment of his progress to triumph being manifest in Shakespeare's own tendency towards the composition of masques. When Hazlitt wrote criticism the actor was the attraction the public went to see. When Shaw began the acting was all the critic could write about, since everybody was sure to know the play—and to have no interest in it apart from the fat it provided for the favourites. Ibsen and Shaw, along with others less written about—Strindberg for example—altered all that. The play became the thing, and the author formed the parts in Shaw's plays if they could speak clearly and rapidly enough to get the audience home before the omnipotent. Indeed, it is for the producer that men like the Kapels and Elmer Rice have written; they have created lumps of mass emotion for the producer to hurl at the public. Mr. Ivor Brown has a good deal of common-sense to impart on the problem of attaining such a balance of power. Whether in one theatre or many, as will preserve the distinctness of dramatic art from pure spectacle making and through, to enjoy, and to mark.

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The Social Credit Movement.

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

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