

THE NEW AGE

INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER"

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE		PAGE
NOTES OF THE WEEK	73	THIS NOVEL BUSINESS. By Leopold Spero	80
The Lakeland (Florida) merchants' experiment in cheque-circulation. Mr. W. W. Hill on bank premises and school premises—the over-staffing of the banking business and the under-staffing of the schools. The Americans seek a new industrial use for sugar. Lord Morris on the machine-displacement of men. Woman's personification of expenditure. The Savidge inquiry. The <i>Daily News</i> and its "debate" on where the Dead are. The <i>Round Table</i> on the Kellogg plan to renounce war.		<i>Fools in Mortar. Comfortless Memory.</i>	80
DRAMA. By Paul Banks	76	LONELINESS. By William Repton	81
<i>The Man They Buried.</i>		ART. By L. S.	
CURRENT POLITICAL ECONOMY. Oxford	78	Walker's Galleries. The Redfern Gallery. New English Art Club. The Fine Art Society, Ltd.	
Awake. By N.		THE FOREIGN LEGION OF FRANCE. II. By	82
The Oxford Preservation Trust.		Richard Fisher	83
VIEWS AND REVIEWS. The Disintegration of Sovereignty. By Maurice B. Reckitt	79	TWELVE O'CLOCK. By Sagittarius	83
<i>Political Pluralism. Sovereignty: a Study of a Contemporary Political Notion.</i>		REVIEWS	
		<i>Mussolini, His Work and the New Syndical Law. The Boy Prophet. Armed with Madness.</i>	83
		LETTERS TO THE EDITOR	
		From K. P. and Wm. K. Primrose.	
		VERSE	
		By Leopold Spero (77), Michael Joyce and Joe Corrie (82).	

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

When any section of society defaults in the performance of a necessary function with which it has been entrusted, it is bound, sooner or later, to find itself displaced by the other sections, which will, between them, perform that function, whether in the same way or by improvising an alternative. The original functionaries may be able to demonstrate on paper that their default is due to circumstances outside human control, but once let the consequences thereof approach the point where they are intolerable, and the rest of the people will move in action against the logic of the situation, even while they may be unable to answer it intellectually. This applies to-day especially to the relations of bankers on the one hand and industrialists on the other. Though the industrialists are not quick-witted enough to retort on the bankers that if logic be against any beneficent outcome from the exercise of the bankers' function, logic is therefore against the monopolising of that function even by the wisest, yet their action will lie in a direction consistent with such an inference. Either the bankers must serve the industrialists or the industrialists will absorb the function of banking. This would happen even were there no precedents; but since there are precedents it will happen more quickly. The building of the Guernsey market under the guidance of Governor de L'Isle Brock is a compact illustration. He printed market-house certificates of various denominations and authorised their use as legal tender first for hiring labour and buying materials, and ultimately for the tenants of the market to pay their rent with. Since all the required labour and material were inside the island, there was no difficulty in achieving the purpose in view, which was to ensure that when all the certificates had been collected again by the Government the market-house would be free of debt-charges. The story was told by Mr. William Irvine in the Canadian House of Commons on June 5, 1922; and although it by no means stands as a complete model of a Social Credit system, it does stand as a record

that certain difficulties can be surmounted by supplementing ordinary credits by credits created outside the banking system.

* * *

Nothing has so much propaganda value as an *experiment*. It may be clumsy, and it may not do all that was expected; but the mere trial, with its margin of error, is worth all the theorising in the world. For this reason we are interested to read an account of another experiment similar in principle to the Guernsey precedent. It is reported in *The Nation's Business*, the organ of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, in its issue for May, 1928.

"Debts can be collected and paid without money, the merchants of Lakeland, Florida, have just discovered. Cashing in on the idea, they have collected to date in and about the city \$100,000, and the collecting is still going on.

"The idea behind the collections was to collect the money through a clearing house operated among business men, without disturbing any of the money lying in the four banks of the city. Special cheques printed for the occasion, size 11 by 32 inches, were made up with the understanding that in no event were they to be banked until the entire back of each had been filled with endorsements.

"The cheques are started out weekly by some member of the association, and in the hands of a special committee are pushed with more the spirit of a game than anything else.

"How the plan works out can be best told by sketching the course of one of the big cheques. The first cheque was taken out by the President of the Chamber of Commerce, who passed it on to J. E. H. Dorsett, the plumber, who passed it on to the *Evening Ledger* for an advertising bill. From the *Ledger* it went to Benford Stationery Co., thence to Hendry-Nicholson Garage, from there to the *Star-Telegram* to pay for more advertising, thence to one of the workers as salary, from him to the clothing man for a suit of clothes, next to a grocery to apply on account. At last report it had been through thirty-five hands and was still going. It will not be banked until every one of its 352 square inches of surface is filled with endorsements.

"As long as the plan is pushed for all there is in it, money will keep coming in. Many of the Lakeland mer-

chants are strong for plan to be used in their city periodically. They aver that without it they would still be nursing many accounts on the red side of the ledger that are now being paid and at the same time they have paid many accounts they would have had to put off for obvious reasons. The idea will work anywhere, they believe, where the average man will admit that he is in debt and wants to play the game squarely in getting out."

Of course there is a snag; but the point is that without an experiment of their own the practical business men who are now carrying it out will never realise what the snag is—and it is of more importance that practical people should come up against these snags in reality than that intellectual people should talk them up in theory. The account of the scheme is not full enough for any dependable analysis to be offered of it in these columns. If any of our readers can get into touch with the promoters of the experiment, or the traders or newspapers participating in it, and supply us with further information we shall be glad to have it. In the meantime we must be content to emphasise the significance of this gesture of independence and initiative. Our readers will do well to refer to it in their conversations on the credit question, because nothing so quickens attention in regard to an idea as for them to be able to point to its being used experimentally by business people to meet familiar practical business problems.

Mr. W. W. Hill, in his presidential address to the National Union of Teachers in April, made a remark that must be placed on record. After speaking about the "menace of mass-psychology"—the "Imposition upon people of a machine-made culture, and a standardised idealogy"—he referred to the refusal of the President of the Board of Education (Lord Eustace Percy) to fix a date for the raising of the school-leaving age as recommended in the Hadow Report; and said

"Beneath his honeyed phrases we discern the steely glint of Treasury control. The President of the Board of Education is the conscript of finance. He ought to be the free champion of the schools. Surely when there is optimism in Lombard Street there need be no pessimism in Whitehall. If we can enlarge our banks we can expand our schools."

Teachers would do well to elaborate the contrast between banks and schools along these lines. They are condemned to handle classes of an inordinate size because the "country" is supposed not to be able to afford to increase the teaching staff or the number of class-rooms. Yet day by day new branch banks are being erected at a rate which, if continued for long, will result in there being a bank-staff and equipment for every hundred depositors. Yet consider; the right technique of teaching any child varies with every child, so that speaking ideally there should be one teacher for one child. On the other hand, the technique of serving any one bank-customer is the same for every bank-customer. There is no such thing as a "backward" depositor who must have a kindergarten pass-book. There is no "bright" or "dull" way of using a cheque-book. But to watch these enormous preparations to deal with customers one would imagine that the banks had to work as many differentiated accounting processes as there are differentiated signatures. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the Midland Bank, for instance, with an almost imperceptible increase of staff and premises could look after the money of the whole banking-population, and render the other four banks, their premises, and their staffs a superfluity. Or the same result could be achieved if the Big Five would take a dose of the same medicine as they administer to industry, and merge themselves into one formal trust, scrapping their redundant plant and labour. In the meantime the teacher must be sacrificed for the teller.

After the precedents of the shooting of calves, the destruction of fruit, the dumping of fish back into the sea, one is prepared for anything. The next thing seems likely to be the burning of sugar as fuel, as wheat has already been. There is no report to that effect, but a statement in the *Evening Standard* of June 7 is suggestive of the idea. It begins by saying that in America an important attempt is being made to increase the world's consumption of sugar. That sounds healthy—until one learns what is intended by this "consumption."

"An American group in the sugar trade is now offering a considerable sum for any process which will lead to greater uses of sugar for industrial purposes.

"While production has increased very greatly owing to the expansion of beet sugar culture, domestic consumption is only increasing very slowly. The only real hope of demand equalling supply is therefore the discovery of an industrial process which will call for considerable quantities.

"If such a process could be discovered, it would, of course, help to stabilise prices, and should prevent dumping, which last year brought on somewhat of a crisis here, and, together with beet sugar competition, resulted in the closing down of Tate and Lyle's works for a period.

That is to say that the said "consumption" is really destruction. Of course they do not mean that: they will tell you that what they want is a new process that will turn the sugar into something else. Anything else will do so long as it will "stabilise" the price of sugar. One might suggest diamonds—but the demand would not be worth while, besides which, natural diamonds are already a glut in the market. Carbon sounds more promising—and that is what suggests the burning of sugar. But since no one eats much carbon there would have to be a new industrial process to turn the carbon into something else. Ink? Pencils? Crayons? Blacking? Well, let them get on with it and see. All they want is more money to flow into the sugar market. After that they do not care; or if they do, they comfort themselves with the idea that there is some magic in changing sugar that will create the money which is not available to buy sugar. They do not realise that in the end it is the consumer who must buy the products finally made out of the sugar. It would be a different matter altogether if the world's consumers were reserving money from trade because they did not want what industry was producing, but wanted something else: but the case is that they are spending everything they can on existing production. There is no surplus of actual sugar: but there is a surplus of sugar costs above consumers' available sugar-incomes; and similarly with every item into which you like to resolve their consumption requirements. If the sugar-producers succeed in making "demand equal supply" in respect of sugar, it will only be at the expense of the making demand less than supply in respect of the products into which the sugar is changed. So that in the end it is not a bit fanciful to imagine this dump of sugar going through ten or a dozen processes, passing from industry to industry, and ending up in the hands of an unlucky thirteenth producer who cannot sell the final product and will then organise a campaign to find an agricultural use for this "surplus" by the sugar planters. Even if that actually happened it is doubtful whether anyone would realise that the original sugar-canes might better have been buried at once in the earth where they grew than sent round the world like a disembodied soul in search of a body, worrying and frightening people for no purpose.

Think of the ten thousand tiny toddlers staring sombrely in the sweet-shop windows day by day; or of the hundreds of thousands of countryside dwellers disconsolately watching a rich fruit harvest rot in the ground because they cannot afford to buy preserving sugar: and then ask yourself what curious superstition animates the money-monopolists that

they find it impossible to issue transfer-coupons and get this sugar into the right hands. It is too late in the day for the national banking-systems to pretend to fear complications from the international nature of such a transaction, because at the top they are one system, and are already claiming to be able to organise the whole world in respect of much more complicated things than getting sugar from a refiner to a user. The obstacle lies in the fact that this exceedingly simple transaction is not in accordance with their policy.

Lord Morris, K.C., touched on another aspect of this situation last week. In his address at the annual "King's Birthday" luncheon of the Royal Warrant Holders' Association he remarked on the "extraordinary thing that unemployment is being produced by increase in output." His reference was to America's five million unemployed. As an instance of what has been going on he pointed to tobacco production in that country, which showed an increase last year of 53 per cent. while the labour engaged was diminished by 5 per cent. This shows that it is not the increase in output which is the cause of unemployment, but the methods used to increase it. He recognised this in the following remark that "the machine has taken the place of the man." He did not add that when a machine replaces a man, neither machine nor man gets any wages or other kind of income. In other words, neither the machine nor the man can consume the machine's product. But do other men consume it? No; because while the machine was being made a sum of money equal to its accumulating cost was returning all the time to the banking system somewhere else and being cancelled. As soon as the moment arrived when the machine was ready to earn its cost back there was no money in the market *referable to that cost*. "But of course machines earn costs somehow or other," snorts the business man; "it all comes right somehow in the general money circulation." But he's wrong.

That is the difficulty about male psychology in money matters. A normal woman would be much quicker in comprehending this argument, for the reason that in her private system of accountancy (when she uses one at all) she does not inspect the written figure of her weekly house-keeping allowance as one homogeneous sum. No; the sum is so clearly divided and hypothesized in her mind to the various purposes to which it is to be applied that when she looks at that single figure of revenue she actually sees a row of definite little expenditures—each with a kind of personality—each belonging to some person for whom it is intended. Out of, say, £5, probably 5s. will be for the milkman—not any 5s., but the *milkman's* 5s. It is as though the figure of her £5 were to her a picture of tradesmen standing in a definite order, and waiting each for his share. She numbers her shillings like the Bank numbers its notes. She acts her prospective purchases. Her accounts are a stage peopled with the destined recipients of her moneys. That is why she does not need to keep accounts at all, and rarely does. In fact "orderly" accounts "put her out." Of course they do—they swamp her individualist personification of expenditures under the group repression of massed digits. Have you elderly married fathers never heard something like this?

Mary: "Mother, can I have sixpence for the swimming bath?"

Mother: At table with money in heaps. "Yes, dear—but stop; don't take it from there; that is Edith's five shillings."

It did not matter if the whole of Edith's five shillings was in sixpences, and that other sixpences were lying about; the point was that Edith's sixpences

were Edith's, and were not suitable for another purpose. And if you laughed at Mother and said "What does it matter," she would say, "Yes; but I like to do it *my* way. Take, again, the most intimate personal object of a woman's expenditure—clothes. Have a look at the draper's window and select a specimen ticket—"3s. 11³/₄d." There you have a living price . . . with individuality . . . character. Whereas, what would you see in the man's outfitters' . . . "4s."—a corpse.

Would a purely male community stand these terrifying odd farthings for a week? Not on your life! But a woman likes to do it her way. God bless her: and if only she could be brought to turn her unsophisticated mind to weighing up the nation's accounting "in *her* way" we would have a change in no time. We heard a joke told about a lady who kept a few fowls as a recreation, but sold some of the eggs. She decided to keep strict accounts. At the end of her accounting period her husband asked the end of her accounting period her husband asked how she had got on. She replied, "Well, I have made a profit of four pounds five shillings, but—it's a funny thing—I haven't got it." Amusing, of course; but not so funny as many business directors, who have made profits and haven't got them and yet think it the most natural thing in the world.

It is a curious reflection that the Inquiry into the alleged Scotland Yard inquisition has involved Miss Savidge in another inquisition twenty times worse. Having originally been cross-examined for five hours in private she has since been cross-examined for five and a half hours in public. This is a good illustration of the manner in which these fool demagogues in Parliament go about redressing wrongs of the King's subjects. They have called into aid a tenth-degree method to ascertain whether a third-degree method has been practiced; and to crown the lunacy, the most harassed victim of the second is the same person who underwent the first, not to speak of her father and mother's being called to the ordeal. Miss Savidge is not being asked to defray any of the costs of the proceedings. Seeing that they are estimated to be £1,000 a day she could not have paid a very large proportion in any case. Apart from that, it is certain that no self-respecting subject of the King would wish to owe his liberty to this young girl's financial sacrifice. On the contrary, seeing that she has been the cause that the great Principle of their Liberty has been so jealously reaffirmed by Press and Parliament, they would doubtless approve of her being granted compensation out of the public funds. If not we suggest that the lawyers hand their fees over to her. They will have all their glory left. Or, lastly, Lady Oxford and other fashionable members of Society who got into the court without queuing up might pay for their mysterious "early-door" concession in that way.

The "debate" in the *Daily News* on the question "Where are the Dead?" is proceeding right merrily. There is plenty of room for every argument because the question is not susceptible of argument. The average person either *wants* to believe in survival or he is indifferent. The only tangible basis of any argument at all would be on the question of why some people want to survive and why others do not trouble about the matter. In any case, the present debate is a mock debate. The *Daily News* has invited expert exponents of religion to answer dabblers in materialism. There is one man in England above all others who is qualified to define and argue the materialist position on equal terms with the divines, and that is Mr. Chapman Cohen, the editor of the *Freethinker*. He has not been asked to contribute to the symposium.

The *Round Table* for June discusses Mr. Kellogg's proposal to outlaw war. The contracting parties are invited to "renounce war as an instrument of national policy." So they can, but only when they can first renounce the right of competing in external markets. They are invited to agree that the settlement of all disputes or conflicts which may arise between them shall never be sought except by pacific means. Short of war, which is ruled out, these conflicts will be economic conflicts concerning markets. As the contracting parties are all interested litigants the settlement must be finally some interest which is not. The banking monopoly. If these arbitrators have found out how to induce all nations to accept and work under any system of market-rationing, they have kept very quiet about it. That they have not is pretty evident in the provision that if in spite of the contract not to go to war any nation does in fact go to war, the nation that is attacked may defend itself, but when once the attack is repelled it must submit the issue to settlement by pacific means, and not try to impose its own will by continued war. What is to happen supposing the aggressor nation is not repelled, but on the contrary succeeds in its attack, is not provided for. But that is by the way. The attitude of the banking interests is plainly seen in all this. An act of war involves (a) mobilisation, (b) political control of armed force, (c) political control of credit which can be enforced by martial law if challenged, (d) expansion of credit. While the war lasts the power of the banker is ultimately and really in the hands of the army, though immediately and formally in the hands of the Cabinet; and the only circumstance in which the banker can resume control is when the power is voluntarily handed back after the declaration of peace. This is what happened, almost automatically, in 1918. But the chances of any such restoration after another war by no means approach practical certainty. Statesmen and industrialists have an incomparably clearer knowledge to-day of the power residing in the control of credit, and they will be certain to adopt a less subservient attitude to financial experts in another war. We believe that a war of only moderate magnitude and duration will finish the bankers. But they may be hoping that if it can be delayed until they have been able to devise a plan by which its duration can be limited to a single attack followed by a counter-attack, the situation may yet be kept within bounds. Their attempt to get the world to outlaw war is an attempt to make their domination an article in a world Constitution.

"Mr. F. Andrews said the union felt that a second Marconi scandal was about to be perpetrated. They felt that the dirty hand of the Stock Exchange was touching the Imperial nerve centres. The big capitalists of America, busy looking after themselves, were endeavouring to make profits for the big banks, like the Chase Institution, by purchasing the nerve centres of the British Empire. If the union lost on this issue they would go down in very good company, because he believed they would go down with the Royal Navy."—Report of Postal Workers' Conference in the *Financial Times*. The speaker's reference is to the Hardman Report.

"It is sometimes supposed that the collieries cannot be producing as they ought if such conditions prevail. But they are producing over 5,000,000 tons a week, or more than 250,000,000 tons a year, which, so recently as the Sankey Commission, was regarded as a fine output. In those days the complaint was that the miners did not put their backs into their work; the complaint to-day is that there is no market at anything like a paying price for a larger output, or, indeed, for the present output. . . . The weight of argument points to the depressing conclusion that at least 150,000 of the miners now unemployed will never be employed again within the industry."—Leader in *Daily Telegraph*, May 25, 1928.

Drama.

The Man They Buried: Ambassadors.

Nietzsche said—in verse—that when Columbus got home from America he told his wife: "Woman, never trust a Genoese again." If "The Man They Buried" fails, never blame a theatre-manager again for unwillingness to experiment. Though the play cannot be described as great for reasons to be set out later, it is full of thought and observation which astonish again and again by their depth and accuracy. Madame Karen Bramson gives the playgoer on whom it has dawned that anything worth saying has to be said from the stage before it can be publicly understood—Press, pulpit, and Parliament being as institutions about defunct—something to bite on. If the intellectuals, especially the intelligent women, who are apparently numerous enough for so good a judge as Shaw to expect a profit from addressing them to the length of 150,000 words, do not support this play, God rest their souls. No play by a woman, many as there have been over the last few years, has exercised the mind so much while offending it so little. "The Man They Buried" is composed for persons of both sexes who have eyes, ears, and minds, as well as sex fittings, whether they have inherited the consequences of the Victorian divorce between intellect and instincts, or not.

The play is presented in eight angles, a manner to which I found more objection before the performance began than after it ended. In the first M. Duhamel, a young cancer-research specialist with a career before him, holds a conversation with his disillusioned friend Svane, who imparts in the course of their talk that he is in love with Duhamel's wife. Suddenly, after Svane's departure, Duhamel is struck down by pains which anyone not obsessed by cancer would have been sure was appendicitis. To the man who has spent his life on cancer serum research, who depends on cancer for fame and self-esteem, they are obviously symptoms of cancer. Thus a weakness of the play is apparent at once, though it is acknowledged that there would have been few plays if the characters had acted with common sense in the first act. If Hamlet had carried out his father's bidding straightaway, there might have been news, but not drama. In the second act the surgeons crowd over Duhamel and his wife, but he will not bow to the ridicule of the recantation which submitting to operation would entail. Next he is a prisoner in his room, refusing to see his friends or associate with his wife, and it turns out that he has been trying his serums on himself in secret without result.

In despair Duhamel sets out from home, visits a clairvoyante, and comes to himself on the suicide-bridge by sharing in pulling a girl out of the water. Everybody he meets is suffering in his—or—her own way, but all have some illusion, whether they are slave or its master, on which they can nourish their souls to stomach their degradations. From the bridge he wanders into a night club, only to find that even here irresponsibility is only paint-deep. Finally he comes back to his friend's home ready to acknowledge the failure of his serums and the waste of his life's work, and to take the only hopeful course of operation. At the clinic, after the operation is over, the specialist-surgeon goes into a rage for being trapped into cutting a man open for cancer who had only a mild appendicitis, in which the weakness of the play's background comes home to roost.

the tortured Duhamel himself might diagnose a case of appendicitis as cancer, it is difficult to conceive everybody else doing so. The play ends on the doctors, surgeons, and Duhamel's friend Svane, for the sake of reputations and—from Svane's point of view—of reviving the wife's respect for her husband, conspiring to hold to the lie that the patient not only had cancer, but grave cancer, though curable.

This condensation of the play is unjust in that each of the eight scenes is as full of meat as most plays. By the first interval, which occurs after the third scene, one has already had one's thought awakened. A reason, however, why the play has been and will be misunderstood is the very great difficulty of manipulating the mind-disease, which is the real theme, along with the body-disease, which is for atmosphere and occasion only. The play is not about cancer. If it had been its author would have brought in questions of food, drink, medicine, and a score more, as well as microbes and knives. M. Duhamel was not finally shown to have mild appendicitis to procure a happy ending or to fool doctors. If he had had cancer it would have been another play. The main theme of the play is a man's conflict under the necessity of divesting himself of a halo of perfection which he has generated round his own head, and which has proved false; and there is a further theme round the fact that people who reckon themselves so important that they for ever knock at God's door to ask what he means by the world before they will risk living in it, get no answer. Madame Bramson's lesson to the Duhamels of the world is that the way to live is to grow absorbed in some job of greater importance than one's self or fame; and that one sort of delusion helps life on just as another sort cripples it.

My opening quotation from Nietzsche was not an accident. Madame Bramson's portrayals of human nature in relation to its myths recalled Nietzsche many times. The wisdom of Nietzsche, of Dr. Frank Crane, Christ, of all who have pursued wisdom, is the same at root. Sin almost means refusing to own up that one has found one's self out. What distinguishes wisdom is its expression, and, unfortunately, Madame Bramson sometimes reminded me of Dr. Frank Crane as well as of Nietzsche. "The Elephant" could live because, like Heine, he could see the points of God's humour. He could laugh at his crippled beggar's mission of giving all who saw him the treat of pity. But he could also try to cheer people up by reminding them that there were others worse off still! On the programme the play is described as "a comedy for the fearless." In spite of its occasional false steps it is an event in plays by women, a statement which does not detract from the persons of women. All tradition is against sincere work by women, since its enormous power of suggestion over new dramatists is nearly wholly masculine, and women have to fight hard for artistic independence. "The Man They Buried" justifies its description as a comedy for the fearless. It shows that life is worth while by the test of whether what one seeks from it is motivated by fear. If it is, whether it be exposure, or of anything, the victim is on the wrong bus.

Enough has been written to give a clue to another cause of the failure to perceive that something unusual was happening; briefly, that the character drawing is analytical rather than constructive. The play moves from laboratory to clinic. It merely passes through the garden. Every character is either dissected by the others or by itself. Madame Bramson appears all the time to be searching for the little flower that makes whole while ceaselessly and passionately grinding down men and women with their crutches into their elements. Her justification is that she separates the illusions which enrich life

from those which impoverish it. Analysis is the chief factor in the method of our period. It is probably necessary for cutting away "the dead wood." Art can get back again to beauty only when it has got back to truth—which explains several movements.

The production, on which Mr. Leon M. Lion has spent a great deal of labour, is excellent, and in a number of the parts the acting merits the epithet of superb. Mr. Owen Nares loiters almost into madness and suicide rather than face ignominy with a technique to make one wish he might never have to play an inferior part. Arthur Wontner's Svane is of the first rank. Two performances furnish cameos to talk about and remember—Mr. Leon M. Lion's "The Elephant," and "A Child of Joy," by Miss Una de Casalis, who was either Miss Jeanne de Casalis or her twin sister hitherto hidden under a bushel, to audiences' loss. For an example of acting such as this it is worth going a long way, though I hope that managers will not begin to want her every time there is a similar part going. Miss Jeanne has already suffered—not alone, of course—from that. If Miss Jeanne disappears, and Una comes to stay may her versatility be used as a discerning public deserves.

PAUL BANKS.

GOING TO THE ANT.

A Butterfly Arose one Day
To find the World extremely Gay;
The Sun was warm, and in the Sky
A Tuneful Lark was circling high.
A Tuneful Lark was circling high,
The Trees were in their Modish Green,
And Genial Beauty decked the Scene.
"But This, I Fear, is All my Eye,"
Opined the Cautious Butterfly.

"True, I have not been Very Long
These happy Summer Hours among,
And yet I know that Butterflies
Are Seldom Counted with the Wise.
We may be Popular—but That
Is Not what I am Aiming at.
Prudence and Forethought, these I love
All Other Attributes above.

"See Yonder, on that Hummock, which
Raises itself beside the Ditch,
Where Busy Ants accumulate
Stores at the Lowest Market Rate,
So that, when Autumn comes, and chill
December, they may Flourish Still.
To them will I Forthwith repair,
And seek good Worldly Counsel there."

She flew, in Light and Zig-zag Mode,
Over the Hedge, across the Road,
But Confident, as well she might
Be, that the Course She took was Right.
Butterflies hatched in Other Times,
Unwarned by Sound Aesopian Rhymes,
Had taken, for their own, the Brief
And Primrose Path, and Come to Grief.
She could not Choose but be a Thing
Of Airy Grace, a Child of Spring;
But was she therefore bound to be
Naught but a Mere Frivolity?
That Butterflies should be debarred
From Solid Virtue, sure, were hard?
These Ants, if Tactfully Approached,
Not Aggravated, nor Encroached
Upon, Advice would not Refuse
How Best to Follow in their Shoes.
She'd Ask, at least, and take her Chance;
And if they Jibbed, well, Ants were Ants.

So Musing, and at Length Arrived
Where all th' Industrious Beasts were Hived,
She found both Hill and Ants, Alas!
Trode Shapeless by some Silly Ass!

LEOPOLD SPERO.

Current Political Economy.

OXFORD AWAKE.

The Trustees of the Oxford Preservation Trust have decided on a campaign, to open on July 9, with the object of raising £250,000. This quarter of a million is required for preserving what is regarded as essential to the spirit of Oxford. It would keep "unspoiled the belt of meadow and park which surrounds" . . . the centre; it would preserve "the old houses which are essential factors in the characteristic charm" . . . of the streets, and "which are likely to be destroyed as commercially unprofitable"; and it would "keep free from building and open to the public certain tracts of land from which can be enjoyed beautiful distant views of the ancient city." All efforts to get money out of people, except taxation, which goes by the holier name of inquisition, are called campaigns. This one will start with a dinner at the Hotel Cecil under the chairmanship of Lord Birkenhead. The address of the Secretary of the Trust, to whom applications for tickets should be made, is 17, Waterloo Place, S.W.1. As we shall not be able to attend the dinner we propose like Sir Michael Sadler, in spite of having spoken before, to offer our comment separately.

Sir Michael Sadler is hardly an optimist. "The Trust," he says, "needs quickly £100,000, and will undoubtedly get it in time"—he does not say in time for what—"and get more than that in the course of the next generation, provided it does its work diligently and with wisdom." A quarter of a million would have financed the war for about an hour. It would beautify the face, though not the back parts, of Oxford for all time. There does not seem much comparison between the two so far as wisdom is concerned, but it would have been a sorry look-out for winning the war if raising the expenses of an hour had been a subject to discuss in terms of generations. That this is not an irrelevant antithesis may be ascertained by merely consulting a very excellent text-book on "Money" published some years ago by the Oxford University Press. If the preservation of Oxford would add to the national wealth there seems good reason why the National Financial Credit should be "inflated" by the corresponding quarter of a million before the Bank of England takes over control of the currency-note issue. A loan in perpetuity of £250,000 fiduciary credit from the State to the Trustees of the Oxford Preservation Trust would be convincing testimony of a desire to preserve Oxford. The collateral security would be of a quality above reproach, namely, the parks and harbours of Oxford secured for the enjoyment of the people and their heirs for ever.

When Mr. Ford was shown the colleges of Oxford he welcomed the invitation to pass to the Cowley works as a liberation from boredom. Not all Americans are so immune to the allurements of European tradition. One of these days some American millionaire will offer to buy Oxford—except the Cowley works and all these connotes—and move the lot, stones, mortar, and hoariness, to Chicago. Not very long ago a Warwickshire castle changed hands on precisely those conditions. If Britain's present financial policy is continued, when the time comes it will be necessary to treat the offer as serious. Sir Michael Sadler writes in his pamphlet that the trust does not wish to make Oxford a museum piece. This is just what Oxford is becoming, and what much that has been done for its preservation has tended to make it. Already the American visitor treats it as such, and goes to see it in much the same frame of mind as he goes to see Shakespeare's cottage, and the changing of the guard. The very fact of appealing to

the whole of England, and in particular to London, to think of Oxford as a special case, shows how necessary the protest is against the suspicion of museum-making. The jeopardy of Oxford is but a phase of the jeopardy of England. Oxford has awoken to the outrage of blind industrialism only after whole counties once enchantingly beautiful have been turned into charnel heaps. It is no more important—and, in all conscience, no less—to preserve the charm of Oxford than to restore the charm of Wigan.

In the earlier stages of the industrial era when power was first used to drive machines industries grew up on the site of the power. Other factors such as raw materials, climate, and existing settlements, had their effect, of course, but the presence of water and coal was dominant. With the internal combustion engine and the electric cable a new era has begun. This does not, of course, entirely explain the industrialisation of Oxford, whose most prominent industrialist merely happened to be born there under a legal system peculiarly discriminating as to the liberties it allows. But the change is affecting the destiny of England as a whole by the movement of industries to their market. If the policy of financing the saving of England could be agreed upon no doubt some policy could also be reached for regulating its future industrial development. Oxford will not be a great deal better off when it becomes the only spot in England to which one may take a rural ride—in Morris-Cowley or charabanc.

The idea that the ugliness of industrial development may proceed with the Trust's blessing provided the views of the landscape are not interfered with is superficial to the point of contemptible. It is applying cosmetics to the ruined complexion of the landscape. As Sir Michael Sadler almost admits, Oxford is in a dilemma.

"Forty years ago the problem how to help the poorer town people through the Long Vacation was an anxious one. Now the level of unemployment in Oxford is markedly low."

Later Sir Michael says that

"its growth should be guided but not grudged. The work of the Trust is not to hamper Oxford but to help it."

This cannot be excused, not because it is a compromise, although it is a questionable compromise, but because it indicates the lack of a policy, co-operation with other rural preservation societies notwithstanding, for the economic life of the nation. The markedly low unemployment level of Oxford has as its reverse the devastation of South Wales. As long as the discovery of new vogues or forms of power is unaccompanied by financial and labour adjustments, a transfer of public affection from one pastime to another will starve somebody.

If Oxford is ready to set the example of living not for the superficies of prettiness but for the heart of beauty, for Heaven's sake let her leaders end this silly compromise of ushering in the petrol age while trying to contract out of its disadvantages. If the City Beautiful has a claim to exist in one place it has a claim to exist in every possible place. Boldon Colliery could hardly be beautified all at once, even superficially. But town-planning was a good and sufficient idea only when it was the fad of a few philanthropists. Now that its necessity has occurred to Oxford it is out of date. Nothing less than national planning can serve now, unless the country as a whole is to be further disfigured. The outrage of Nature has gone so far that what matters to Oxford if it goes much farther elsewhere is of no consequence.

Views and Reviews.

THE DISINTEGRATION OF SOVEREIGNTY.

By Maurice B. Reckitt.

There are still some spheres in which America is content to pay to Europe an implied, if unspoken, tribute, and the appearance of these interesting volumes* is further evidence of the familiar fact that in the realm of political ideas what Europe was talking about yesterday will be what America is writing about to-day. If we will only tell them what to think about they will tell us how to think about it; and these books do for the political theory which largely crystallised itself in England round the Guild idea, what Dr. Niles Carpenter's volume on "Guild Socialism" did for the social and economic aspects of that movement half a dozen years ago. If for no other reason, then, their consideration is appropriate in THE NEW AGE, in the columns of which ten years back there were raging battles round the conceptions of sovereignty and group autonomy such as form the new material for the syntheses aspired after (but hardly achieved) by these writers. Mr. Cole did some of his most stimulating exploration in political theory in these pages, while, if I am not mistaken, it was Ramiro de Maetzu who first called attention in THE NEW AGE to the significance of Leon Duguit, about whose work both these writers have much to say. It is unfortunate, therefore, that they both seem to be unaware of de Maetzu's remarkable book, which, not having emerged from the customary academic circles, has suffered an undeserved neglect from all but the most discriminating.

While the general subject with which these books deal is substantially the same—the true nature of political authority and the degree to which this can and should be disintegrated and re-distributed—their outlook and method are dissimilar. Mr. Ward is the practically-minded American in a hurry to be rid of political superstitions—"if politics would be a science rather than a mythology it must be more iconoclastic." His style reflects his thinking; it consists of short sentences full of long words. Mr. Hsiao is in no hurry at all. Though his book is explicitly the product of American scholarship, and is dated from Ithaca, N.Y., he is throughout the sceptical, contemplative oriental, demolishing with the blandest courtesy the illogicalities of enthusiastic "pluralists." Mr. Hsiao is suspicious of Mr. Laski's individualism, and believes that the Hegelian "civic community" indicates the lines along which Monism can be made safe for democracy. Mr. Ward is enthusiastic for Mr. Laski, and violently critical of the Hegelians. Yet their divergence is one of outlook rather than of ultimate analysis. Mr. Ward avoids committing himself to a dogmatic pluralism, and Mr. Hsiao gives one the impression that, while the exposure of the superficial thinking and lack of logic which he discerns in the pluralists is a melancholy duty, he is happier in applauding pluralism for "the soundness of its general spirit." It is impossible to rise from a perusal of these two books without the conviction that political theory at the end of the present century had adopted categories of thought and a series of abstractions which were as fatal to reality and every prospect of true liberty as are the assumptions of orthodox economics. The pluralists, for all their occasional illogicalities and their constructive incoherence, are the "credit-reformers" of politics, calling men to release from usurped authority and depersonalising centralisations of power. The doctrine of the omni-com-

* "Political Pluralism." By Kung Chuan Hsiao. (Kegan Paul, 10s. 6d.)
"Sovereignty: A Study of a Contemporary Political Notion." By Paul W. Ward. (Routledge, 7s. 6d.)

petence of the State is in its way an "inversion of science" as gross as are the superstitions of economic scarcity; and an indication of the inter-relatedness of these subjects is provided by the reflection that in the secret hegemony of world finance we have the ultimate monism of fact. Mr. Ward, who is an enthusiastic internationalist, has caught a glimpse of this, without at the same time perceiving its perils, when he observes that "the economic futility of contemporary disorders may be attested by the fact that international bankers are leaders in the movement toward international government."

The term "pluralism" seems to have been borrowed by Mr. Laski from the metaphysical pragmatism of William James, and we may agree with Mr. Hsiao that "it is ambiguous and extremely misleading." For it tends to obscure the real and essential truth of the case against State sovereignty and the argument for the recognition of a functional order ("a harmony of articulate wills projected into a functional system"), by an implied denial of the validity of any political representation of the fact of human interdependence and solidarity. Moreover, the quest for an order which shall be in the exact sense pluralist is not merely mistaken; it would appear to be a wild-goose chase. "Whatever may be the avenue of approach—whether it be through law and legal theory, through the problem of representative government, or, lastly, through economic and social organisation—the final outcome of the pluralistic argument is, in every instance, not multiplicity as such (as we naturally expect), but some unity that transcends and points beyond mere multiplicity." Mr. Hsiao devoted considerable space to showing how this is true of all pluralist theorists. In particular, in the case of Mr. Cole, sovereignty "comes back with a vengeance" in the form of a "supreme court of functional equity," enforcing its own decisions by physical coercion. "The truth is that when pluralism sets out to prove that there is no ultimate authority in society, and that there should not be such authority, it proposes a task which cannot be accomplished." Monism, it would seem, is technically inescapable in politics.

This may be granted. Yet Mr. Ward's book gives us good reason to see that this exemplification of our communal solidarity, the "objective manifestation of the totality of social purposes," as Mr. Hsiao defines it, is not to be, and must not be, equated with the concept of sovereignty, which "is a notion which has been carried over, out of the setting in which its historical function lay, with its implications of irresponsible absolutism and inherent supremacy to law, to plague and befog contemporary thought with ideas of national exclusiveness, inalienable rights, moral absolutism, and legal omnipotence . . . it is useless and confusing to the necessity of sary discriminations concerning the focussing of social contacts." We have got to go to quite other sources for our clues to the right ordering of man's increasingly diversified human relations. And of these two are uniquely vital and illuminating. One is the realisation of the essentially pluralist nature of the individual himself. The "political man" is an abstraction as unreal as the "economic man," and the disintegration of the monistic fallacy must begin with that of its human atom. "It is impossible," says Mr. Cole with much perspicacity, "to represent human beings as selves or centres of consciousness; it is quite possible to represent . . . as much of human beings as they themselves put into associated effort for a specific purpose. What is represented is never man, the individual, but always certain purposes common to groups of men."

The second clue, I would suggest, is that the sole, sufficient, and final "monism," reconciling the diverse associations of man, so that their struggle is for a true balance and not for supremacy, must be

a clever but intensely dislikeable nude, and Mr. Raymond Coxon (No. 72) a clever strap-hanging impression, which Mr. Frank Pick might like for the Underground. Tom Nash's picture of "Christ Preaching" has deep sincerity and devotional feeling. George Bissill draws half his picture right and the other half all wrong. Vernon Wethered and Claude Flight please us: but nothing like so much as George Charlton with his "Sanger's Circus," a picture as beautifully drawn as a first-rate etching, brilliantly coloured, full of life and movement. Nor must we leave out the clever composition of Robin Guthrie's "Pastoral Lunette, No. 2." On the whole, the show is highly miscellaneous, but distinctly interesting.

L. S.

The Foreign Legion of France.

By Richard Fisher.

II.

The discipline of the Legion is very severe, and the punishments for any disobedience are truly harsh. With such a collection of races and morals, such is entirely necessary to keep the officers in control of their adventurer soldiers. In fact, it is only by a very stern hand that the minority is able to control the majority, who are utterly devoid of any personal patriotism towards France.

While dealing with discipline as confined to the Legion, there is one other rather curious difference between that regiment and other French corps. It is the custom of every regiment in the French Army to bear a standard on which is inscribed the motto, "Pour l'honneur et la Patrie." In the Foreign Legion a similar standard is carried, but the words are changed to "Pour l'honneur et discipline." A subtle difference, but the people in the Quai d'Orsay have realised the only method that can keep her adopted children together.

The general public, perhaps through the guidance of certain writers, are very apt to make one grave mistake when speaking of the Légion Etrangère. They are led to understand that the regiment is composed of convicts. This statement is entirely untrue, the Legion may ask no questions, but all her children are at least free men. There is, however, another body with which the Legion is often confused, and that is the Battalion d'Afrique. This formation is purely a convict establishment. It is unarmed and does the duties of a labour battalion. Any convict of the French civil and military courts, if hale and hearty, can earn a reduction of his sentence by serving in these battalions. They are not military and are unarmed, only in fact doing certain constructional and maintenance work. It is to be believed that the conditions in these battalions are too terrible for any attempt at description.

Of the various nationalities that compose the Foreign Legion, Russians are by far the most numerous; then Germans, Austrians, Slavs, and Bulgarians in smaller percentages. Of British and Americans there are probably not more than fifty in the entire regiment.

During the Great War, the experiment was tried of forming the various nationalities of the Legion into compact battalions and companies according to their numbers, the idea being to keep each race complete in its own unit. However this move was a failure, and the Legion reverted to its old-time method of indiscriminate mixing, which the French authorities find the more satisfactory for two reasons: First, because in a battalion of mixed nationalities a revolt against officers is not likely to be unanimous, and second, because some races are more warlike than others, and the strong will encourage the weak.

The romance that has been built up about the Foreign Legion is probably due to the method of enlistment. It is so simple and no questions are ever asked as to what has brought a recruit to the gates of the barracks. Thus a man may hide himself from the world, five, ten, fifteen years. A quarter of a lifetime, the years slip by, and old sores are forgotten. The Legionaire leaves behind his friends, relations, sorrows, and loves just as effectively as if the world had opened and he had disappeared. The Legion seeks to find another mother for her children in the person of "la Belle France." A vague sort of parentage, but for all that a kind of affection starts to grow in the heart of the Legionaire.

The very positions of the recruiting offices, one in the gay Paris, the other in Marseilles, not so far from the Casino of Monte Carlo, throw open their doors for the "viveurs," who have thrown down their last stake and lost their all. A haven for the broken, and yet the hardest haven in the world.

The efficiency of the Legion is marvellous; it holds the records for marching against all regiments in the world, a record set up beneath the broiling sun of Northern Africa.

As skirmishers they are unequalled. Fighters who neither give nor expect mercy of any sort. They brag that they have no friends, therefore all mankind must be their foes. Content to laugh as children of the devil as their sockless feet go slogging through the oceans of sand.

Perhaps one little anecdote of the Foreign Legion will show how completely a recruit loses his nationality on joining this "regiment of the lost."

Some time ago a young Belgian of a well-known family made a fool of himself at Monte Carlo. The police were after him, and he took the line of least resistance by joining the Foreign Legion. His mother heard of his action two months later, and as is the way of mothers, came hurrying to find her son. Being in a position of influence, she was able to obtain permission from the French War Office to visit the Headquarters at Beir Abbas, near Algiers. As soon as she arrived she explained her purpose to the colonel, and the legionaires were lined up for inspection.

The mother passed down the line of men, then suddenly stopped before a soldier.

"This is my son," she declared to the accompanying officers, but the legionaire never moved a muscle.

"Is this your mother?" he was asked, and his answer came without a falter.

"I do not know this lady."

Could a mother mistake her son? Surely this is a question that the mothers of the whole world could answer, and yet even against the laws of nature the Foreign Legion had claimed its own.

To-day there is a talk that the Foreign Legion will be disbanded. Stories of the life that France gives to her adopted sons are being magnified to the detriment of France. One wonders if the Legion will be sacrificed to public opinion. Whether this refuge for the tired mortal will be taken away.

To a certain extent romance has gone from the Foreign Legion, the picturesque uniform is a thing of the past, drab khaki drill or sky blue has taken its place. Pay has been raised to almost attractive standards. Another type of men are said to be filling the ranks. Romance made the Legion, brought to its ranks many an aching heart, and taught those who were sad to forget. The Legion without its glamour would be sad, stereotyped, uninteresting. There is no room for glamour in the methods of modern war. Therefore, perhaps, the French are right to disband this regiment, and let the memories of the old Legion live as an ever romantic memory in the history of arms.

RICHARD FISHER.

HARBOUR.

To M. E. F.

I was not meant
For quiet and content.
Still waters were not meant for me:
My soul was clinker-built to ride
The rollers of the open sea—
Still waters were not meant for me
To walk beside.

But when my soul is overspent
There is one harbour where she's free
To furl her sails and hide.

MICHAEL JOYCE.

CONSOLATIONS.

I tell myself there is a heaven in the sky
Where I shall sing and play a harp when I die.
So that is good.

I tell myself there is no heaven in the sky
That I will never know I'm dead when I die.
So that is good.

JOE CORRIE.

"I don't think," said Mr. Neville Chamberlain, "there was ever a time in the history of the country that politicians of all parties were so much disposed as they are to-day to fortify their own opinions by consultation with other members, whether bankers, captains of industry or leaders of thought, and I am convinced that their readiness to consult with others enables us to avoid many errors into which we might otherwise fall."—From report in the *Financial News* of the annual dinner of the British Bankers' Association.

Twelve O'Clock.

"Shakespeare strikes twelve every time."—Emerson.
EXTRACTS FROM "THE NEW AGE."

Edited by Sagittarius.

"Consumers cannot get any income otherwise than from industry; nor can industry collect revenue in prices otherwise than from consumers."—*Notes of the Week*.

"It is because Major Douglas makes *Cost* the economic centre of gravity that he has been coolly boycotted by high-financiers and warmly assailed by credit reformers."—*Notes of the Week*.

"The question for Mr. Baldwin is more immediate than the next election. It is: Can His Majesty King George possibly give his consent to an Act of Parliament whose effect, however concealed, is to deprive him of an ancient right of the Monarch, and to hand over the dominion of his people's industries and incomes to the Bank of England."—*The Coming Election*.—Ben Wilson.

"The acceptance of the social dividend will necessitate its careful co-ordination with other acknowledged principles. Thus the introductory statement extracts as the essence of the moral economics of the Middle Ages the three principles of the Just Price, the Prohibition of Usury, and a Functional Theory of Society."—*Views and Reviews*.—N. E. Egerton Swann.

"The whole system of State financial aid to industry, including agriculture, is one of frantically patching what is already all holes and patches."—*Current Political Economy*.

"For all his nausea at the waste and futility of social institutions, Galsworthy has never either moved a resolution or pointed to a goal."—*Drama*.

"Consistent irony is a psychological sign that its user is holding himself back, that he has cut himself off from his fellows, and that he refuses to be dragged into their affairs. It is a verdict that people are not worth saving on any ground, with a rider that nobody need feel any responsibility towards them."—*Drama*.

"Of the Unknown we can all believe exactly what we want to. We are as free from the discipline of evidence as the 'Emperresses of China' in Colney Hatch. Everybody wins, and all get a prize."—*Necro-Malthusianism*.—John Grimm.

"There are artists of high repute at work to-day who would never think of disciplining themselves so heartily, or taking a tithe of such trouble over paying the compliment of justice and accuracy to Nature when she poses for them."—*Art*.—L. S.

"Suspicion is stirring and yawning. 'A bank manager,' remarked Sir Allan Smith recently, 'may be able to make his dividends, not on the prosperity of industry, but on its adversity.'"—*Notes of the Week*.

"When the 'sanctity of debt' begins to be questioned, the power of finance is being undermined."—*Notes of the Week*.

"The two main issues are clear. (1) Is the Bank to rule England? (2) Is America to rule the Bank?"—*Notes of the Week*.

"Why should the Midland Bank not promote a petition for the Financial Inquiry which Mr. McKenna is so strenuously advocating?"—*Notes of the Week*.

"Every Scots village is the same. It stinks with sex, and sex talk, and sex deeds done in secret, and known to everyone, and when a case of child-murder occurs they immediately look as if sex was something they knew nothing about, and something that anyone knowing anything about ought to be ashamed of themselves for knowing."—*Check Mate*.—Iain Bruce.

"A vista of straight lines and forbidding angles negates the idea that this can be a street. Rather must it be an apocryphal proposition in Euclid."—*The Street of Angles*.—Stuart Trenaman.

Reviews.

"Mussolini, His Work and the New Syndical Law." By C. R. Muriello, with Foreword by Prof. Stalker. (Macniven and Wallace, Edinburgh. Third Edition. 1s. 6d. net, revised and enlarged.)

"Mussolini has caused the Crucifix and the portrait of the King to be restored to all the schools; and religious instruction has been reintroduced. The salaries of the clergy have been raised, many religious festivals have been reintroduced; religious ceremonies can take place without fear of disturbance, and the people can freely attend religious services." So everything in the garden's lovely.

"The Boy Prophet." By Edmond Fleg (Benn, 6s. net), translated from the French by D. L. Orma.

A most unusual piece of work. NEW AGE readers should not miss it. It does not deal with economic problems, but with Jewish mentality and customs, Christianity, and the Zionist movement as a new kind of "scouting for men." It tells a story which is worth telling, and tells it in a few clear words which hit home. Never a word too much. As vivid as any of the Old Testament stories, it presents certain modern racial and religious feelings which New Economists will have to understand. How the boy hero is made Bar-Mitzvah by Mr. Lobmann is so good that one turns back to read it again. It is full of tragic humour.

"Armed with Madness." A Novel. By Mary Butts (Wishart).

Yes, this is all right, but there is no need to be so beastly clever in making words halt and bump each other. Example: a girl is watching her brother swimming. "Naked, the enormous space, the rough earth dressed her. The sparkling sea did not." Most of it is written in that way—written, it is in that way, most of it. Some of the descriptions are first class, and the general sensation—atmosphere—of something fey, brooding, uncanny, is extraordinary. If only the sentences would not get themselves knotted up, cryptically.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR. BELIEF.

Sir,—The article by Alan Porter entitled "American Belief" is welcome in its insistence upon the necessity for definite teaching on the part of Professors and authorised guides in specialised branches of knowledge.

But his second proposition is more open to discussion. He writes: "Why are we urged to believe? What advantage is there in believing? What are people after when they insist so continually that we believe something or other, who knows what? It is impossible to say what the relative advantages are between mere belief in something or other, and mere disbelief in something or other."

I submit that the relative advantages are infinite. The one attitude implies that man is a rational being in a rational Universe—the other that he is derelict in chaos.

Even a blind faith, which is neither definite nor dogmatic, is of a specific and even dynamic value, as compared to a negation and denial. For it is an assertion that there is a Truth; a Law, an Ultimate; and that Man is in vital contact with it. And that is my definition of Optimism. K. P.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

Sir,—In the article, "Views and Reviews. American Belief" in your issue of May 31 there is a reference to Christian Science which is a complete misdescription of that religion. In the Christian Science textbook, "Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures," by Mary Baker Eddy, she writes, "In the year 1866 I discovered the Christ Science or divine laws of Life, Truth, and Love, and named my discovery Christian Science." (Page 107.) The practice of Christian Science is based on an understanding of these divine laws, and not on blind belief or faith in anything, as the article states. Further, I would add that one of the outstanding points in the teachings of Christian Science is that man does not lose his individuality in Science, but on the contrary finds it. These teachings are reinstating primitive Christianity in this age, and in them there is neither room nor place for empty belief.

I would also add that Christian Science has nothing in common with New Thought. WM. K. PRIMROSE.

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(One of numerous similar expressions of opinion.)

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