



the camel's back, we should not have been embarrassed by a demonstration that the first few straws hadn't. We see no reason for continuing the argument, because so far as our observations have gone there is not the slightest evidence on either side of the Atlantic that a transfer of goods of the necessary dimensions has taken place. On the other hand there is a strong piece of presumptive evidence against the hypothesis. It is the American Tariff. As we used to learn in our history-books, "it has increased, is increasing, and ought to be abated." It is surely a very significant fact on our side of the argument that the one nation to whom, on balance, the whole world owes money, should be the nation which exhibits the most strenuous resistance to the admission of imports.

Now let us consider hypothesis "b." Granting the proposition put forward that Great Britain has paid £100 millions to America in some form of credit acceptable to that country; what was this credit, where did it come from, and how did Great Britain acquire it? We can dismiss the Bank of England's "cheque." It means nothing unless the Bank of England had a deposit in New York by virtue of which the cheque would be honoured. The point is: what was the deposit? It must have been a credit in favour of the Bank of England, and convertible into dollars. How could Great Britain acquire the command of a dollar-credit? The most obvious way would of course be by the selling of goods to American importers; but we must exclude this method from consideration, because if we admit it we are affirming hypothesis "a," whereas our argument requires us to discuss hypothesis "b" as an alternative to hypothesis "a." (The two will be combined after our separate analysis.) So let us consider another alternative method. Has Britain delivered £100 millions worth of gold to the U.S.A. since the ratification of the Debt? So far as absolute knowledge goes it is impossible to say. All we do know is that the Bank of England issues periodical statements of bullion-movements and bullion-stocks. These do not indicate any "loss" of gold approaching the amount required to support the hypothesis. But if our critic likes to distrust the Bank's statements and to suppose that it has really parted with all this gold we shall make him this concession—that it is conceivable; and in fact we can make him a present of a supporting argument, which is that not long ago the French bankers suddenly discovered that an amount of £20 millions' worth of gold which was supposed to be in the vaults of the Bank of France was actually in the vaults of the Bank of England, and had been there for a year or two. After that precedent we cannot exclude the possibility that somebody may suddenly discover a similar position in London. But in the meantime we must be guided by the official statistics. We will add, by the way, that perhaps the Snowden Commission of Inquiry might investigate the present method of preparing such statistics with the double view of making them subject to independent verification and making them more intelligible.

But there is still another method of paying debt without exporting goods. That is by selling to the creditor nation the right of ownership of goods without exporting them. The sale takes the form of selling shares in business concerns in lieu of selling the products of those businesses. It is manifested in England at the present time by what are called dollar-investments. It does not matter whether you choose to regard these investments as a purchase of British capital assets by Americans or as a loan by them on the security of those assets. The essential result in either view is the same, namely that by this process you do command a

dollar-credit, and then you can pay off a dollar-debt.

Now taking the three possible methods of payment now reviewed: (1) by exports of goods, (2) by exports of gold, (3) by exports of debentures and shares in British enterprises, can any business man hesitate in choosing which of them is most likely to have enabled the British Government to pay off the £100 millions from the Official Debt. Directly this third alternative is mentioned a business man has only to look round to find himself knee-deep in confirmatory evidence. He splashes his eyes with it at every step he takes. For instance, in the realm of high politics we have seen Lord Birkenhead declaring the necessity for British enterprises to attract dollar-finance, while in the realm of practical business we have seen Sir Hugo Hirst trying, and heroically failing, to secure for the British General Electric Co. sterling-control of policy under this dollar-finance. Uncle Sam's attitude is this: "I won't buy your goods, I don't want your gold, but I'll buy your key-industries." American capitalism, with the co-operation of American banks, has been doing this all over Europe since the war. We wrote at length a few weeks ago about its penetration of Germany in particular. Anyone who has observed on how vast a scale these dollar investments and purchases of European enterprises have been conducted must be rather inclined to wonder why the nations of Europe, including Britain, have not been able to pay off the whole of their collective debt to America. And so they might if they had been able to get an honest price for the property and rights that they sold. But when, for instance, the German exchange was 18½ million million marks to the £ sterling Americans were busy picking up German properties at something like a dollar a factory. British capitalists might have done the same, and perhaps did to a limited extent, but their opportunities were practically nullified by the Bank of England which was maintaining an embargo at the time on the raising of loans on the London Market for employment abroad. It looks as if the late Governor Strong's secret pact with Governor Norman gave America the monopoly of the bidding at the auction of German property. Here is another item which the Snowden Commission might investigate.

The meaning of all that we have been saying on the debt problem can be briefly summarised and supplemented by an illustration. In one aspect a country resembles a block of mansions, the tenants of whom appoint a manager, and confer on him rights of a proprietor. If in addition we imagine that this manager co-opts someone else to act for the house as bankers act for a country, someone who may print, issue and withdraw paper money to the tenants for use inside the house, we have a rough picture of the conditions of economic life. The tenants correspond to the population, their apartments with contents to industrial property and equipment, their manager to the Government, their rentals to taxation, and their house-banker to the banking system. Suppose only three of such houses to exist, and that they correspond to the world. Now, on the authority of Mr. McKenna, the amount of money in any country is governed by the action of the banks of that country, and rises or falls according to whether they increase or decrease their loans. The loans bring money into circulation there, and the repayments take it out. On the same authority, the money of one country is not valid, as such, in another, and in practice does not leave that country. Assume these truths to apply to the three hypothetical houses. We will call them "A," "B," and "G"—these letters standing for America, Britain and Germany, the ultimate creditor, the intermediary creditor and debtor,

debtor, and the ultimate debtor. The three managers have to act *individually* in conformity with the rules laid down by the three bankers *collectively*. The basic rule of the bankers is that each manager must balance his budget, which means that he must raise in rents from the tenants at least as much money as he expends on their behalf. He may borrow from the banker, but only temporarily to bridge over any delay in the collection of rents. At the same time the tenants also borrow from the banker to finance their production. It is exclusively out of the money created by their borrowing that the manager can collect rents; and his ability to raise or lower them depends on how much or little the banker is lending. There is a margin within which he may raise rents against an unchanged amount of borrowing, or may maintain them against a contracted amount of borrowing, but beyond that margin the tenants would be unable to stand the burden of the charge. Now, from the point of view both of the manager and the tenants it would be considered best if the manager always spent all the rents he collected with the tenants in the house and did not place any orders to the tenants in the other houses. For then the manager's rent revenue from, and his disbursements to, the tenants would always be the same amount, and would cancel out, leaving them able collectively to repay the banker, and subsequently re-borrow. Notice incidentally that the tenants as a whole cannot make a profit in actual money in the sense of getting more money than they expend; nor can any one tenant do so without leaving others in debt to the banker. The possession of money, money "belonging" to any one of them, represents a default in respect of an equivalent amount by someone else. This is true in economic life. Profits can only accrue in the form of property. The monetary figures published as profits in industrial accounts are not money, but valuations of property, or estimates of the future revenue-earning capacity of property.

Now, with this in mind, let us suppose that somehow or other the banker of "B" house is seen to hand something which purports to be money to the banker of "A" house. What is it that he hands over, and where has he got it from? The first explanation would be that it was surplus of money raised from the tenants. But if so the money would be "B" money, owing by the "B" tenants to the "B" banker. The effect of its transfer in that form to the "A" house would be exactly the same as if the tenants themselves had clubbed together and sent it direct instead of paying it to the manager, and through him to the "B" banker. That is to say the "B" banker would be unable to recover his loans in full. This does not happen in economic life except to a microscopic degree. But if the money is not transferred in "B" form it is not transferred at all. The real transfer must be "B" property or titles to "B" property.

Gesunder Mensch ohne Geld ist halb krank.  
"A healthy man without money is half ill."

—Goethe, *Sprichwörtlich*.

"It is easy to move traffic, both passenger and freight, but the great problem is to get it."—Sir Henry Thornton (1925).

Canary Islands.—"Cost of living high, the available land being almost entirely given over to cultivation of fruit and vegetables for export. Complaints of the dearth and scarcity of foodstuffs are to be heard everywhere" . . . "not easy to see remedy so long as it pays to grow for export."—Department of Overseas Trade Report (1927).

## About Things.

Major Douglas left England for Japan a week or two ago. He has been invited to address a Congress of engineers there, and has accepted it. He will not be back for a month or two. I thought it odd that the negotiations about his Address had gone through without a hitch, and that his passport was granted with so little delay as it was. But the announcement of the Snowden Commission makes everything quite clear, particularly to those readers who have written in to ask what can be done to "get Douglas a hearing" before the Commission. The answer is, nothing—unless of course the Commissioners extend their sessions until he gets back. They'll watch that all right!

Still, there is something to be done, and I am asked to invite the above readers, and any others who want to do something, to address a communication to THE NEW AGE, 70, High Holborn, W.C.1. If a sealed letter, the envelope should be endorsed "Snowden Commission," and should contain no other enclosure than the notification of the sender's interest, and also (if possible) a donation towards the expenses of a Vigilance Committee which is being formed. All communications received with such endorsement will be handed unopened to the gentleman who is temporarily acting as organiser and secretary.

It is too early to describe at length what the Committee will do, but I am able to say that its initial effort will be based on the almost certain hypothesis that the terms of reference on which the Snowden Commission will conduct their investigation will exclude any consideration of the fundamental relation between credit and prices. If the hypothesis proves wrong, so much the better; but the Vigilance Committee is not going to wait and see. Its first duty will be to declare the vital importance of the terms of reference, and, contingently, to repudiate the Commission in advance on behalf of the Social Credit Movement and in the name of every citizen who is hoping for some tangible benefit to accrue from the Inquiry.

In the same event, another move (this is my own opinion only) should be to consider what sort of things the terms of reference will admit as subjects of investigation, and which of them it would suit the S.C. book to elicit an authoritative judgment upon. Two such matters are suggested in the Notes this week. An occasion like the present offers an opportunity for S.C. men to test the temperature of public opinion and to get hints as to how far the centre of gravity of expert opinion has shifted. The earlier occasion was when the mining crisis threatened to precipitate the General Strike. The Finance Inquiry Petition Committee had been formed. Its work was hardly begun when the Strike took place. Eventually the Petition—comprising, I think, 30,000 signatures—was completed, an achievement of great significance at a time when credit questions were so little discussed in the Press compared with what is being published now, and when the circumstances of the Strike laid the Committee idle, wasted its funds in rent-charges, and so compelled it to curtail the duration of its efforts to avoid getting into debt.

I see that the *Times*, in a leading article on Mr. Snowden's address on thrift, makes an allusion to a remark of the Chancellor on the "paradox" manifested in the persistence of trade depression during a period marked by the increasing savings of small investors. Very good. Now if a Commission of Inquiry is to be of any use at all a paradox like

this should come at the top of its agenda. I wonder if this Commission will attack it at all. One hopes without hope that it may at least prove itself able to travel as fast as Foster and equal to catching up with Catchings on the investment question. In that case it could, we hope, make Mr. Snowden aware that what he calls a paradox is a beautiful little illustration of cause and effect at work.

But do not let anyone be too expectant. I notice that in the same leading article in the *Times* ("Mr. Snowden on Thrift") the following are the concluding sentences:

"There is current a good deal of spurious teaching about the advantages of mere 'consumption,' regardless of the nature of the things 'consumed.' At bottom it is no more than an old friend, or enemy, in a new guise; and whether it is crudely or artistically dressed, it is what the thrift agencies exist to defeat."

I should think that the leader-writer had not received his usual ready-made article from the bankers' intelligence bureau that morning, and had therefore to write one out of his own head. Did anybody ever see such an example of bathos as the final clause? I suggest that the only thing he knows about "consumption" has been tipped to him by his colleague the Publicity Manager, namely, that good hefty anti-consumption sentiments seem to stimulate orders for financial advertisements.

A correspondent tells me that in one of the most important shipbuilding yards on the north-east coast many vessels have been built and are being built on the hire-purchase system. "Buying your house out of your lodger's income," so to speak. It is a tribute to British enterprise that anybody buys anything at all to earn a profit on nowadays.

It is time someone with the requisite influence tried to ascertain who is responsible for the Epilogue broadcast by the B.B.C. on Sunday nights. I refer in particular to the readings from the Bible. These have seemed to me to be selected on political grounds, or rather for the purpose of creating a spiritual atmosphere congenial to current political philosophy and policy. In general there has been a tremendous quantity of peace-talk. In particular there have been indications that some of the Epilogue-programmes have been chosen for their immediate topical allusiveness. For instance, one of them (was it a fortnight ago?) was virtually a Funeral Service—presumably referable to the death of Stresemann. There is no objection to this in itself; but the moment you allow certain people to pick and choose passages for reading you risk their abusing their privilege. The abuse can take place not only in the selection of single connected passages, but in the selection of two or more distinct passages which are joined up and made to appear as one. For instance, some weeks ago I listened to a reading in which the injunction: "Seek peace and ensue it" occurred. This is to be found in one of the Epistles of Peter. A little later during the reading the word "spit" (or "spew") occurred, and at least four other conspicuous words which have escaped me now. At any rate I made notes of them at the time, and directly the reading was finished I tried to find them in the Bible—and of course read through the chapter in which the injunction occurred. But none of them was there. Some verses from some other Book must have been lifted and planted in Peter's Epistle for the occasion. If I am wrong it is easy for some reader to correct me, and I hope he will.

Again, following upon the "Stresemann-Epilogue," so to call it, there was last Sunday what I may call a "Palestine-Epilogue." I hope I shall

not offend anybody by confessing it, but when I heard the solemn voice of the reader declaiming:

"Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned"

I could not help thinking of the Arabs, and of Lord Robert Cecil's "We will never let the Jews down." The passage that I have quoted is that of the Authorized Version. It is not complete: it finishes with these words:

"for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

But they did not come over the wireless that night. The reading ended at the word "pardoned"—or at the point where that word occurs, for the reader gave it as "gone"—"her iniquity is gone." Presumably he was using the Revised Version.

During the same Epilogue there was the passage:

"If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him," together with a reference to the "enduring" of "hardships." This doctrine of sacrifice is constantly being preached by the B.B.C. Even if it is mere coincidence, one cannot help reflecting how exactly it fits in with the bankers' doctrines of abstinence, deflation, and the gold-standard. With every respect for the Prophets and the Twelve Apostles I prefer the words of Christ. I want to hear about the lilies of the field who eat without working—about the Sabbath being made for man—about the "letter" which "killeth" and the "spirit" which "maketh alive."

HERBERT RIVERS.

## Twelve O'Clock.

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

Edited by Sagittarius.

"British policy is controlled by a Dollar Diplomat in the interests of Dollar Trade."—Notes of the Week.

"Currency is the property of the whole community, sovereign power inheres in the control of it."—Notes of the Week.

"A national currency derives its validity from its effectiveness as a demand for goods and services."—C. H. Douglas.

"London is a parasite on productive England. To say that rebuilding has increased its business efficiency is only to say that it has enabled London to be a more efficient parasite."—Notes of the Week.

"Each for himself and God for us all,' as the elephant said when he danced among the chickens."—Quoted in Notes of the Week.

"In the phrase that 'it's money makes the world go round,' vernacular is in advance of scientific research."—N.

"Thirty years ago it would have been excusable for a layman to state that the power which turned the banking machinery was savings."—N.

"To give girls the same education as boys is like taking the food of a rhinoceros and giving it to a canary."—Dorothy Dudley Short.

"The pen is indeed mightier than the sword when the refusal of a few drops of ink can plunge a world of nations into an orgy of bloodshed."—Notes of the Week.

"Exchange fluctuations are not, in these days, manifestations of natural law; they are consequences of bankers' policy."—Notes of the Week.

"The prosing of a hundred or so tied experts at Geneva is not going to alter the psychology of the many millions who do the work of the world. Horse-sense will sooner or later put the 'expert' in his place."—Notes of the Week.

"To many men the question at issue in considering inspiration is a very fundamental one, whether man made God or God made man."—M.B., Oxon.

## The Experts Reviewed.

"The visit of the Governor of the Bank of England (travelling as 'Mr. M. Collet') to the United States during the past summer, has opened a new chapter in American banking management, and one which calls for the careful study both of American and British nationals." Thus Mr. H. Parker Willis, in the October number of *The Banker*. There are some "British nationals" who would be only too glad to give "careful study" to Mr. Norman's movements and their meaning. But are they to blame if they do not, seeing how meagre are the materials for study? Thrice welcome are the efforts of an American writer to enlighten them.

Mr. Willis goes on to say, "The consequence (though not, perhaps, the result) of it has been the adoption of a new discount policy and the prolongation of the recent artificial conditions in both the London and the New York markets."

To help us understand the situation which brought Mr. Norman to the United States, he gives us a brief retrospect, and recalls how, as a result of the entente established through the Reserve Bank of New York between the Bank and the Federal Reserve System, American re-discount rates were for long kept below those of the Bank of England. They were maintained at an abnormally low point in the alleged attempt to prevent gold from being attracted to New York. However, this lowering of the Reserve rate only served to accentuate the excited stock speculation, and in the spring of 1929 the Reserve System resolved upon the termination of its entente with the Bank of England.

Then followed the movement of gold from England to New York; and the question must have exercised the minds of the management of the Bank of England as to what new policy could be invoked for the purpose of stopping a further gold efflux to the States, especially when the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced at the Lord Mayor's dinner on July 25 that it was desirable that no advance be made in the Bank rate. This, according to Mr. Willis, affords an explanation of Mr. Norman's visit to the United States. When he reached New York, Mr. Norman no longer sought to carry on negotiations exclusively through the Reserve Bank of New York, but directed his communications also to the Reserve Board and the other Reserve Banks. In this he showed wisdom.

But the consequences of his negotiations do not meet with Mr. Willis's approval. These consequences are: (1) The Federal Reserve Bank of New York raised its rate to 6 per cent. on August 8. (2) The Reserve banks have begun the purchase of sterling bills in the New York market. How much they have bought or will buy is not known. (3) The Bank of England, working with the protection which has thus been given to it in the U.S., has been able to refrain from raising its rate of discount (raised since this article was written). (4) Psychologically, the effects have been to create a distinctly better feeling on the part of American business men towards the plans and method of the Bank of England. Also a more cautious attitude in influential circles is evident towards the International Bank, and American financial opinion is confirmed in holding aloof from the new bank.

In these changes Mr. Willis sees an entirely new course of policy on the part of the Federal Reserve System. The raising of the rate, accompanied by the reduction of the acceptance rate, has done nothing to stop the steady upward movement in brokers' loans. This figure at the close of August reached a new high record of \$7,800,000,000. The Reserve System has entirely lost its leadership of the New

York market," comments Mr. Willis. "The rate situation which has grown out of the negotiations with the Bank of England has, on the whole, tended to make the market conditions even more serious than they were previously." He examines how far the Reserve System may go in carrying out its present policy, and points out that the paper the System is carrying tends to become less and less liquid as time goes on. Difficulties would arise if there were an outward flow of gold; or if the proposed tariff is adopted and is followed by retaliatory measures, there might be a serious interference with foreign trade. This would lead to a reduction in the activity of the manufacturing establishments in the basic trades, to unemployment, and to a weakening of the instalment-credit structure.

What is important is that the United States and its banking system has more and more tended to lose control of the direction to be taken by American finance, and also of the general development of American prosperity. This control rests in other hands—a situation which has largely grown out of the discount policy carried on by the Reserve System for a number of years past and now developed through international agreement.

Mr. Willis concludes by returning to the purchase of sterling bills by the Federal Reserve Banks. The public has not been informed of the volume of the bills to be purchased by virtue of the agreement, but the Reserve Banks have asked the large private banking houses to assist them by abstaining from extensive independent efforts at the importation of gold. "It will remain to be seen," he adds, "how far circumstances will permit the continuance of such a wholly unsatisfactory way of controlling the movement of precious metals."

"Wall Street has obtained an increased supply of credit by putting all the rest of the world on short rations." This statement is issued with all the authority of the National City Bank of New York by the writer of its October review. Commenting on the rise of the Bank of England discount to 6½ per cent., the writer states that demand for credit in the New York market is generally agreed to have been the dominating influence in the foreign situation.

"The Nationalists say that Germany has become a colony of France and England. No, we are not a colony, but it seems to me doubtful if all Europe isn't becoming a colony of those who are luckier than we. The fact is that the colonies known as Europe have now come together mutually to lighten their burdens because they have been given no alleviation from the other side—America!" This was reported in *Time*, a Chicago paper, of July 8, as having been said by Dr. Gustav Stresemann, "Germany's quick-brained, bullet-headed Foreign Minister." The writer continues: "Germany's hope of meeting even the Young Plan payments rests largely on further loans from the U.S. Berlin business men wrung their hands over the Stresemann 'colony' speech. Quick to soothe the ruffled feelings of the U.S. was Dr. Hjalmar Schacht, iron-man of the Second Dawes Commission. He urged ratification of the Young Plan, but hastily added for U.S. consumption, 'Nothing lies further from the wish of the American people than to take from the European his responsibility for the conduct of his own industry. The American . . . does not wish to deal with slaves.'"

According to the leader in the *Wall Street Journal* of September 6, prominence has been given in the American Press to the trouble in Palestine because the Young Plan was not unconditionally accepted by the British Government!

FRANCIS TAYLOR.

## The Riddle of Censorship.

By George Ryley Scott.

Any study of the censorship question reveals what apparently is a hopeless muddle. In England "The Well of Loneliness" is condemned high and low as a mass of obscenity, in the United States it is paraded as a powerful social document of immense interest. In England that much over-praised war story, "All Quiet on the Western Front," proves a best seller; in the States the English edition is banned as an obscene work by the Customs, a special bowdlerised translation being printed for American consumption. "The Sleeveless Errand" is suppressed, ostensibly on the grounds that it gives the dignity of type to words apparently reserved for use in medico-legal treatises; while the inclusion of a reference to a scene in which sexual intercourse between a crippled soldier and his wife takes place in the presence of half a dozen inmates of a hospital ward is not allowed to temper the praise showered on the best-selling war novel of the decade.

The so-called obscene books are roughly divisible into two classes: (1) Those in which blasphemous, vulgar, and erotic terminology is employed, (2) those which treat sexual subjects in a manner divorced from the code of ethics founded on the Christian religion. Thus any writer has a good chance of getting by with eroticism provided he tucks on to it a moral lesson. But let him depict vice in any but deprecatory terms and his book is in danger of being haled into the courts by the smut-chasers. In instance, because Zola's "La Terre" was devoid of moral propaganda, for the use of impolite terminology and the depiction of sexual vice, its English translator was clapped into jail; because "The Yoke" described a spinster's longing for and gratification of sexual pleasure outside marriage it fell under the axe; because Lilly Czepanek made a success of the prostitute's trade the English translation of "Das Hohe Lied" was promptly suppressed.

From a mass of apparently contradictory facts a few points stand out—they are brimful of significance. It is evident there is no such thing as a standard definition of obscenity. The long, weary, and laboured sittings of the League of Nations International Conference for the suppression of the circulation of and traffic in obscene publications, held at Geneva in 1923, demonstrated one thing only: that no satisfactory definition of obscenity was possible, that each delegate had his own private definition. Thus what a novelist or an artist may consider a work of art, a London magistrate may condemn as immoral; what an advanced surrealist may look upon as innocuous, a bishop may denounce as an incentive to vice. But while the opinion of the novelist or artist is, in any police court sense, valueless to the point of futility, that of the magistrate is irrevocable. It is because of these fundamentals that, as regards the majority of books which come under the head of erotic literature, their suppression or otherwise is more a matter of accident than anything else—in particular does this apply to purely pornographic works. The exceptions are those books which are objectionable to those in authority for reasons unconnected with their alleged obscenity. Careful study of what at first sight appears inexplicable gives rise to a suspicion that obscenity *per se* is not the primary reason for suppression, that the real reason lies deeper.

Anyone who has gone thoroughly into the subject knows that throughout Europe the regulations governing prostitution are designed more with the idea of giving to the police additional powers for dealing with the women of the streets and their associates than any idea of actually controlling or eradicating the evil of prostitution itself. Sexual vice increases

in enormity from what is looked upon as the merest peccadillo to the seriousness of crime if the perpetrator of it happens to be a thorn in the flesh of powerful personages or interests.

Similarly with the concept of obscenity. The potency of the legislation dealing with obscene literature is exemplified in the fact that in England any protest against the tyranny of police and magisterial decision is futile, as was amply demonstrated in the case of "The Well of Loneliness." Obscenity being always subjective, thus being undefinable objectively, it necessarily becomes a constructive offence, the magistrate being enabled to interpret the facts in accordance with his emotional concepts, thus actually creating the crime which he elects to punish. Monstrous as is such a position, there is no redress. For obscenity, like prostitution, is publicly condemned by its private supporters: the authorities know they can rely on public support, or, at any rate, what negatively works to the same end, the absence of any effective protest.

It would appear that obscenity or immorality is rarely the sole reason for the suppression of a literary work: it is merely the reason paraded for public approval. There are the strongest grounds for believing that the view expressed by Mr. Herbert Rivers in a recent article in THE NEW AGE, that "The Well of Loneliness" and "The Sleeveless Errand" in reality were suppressed for political reasons, is correct. Obscenity provides unimpeachable grounds for the suppression of an undesirable book, as there are few modern novels which cannot be brought within a concept so elastic as to include the Bible and most of the ancient classics.

If obscenity, as definable by analogy from actually banned books, were the *only* reason for suppression it would be hard to justify the non-interference with "All Quiet on the Western Front," "The Rampant Age," "Siren," "Bohemian Glass," "Mills of Man," Arthur Symons's translation of "L'Assommoir"—to mention a few. Had the equivalent of Remarque's novel, dealing in precisely similar fashion with the British troops, succeeded in finding a publisher, I am confident its suppression would have been certain; had "The Rampant Age" depicted English instead of American school life, it would have been scotched as pornography at the outset. These books would have been suppressed because some newspaper or individual would have vehemently called for their suppression, and the authorities in justification of their attitude towards books which for other reasons must be suppressed, would have taken action. This, it seems to me, is the only explanation which satisfactorily accounts for an attitude which, on the face of things, appears inexplicable.

"You tell me that money cannot buy the things most precious. Your commonplace proves that you have never known the lack of it. When I think of all the sorrow and the barrenness that has been wrought in my life by the want of a few more pounds per annum than I was able to earn, I stand aghast at money's significance. What kindly joys have I lost, those simple forms of happiness to which every heart has a claim, because of poverty! Meetings with those I loved made impossible year after year; sadness, with those I loved made impossible year after year; misunderstanding, nay, cruel alienation, arising from inability to do the things I wished, and which I might have done had a little money helped me; endless instances of homely pleasure and contentment curtailed or forbidden by narrow means. I have lost friends merely through the constraints of my position; friends I might have made had I remained strangers to me; solitude of the bitter kind, solitude which is enforced at times when mind or heart longs for companionship, often cursed my life solely because I was poor. I think it would scarcely be an exaggeration to say that there is no moral good which has not to be paid for in coin of the realm."—*The Private Papers of Henry Rye-croft.* George Gissing.

## Drama.

The Rising Sun: Kingsway.

"The Rising Sun," by Herman Heijermans, deals with the Dutch small shopkeeper in his hopeless fight against the big store. The class of Dutch society portrayed accordingly corresponds with the Irish portrayed by Lennox Robinson in "The Whiteheaded Boy." But Robinson observed his folk directly, his view being coloured only by Irish tradition, whereas Heijermans has observed through the masks of other dramatists. After a magnificent naturalistic opening showing the household of the shopkeeper, with its atmosphere of nagging, parsimony, and "nerves," Heijermans exhibits a committee-meeting of the local amateur dramatic society, of which the small shopkeeper, Matthew Strong, is president. It is a good scene, in which the claims of Ibsen and Tchegov on advanced amateurs fail against the box-office view. This scene gives the clue to what is wrong with Heijermans's play. As long as it portrays in the naturalistic style the break-up of the small tradesman, whom Mr. Chesterton is so anxious to preserve, by the emporium, which everybody in practice supports, "The Rising Sun" is great work. But Heijermans does not follow the uncorrupting Tchegov all the way. The progress of Matthew Strong and his daughter through the misfortunes which befall them is streaked more and more as the play proceeds with Ibsenish idealism, even more vague than Ibsen's, and also, while apparently less suspect by the author, more suspect by the audience.

Matthew Strong and his daughter, Sonia, who loved him too much for my liking, or for her own married future, practised the gospel of optimism. Although they laughed, however, the world did not laugh with them, possibly because they laughed when others were inclined to weep. Their cheerfulness reminded me of that definition of a pessimist as one who makes the best of a bad job, whereas an optimist is too blind to recognise a bad job. When the manager of the emporium wanted to pay their debts in consideration whereof he would take their site, Strong and his daughter conspired to look prosperous, and proudly refused to leave their rotten ship. Later, after Strong had passed the day at a level crossing contemplating the liquidation of his family's troubles through "accident" insurance, and after more than one suggestion had been made that a destroying fire makes many a business prosper, Sonia dropped the lamp in the shop, burning as well as the shop a crippled girl who lived over it. The rest of the play depicts her torment by her sense of guilt. Although she had upset the lamp by accident, she knew that she could have saved it, and at the cost of abandonment by all except her father and fiancé, with prison and disgrace ahead, she and her father insisted on her publicly confessing. This, according to Heijermans, seems to be the true Rising Sun of human spiritual cleanliness.

The strength of Matthew Strong in his hour of travail provokes the comment that all uplift, in Heijermans as in Ibsen, is open to misunderstanding. Strong could send his daughter to prison for her soul's sake, and could refuse to benefit from the insurance-money as his answer to the suspicion of incendiarism. But he had been equally able, without need for either confession or repentance, to squander Dorothy Mertens's life-savings in incompetent speculation. He had borrowed wherever he could without hope of paying back with as little conscience as if he had been a Dubedat rather than a shop-keeper. Indeed, his success as borrower suggested that little mugs find lesser mugs for some

distance if not *ad infinitum*. Strong and his daughter gave the impression of needing a great deal to shake them up, and of being as little likely to pull their affairs out of the fire in the future as in the past. If Strong was not to accept the managership of a department in the big store, and Sonia to display her pretty face in the gent's outfitting department, as offered in part compensation for giving up their shop—and there was no sign that they were going to accept—it was difficult to see what the future held for them. They appeared to symbolise idealism in a cul-de-sac.

In addition to the excellent naturalism after Tchegov, however, the play has interest in that comedy and tragedy are in places welded together in a manner prophetic of the earlier method of O'Casey. For these the production is well worth while, and ought to be supported. The cast is of so high a quality that it startles one into asking how it came about that so many first-class character actors were available together. To mention the good performances would be to mention all, the smaller parts being as well done as the larger. Indeed, the only performance that dissatisfied me was the chief one. Mr. Frank Cellier's Matthew Strong conveyed the feeling for a time that he was as irresponsible in his heart as he was taken to be by the other characters, an impression which the author did not intend. Miss Angela Baddeley's Sonia Strong, the daughter, began with a similar fault, but later rose to deeply moving tragedy.

The Merchant of Venice: Old Vic.

In Mr. Harcourt Williams's production of "The Merchant of Venice" the delivery of the lines is at times sped up so much as to cause one to describe the performance as Shakespeare in modern speech. The production is of interest for Mr. Brember Wills's Shylock, and for the varied use of one simple setting—especially in the trial scene—by Mr. Owen P. Smyth. Mr. Wills's Shylock is a high-speed, streamlined Shylock. He portrays a Jewish gentleman with a fanatical hatred for Christians and a fanatical love of money, who becomes almost demented between his hope of revenge on Antonio and the loss of his ducats and his daughter. It is a performance at the same time original and consistent with the text; and in the lamentation scene, in spite of too rapid delivery of the lines, and occasional excessive use of gesture, Mr. Wills carried one away, and wiped out the world except an almost lunatic Shylock. "The Merchant of Venice," of course, is no title for the play, which is essentially Shylock. Antonio is more a challenge to actors to try to make more of him than others have succeeded in doing than a character to be played for either love of, or interest in, him. Bassanio is a hero into whose character charity forbids inquiry. These characters attract no distinction whoever acts them. Portia is almost impossible, since not even Sybil Thorndike, who could be masculine enough for the learned lawyer, could also be feminine enough for the Portia of Belmont. Miss Martita Hunt's Portia is more feminine in the lawyer's robe than in the gowns of the maid too obedient to her father; and both her red robe and her make-up as lawyer need to be changed. Mr. Henry Wolston's lines as the Prince of Morocco were not clearly enough articulated, but Mr. Eric Adeney's Prince of Aragon was a magnificent comedy performance that deservedly won enthusiastic Old Vic applause. Adele Dixon as Jessica was excellent in appearance, costume, and deportment, as well as a model of clear articulation; but her voice requires greater flexibility to the end of expressing more nuances of mood and emotion. As Nerissa Miss Margaret Webster gave a very good performance indeed, full of life and humour. She successfully passed off both the maid and the lawyer's clerk by intelligently compelling the audi-

ence to enjoy the comedy rather than examine the effectiveness of the deception.

#### A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur: Daly's.

The title of this musical comedy misleads one to expect an illustration with music of Mark Twain. Seeing that much of Mark Twain's humour was prophetic of the mechanical supremacy of America when even humour would be made by machinery, the comedy is no worse in that it has nothing to do with Twain. Unfortunately, it is no better. "A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur" hardly differs from any other musical comedy, except that the comedy is neither so funny nor so continuous; and largely consists of a couple of actors advancing to the front to deliver a few cross-talk jokes. A party the night before the leading man's wedding allows a male chorus to be on the stage when the curtain rises; and the female chorus finds an excuse for coming in when required. The leading man cannot choose between his business-manager bride and his bit-of-fluff mistress. Having been hit on the head with a bottle by the former, he settles which to marry in a dream, in which he shows Merlin up as a market-square conjurer, and takes his place as court-magician by prophesying the future on the strength of a knowledge of Tennyson, which his personality refused to let me believe in. He introduces to the court of King Arthur telephones, machines, aeroplanes, and American slang, and becomes known there as the boss. He addresses Arthur as Arty, and is familiar enough with Guinevere to call her Gwennie. There is the quantity of kissing and fondling that one would expect of a petting-party public to desire. The one interesting feature of the show—which I anticipate will fail before English audiences—is the pattern-dancing; the insistent drum rhythm of the dancers' feet and the military precision of the figure-making is occasionally impressive.

PAUL BANKS.

### The Screen Play.

#### Two "Shorts."

The Avenue Pavilion offers its patrons so much rich fare in the course of a single evening that the critic would like to chronicle all the courses. Space considerations demanding selectiveness, I single out two remarkable short films, "Life and Death of a Hollywood Extra," and "Bluebottles." The first, directed by Robert Florey, is already a classic, and is one of the few examples of pure film yet made. It is characterised by a remarkable symbolism and sense of rhythm, suggests, in some respects, comparison with the "Marche des Machines," and should be seen more than once if it is fully to be appreciated. Incidentally, it cost only £20 to make. "Broadway" is said to have cost half a million, a comparison to be commended to the notice of the Hollywood magnates who believe that the excellence of a film is in direct ratio to the money spent on it. "Bluebottles" is all-British—and good. It is based on a story by H. G. Wells, is directed by Ivor Montagu, and its cast includes Elsa Lanchester, Charles Laughton, and—Joe Beckett. This little film is extremely witty and amusing, and encloses a delicious satire on officialdom, notably displayed in the creation of a gorgeous Commissioner of Police who is the incarnation of all the dug-outs ever dug out. Elsa Lanchester reveals herself as such an excellent comedian that it is safe betting that Elstree, which instinctively rejects native talent, will be in no hurry to give her another good part. My only adverse criticism on this most original and promising film is that while it begins on a note of pure fantasy, and almost of pure film, it is abruptly transformed into farce. This transition, while not affecting the continuity, is somewhat destructive of unity.

#### The Godless Girl.

It has become the fashion to sneer at Cecil de Mille, but, whatever his defects, it is as stupid as

it is ungenerous to belittle one of the pioneers of screen art. He inevitably suggests comparison with Dickens in his enthusiasm, his characteristic impulse to use his art-form as a medium of propaganda, and his inability to distinguish pathos from bathos. Abrupt transition from the sublime to the ridiculous is indeed his gravest fault. "The Godless Girl," privately shown at the Carlton last week, is typical of its maker. I do it no injustice in substituting for personal criticism some of the superlatives with which the producing company has sent it out into the world.

It is, we are told, "a new type of melodrama" (which it is not), a "sensational melodrama," and one "that will revolutionise all previous standards for box-office values"; it is "a super-production that for sheer drama, stark realism, and sensational action will probably never be equalled" (I like the modesty of that "probably"); it is "unadulterated melodrama"; it is "a daring exposé (sic) that has evoked the enthusiastic commendation of forty governors and persons high in other stations in life"; and it runs through "the gamut of human emotions in all their intensity—set against a background of monumental settings and unsparing and lavish De Mille production values." So now you know what to expect. I should add that "The Godless Girl" has been banned by the Australian censorship, although, again to quote the author of the "synopsis," it makes "all realise that, after all, faith in God is productive of more happiness than anything the godless have to offer mankind." We will now take up the collection.

DAVID OCKHAM.

### Music.

#### QUEEN'S HALL.

Wednesday, October 2: Brahms.

A Brahms night at the Proms noteworthy for one of the rare appearances of Olga Haley. Miss Haley has such a perfect appreciation of the requirements of *Lieder* singing that the faultiness of her singing methods is all the more regrettable. Though she has improved to a certain degree in head resonance there is still not enough fundamental tone or support. This is a thousand pities, for she is very easily the most gifted and accomplished English concert-singer of the day, and there is no one to compare with her in versatility, fineness of style, or imaginative insight. And the trouble could be easily overcome with work and study adjusted to that end. The colour, tone, and *Stimmung* of her singing of the *Leichengesang* were exquisite. In *Der Schmied*, with its vehement declamatory vocal line, she was crippled by the most inept accompaniment I have heard for years—a ludicrous lady-like tapping suitable for an "at home." Over Mr. Franklyn Kelsey's singing of "*O Wusst Ich doch den Weg zurück*" and *Verrat*, it is preferable to pass in silence.

Thursday, October 3: All-British Programme.

This contained three bad and two good works—a high proportion. The new Bax work, *Three Orchestral Pieces*, is in welcome contrast to the usual sprawling, invertebrate productions of this composer. There is here a pregnancy of thought, a cogency of utterance, that as far as I know exists nowhere else in Bax's work. His usual lush, sodden undergrowth of melody has given place to themes of a much greater decisiveness and directness than ever before. Like so many European composers whom the exotic has fascinated he has often been landed in a morass by it—for his is not at all an exotic mind, it does not move easily or naturally amid the tropical tangle and fierce growth of prodigal decoration and ornament. His thought is almost always simple and even naive; it has no inherent complexity nor multiformity, these being added afterwards in an extra-

neous inconsonant manner, and even inconsequent manner. But this is not the case with the fine and rather grim work played on this particular evening; and it is easily the finest thing Bax has produced so far.

William Walton continues to surprise and delight with the prodigious strides he is making in musical, intellectual and spiritual development. He has now completely shed the influence of Stravinsky, which, with the demise of that consummate showman and arch-charlatan, Serge de Dhiagilev, one may confidently expect to disappear rapidly everywhere where people retain a rudimentary sense of proportion, together with the dried-up angularity of style that disfigured his earlier work. The new viola Concerto, *à propos* which these remarks are made, is in every sense of the word a fine work—close knit and sincerely-felt music, full of pregnant and convincing melodic and harmonic thought, finely balanced and proportioned, and of a most attractive dark colouring, in which is to be found hardly a single "modern" trick. That it impressed as deeply as it did in spite of the bad performance and most indifferent playing of Paul Hindemith and the ragged orchestral accompaniment speaks volumes for it. Mr. Hindemith seemed trying to make the work sound like his own lucubrations, a treatment it very properly resented and declined to tolerate, with wishes not of the happiest for Mr. Walton, whom one work of his an *artist* who can play in tune *all* the time. The serious sobriety of this work, its quiet thoughtfulness and dignified reasoned utterance, had a shattering effect on the noisy braggadocio and inane bombast of a "Rhythmic Dance" of Eugène Goossens, the pleonastic and redundant phraseology of whose title is an apt criticism *in pello* of the *Comedy Overture*, dating from the days when it was *terribly* daring to trot up and down a pair or so of whole-tone stairs, and a very far from amusing but depressing concoction called a "song group" by Mr. Herbert Howells, completed the tally of new or newish works. I was unable to detect anything but some misapplied Delius and a very great deal of dilution with Howells-water in this latter composition.

KAIKHOSRU SORABJI.

### John Knox.

The so-called Great War wiped out, among other things, the hero-worship method of biography. Since many bubble-reputations of alleged great men were pricked during that international competition, it was in the natural order of things that a new yardstick of biographical criticism should take the place of the old rule of thumb. A mood of what may be termed amused contempt for the antiquated "dug-out" was the universal feeling of the young gods ventor of the trenches. Mr. Strachey was not the merely of the post-war satiro-critical attitude, but rest of the first swallow to herald the arrival of the That Mr. Muir's portrait of the Calvinist leader of the Scottish Reformation\* should be painted in modern colours is therefore "inevitable." His technique reminds the present reviewer of Phil May's masterly draughtsmanship; for our author lays hold of the salient features of his subject, and eliminates every line that is not essential to the finished picture. He is not concerned with the truth or the falsehood of Calvinism as a theology, but confines his efforts to analysing the great Reformer's conflicts both with himself and with his contemporaries. He is particularly illuminating when dealing with Knox's reactions to the influence of the three queens—Mary of

\* "John Knox." By Edwin Muir. (Cape, 12s. 6d. net.)

England, Mary of Guise, and Mary of Scotland—from whom he had successively to take refuge in flight. At 59, the venerable dogmatist took for his second wife a girl of 16, much to the disgust of the Scottish Queen whom Knox had denounced from the pulpit for "villainous adultery."

Mr. Muir is perhaps at his best when handling the controversial interviews between Knox and Mary Stuart. The hapless Queen's skilful arguments on such occasions prove her to have been an extraordinarily highly-gifted woman for her epoch, and quite able to "hold her own" in dialectics with the vehement dogmatist who did not fear the face of either queen or subject.

Our author's peroration concerning Knox should give the savour of the rest of this intriguing work:

"His greatness lay in two qualities: the inexhaustible vehemence of his powers, and the constancy of his aim. The effect he had on men less unrelenting was like that of a wind, which blows with a steadfast violence, and by its persistence bends everything and keeps it bent. His will, like the mistral, had something in it unnatural and mechanical. It never relaxed, because it could not. It went on, as if independent of him, when his body was powerless, and he was lying on his deathbed; it lived in his last gesture, the hand stubbornly upraised as he gave up his spirit. It had goaded the Scottish nobles to revolt and Mary to shame and destruction: it had not given its possessor a respite for thirteen years. It was cruel and terrible, but it is perhaps the most heroic and astonishing spectacle in all Scottish history."

This book is a useful corrective to the existing biographies of the leader of the Scottish Reformation; for while Mr. Muir is a Scot, he is at the same time non-sectarian. Older readers will know that he was a regular contributor to THE NEW AGE for several years. S. C.

### Reviews.

A History of Egypt. By James Baikie, D.D., F.R.A.S. (A. and C. Black. Two vols. 36s. net.)

Two handsome volumes by the learned scholar who has acquired a deserved reputation as vivifying for experts and general readers the life of the Ancient Civilisations. Dr. Baikie takes into account all the controversies of the experts, but leaves the clutter behind in his literary workshop. The result is an eminently readable, graphic and balanced history of Egypt from its dawn to the end of the eighteenth dynasty, with judiciously selected photographs illustrating the varied periods of this great culture. The book will whet the interest of the general reader by its account of Tutankhamen in his historical context and the result of recent excavations. It should also command the attention of sociologists by the description of such things as the discovery of metal and the religious revolution known as Atenism. The nature of Civilisation has become a popular study and I commend this pair of volumes as the most useful history of one of its most striking embodiments. V.A.D.

Money and Its Relations to Prices. By L. L. Price. (Allen and Unwin, 246 pp. Cloth 5s., Paper 3s. 6d. net.)

This is a new issue (August) of the fourth edition of this work, which was first published in 1896. It is stated to be an enquiry into the causes, measurement, and effects of changes in general prices, "with an epilogue on movements of prices and monetary change in the twentieth century." Like so many other books of this sort, it has no value except to students who may sit for examinations on the particular data which appear in it. Readers are told, for instance, what this or that economist thought about this or that phenomenon at this or that date; and the author provides them with a fairly full selection of statistics relating to gold-production, gold-distribution, general courses of price-indices, etc., so that they can follow the reasons for the opinions expressed by the aforesaid authorities. But he himself refrains from drawing any conclusions, nor does he give so much as a hint of what he expects will be the outcome of the "Yes-But" philosophy which was pilloried by a contributor in last week's issue of this journal. Thus, he spends a page in discussing whether a rise or a fall in prices hits the wage-earner more, showing that a rise may hurt him immediately, but may heal him ultimately. Incidentally, he points out that when

prices rise the workman notices the fact and demands more wages, and that when they fall the employer notices the fact and seeks to reduce wages. But he has no opinion to express in regard to the practical question whether wages ought to follow prices; the reader is left with the impression that if there is any "ought" about the matter at all it is that the workman ought to put up with a price-rise, or his employer with a price-fall, according to which event may happen first, in the hope that the sacrifice may perhaps correct itself in course of time. The book is full of Yes-facts and But-facts, Yes-tendencies and But-tendencies, and conveys the impression that the science of economics is that which treats of the transmutation or "emergence" of Yes into But and But into Yes by the alchemy or life-force of a property designated "Wait and See." One of the few matters on which the author is definite is his expressed "confidence" in the Bank; and his reason is based on its "complete recovery from impending panic in the straining days of August, 1914, and the quick vanishing of any serious danger of a run on cash." Well, in one sense, we may all feel confidence in an institution which can gold-plate lead ingots and get them hall-marked for acceptance as gold. At the same time, if this privilege of substitution were allowed to the workman or his employer when threatened by a "run on cash," it would not be beyond the ingenuity of either of them also to devise means of making the danger vanish. One method is exhibited in the story of the old lady who, when she was notified by her bank manager that her account was overdrawn, drew a cheque for the deficit and sent it to him in settlement. Another method, it will be remembered, was practised by Mr. Micawber, and consisted in the liquidation of his I.O.U. obligations by the creation and issue of Promissory Notes. The most interesting fact in Mr. Price's book is the figure of the peak exchange-rate for German marks. In June, 1923, it was about 18½ million times one million marks (18,349,000,000) to the Pound Sterling. Also: "by 1922 prices had risen 34,182 per cent. above the 1913 level." The book would have been much more useful if its statistics had been tabulated and indexed. All the information it contains is mixed in with the text, which is marred by the priggish stylism of the author. One is constantly irritated by such turns of phrase as the following: "but no negligible pertinence attaches to . . ." "some other opinion or other. . . ." "Text of this sort matches the content of the book in its indefiniteness."

A. B.

#### The Return of William Shakespeare. By Hugh Kingsmill. (Duckworth. 7s. 6d.)

Mr. Kingsmill's recent life of Matthew Arnold was remarkable as a book of sound criticism which frequently made you laugh; he has followed it up by casting his ideas of Shakespeare in the form of a most amusing novel. Mr. Albert Henry Butt discovered a means of re-integrating, or rather duplicating, the dead. Having taken the experiments as far up the scale as pigs, Melmoth, his backer, urged him to try the process on a human being. The first subject was a young Scotsman who had recently committed suicide; on being re-integrated he went straight home and re-shot himself, causing some disturbance in the neighbourhood by his likeness to himself. The money required for these experiments had been supplied by a great ecclesiastical dignitary as a result of a certain threat from Melmoth. Finally, Shakespeare was reproduced, as he was in 1607, the year which, according to Sir Sidney Lee, saw the climax of his powers; but the Bard defied his illustrious biographer by coming to life in an acutely nervous condition, bursting into tears, and refusing to be exploited. This was awkward for Melmoth, who had arranged for the broadcasting of "To Be or Not To Be . . ." by the author from the battlements of Elsinore; special performances of Julius Caesar in Rome (if Mussolini had no objection to the assassination scene), of Romeo and Juliet in Verona, of Macbeth on some easily accessible but blasted heath in Scotland (bouquet to be presented to Our National Poet by Sybil Thorndike), and so on. The only way out was to pack Shakespeare off to the country for a rest cure, and get one of the promoters to impersonate him. The scheme broke down, and the real Shakespeare died; but during his short stay in the country the poet read all his own works, including those he had not yet written, together with a mass of criticism and biography, and found time to reconstruct, for the benefit of his host, the story of his life in the light of the plays. This reconstruction, which is, of course, the heart of the book, is far too good to be reproduced in brief. Mr. Kingsmill's Shakespeare can no more be reduced to a formula than a living person, and in that lies the strength of the book. The over-serious reader may object that the farcical setting is unnecessary; but personally I enjoyed it so much that I don't care if it is.

M. J.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

### NIETZSCHE AND MARS.

Sir,—You would oblige me if you would publish the following letter *in extenso*, as the *Sunday Times*, to which I originally addressed it, has only reproduced the more innocuous part of it.—Yours faithfully,  
O. L.

To the Editor of the *Sunday Times*.  
FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE: "THE MYSTERY MAN OF EUROPEAN THOUGHT."

Sir,—I was astonished to read in Mr. Laurie Magnus' review, "Nietzsche in France" [S.T., September 15], remarks such as these: "Nietzsche has not unfairly been charged with a part of the moral preparation for the war. His 'Will to Power' fitted in extraordinarily well with the doctrines of the Prussian School of history."

Living, as I do, on the Continent, I thought that this piece of war-propaganda was dead by this time, but apparently it is not. It even seems to flourish more than ever, as is proved by a further sentence from Mr. Magnus's pen: "It is impossible to understand Machiavelli without comparing him with Nietzsche," says Magnus, quoting Figgis, the author of a book on Nietzsche, and he (Magnus) adds on his own account: "It was Nietzsche's misfortune to find a prince ready made and fully armed."

Now, the late Emperor may have been fully armed, but to his Machiavellianism one should be allowed to put a question mark. A Machiavellian prince would certainly not have sent out four declarations of war to the neighbouring nations without suspecting that this would bring the whole of Europe into the arena. Machiavelli, as far as we know, was a very intelligent man, and a man thoroughly versed in life's realities. A Mussolini might and does openly admire Machiavelli; the Emperor William would and must certainly repudiate him altogether. And for a good reason. The Emperor William was and is the opposite of a Nietzsche and a Machiavelli, to wit: an ardent Christian. When the war broke out he, in deep emotion, asked his people to go to church, whereupon the Germans, assembled before the Berliner Schloss, answered him with the mighty tunes of a Lutheran Choral. Some people report that he used to press into the hands of young ladies a little book, entitled *Talks with Jesus*. What is quite sure was his habit of reading the Gospel aloud to his sailors when on board of one of his men-of-war. It thus would have been more to the point if Mr. Magnus had written: "It was Nietzsche's misfortune to find no prince ready and fully armed." Nietzsche only found William, but William and Nietzsche are separated by a whole world: the world of different values.

Is it known to Mr. Magnus that Nietzsche proposed a transvaluation of all values, and that, consequently, he had combated all the values that led up to the great war, from Nationalism to Socialism, and its offspring, Bolshevism? That he was a good European long before the war, that he hoped for a United Europe, that he despised Prussian militarism, that he hated "the bovine patriotism," which finally led to the most stupid of all disasters? Had people in Germany and elsewhere only read Nietzsche, and not misunderstood and misinterpreted him, there would not have been war: at least, not this war for "Liberty," "Justice," "Civilisation," "Kultur," or other slogans, in which Nietzsche never believed, and which he combated throughout his eighteen volumes.

I am grieved to see that Mr. Laurie Magnus, who is a member of my own race, has so little understanding for what is essential in the thought of Nietzsche. If ever a Prussian Junker misunderstood Nietzsche's "Will to Power" (which is possible, though not very probable, as this class in Germany, as in England, does not "go in" for philosophy), he is on the same level with Mr. Laurie Magnus, who also interprets the "Wille zur Macht" *au pied de la lettre*, and in the light of the old values. But a Jew has not the excuse of a Gentile: for we have been concerned with values for three thousand years, and we ought to know more about them than other and younger races.

Let me, in conclusion, add a few words about Professor Saintsbury, who, as quoted by Magnus, has stated: "Nietzsche had the most astonishing force of wit, the most enchanting grace of melody, and the strangest power of suggestion. . . . The irony of the fact that it took a madman to make German prose thoroughly beautiful may be rather terrible, but the fact of the beauty does not admit of question."

Now, if madmen can get a little more beauty into this world of ours, for goodness' sake let us have madmen! In any case, they are preferable to "sane" men who produced no beauty, but the ugliest war in history.

OSCAR LEVY,

Editor of the authorised English translation of Nietzsche's works.

## ARE WE DUMBFUNDERED?

Sir,—In your issue of August 15, Mr. Norman F. Webb wrote saying that it was rather a surprise to him that certain articles on "Advertising Social Credit" had drawn forth no comments in the correspondence columns, either indignant or appreciative. Well, some of us prefer to go warily where ang-E.L.s rush in; not because we "fear to tread," but because we want to be sure that there is some solid ground to tread upon. What with the publication of a "First Manifesto" and "The Groundwork" and God-knows-what-else by the Economic Party, and a number of articles showing up our weaknesses and uselessness, I feel the time has come to ask—Are we dumbfounded? I have waited in the hope that someone else, more fitted for the task, would take pen in hand and state the case for those of us who at present are dubbed by some "the M.M.-ites."

I must admit, at the outset, that our position is not an easy one either to define or maintain, because, whether we like it or not, we have been faced by a baffling enigma. I do not forget what Mr. John Hargrave had to say to us when he spoke at the M.M. Club on November 7 last year, that there is a "nasty patch of ground" between where we are now (the present system) and where we want to be (Social Credit system), or words to that effect. I do not think any of us had much to say in reply to his lecture, because we recognised that most of what he said was true.

Now the worst of it is I do not like being dubbed a sort of cheese-M.M.-ite, and yet I feel very much like one! It seems to me that, intellectually, we have been driven into the position of "Kerenskyism" simply because we have not yet defined our position; whereas the Economic Party has stated its position very clearly. I can speak only for myself, of course, but it seems to me that no sort of frontal attack upon the present financial system is of any use at all; and although, in my "innards," I have a sort of admiration for the "deedfulness" of the Economic Party, my reasoning faculty keeps on reminding me that the forces arrayed against any such Credit Reform as we contemplate are so vast and so impregnable that it is like battering one's head against an invisible stone wall. Having written that, I must say I feel even more like a cheese-M.M.-ite, for it is rather like saying "chuck up the sponge." I am left with the somewhat wan hope that things are happening in the financial world of which we wist not yet, and that Finance itself may in time be driven to correct the flaw in the economic system. There was a time when I had more faith in this way out of the impasse than I have now, and, if I am honest, I am bound to say that my faith here has been shaken by the painfully logical reasoning of those I may dub the E.P.-ites. I do not think it is much use saying that anyone who sets out to "do something" is suffering from a power-complex; for it would be so easy for the psycho-analysts to prove that I am suffering from some sort of mammy's-apron-string complex, and that I cannot help sucking my thumb instead of putting it boldly into the E.P.-ice.

No, I am sure we must not fall into the habit of calling each other psycho-analytical names; it would be better to "blind and swear" at each other by all the gods that b— and d—, rather than sublimate our very righteous indignation in the jargon of Jung, Freud, and Adler.

I think our function—those, that is, in a position of mental hesitation, as I am—is to go on spreading the gospel in our own way, and hope for the best. I know that sounds milk-and-watery. But still, you never know. (I expect the fact of the matter is, that I am temperamentally unfitted to face the realities of the situation; and I rather fancy, if we would but examine ourselves honestly and speak the naked truth, that there is a number of us in a like state. Still, that does not alter the fact that we are what we are, does it?)

I do hope someone else will make a better show of it than I have done in this letter. I almost feel now as if I had set out over-boldly to defend "the last ditch" and instead of doing so had sat down in the M.M.-eadow, near at hand to g-g-ather E.P.-p-primroses.

"CHEESEMITE."

## SOCIAL CREDIT PROPAGANDA.

Sir,—P. T. K., in his excellent letter last week, speaks of "honest resistance." He says there is "a good deal of quite honest resistance amongst us" to any change in our methods of making Social Credit known. That may be. It is the word "honest" that is interesting. For instance, we may take it for granted that members of the banking profession know and understand the Douglas analysis and proposals. If we were able to talk the matter over with them, and with the highest of high financiers, I feel pretty sure that we should find "a good deal of quite honest resist-

ance" amongst them to any such change in our economic system. Resistance is resistance. Does the fact that the resistance of the International Credit Combine to the Douglas Scheme is, in all probability, "quite honest" make the resistance less, or easier to overcome in any way? Or is it a matter of chivalric feeling—it does us good to know that we are fighting (is "fighting" too strong a word?) an Honest Adversary? Sportsmanship, eh? How comforting it is to know—to feel, at any rate—that the completely effective resistance to Social Credit on the part of bankers and financiers is—quite honest!

S. R.

## CONFESSIOINAL?

Sir,—In connection with a point in the correspondence in your pages on S. C. Propaganda the following reflection may be of interest.

Abraham Lincoln said: "You can fool all the people some of the time; you can fool some of the people all the time; but you cannot fool all the people all the time." Lincoln was a great man and an essentially noble man, and he has now become a god. But to attain to a position so important that his untimely death was one of the worst calamities that ever befell his nation he had also to be a great politician.

Is it likely that he would have uttered the above words unless he had had considerable experience in trying?  
P. T. K.

## Retrospect.

OCTOBER 15, 1925.

Conservative Party Conference—Mr. Garvin's comments—our excess of imports.

Sir Josiah Stamp interviewed by Mr. Harold Begbie—his "principle" that economic values are not the same thing as purchasing-power—harder work and more production wanted.

Mr. Bernard Baruch gives £50,000 to the Walter Page School of International Relations for research into how to abolish profiteering during war. A few biographical references to Mr. Baruch.

OCTOBER 14, 1926.

Post-Office cheques—the T.U.C.'s request for this. Anglo-German relations—negotiations at Col. Ashfield's house.

Mr. Henry Ford on international competition. Mr. Foster on the re-investment problem—his conclusions contradict Mr. Ford's.

Mr. Alexander Dunbar's campaign for the instalment purchase system in Britain.

A Note on the "Protocols" (Editorial). They must be read as the private minutes of an international Cabinet of bankers.

Heterodoxy in Propaganda. (Letter of protest by Mr. Reckitt with reply by Mr. Brenton.)

OCTOBER 13, 1927.

The Bank of Montreal's new policy—making friends with the farmers.

The *Wall Street Journal* discusses the chances of an Anglo-American War—refers to Rothermere's dismissal of Marlowe and Caird (editor and managing director of the famous "Uncle Daily Mail") following the publication of the famous "Uncle Shylock" attack—also to Rothermere's letter of apology.

The Labour Party Conference and the sur-tax. The Lord Chief Justice's attack on the new system of government by Departmental Orders.

The *United States and the British Empire III*. (By C. H. Douglas.)

OCTOBER 11, 1928.

Mr. Norman Angell becomes editor of Foreign Affairs—his appeal for support—"it is the opinion of the ordinary citizen which ultimately settles these things."

Mr. A. J. Cook considered as the militant "Foreign Minister" for the miners—the analogy with Sir Austen Chamberlain's representation of Britain abroad—both ultimately want to get jobs and earnings for their "countries."

The Labour Party decides to press for a non-political corporation to control the Bank of England. Mr. Snowden agrees, but with emphasis on the "non-political."

Expository section (in the Notes). The right relations of work, wages, doles, leisure and consumption shown by a simple arithmetical illustration.

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