THE

NEW AGE

INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER."

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE AND ART

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

We made reference some time ago to the Scottish National Party; and readers will have noted in our issue of last week its decision to investigate Major Douglas's credit proposals. In our issue of May 15 appeared a review of Mr. Bell's book, *Rip Van Scotland*, the central aim of which was to emphasise the fact that without financial self-determination there can be no such thing as national self-government, and to point out that Major Douglas's proposals are the only ones before the public which will enable a nation to establish and preserve its financial self-determination.

* * *

As we see the situation we would affirm that the real problem of Scottish nationalist leaders is how to mobilise the hearts of the Scots for the ideal of self-determination on the one hand, while, on the other, educating the brains of the Scots to resist the offer of a spurious scheme of self-determination. We have not the slightest doubt that already there are several alternative draft schemes of this character pigeon-holed away "somewhere in London" ready to be planted in turn onto Scotland directly the nationalist movement becomes important enough to be treated with. They are graded in an ascending order of innocence, and will be produced and displayed in that order until one of them slips past the wits of the Scottish negotiators. That is the strategy which Scotland has to meet.

* * *

Fortunately there are signs that some of the leaders of the movement are up to the trick. In addition to those we have just mentioned, there is the appearance of the first issue of *The Modern Scot* ("The Organ of the Scottish Renaissance"), a two-shilling quarterly published at 136, Nethergate, Dundee. It began in April, and will be published in July, October and January. The first number contains fifty-five pages. Major Douglas writes five pages on "Delusions in Regard to Money, and Their Effect." There is also a review of Mr. Bell's book occupying just over two pages. In a footnote to this review the editor announces that—

> "We hope in further issues of *The Modern Scot* to deal fully with what is known as the Douglas Theorem. Meanwhile we recommend to our readers Major Douglas's *Economic Democracy, Social Credit,* and other works."

In the same sense as "possession is nine points of the law," to know exactly what you want is nine points of diplomacy. Though certitude may not guarantee victory, incertitude inevitably spells defeat. The astute diplomat on the other side will put up a show of resistance just at that point along the battle line where he wishes his opponent to break through. And so, in the present case, the Scottish National Party will have to watch out that High Finance, which is behind London diplomacy, does not insidiously assume the direction of the Party's strategy.

* * *

For example, if the few facts and the brief reasoning which Major Douglas presents so clearly in his article are dispassionately deliberated upon, there ought to be no danger of electoral self-government being confused with economic self-determination. The difference, as he well points out, is the difference between a leasehold and a freehold. That is to say, it is a matter of deciding (1) whether you want to become a freeholder, or (2) whether you want to secure an alteration of some of the terms of the lease, or (3) whether you want the right to comply with its existing terms in your own way. In coming to that decision you have first to realise exactly what it is that makes you desire any change at all. In the case of Scotland, the emphasis is rightly laid on the economic situation in that country. This situation, though it may be worse than in England, does not differ in principle from the situation in England. In fact, it is a situation common to all the countries of the world, no matter under what political systems their populations try to make a living.

* * *

That consideration alone should dispose at once of the notion that a Scottish Parliament is in itself

the required remedy. Before a single thought is given to electoral separation a new Charter of Independence must be written. The Charter must break all precedents in this one respect; that *its preamble must on no account be formulated by the bankers or any other interests associated with them.*

* * *

The *Daily Mail* of June 2 contains a long article on the fusion of the *Daily News* and *Daily Chronicle*. The following facts are given in it. In 1928 following the death of Sir David Yule (the Indian merchant, and Lord Reading's associate—see THE NEW AGE of June 2) Mr. William Harrison bought the *Daily Chronicle*. Mr. Harrison was, at that time, the Chairman of the Inveresk Paper Company, Ltd. The price he paid was given as £1,500,000, or exactly half the figure at which Mr. Lloyd George had sold it in 1927 to the Yule—Catto—Reading group.

"Last year was a critical year for many great enterprises. For the *Chronicle* it was a period of great financial embarrassment, and at the end of 1929 Mr. Harrison resigned—as he stated, under pressure—from the chairmanship of the Inveresk Paper Co. and associated undertakings, and was succeeded by Mr. B. H. Binder, *the nominee of the company's bankers*." (Our italics.)

Last February, in a circular issued by Mr. Harrison to the Company's shareholders, he stated that the Company had an investment in the *Daily Chronicle* and *Sunday News* of the face value of £1,142,500. In the circular he made the statement:

"Last year the *Chronicle* and *Sunday News* only made £25,000 [profit], and I think that the new editions of the *Chronicle* and *Sunday News* cannot be expected to make anything but losses for the next two years."

The *Daily Mail's* comment is: "Ominous words charged with purport in relation to a property which had changed hands for £3,000,000 only a few years previously!"

* * *

One section of the *Daily Mail's* article consists of an interview with Sir Robert Donald, who was editor-in-chief of the *Daily Chronicle* from 1902 to 1918. Sir Robert regrets the "passing of a great newspaper," pointing out that it was the first paper, under W. E. Fletcher, a Ruskinian, to "show sympathy with Labour." After Fletcher came H. W. Massingham, who "distinguished himself by making Rosebery Prime Minister and then turning against him." When the Boer War broke out in 1899, Massingham "made the paper pro-Boer *and had to resign*." (Our italics.) When Sir Robert Donald succeeded to the direction of the *Daily Chronicle*, and became the "first editor" who had "complete control of the editorial and business sides of the paper," he "captured many young men" who have since made reputations in journalism and literature. One of these was Mr. Ramsay MacDonald. Sir Robert Donald says:

"Mr. Ramsay MacDonald acted as a special correspondent for the *Daily Chronicle* in all the great Dominions and *in India*. In those days Mr. MacDonald *depended for his living on free-lance journalism*. He wished to visit all the Dominions to improve his political education. He came to me before he went, and I ordered a series of articles which covered his expenses." (Our italics.)

Sir Robert considers that the *Chronicle* suffered the "first blow" to its "prestige" when Mr. Lloyd George got hold of it, because it had then to "shape" its political news to its political policy at the sacrifice of its "independence." Then with regard to the technique of its administration Sir Robert observes that during the last ten years the *Chronicle* has had seven or eight different chairmen and managing directors, reflecting a "lack of continuity" which must have affected the paper adversely.

* * *

The concluding section of the *Daily Mail's* article consists of a financial history of the *Chronicle*. The following are the main features:—

1918. Taken over by United Newspapers (1918), Ltd., a private company. Rt. Hon. C. A. McCurdy chairman, and Major G. Lloyd George one of the directors. Capital, £1,225,000.

1925. Company converted into a public company—capital rearranged—a public issue made of £550,000, in Preference shares.

1927. The Daily Chronicle Investment Corporation, Ltd., formed—Lord Reading chairman—"authorised capital £3,000,000, to acquire more than 99 per cent. of the Ordinary share capital of the company." The capital, subscribed in cash or guaranteed, was:

£800,000 First Preference shares (public subscription).

£650,000 Second Preference shares (Yule and Catto).

£100,000 Ordinary shares (Yule and Catto).

£150,000 Deferred shares (1s.) (Yule and Catto).

£50,000 Second Preference shares (Lloyd George).

Total, £1,750,000.

"The new corporation, in effect, purchased from Mr. Lloyd George the whole, or nearly the whole, of the 616,505 Ordinary Shares of United Newspapers (1918), Ltd., for £2,900,000, payable as to £1,750,000 in cash and as to £1,150,000 in Ordinary shares."

1928. Control passes to the Inveresk Paper Co., Ltd.

1929 (December) this company postpones dividends on its Preference shares, "in order to retain all its cash resources in the business." Simultaneously Harrison resigns, and Binder, a City chartered accountant, is appointed chairman *pro tem.*

We apologise to our readers in general for recording so much detail, but there are some of them who will know what use to make of it.

* * *

The facts here reviewed have, of course, to be considered in relation to others given in previous issues of THE NEW AGE, particularly those of April 24 (when our suspended Notes on Lord Astor and Anglo-American naval relations were reprinted and inset); May 8 (America and the Irish question, and Mr. Banister's leaflet on Jew-Irish influences in journalism); May 15 (Mr. Gandhi's agitation and Lord Reading's position, with a preliminary allusion to the Marconi Affair of 1912); May 22 (a full account of the Marconi Inquiry and the Samuel-Montagu-Isaacs association with Indian finance); and May 29 (Sir John Simon and India). There is enough material in these numbers for the building up of a tolerably intelligible picture by those readers who have the time and patience to assemble and measure it.

* * *

We think that when surveying the period over which the events here referred to have taken place, the change in world-financial policy should be allowed for. From 1900 to 1914 high-financial initiative resided in London. Since 1918 it has resided in New York. The transition period was 1914-1918. So whatever events occurred in the first period should be interpreted as manifestations of what may be called "Sterling" policy, and those which occurred in the second as subserving "Dollar" policy. Taking the second period, we first observe that in or about 1918 Mr. Montagu Norman becomes the first *permanent* Governor of the Bank of England. In the same year Mr. Lloyd George acquires the *Daily Chronicle*. This was during the Coalition Government, when nobody knew what was likely to be the result of the next General Election. Of the two elements in the Coalition the Liberal Party, being anti-Landlord and anti-Protection, has always been a preferable instrument to the bankers. So it was to the advantage of the City that the influence of the Liberal wing of the Coalition should be promoted. Mr. Lloyd George, then, was, as banker of the Bankers' Party, permitted (and probably assisted) to acquire a newspaper under conditions which seem to have given him full and exclusive control of its policy. Three years later—the Coalition Government still being in office, Mr. Lloyd

George appoints Lord Reading to be Viceroy of India. The appointment must be taken to have been approved, if not inspired, by Mr. Norman in particular and by City interests in general. It was a bankers' appointment. But, for the reason that the policy of British bankers was subject to the policy of the Federal Reserve Board of the United States, this appointment may be regarded as an American appointment. Remembering what Dr. Page had said about the Empire falling into America's hands, and also what Lord Rothermere has been declaring during the last fortnight on the vital importance of India to "us" (should it read U.S.?) the probability that Benjamin Strong was consulted by Mr. Norman about the selection of the Viceroy is heightened to a moral certainty—in which case Benjamin preferred a Jew.

* * *

If so, was it not natural? Let us put ourselves in the place of Wall Street finance and Washington diplomacy. Suppose that, owing to a protracted war in which Britain did not participate until towards the end, our City magnates and Foreign Office foresaw, or hoped, that the hegemony of South America would pass into British hands. And suppose that London and Westminster were in a position to dictate Washington's choice of a Viceroy of South America. If it were possible to get away with it without arousing public suspicions in America, the choice would naturally fall upon a 100-per-cent. Briton—a man born and nurtured in the society and traditions of this country. But rejecting this as impracticable, would not the choice fall upon someone who was 100-per-cent. international—which is to say *non-national*: a man who would regard himself—quite sincerely, it may be—as a "citizen of the *world*" (as Professor Levy called it in his article which we reviewed last week)? If, on this hypothesis, our Foreign Office had known its business, it would have seen to it that Washington nominated somebody like Mr. Barney Baruch as Viceroy of South America. His job there would have been to construct a financial framework of reference within which the post-war political legislation of South America would have to be fitted. It would have suited him down to the ground; for, as Lord Castlerosse observed recently in the *Daily Express*, "finance is the Semite's fun"; and, as we have already indicated, his conscience would not require him to consider the interests of any nation *as such*, but the interests of the world in general. And since, as a congenital financier yielding loyally to "sound financial doctrine," he would assent to the principle that the nation possessing the predominant financial power in the world should initiate and direct the policies of all other nations, he would work in the interests of the nation that possessed that power—and *because* it possessed that power. It would be a matter of instinct with him. . . . So Mr. Baruch would have taken his orders from London via Washington without the slightest compunction. He would have considered himself a Servant of Jehovah.

* * *

On the eve of the Russian revolution (*during the war, observe!*) the British and American Governments connived at something like the same dodge. The *Dearborn Independent*, in its series of anti-Semite articles, has stated that at that time Mr. Lloyd George negotiated with Washington for the release of Trotsky, who had been interned there, and who proceeded to Russia almost immediately; also that the New York ghettos were combed to select a suitable cargo of Jewish experts to ship to Moscow to handle the Revolution. This move synchronised almost exactly with the German Government's careful and solicitous conduct of Lenin in a special train to the nearest point to the Russian frontier.

The rationale of these acts is pretty plain. Whatever political government was eventually going to emerge from the Russian Revolution, the international bankers wanted to make sure that it would create an economic system which would work within a "sound financial" constitution. The Jew, therefore, was the medium *par excellence*; for in the Jew are combined the *flair* for organisation plus the instinctive acceptance of high-financial axioms.

* * *

Having now made out a *prima facie* case for America's having planted an Isaacs on India, we can adduce the same considerations to suggest that America also planted a Samuel on Palestine. And in both these countries we have seen symptoms of incipient revolution follow. The only distinction is that whereas in Russia the disaffection of the people first showed itself before the arrival of the Jews, in Palestine and India it occurred afterwards. Of course, to readers unacquainted with Major Douglas's credit-theorem this distinction will be held to amount to an enormous difference. But not to any student of Social Credit. For he knows, and can demonstrate, that revolution, civil war, or international war are mathematically predictable from the economic point of view and psychologically predictable from the political point of view. The bankers are the creators of revolutions. The germ of violence is contained in their basic axioms. And, to do justice to the Jew, he is not the prime cause of the trouble: he is more accurately described as the intermediate exciting cause. He is what the chemist would describe as a catalyst, a substance which has the property of *hastening the completion* of a reaction without being a factor in the *causation* of it. The catalyst shortens the duration of an otherwise slower, though inevitable, process. It acts just as moonlight does on lovers. And so, in the light of this analogy, we can make our peace with the Jews by saying that whereas their peculiar genius is particularly adaptable to evil uses under the existing philosophy of economics preached by high-finance, it is, by the same token, capable of immeasurable good under the alternative philosophy of which the Social Credit system is designed to be the instrument. When Production intends marriage with Consumption, then let the full moon shine out and the child be born. But just yet, while the illicit union of these twain can only result in the bastard progeny of wheat-pools and destitution, let us have a black sky.

* * *

The mention of the name of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald as having been a travelling correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle* is an amusing reminder that capitalism was quite ready to help forward in his career a man whose political objective was to overturn the capitalist system. The interests behind the *Chronicle* at that time saw no reason to interfere with Sir Robert Donald's discretion in the matter of ordering articles from a wandering fellow-tribesman. There came a time when Mr. Ramsay MacDonald was able to give up free-lance journalism, because he could make his living as a Member of Parliament. In the meantime, as in his case so in the case of the Labour movement generally, the contingency of a Labour Administration in this country became a probability, and was freely and calmly discussed in the capitalist newspapers. There is little doubt that already the Liberal and Conservative interests had agreed on making Mr. MacDonald the Labour Premier. His visit to India has been referred to in these pages before. It took place at some time between 1921 and 1924, while Lord Reading was Viceroy; and it was common gossip that he was assisted to go out there to learn what his Lordship had to teach him about the principles and practice of running an Imperial Government. All his political followers of course thought that he was going there to

make an independent investigation of Indian problems with the object of framing a new policy for Socialism to adopt and administer when it reached power: instead of which his investigation took the form of listening to confidential reasons why, when he became Prime Minister, he would have to legislate conformably with an already established financial policy. Having received these confidences and undergone expert tuition he was politely bowed out of India and returned to London with the enhanced prestige (in Socialist circles) of a man who was "going to tell 'em what's what," while in actuality the Mansion-House magnates were probably passing round to each other a certificate from Lord Reading stating: "I've told the fellow what's what, and he will do no harm." And he hasn't.

* * *

In the meantime, and up to 1924, when Mr. MacDonald took office, other Socialist Ministers-designate were being looked after by Lord Astor, at whose dinners they probably received instruction and advice somewhat like Lord Reading's but spoken with a dollar-accent. At the same time the deeper confidences must have been reserved for Mr. MacDonald, and this hypothesis will explain two things which evoked criticism from his own followers when he was Prime Minister: (1) his holding of more than the one office, and (2) his attitude of reserve and reticence towards his colleagues in the Cabinet. It stands to reason that however careful the instruction of the Labour Ministers, they were new hands at the game, and when faced later on with the task of explaining to their disappointed constituents why the Labour Cabinet's "what's what" was nothing like the Labour Candidate's "what's what," they might yield to the temptation to put themselves right by revealing something of the real "what's what" that governs all the other "what's whats." So the fewer of them that knew the truth the safer the secret. They had first to get accustomed to the democratic doctrine that the duty of a Minister is to give the people what is good for them, and not what they ask for. To-day, in their second spell of office, these Ministers have learned the lesson, and subscribe as heartily as do Liberals or Conservatives to the doctrine that the fundamental test of "sound government" by any Party is the dissatisfaction of its own constituents, and that the fundamental test of sound government in principle is the dissatisfaction of the whole community. Mr. Churchill expressed the same doctrine in other words when he observed that the test of the soundness of any financial policy was the unpleasantness of its consequences.

* * *

We must say a word about Mr. B. H. Binder, the bankers' nominee who replaced Mr. Harrison in the chairmanship of the Inveresk Paper Co. It will be remembered that this company was involved in the hullabaloo which Mr. Gilbert Frankau caused by printing, in *Britannia*, a statement about Mr. Garvin's editorship of the "Encyclopaedia Britannica" in relation to American foreign policy. Mr. Frankau retired from the editorship under terms which it was said involved the payment to him of very substantial compensation. This happened not long before the retirement of Mr. Harrison, and may be connected with it. Mr. Binder, who is, so far as we know, still chairman of the Inveresk Paper Co., is one of the trustees of a new company which will control the *Daily News and Chronicle*. The *Daily News* belongs to a company called News and Westminster, Ltd., controlled by the "Daily News" Trust. The *Daily Chronicle* belongs to a company called United Newspapers, Ltd., controlled by the Daily Chronicle Investment Corporation. These two companies are to hold shares in equal proportions in a new company which will take over the copyrights of both the merged newspapers. Control of this new company will be vested in five trustees. Their names are Mr. L. J. Cadbury; Mr. W. T. Layton; Lord Cowdray; Mr. B. H. Binder and Mr. J. C. Akerman. This is all that the *Daily Mail* can tell us. But real control commences at the point where it ceases to be mentioned; and we are left free to speculate on the identity and nationality of the advisers whom the Big Five Trustees will consult. International Peace and International Free Trade constitute the basic policy of the new paper, as it announced in its first number. Perhaps it will develop into the British organ of the Bank of International Settlements.

* * *

At the bottom end of the picture where the humanities obscurely lurk, if you put your nose close to the canvas you will count something like twelve hundred individuals walking about Fleet Street with no money in their pockets, and no prospect of a new job. All of them are out of work directly or indirectly as a consequence of this fusion of two Liberal newspapers. The time of the year chosen to dismiss these men aggravates their hardship. If this had been done only a week or two earlier they could have found temporary work as relief hands in other newspaper offices while the regular hands were taking their holidays. But by the time of the announcement all these temporary engagements had been fixed up. Of course, it may be said that one man's meat is another man's poison, and that the casual worker has as much need for an income as an organised worker. But in terms of mental suffering the condition of a worker suddenly plunged into destitution from a position of apparent permanent security is worse than that occasioned to an intermittent worker when he misses the chance of a job. It is a matter of psychological adaptation to material conditions—and no appeal to any principle of justice will alter the fact that a man who descends from a wage standard of life to a dole-standard feels it more sorely than one who has been continuously or intermittently on the dole. However, we need not pursue the subject, because an earlier timing of the fusion would, after all, have only given the dismissed men a week or so longer to prepare themselves for the declension into poverty.

* * *

The difference between 1,200 men drawing, say, £3 wages a week and a £1 dole a week, comes to over £120,000 a year. This roughly measures the amount of business which will be lost to London shopkeepers. The dole works out at £60,000 a year; and the cost will be a charge on the public. In the last analysis, of course, the whole £180,000 a year is bound to be borne by private individuals. And it is practically a net loss, because the price of the merged newspaper is the same as was the price of each. Conversely it is largely a net profit to the new paper. Call it £150,000 and capitalise it at 5 per cent. and you arrive at the sum of £3,000,000, which is what Mr. Lloyd George got out of Lord Reading for the *Daily Chronicle*. It is a striking reflection that whereas a few weeks ago we were paying our pennies and supporting two bodies of printing operatives, to-day we are paying the same number of pennies to support one body, and being priced and taxed in addition to support the other. The only comfort we can draw from this episode is that it is creating a psychology conducive to the overthrow of the present system of finance, and creating it among a class of workers whose knowledge and skill are indispensable to that system. When we remember that some of them had the courage and temper to administer a jolt to the *Daily Mail* on the eve of the General Strike in 1926, and then consider what has been happening since, we feel more and more confident that as soon

some body of soldier-statesmen declare for the Social Credit policy the workers of Fleet Street will spontaneously white-out on their own responsibility Rothermere's and Beaverbrook's blather, and print the New Economic Charter instead. What could stop them?

Implications of Social Credit.

A social credit state in being, that is, the Economic State instead of the political state, implies certain definite alterations or adjustments, whether brought about suddenly or gradually, some of which can be foreseen.

Within the economic frame-work of the Economic State we should expect to find certain changes, and if these changes had not taken place, or *were not taking place*, we should know that the Economic State had not yet been established, and that we were dealing with a political state shamming to be —passing itself off as—the Economic State.

For example, in the Economic State we should expect to find:—

No one looking for work—no Unemployment Problem.

Everyone with a bank account, without distinction.

Those needed in industry well paid for their services, over and above their national industrial dividend.

Mechanised production increasing.

Human labour (within the industrial system) decreasing.

Research and invention stimulated and set free in all directions.

No invitation to invest money in industry, and no desire or need to do so.

No need or desire to insure either persons or property against any kind of risk.

No taxation of any sort whatever.

No speculation in stocks and shares.

No cash-charges for such national services as postage, transport, etc., etc.

Voluntary evacuation of slum areas by slum-dwellers.

Keen competition in the quality of goods for sale; no market for shoddy goods.

No Charity Organisations of any kind. No Flag Days for anything.

An enormous increase and release in creative play, in travel, in sport, in exploration, in daring experiments, and in all the arts.

The individual, free from the economic bug-bear, and finding it fairly easy to supply all his material needs, whims, and desires, turning at last to examine—himself.

No strikes and no lock-outs.

A rapid decrease in litigation of every kind.

A decrease in suicides and feeble-minded people.

No crimes committed for money.

An enormous advance in domestic labour-saving devices and organisation.

Earlier marriages; fewer divorces.

No prohibitive measures; less drunkenness.

More laughter; less sniggering.

No need for industry to take part in the scramble for export markets.

Needed imports flowing in in return for a real surplus export.

No economic need for war.

No possible threat of revolution, nor any sort of civil strife.

No National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children; and less work for the R.S.P.C.A.

No voting for political parties.

No need to advertise goods.

No bankruptcies.

No appeals for money when hospitals or cathedrals are "falling down."

No woman forced to "hunt" for a man in order to escape economic insecurity.

No frustrated impulses.

A great advance in individual self-discipline.

Less illness.

Better-looking people.

More beautiful clothing, houses, etc.

No need to lick anyone's boots or to kow-tow in order to get on.

Greater respect for sheer ability; less and less respect for self-important humbugs.

Fewer cranks, fanatics, and reformers; more interesting individuals.

Less and less herd suggestion.

No need for Press stunting; newspapers with fewer words (no insurance schemes), no political clap-trap, news properly sorted and set out.

Less mystical twaddle.

Splendid colour—Pageantry—on certain occasions.

All educational institutions teaching children and adults *not* to fit the industrial system; education dealing only with the development of the impulse of the individual to live splendidly, with full vitality, well tempered, and keen to be alive on this earth.

Everyone minding his, or her, own business and not poking his, or her, nose into other people's affairs.

The Government—the Organising Clique—making sure that peace is maintained, and maintaining the peace by allowing no sort of individual or group interference with the free economic inter-play of Production-and-Consumption; that is, maintaining the equation of Consumption to Production, and thereby minding *its* own business, which is: to allow and ensure the economic security of every man, woman, and child within the Economic State.

The above are jotted down at random in no proper sequence. There is, of course, a great number of other changes or adjustments implied in the introduction of social credit as a working economic system. The point to bear in mind is that *practically none of them would have to be enforced.* They would follow naturally—they would happen—after the establishment of the Economic State.

S. R.

"At the recent bankers' dinner the Chancellor of the Exchequer opined that the fall in commodity prices is 'a common world cause of trade depression.' One wonders what he meant exactly. If prices fall, naturally the producer is hit: this creates unemployment, and to the extent of the unemployment there is reduced spending capacity. The reduction of that capacity spells trade depression. All that is agreed. But how is one to read such a remark, coming from so authoritative a source, except as expressing the speaker's belief that it points to a primary cause? This, quite obviously, the commodity-price decline is not. It is first an effect of bad business and only after that a secondary cause. Prices do not drop arbitrarily, without reason—though often the reasons may be complex and obscure: there must first be a cause. The root cause, as we stated last week, is, in the broadest terms, the inability of people all over the globe to consume commodities at the rate at which in recent years they have been produced. Conditions which in the last analysis are ultimate have disabled them from buying."—*The Hairdressers' Weekly Journal*, May 31, 1930.

Gnosis and Science.

The cause of Dr. Harvey-Gibson's undertaking a history of science* was his inability to think of one less than fifty years old when a friend asked him to recommend a book of reasonable size which would give him a general sketch of the growth of science from early to present times. Dr. Harvey-Gibson died in 1929 while the early proofs were under revision. Revised by another hand, "Two Thousand Years of Science" is a compact history of the pure sciences, Astronomy, Geology, Physics, Chemistry and Biology. The author has no pets to stroke but is content to give, in a temperate, simple, readable style, a record, and a very full record, of the cumulative discoveries in these branches of knowledge. Read between the lines the book is a beautiful history of the development of the human mind in the understanding of natural law, in the preparation of exact formulae for calculating the quantities of force involved, and unifying the forces in the attempt to perceive their essential nature. The author, while collating the history of science, has remained entirely scientist. He has observed the discoveries of the past with the scientific eye, and set down their errors and successes with the same admirable detachment as if recording research experiments.

A full review of the contents of a book which, in spite of containing only about 350 pages, constitutes an orderly work of reference is out of the question. Two reflections only must suffice. Twenty years ago many writers were begging for some unifying science, apart from philosophy, to bring the results of the specialised sciences, since the details could not possibly be so brought, within the scope of the cultivated mind. Modern atomic research has broken down many of the partitions between the specialised departments of science, and unified them. Although the inside of the atom has made the universe a vastly more complex construction than it could be as long as the atom remained uncreateable and indestructible, it has become possible for the cultivated mind, under the guidance of the modern chemist, physicist, and astronomer, to perceive a convergence of direction. The universe, becoming more complex, has become more full of possibilities, and a more attractive place to think in and upon.

A history of science is nowadays incomplete without a history of psychology, not because there are land-marks of discovery in psychology about which there is similar agreement, qualified by the effects of profounder subsequent discoveries, to what there is in chemistry and physics. In spite of the concept "libido," of course, the contents of mind, ideas, feelings, and instincts, not for the time being in consciousness, are still considered by psychologists largely in terms of spatial pictures, very unscientifically indeed. The Behaviourists are mainly observed without a hypothesis, hoping for something to turn up. Nevertheless, there is a science of psychology which is both experimental and to some extent prophetic. Some time in the future mathematical formula may even be used in it for scientific calculation, the "ego" still being safeguarded by remaining as arbiter and calculator on behalf of its own destiny. If science is organised common-sense, as Huxley said, psychology is the correcter of the personal equation, the means of checking whether individual common-sense is sufficiently detached for its conclusions to be attachable to the body of knowledge. As one realises when following the progress of science through such a work as this, science is the contribution of the Western world to the Universal Gnosis. It has revealed such wonders and given such command over environment, by calculation in pure science, and by interference with nature in applied science, that the West is often in danger of allowing enthusiasm for science to give it the notion that science is the only or, at any rate, the supreme Universal Gnosis. "When one has weighed the sun in the balance, measured the steps of the moon, and mapped out the seven heavens star by star, there still remains one's self." Psychology, with the honest observation it is now receiving, being freed from preconceptions, and well out of the scholastic age, is probably the doorway through which the various Universal Gnoses may pass and mingle together.

Dr. Millikan is among the many who look forward to the scientific spirit in sociology. These have their minds chiefly bent on such things as birth-control, eugenics, criminal reform, and the segregation or even sterilisation of the "unfit" by social deed. But that would not be the scientific spirit in sociology, but rather the experimental application of sciences other than sociology to certain individuals whose lack of Nature's favours and society's justice rendered them a nuisance or danger to certain other individuals. The application of the scientific spirit to sociology would entail an examination of society, as to what its purpose was, as to what its existence implied in social responsibility. It would require consideration of functions, rewards, and responsibilities, in relation to this purpose. In short, the political or sociological Gnosis would be quite distinct, for a long time at least, from the Gnosis which science is at present; and it would need psychology as a forerunner to give the observer the requisite detachment. In the Western world, despite all its science, there is no true politics or sociology. There are only individual views cutting across conflicting values, with the result that society limps along abominably, alternating discontent with revolution.

The reason for the introduction of a plea for the recognition of knowledge as Gnosis, that is, as bound up with the destiny of mankind, and not pure in the sense of the higher mathematics at Cambridge—"of no earthly use to anybody"—into a review of a history of science is in Dr. Harvey-Gibson's "envoi." There he refers to the purpose of it all:

> "Some are loath to think that a being evolved with so much labour through countless eons of time should perish and leave nothing behind it but a memory . . . which (extinction or preservation) is nearer the truth is a question that has puzzled the sages of the past, as it will doubtless puzzle the generations of wise men yet unborn. . . ."

The fact is, of course, that on this question the West has no Gnosis. It has not, as India did long ago, thought out the question as far as it can be thought out, by minds prepared for the task in detachment—or disinterestedness—and collected the results of a body of knowledge that had to be developed to be surpassed. That part of the anarchic "Every man for himself as thinker" philosophy of the West gains most conviction from the cultivated thinker where it approaches in conceptions the accumulated body of philosophical knowledge of the East. If these Gnoses, all of which are necessary to the orderly management of the world by men are ever to be constellated, in one human mind, psychology will be one of the centres round which the pattern of the greater Gnosis can form.

One last reference to Dr. Harvey-Gibson's excellent book. Would that he might, and since he cannot, will not somebody, correlate the book with a history of applied science, showing its interworkings with pure science, and to what extent invention and discovery, scientific and geographical, have been primary and interdependent.

R. M.

* "Two Thousand Years of Science." By R. J. Harvey-Gibson, C.B.E., D.L., M.A., D.Sc., F.R.S.E. (A. and C. Black.) 12s. 6d.

Drama.

The Plough and the Stars: Duchess.

Those who decry "The Plough and the Stars" by pointing out its technical crudities recall the boy who asked, "Who stuffed that white owl?" Let them have their fill, for after they have finished the fact is left that "The Plough and the Stars" is an unquestionable work of genius. Its crudities are due to its being so intensely of life, and having so little to do, in consequence, with the urbanity—in all senses—of literature. Historically, the play is an event. It celebrates in the theatre the coming-of-age of the labouring classes. In other words, it is portraiture of the working-classes at least as realistic as that of the middle-classes by Strindberg or Ibsen, with far less of false romanticism than any play that Shaw could have written. It does not treat of one institution only, such as marriage or slum-landlordism, nor expound one simple *cliché* such as one law for the rich and another for the poor, in the manner of Galsworthy. Although it is nailed down in recorded time to 1915 and 1916, and in place to a Dublin tenement, the vision it gives of present-day society, its ideals and characters, pretensions and realities, and the abyss that divides the crucified thief from self-consciousness, is as the landscape vision on the mountains at night when lightning splits the sky.

"The Plough and the Stars" signifies a definite intensification, and widening of the horizons, of consciousness. This is in no way related, of course, to the class-consciousness of the class-war propagandist. The consciousness at stake is human. Those to whom the representation is delivered, namely, the audience, can no more help suffering the shame of a fall, and finding themselves guilty of the failure of human responsibility, than can the characters which are revealed, when understanding comes upon them; and for the characters a prayer for indemnity can be repeated on which the audience, with enlightenment before it, has no claim: Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.

It is not that O'Casey's folk are either miserable or sinners. It is shame, not sin, which is miserable, sin generally being the reverse. For by far the greater part of its duration "The Plough and the Stars" is played to an accompaniment of unrestrained laughter from the auditorium. But it is one thing to laugh at a clown, and another to laugh at the clown mentality in real situations. Barrie enamoured himself to the sentimental and romantic public by arranging for those who had never been anything but little children invariably to emerge triumphant from the most threatening complexities. O'Casey has enamoured himself to a few lovers of truth and growth by showing that the clown mentality—which is the mentality of a child who has never been anything else—invariably sows and reaps chaos. Members of the audience who have understood O'Casey's work sometimes join in the laughter, but theirs is a choking, sad contribution. In "The Plough and the Stars" O'Casey has not merely officiated as the wrath of God; when he tries to do so he becomes less creative. Fluther Good, Bessie Burgess, The Young Covey, Jack Clitheroe, his wife Nora, and the rest, are not damned as, say, the teacher, the trade union leader, Jack Boyle and Joxer, are damned in "Juno and the Paycock." In "The Plough and the Stars" the innocence of ignorance is found guilty, but mercy is granted. Its characters, although most of them shirk the task of living up to their pretensions, nevertheless do the decent, even heroic, services to their fellow creatures, common to their kind, as when Bessie fetches the doctor, or wears herself out and is killed through nursing and caring for Nora; as when even Fluther is thanked by Mr. Gogan for doing, in spite of the shooting in the streets, the necessary running about in preparation for Mollser's funeral. It is because the working-classes are human, with merit and worth, that O'Casey holds their likenesses before the eyes of men, less to scourge them than to grieve for them.

Some critics have said that O'Casey's method is simply the old one of look on this picture and on that. Apart from the fact that this method offers so great a scope for selection that one artist may draw attention only to his method while another achieves his ironic purpose, O'Casey's method is much more. Again and again the two pictures are so part of one another that a sentence carries a book-ful of associations, social, moral, and political, as when the soldier remarks that "we've plugged a woman of the house," and adds, "But we couldn't take no chances"; or when Nora admits that she burned the letter announcing to Clitheroe his appointment as Commandant. While it is true that O'Casey contrasts irresponsible comedy against its tragic consequences so rapidly that its effect on the audience is that of a sort of battering-ram, his theme requires violence if it is to land home. He has assaulted human—not class merely—unconsciousness and irresponsibility where these were most impregnably fortified, and pray that he has shaken them.

It is good to have the Irish Players together again, and good for London that they are in London. Production by the Irish Players is more than interpretation, it is a considerable share in the finished creation. In every performance there is evidence of intimate knowledge of the characters being presented. Sinclair can do more in a second with his back turned to the audience, with the tilt of his head or the crossing of his feet, than many actors with only words can do in a whole performance. Always the gestures are wide enough, enough before the words are uttered, apposite to the thought, so that the audience is prepared to laugh or cry before the formal words focus their emotion. In the public-house scene Sinclair's movements front stage were a little excessive. His object, of making the whole audience feel that it was a crowd in the pub could be accomplished with less, and would be destroyed by more. Also in the public-house scene I noticed an instance—the first in all the work of the Irish Players I have seen—where other actors than the one speaking indulged in business. While Maire O'Neill speaks—I like the modification of her dialect since last I heard her—it would be better if Tony Quinn and Sara Allgood remained still. Sara Allgood is unquestionably one of the great. To see her sleep is to see great acting. Her every word and movement are magnificent. Tony Quinn is not a new-comer, but he is apparently new to the part of the Young Covey, which is almost inseparably associated with Sidney Morgan. Quinn lacks breadth as yet. He plays the Young Covey as a Communist of the night-cafés of London, and not as if he were a *fitter* as well. He has not, along with his pretence of learning, the ferocious sincerity which the part appears to require. Nora, performed in the previous production by Kathleen O'Regan, of rich voice and presence, is taken this time by Kitty Curling. At the start it is less musical, less Abbey Theatre purpose of preventing the beauty of Irish oratory from perishing, but it improves throughout. In the last act her smile when Bessie is shot is great realism, and all her work in the last act is excellent. The setting of the act outside the tenement is not so fine as the one used previously, and I also preferred the smaller room for the first act, although it was probably forced on the company by the small-size Fortune Theatre. The lighting of the last act has been increased, and one or two episodes that possibly offended the squeamish,

such as the movement of Uncle Peter—magnificently acted by O'Rourke—to put the baby on the floor in the public-house, and the barman's reaction—"You're not going to leave the bloody thing here"—appear to have been cut out. But all said and done, "The Plough and the Stars" is a great play, and the Irish Players are the Irish Players.

PAUL BANKS.

Shakespear Knew.

It is traditional in the stage representation of *Julius Cæsar* to alter Shakespear's obvious delineation of certain characters. However, the policy of a certain theatre management under which I acted in this play was not that of one eye on the box office; so we players were not set to do the usual acting version, but to perform the entire text. This gave our producer a chance to carry out what seems to be Shakespear's intentions. Cæsar was not to be the customary haughty, pompous figure delivering his lines with oratorical effect, but a man whose strength was failing and whom fear had gripped. Cæsar knew he was beset with ambitious enemies, and the scene in the Capitol just before his death was a desperate attempt to assert his will and maintain his failing power. The thought of making Cæsar a weak and timid old man bothered our old-time actor considerably. When he was told not to "pong" (the actor's word for a sing-song delivery) the lines, but to make Cæsar human, he privately let it be known that such new-fangled notions led the drama to the dogs.

The matter that concerned me most was our producer's view of the character of Marcus Antonius, which part I was to play. The blue pencil makes Antony not only a hero, but a blatant hero; what actors call a "showy" part. It was something new to look upon him as a sycophant, flatterer, place-seeker, and, in turn, deceiver, liar, treacherous friend, and finally, when in power, cold-blooded and ruthless. Yet the populace in his time thought him a heroic figure, and it has been found expedient to keep up that illusion in modern times.

"To put the matter briefly," said our producer, "think of the same sort of character in modern politics; for example, ——," naming a contemporary Minister of State. "That made the going easy. It is a great help to an actor to study a living example of some historic personage. I remember how the Press took the matter up and gave space to the discussion of this still specious but unheroic Antony. On the whole they did not agree with presenting the character as Shakespear drew him.

Apart from prejudice there is a commercial reason for this attitude. As in politics so on the stage it pays to have heroes about, and as no man can be a hero all the time, his unlovely moments must be suppressed, otherwise, in actor's parlance, he loses "the sympathy of the audience." But Shakespear gave us all the man; and how well he knew him. Early in the play we see Antony arm in arm with Cæsar returning from the games, telling him bits of gossip and funny stories, all the others standing round exhibiting impatience and exchanging glances till these whisperings and chuckles have ceased. Then Cæsar marks the jealous, angry eyes of Cassius, and expresses his fear of him, which Antony, attitudinising as a care-free, open-hearted fellow, diplomatically endeavours to abate.

After Cæsar's murder Antony is careful enough to send his servant to the Senators at the Capitol and get Brutus' word of honour before he will venture there himself. Brutus' word was the surest pledge in Rome, and Antony, having that, with rare psychological astuteness and dramatic effect immediately offers his breast for their swords:—

> "I do beseech you, if you bear me hard,
> Now, whilst your purpled hands do reek and smoke,
> Fulfil your pleasure, Live a thousand years,
> I shall not find myself so apt to die:
> As here by Cæsar, and by you cut off
> The choice and master spirits of this age."

Having received assurance that their swords "have leaden points" for him, he makes a pact with them saying, "Let each man render me his bloody hand," and begs that he may, to mourn Cæsar—

> "Produce his body in the market place
> And in the pulpit, as becomes a friend
> Speak in the order of his funeral."

Only the sour, cynical, humorous Casca suspects Antony's intentions; but Brutus is a man of such clear honesty himself he does not heed the warning, and is quite satisfied with Antony's promise to speak no ill of the conspirators. Quite the best we see in Antony is his genuine love for Cæsar, but that does not prevent his using Cæsar's death for his own advancement, nor his body as a dramatic exhibit for political ends. Before the funeral oration he sends word to Octavius Cæsar to remain in safety outside the city until the mob are roused. He thus binds Cæsar's possible successor to him by bonds of gratitude. He is a sure and careful plotter.

Brutus first addresses the mob from the forum in his blunt way, giving them a reasoned justification for his share in Cæsar's murder.

Sydney Lee, and other writers, think this fine piece of prose shows Shakespear's tired and ageing hand, because it is in prose. Leaving out of the question the merit of this prose and why such evidence of weariness should come before some of the play's finest verse, I suggest they would not think so if they had ever acted in the play. Verse leads to oratory, and a logical statement is best for the actor in prose. And by this means a clearly defined contrast between Brutus' and Antony's types of oratory is established, which is vital to the actors.

After Brutus' speech, Antony, that master of mob psychology, is left in sole possession of the platform. He opens his oration by maintaining that Brutus and the other Senators are honourable men while subtly suggesting the contrary. Then he strikes an emotional note. This is only a preliminary. He passes quickly from that to tell them of Cæsar's will and how he has made them all his heirs, at the same time declaring that he must not read it. It is too soon for that tit-bit. Ignoring their demands for the contents of the will he holds them with an emotional and dramatic exhibition of Cæsar's wounds, following this with that magnificent piece of dissembling in which he contrasts Brutus' "great" powers of oratory with his "poor" ones.

> "I am no orator, as Brutus is,
> But as you know me all, a plain blunt man
> That love my friend, and that they know full well
> That gave me public leave to speak of him,
> For I have neither wit, nor words, nor worth,
> To stir men's blood. I only speak right on.
> I tell you that which you yourselves do know,
> Show you sweet Cæsar's wounds, poor, poor, dumb mouths
> And bid them speak for me: But were I Brutus
> And Brutus, Antony; there were an Antony
> Would ruffle up your spirits, and put a tongue
> In every wound of Cæsar that should move
> The stones of Rome to rise and mutiny."

The effect of this is so great he has to check the mob now bent on mutiny and remind them of Cæsar's will. There is no stability in mere emotion, and there is no time now for beating about the bush, so he straightway reads the will without persuasion and clenches all in that great economic coup where he declares that Cæsar gives to Rome not only his arbours and orchards, but "to every several man seventy-five drachmas." That does the trick, the mob are his and riot and revolt go forward.

It is interesting to note that immediately Antony is in power he sets about to curtail these legacies. It is an old political move to give with one hand and

take back with the other, and it may be we also have here the first instance of the imposition of death duties.

The following act opens with a scene between the three Triumvirs, Antony, Octavius Cæsar, and Lepidus, gathered together in a room in Antony's house. This scene has rarely been played. It shows Antony in a light and supercilious mood condemning to death relatives and other dangerous persons. Against the name of his sister's son he makes a mark, saying: "He shall not live; look, with a spot I damn him." He then sends Lepidus on an errand and immediately speaks contemptuously of him.

> "And though we lay these honours on this man
> To ease ourselves of divers slanderous loads
> He shall but bear them as the ass bears gold.
> To groan and sweat under the business,
> Either led or driven as we point the way;
> And having brought our treasure where we will
> Then take we down his load and turn him off
> Like to the empty ass, to shake his ears
> And graze in commons."

When the rebels are defeated and Brutus dead, Antony, always good at words, delivers over his body those famous lines beginning with: "This was the noblest Roman of them all."

The modern method is to mention your deceased opponent glowingly in your reminiscences. It shows what a good fellow you really are.

What a study this play must be for politicians. How clearly it shows how and why honours and wealth are obtained and bestowed. That great quarrel scene between Brutus and Cassius arose through the latter's peculations which Brutus would not countenance. Brutus was too honest a man to succeed, and even the public to-day will not accept the plain blunt Brutus as a hero. So Antony has to be whitewashed though he lived two thousand years ago. Then can it be wondered at that such methods are applied to the living?

PLAYACTOR.

Verse.

By Andrew Bonella.

I am afraid Miss Helene Mullins's "Balm in Gilead" (1) is rather calculated to soothe the general magazine reader than the lover of poetry. It is full of pleasant platitude, pleasantly expressed:—

> "Being impatient with adversity
> Will never force the raging storm to pass . . ."

and I can imagine the sympathetic reader ejaculating "How True!" or "Isn't that Life?" at intervals throughout the book. And, indeed, the sympathetic reader will be right in thinking that this is good, honest stuff, sincere and workmanlike, while the unsympathetic need not waste their time in picking it to pieces. Many of these poems have appeared in various magazines, but I notice that by far the best is one which I remember reading in THE NEW AGE.

"Short Reed" (2) is puzzling; I can get very little sense out of the text or the illustrations, and yet I seem to sense that there is a peculiar Blakish kind of talent in their incoherence. I will willingly send the book to any reader who has a taste for the obscure, and wish him good luck with it.

There is not much doubt about "Older than Earth" (3): it may safely be described as the usual product of the intelligent, up-to-date, but unpoetic mind. It is described as the record of a lyrical experience; I don't know what a lyrical experience is (a lyrical *record*, yes), but I gather from references to nakedness and bodies and so on that it is erotic. Here is a beautiful instance of the fashionable mind that delights in comparing the greater to the less, that prefers anticlimax to climax in literature:—

> "The moon is a snail leaving
> behind her a lustrous slime of light
> as she crawls down the branches of the night
> and eats my cabbages."

This is poor stuff. It is not a beautiful thought: well, beauty is rare enough to harden us to its absence. It may be an "amusing" thought, but it is hardly witty or funny. It is certainly not a natural thought; nobody's natural reaction to moonlight is "lustrous slime." It is obviously a thought deliberately manufactured for the sake of its novelty; all the beautiful things have been said already about the moon, so now we must say something bright and silly. It is only fair to quote another passage about the moon:—

> "See where the moon of heaven rises softly
> again, and lifts her gracious head
> and having climbed through that steep loneliness
> pauses for breath. See how her beauty shines
> pausing upon dark trees; and silvers tread
> into the blind alleys of my bleeding mind."

Poor enough verse, but "steep loneliness" is not bad.

"Panorama" (4) is by far the best of the bunch. Mr. Thirlmere has a fine sense of poetic style, and what he says he says well. The book as a whole is disappointing, only because he has not got very much to say. I will quote without further comment a passage of fine blank verse (a difficult form, of course) from a long poem called "Landscape in Another World," the kind of world, as I think, that we ourselves might live in under the reign of social credit.

> "For them no morning grays with gathered care
> Nor night with malediction falls; they watch
> Strong, joyous children break from bud to bloom,
> Unenvious of the ecstasies of youth,
> Since no dark thought draws age across their souls.
> Strangers to fear, nor bellowing seas that roll
> Titanic waves against the purple cliffs,
> Nor thunderous voices of a cosmic strife
> Stir a faint pulse of terror in their hearts:
> After the fiercest tempest, dawn but lays
> A calmer splendour on the hopes of those
> Whose pure omniscience breeds a changeless peace.
> Life is akin to death when it denies
> The aspiring soul sustained tranquillity,
> But fails not those who gather in fair nets
> Dreams which float light upon the tides of thought.
> The clouds that veil and then unveil their moons
> At midnight, or when morning spreads blue wings;
> The cataracts, that through dim, shelving glens
> Toss their bright spray, are the glad messengers
> Of an ageless peace that sways harmonious there."

There is something in these lines of the generous vision that inspired the following passage from Wordsworth's "Laodameia":—

> "He spake of love, such love as spirits feel
> In worlds whose course is equable and pure;
> No fears to beat away—no strife to heal—
> The past unsighed for, and the future sure;
> Spake of heroic arts in graver mood
> Revived, with finer harmony pursued."

It is useful sometimes, especially when one strikes a dull lot of current review books, to consider a well-known work as if it were fresh from the publishers. I have recently bought myself "The Iliads of Homer, Prince of Poets, Never before in any Language truly translated, Done according to the Greek by George Chapman," published in "Simpkin's Thin Paper Classics." (Simpkin, Marshall. 3s. 6d.) It is a nice little volume, well printed and strongly

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(1) "Balm in Gilead." By Helene Mullins. (Harper and Bros. $2.)

(2) "Short Reed." By Siefreid Robert. (Illustrated and published by A. S. Grey, c/o Heywood and Son, 3-5, Regents Buildings, W.C.1.)

(3) "Older than Earth." By Elza de Locre. (Fanfrolico Press. 6s.)

(4) "Panorama." By Rowland Thirlmere. (Shakespeare Head Press. 6s.)

bound, more than worth the money. Keats's sonnet, "Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold . . ." has made Chapman's great work a household word, although, since Keats did not know the original, his "Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold" may not really say much for the translator. Of Chapman's version we may say, as Bentley did of Pope's, that it is all very fine, "but you must not call it Homer." Yet the earlier version, though even less accurate, came nearer to catching the spirit of the original. "Upon the whole," says Pope, "I must confess myself utterly incapable of doing justice to Homer." Chapman's expression, he goes on to say, is involved in Fustian, "But that which is to be allowed him, and which very much contributed to cover his defects, is a daring fiery spirit which animates his translation. . . ." Pope appreciated the majestic pace and rich invention of Homer, but did not realise that the heroic couplet, with its verbal antithesis and the snip-snap of the rhyme, was the worst possible medium for translation. Chapman wrote in a fourteen-syllable couplet, which is mathematically the same thing as a ballad stanza arranged in two lines instead of four, but poetically far superior in sustained force and grandeur; and the terrific roll of this long line gives, not, of course, the smooth surge of the Homeric hexameter, but something not altogether unlike it.

Nowadays we are more tolerant of what Pope called Fustian; we enjoy the riotous Elizabethan fancy and "conceit"; but it is here that Chapman is a bad translator. The modern prose version of Lang, Leaf, and Myer is by far the best in point of diction, but it has lost movement with the loss of metre; on the whole I should say (under correction; for a good deal of literary blood has been spilt over this point) that, failing the original, the best idea of Homer may be got by reading Lang, Leaf, and Myer for the directness and dignity of the language, and Chapman for the pace and the poetic fire.

The difficulties of translation apart, Chapman's "Iliad" is a great piece of English literature. For sheer exhilaration I know nothing to touch it. Achilles rates Agamemnon:—

> ". . . but thee, thou frontless man,
> We follow, and thy triumphs make with bonfires of our bane."

"Thou *frontless* man," what a phrase! The aged Nestor rises to calm him:—

> ". . . Up to both sweet-spoken Nestor stood,
> The cunning Pylian orator, whose tongue poured forth a flood
> Of more-than-honey sweet discourse; . . ."

How perfectly the compound adjective fits into Elizabethan English, and what a cadence "*more-than-honey-sweet* discourse" gives the line! There is quite a different lilt in the following line:—

> "And when the lady of the light, the rosy-finger'd Morn. . . ."

Here is a very queer, but for all that a very fine, expression:—

> "Earth *under-groan'd* their high-raised feet. . . ."

Here is another rhythm altogether, due to the breaking up of the long line:—

> "Each cried to other, 'Cleanse our ships, come, launch, aboard, away.'"

In the original Homer has a queer way, to the modern mind at least, of conveying the idea that everything he relates is being done for the first time; it is only this unique freshness of outlook that can make every meal, every sacrifice, every action, from the grandest to the most trivial, bear an epic significance. This sense of the dawn of civilisation is lost in Chapman; but it is replaced by an Elizabethan freshness which is not to be despised; this was the kind of stuff that Shakespeare used to read, hot from the press.

The Screen Play.

The Song of the Flame: Tivoli.

As an operetta, "The Song of the Flame" was first staged in New York at the end of 1925, and should long ago have reached London, but owing to the breakdown of negotiations it is being introduced to the British public as a talkie. This provides good entertainment, although the mixture of musical comedy tradition with somewhat full-blooded melodrama results in a certain lack of form. But nothing so good in the way of music has yet been heard on the screen. Bernice Claire and Alice Gentle sing superbly; Noah Beery, if no Chaliapine, is exactly the man for a robustious drinking song; and "The Song of the Flame" itself and the duet between Miss Claire and Alexander Gray should before long be in the gramophone repertoire in countless homes of England.

Alan Crosland, who directed, is in particular to be congratulated on his crowd work, which achieves far more apparent spontaneity than is usual in productions of this nature. The defect of the film is its colour; many of the scenes are blurred, and a liberal provision of monochrome would have been much preferable to 100 per cent. colour. Comparison with "Under a Texas Moon," also produced by the Technicolor process, reveals the extent to which much greater fidelity to nature is already possible.

"See the pent-up pleasures of pampered princes unleashed in wild abandon" is one of the gems to be found in the programme given to the first-night audience. As alliteration, this is excellent, but I must warn my readers that if they expect wild screen orgies they will be disappointed. Drinking champagne, singing patriotic songs, and watching dancing girls in expensive restaurants seem harmless enough pleasures, and Mr. Crosland will have to inject a little more abandon into his players before he rivals the orgy scenes in "The Postmaster" or the opening shots of "Jeanne Ney."

New York Nights: Astoria.

This is Norma Talmadge's first talkie. Apart from being an unusually good film, which is admirably cast, acted, and directed, it reveals Miss Talmadge as one of the few feminine "old timers" of the screen whose artistry finds even greater scope with the addition of the spoken word. She belongs to that select circle of which Marie Dressler, Bessie Love, and Gloria Swanson are members. Her impersonation in this role is finished, charming, and sincere; it remains one of the relatively few feats of film acting which make a more than evanescent impression on the critic.

"New York Nights" is one of those films which, without any pretence to greatness or special artistic distinction, are yet much more than merely good entertainment. Its theme is an unusual version of the struggles of a young couple whose ambition is to become Broadway bill-toppers; the dialogue is natural and amusing, with some perfectly delicious American slang; and the fluidity of the direction affords yet another promise of the development of a real talkie technique. The psychology of the relationship between Jill, played by Miss Talmadge, and the bad lad of the play, did not strike me as altogether convincing, but the situation is so handled as to seem plausible. Lewis Milestone is to be congratulated on his direction.

Infatuation: Astoria.

It is possible to account for the inclusion of this exceedingly bad English talkie in the same bill as "New York Nights" only on the assumption either that it was deliberately contrived to show the gulf between a good American and a bad native production, or that the supply of even tolerable British Quota films is insufficient to meet legal requirements.

Having regard to the politics of the kinema industry, one assumption is as tenable as the other. "Infatuation" is about the finest example of really bad and all-round bad acting that I can recall. I have certainly not seen such incredible and old-fashioned melodrama for years. The dialogue is banal and of a nauseating sentimentality, and Jeanne de Casalis will not enhance her reputation by the manner in which she plays the leading female role. To amateurs I would recommend the film as worth seeing for its badness.

Silent Films.

Whether it represents the beginning of a revolt against the talkies, or at least against a certain type of American talkie, is a matter on which I am not prepared to be optimistic, but there is some significance in the fact that the Stoll will next week revive "Beau Geste," while the Regal has selected another silent film, "The White Hell of Pitz Palu," as the principal feature of its current programme. This latter picture is the joint work of Dr. Pabst and Dr. Franck. I may add that "The Mysterious Island," based on a Jules Verne story, which is the star turn at the Empire this week, is mainly silent.

DAVID OCKHAM.

Review.

Mars: The Truth About War. By Alain, translated from the French by Doris Mudie and Elizabeth Hill; with an Introduction by André Maurois, and a Foreword by Denis Saurat. (Cape. 7s. 6d. net.)

Alain is a great French essayist. He is, at core, a man of the people, who hates all authority, and has found some wisdom in himself. These short essays do not tell the truth about War, but they tell some truth about Alain's attitude towards war. He is all for peace, all against war, but, if there is a war, he feels he ought to be in it; or else he will despise himself as a coward. This, for him, explains the true cause of war: most men hate war but would hate themselves still more if they did not join in. Authority "wangles" everything to bring about this feeling. Man cannot bear to think of himself as a coward, and so, certain circumstanceos having arisen, there is war. War is not caused by economic interests—these, according to Alain, can always be arranged. He does not seem to think the arrangement at all important. He does not explain the cause or causes of war. He appears to think he does so by explaining how the natural courage that is in men can be canalised and used in war. He shows how men can be coaxed, wheedled, led. driven to take part in war. All of which is a very different matter. Perhaps if men had sense enough to "arrange" the working mechanism of economic interests they would not find themselves so easily irritated, so easily angered, and therefore not so easily coaxed or driven into war? Perhaps certain circumstances would not arise? However, for Alain, war is caused by those very passions which make of man either a low-down cringer or a rather noble creature. The writing is astonishingly straightforward. It is as clear and sharp as cut glass. No wisp of fuddled thinking clouds the logic. It is always directly to the point. The point is always anger, irritation, courage, lust for power; always the range of human passions and desires—never book-keeping. Alain has seen through everything, except that the passions depend upon bread-and-butter, and bread-and-butter upon ticket numbers. In everything—except economics—he has a sense of real values and a mistrust of abstract ones. He writes: "I must explain more fully the main idea of this book, which is that passions and not interests govern the world, and I am particularly anxious to return to this question when I think of the very incomplete descriptions of human nature current nowadays, according to which all our actions are explained by a more or less hidden personal interest." Later he writes: "I have never yet met the man, so often described, who follows in all his actions the calculations of self-interest." He also says: "The first desire and the one which conditions all others is not to die." In other words, the first desire is economic. Readers of THE NEW AGE will find this book very well worth while, because Alain acts as a mental "dose of salts." After reading his crystal-clear sentences one understands in a flash of paradox why the "unintelligibility" of the new economics arouses *passion and not interest* in those whose desire not to die impels them passionately to thwart and restrict everyone else's desire to live.

J.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

THE "DAILY CHRONICLE" AND OTHERS.

Sir,—In commenting last week on the slaughter of the *Daily Chronicle*, you come to the conclusion that the *Daily News* has been instructed to absorb the *Daily Chronicle*, because the financial interests have got the whole Liberal Party where they want it, and have no further reason for supplying Liberals with alternative viewpoints through two newspapers. Your conclusion may well fit in with the facts, but investors who have in recent years been induced to put their money into newspaper concerns are likely to view the killing of journals with smaller complacency than the controllers of the Press Trusts.

In my book, *Stentor: or the Press of To-day and To-morrow*, written at the end of 1926, I forecast a further extension both of Press trustification and of the process of what is euphemistically known as "amalgamation," namely, the buying up of newspapers in order to terminate their separate existence. I also pointed out that the process of amalgamation and acquiring controlling interests during the previous years had in the main been disappointing to shareholders; that newspaper prosperity could not be expected to last indefinitely; that "the future position of shareholders in the Press Trust does not seem so assured as they imagine to-day"; and that, as profits declined, the controllers of the Press "will decree reductions in expenditure, beginning with the human material which has created their profits and their goodwill."

Since those words were written, there has been a wholesale slaughter of Provincial journals, while the death of the *Daily Chronicle* was preceded by that of the *Westminster Gazette*, which has also been "amalgamated" with the *Daily News*. As a journalist, I deplore the large-scale and deliberate creation of unemployment in my profession caused by these manipulations, but it is not inconceivable that the consistent advance in the process of Press trustification may at length open the eyes of the public to the real aims and methods of the Press Lords, involving the almost complete disappearance of independent daily journalism.

DAVID OCKHAM.

[Right. But let the Press Lords get on with it. Mr. Ockham will see that we have made an extended commentary in our "Notes" this week on the fusion. In our concluding paragraph we have suggested that a revolt of *journalism itself* (in the widest sense) against the *plutocratic control of journalism* is being fomented by the financiers. Take an extreme hypothesis—and a perfectly logical one—namely, that the public opinion of Britain were to come under the sway of a single "national" newspaper; all the rest being absorbed or eliminated by finance. The consequences would cut both ways. Consider the worst way from a Social-Credit point of view. *If* the one-and-only Press Lord could (1) destroy the impulses, the skill, and the resentment of all the journalists he displaced until they were dead; and *if* he could somehow cozen the rising generation of people with journalistic faculties and propensities into applying themselves to something other than journalism; then he might have a sporting chance of getting away with his scheme. But what a chance! Would anybody risk sixpence on it?

But suppose him to succeed in full; and to be in a position to produce a single newspaper with the help of a body of, say, 1,000 printing-trade-unionists, who, by reason of the elimination of all competition, would now be an indispensable monopolistic factor in the education of the whole adult population of Britain. Is it to be supposed for a moment that these unionists would not realise their power?

Think back to the time when candles and lamps were the only source of illumination. There was no such thing as that a mouse could blot out the light of a town—as is now possible in these days of the centralised generation of electric current. And, talking of mice, could not Aesop's fable be easily reversed—namely, that the mouse could, and would, bind the lion?—ED.]

"Low prices are thus seen to be an effect of unsatisfactory basic conditions. Prices have slumped; low prices only begin from that point to be a cause of trade depression: the original state that produced low prices is worsened by the low prices when they eventuate. It is the well-known 'vicious circle' in the sphere of economics; but 'low prices' never began it. Price must be adjusted to the consumer's buying capacity; it is a grave deficiency in the latter that started the trouble. Even a Chancellor may not be at his best post-prandially. But even at such a time one does not look to see the subordinate factors in a case mistaken for its fundamentals."—*The Hairdressers' Weekly Journal*, May 31, 1930, on Mr. Snowden's speech at the Bankers' Association Dinner.

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