

THE NEW AGE

INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER."
A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE AND ART

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

Current Events.

(Dates refer to reports in Press.)

Monday, August 27.

Hitler and the Saar—opens campaign.
Wheat, rising prices of—letter in *Times*.

Tuesday, August 28.

Silence Zones—experiment in London.
Italy and war—Mussolini's candid speech.
Tithes. Royal Commission set up. Members: Sir John Fischer Williams, Sir Leonard James Coates, Lord Cornwallis, Sir John Edward Lloyd, Sir Edward Robert Peacock.

Salvation Army. High Council meets to appoint new General. It last met in January, 1929, when General Higgins was elected to succeed General Booth. Present election takes place under Salvation Army Act of 1931, which abolished the General's right of appointment (name in envelope) exercised by General William Booth.

Wednesday, August 29.

Litigation—increasing costs of. Letter in *Times*.
American Labour unrest—leading article in *Times*.

Thursday, August 30.

Bread—London price per 4 lb. loaf reduced to 7½d.
Steel trade dilemma—sequel to the tariff. Special article in *Times*.

Friday, August 31.

Gold reaches record price in London, 140s. 3d. per ounce.
German debt—Dr. Schacht claims full moratorium.
French Budget—balancing by retrenchment—prospects by tension.—*Times* leading article.

Saturday, September 1.

Trade Union Congress to organise a national drive against Hitlerism—Tolpuddle centenary celebrated.
Salvation Army—new General not elected yet.
Grid failure in storm (Kent).
Strike in America for right to organise threatens to become general.
Ireland—United Irish Party rejects Blueshirt resolution advocating non-payment of annuities and rents (see item August 22 last week).

Brazil's New Constitution.

Brazil has a new constitution. Last month the National Assembly elected Senhor Vargas "Constitutional President of the Second Republic." He came to power in 1930 when there was a revolution arising out of the alleged domination of big business in Sao Paulo over Federal politics. In 1932 the State of Sao Paulo took up arms against the Provisional Government, but was defeated. Vargas had round reform beset with difficulties, "not the least of which," says *The Times* (August 24), "was an empty Treasury." This emptiness did not seem to hamper Vargas in the conduct of the "expensive struggle" to put down the Sao Paulo revolt. Discussing the new constitution *The Times* remarks that "State interference with economic activity" is so general nowadays that it is "scarcely surprising" that Brazil has "followed the example" of other Governments. Foreign capitalists interested in Brazilian undertakings, *The Times* continues, will probably criticise some of the new provisions as "too Socialistic, and others as too Nationalistic." Later comes the following:—

"The articles forbidding Brazilian States and municipalities to contract foreign loans without the Senate's permission will be widely commended—and not least in the City of London."

No-one need ask who runs the Senate! For the rest, the "spirit" of the new régime is conciliatory, as well it might be, seeing that the policy of High Finance is to eliminate party antagonisms, and to make it worth the while of sectional interests to get together. "A large and querulous Paulista element" remains in opposition, "but the President does not lack allies in that State." Quite so: Sao Paulo is a wealthy State. But "wealth" in this context is not necessarily money; it is something convertible into money. The convertibility is not inherent in the wealth, it is a property which is conferred on it, or withdrawn from it, at the will of the bankers. So the President has only to keep in step with the bankers

to make sure that Sao Paulo will not fall out of step with his major policies.

Zones of Silence.

The experiment of stopping road-noises on the night of August 28 was reported successful on the next morning. No accidents happened, and so no insurance risks became claims. Thus the founders of the Anti-Noise League can take credit without restraint for the undoubted contribution of this reform to those who, whether ill or well, need an undisturbed night's sleep. They might now go further, and inquire what other factors tend to disturb sleep. These can be comprehensively called by the name Anxieties. It has been stated by experts that anxiety is the greatest predisposing cause of ill-health; and it is common knowledge that the cause of most anxiety is deficient purchasing-power. To anyone sleepless with worry the noise of a motor-horn will make little difference—in fact the absence of such noise may strengthen the audibility of the silent sounds of the imagination, as for example the breathless anticipation of the knock of the postman bearing that bill to be met which cannot be met.

* * *

Railers against Sabbath-day observance will do well to reflect on this. Sunday is a day of rest from toil, but at this time it takes on a heightened significance as a day of respite from worry. Last post Saturday night—the dread missive not on the doormat—thank Heaven, I shall sleep to-night, for I need not fear to wake in the morning. A moratorium for a whole day is vouchsafed to the distressed debtor. And who shall measure the cumulative effect of that unchanging septiform rhythm of relief on the minds and bodies of Christendom's unfortunates?

A "Peace or War" Plebiscite.

The *Daily Express* of August 31 announces that it is organising a house-to-house canvass throughout the country, in which 643 salaried representatives of that journal will ask heads of households their answer to the following question:

"Are you in favour of Great Britain isolating herself from all foreign armed forces—Navy, Army, and Air Force—in any war, unless our territory or that of our Dominions and Possessions is menaced?" If this question is construed by the elector to mean: Do you agree to our keeping out of war if we don't lose anything by doing so? he will doubtless say "yes." But his "yes" will be utterly valueless, because he is incompetent to judge what constitutes a "menace." For instance, in Mr. Baldwin's view, as was made clear in a recent speech in the House, the invasion of France by the Germans would be a menace—in fact, his words could be construed to mean that this would amount to a virtual occupation of British territory. That, by itself, is sufficient to indicate that the talk of assessing danger to this country's interests or to the Empire in the circumstances postulated is one of extreme technical difficulty, no matter how those interests are defined. To those who grasp the underlying cause of war, it will be apparent that the mere circumstance of war constitutes an incipient menace to all non-belligerents in various degrees. The impulsion to go to war is an impulsion to alter the general balance of economic opportunity and reward; and the only situation in which neutral countries could afford to ignore the fighting would be one in which (a) the victors were content with the fruits of victory extracted from the vanquished and (b) the vanquished were content with what was left after they had yielded them up. Can any

student of finance imagine such an outcome, having regard to the laws under which nations are obliged to seek trade?

* * *

Again, although a country might keep out of a war on the very highest moral grounds, that would not alter the fact that it stood to benefit in a financial, commercial, and military sense by its neutrality, and that if the belligerents went on fighting long enough both might find peace terms imposed on them by the benevolent neutral. The United States made the Versailles Treaty; and although it is true that that country came into the war, she came in so late that she got out of the war with practically all she had got out of the war. By coming in she won the formal right to participate in the drafting of the Treaty, but in the meantime she had gained the real power to measure and apportion the gains and losses of the other belligerents. Her entry was more or less a bankers' ramp engineered to make her dominance at Versailles look correct and proper. In the result, as every Social-Credit schoolboy knows, New York planted Basle on Europe. So, if all that the scientists tell us about the horrible things that are to happen to the populations of warring countries is true, one might plausibly argue that it would not be the belligerents, but the neutrals, who were the menace; and we should guess that the belligerents would take good care to drag them in against their wills and high moral principles. Under bankers' rule every nation is a trade-thief; and you won't see two thieves fight each other for booty to the point of collapse while another one is standing by waiting to pick them up—and *it!*

Democracy or Dictatorship.

So the *Daily Express's* agitation may be regarded as of no immediate importance except as an advertising stunt. It may, however, attain ulterior importance as a precedent for further and more ambitious descents on the privacy of the householder. If Mahomet won't go to the poll the poll must come to Mahomet—and there is no doubt that absenteeism from the poll has of late reached dimensions of disquieting magnitude to those rulers who wish to pursue their crooked voyages under the *visa* of democracy. For if, say, nearly half the people should boycott the elections, an ingenious advocate of dictatorship could adduce this fact as proof that the electors had no use for Parliamentary government. To compel people to vote would improve the figures, but would destroy their value as evidence of the people's will. So there is a good deal to be said in theory for the method of interviewing electors, no matter on what as a means of trying to reawaken their interest in public affairs, and make them realise that their present freedom to signalise their feelings is vital to the defence of their last remaining liberties, however little their signals may be noticed by the administrators put over them. Admittedly it is very little.

An Analogy From Road-Signalling.

Taking as an analogy the road-signalling apparatus, it is broadly true to say that the electorate control only the amber light, while High Finance controls the green and the red. The amber light is a signal to *get ready to do something*, not to do it. And the something to be done is one of two mutually contradictory things—to "go" or to "stop." If the amber light shines along with the green light you prepare to stop because you know that the red is coming up. If it shines along with the red light you prepare to go because you know the green is coming up. You must stop because you have been

going; or you must go because you have been stopping—the twin lights telling you which you have been doing, and thereby warning you to do the opposite. So the amber light, in itself, may be said to signalise a change of direction, without, *in itself*, indicating what direction. That is what the electors do. They are turned on when the banker starts thinking of a new ramp, and are turned out when he puts it over. The amber light, as it were, legalises the arbitrary alternation between the green and red.

* * *

Of course nobody would desire that road-traffic should be directed differently. The lights must be co-ordinated under one control for obvious reasons. The main reason is the reason for any signalling at all, that is, the existence of cross-traffic at points along the main road, necessitating precautions for the avoidance of accidents coupled with measures for an equitable distribution of delay among the various streams of held-up traffic. And the system works satisfactorily. But now, supposing (a) that all the cross-traffic was the private property of the signalling authority, and (b) that there was no necessity for it to cross the main road at all, the present contented tolerance of signalling would disappear, however efficient the system. It was a familiar sight, many years ago, to see the City police clearing the route for the progress of Lord Rothschild's brougham somewhere near the Mansion House; and the cabbies, vanmen and other road-users took it in good part: for they could see the relation between the basting of the Rothschild turkeys in the kitchens of the police on Christmas mornings, and obedience to his Lordship on the part of the police on other mornings. One good turn deserved another, especially when done to a turn. But nobody would stand for the holding up of the whole traffic of London at three-minute intervals for the whole day and every day just to let bankers pass by to their board-rooms. At least, not if he knew it.

The Bankers' Cross-Traffic.

But in a deeper, and impersonal, sense that is what is happening as regards the main traffic of political and economic policy. The straight road of loan-credit finance is needlessly and numerous intersected by cross-roads of obstructive loan-credit accountancy, with the result that the progress of wealth along the route to the consumption market is incessantly checked by the signals: "go"—"stop"—"borrow"—"repay"—"save"—"spend"—"arm"—"disarm," this, that, and the other, all punctuated by the democratic amber-light designed to smooth out the physical jerks that would be occasioned by a too sudden obedience to these contradictory injunctions. The amber light can do no more. It cannot say "Don't go"—"Don't stop," nor can it mistime its entry. The functions of all three lights we said earlier, and must be. So, in the context of what and the franchise impotent. But not entirely. There is such a device as reminder-advertising. It is that of repeating a word or slogan to the public, and relying on the cumulative force of the repetition to evoke action advertised. Relating this to traffic signals, and reverting to our hypothetical picture of hold-ups caused by the cross-traffic of bankers, if you suppose someone were to paint a legend across the glass of the amber light, such as "The bankers are about to cross," or: "The bankers have nearly crossed," and that these appeared

in order at every hold-up, it would not be long before everyone on the road would associate with the words "go" and "stop," the further words "for the bankers." The ambiguity of the first combination: "Go for the bankers" would not be a disadvantage, for it would catch the eye just at the moment when the "prospect" felt in the mood to curse at something or other. The snag would be that nobody is allowed to meddle with the road signals. But in the field of political policy the people do retain the right to "meddle" in this sense; and that right, as we say, depends on the survival of Parliamentary forms in the British Constitution. The practical difficulties in the way of such meddling may appear insuperable, but some element of freedom still remains while attempts to meddle are not indictable or punishable.

The Way of the Dictator.

Herein lies the case against dictatorship, for that system postulates the infallibility of the dictator, and thereby logically rules out complaints and criticisms as subversive of the Constitution. In a proven critical emergency dictatorial powers have to be conceded to any Government, because of the speed with which competence must be exercised to avert a danger within a measurable time-limit. So "speed" becomes the essence of the dictator's fraudulent contract. "There's no time to consult you," says he, "and if you demand time you'll do time." He improvises scares, invents plots, fabricates dangers, all to the end that the people shall come to distrust their judgment and despise the democratic forms which recognised it and encouraged the expression of it.

* * *

The first thing an established dictator does is to smash the machinery through which he might be replaced. Logically so, for the preservation of that machinery is a negation of his infallibility. He does assume responsibility, but the people can only fix it on him in their hearts and be thankful that they are not overheard. He does not need to be efficient, firstly, because the permanent officials of the Government and banks run the country, and, secondly, because he gags the newspapers and blocks all other avenues of publicity through which his incompetence could be disclosed and discussed. On Sunday last the newspapers here were describing a wireless device by which Nazi detectives could listen-in to conversations in private houses from a car several yards distant. It is a very small box which can be planted in the suspect's room and which will pick up everything he says and transmit it outside. Whether the story is true or not in all details, it is quite enough to know that the inventor's claims are being looked into by the German Government.

The French as Democrats.

To cross from Germany into France must be like entering a new world to anyone with an instinct for freedom. We are relying on a leading article in *The Times* of August 31 for the substance of what follows. The French Budget for 1935 is now ready. It is to be balanced by saving; no new taxation is to be imposed. Speaking of its prospects, the writer in *The Times* says this:

"The French political system makes the Deputy peculiarly sensitive to the wishes, or the supposed wishes, of his constituents, and the member of the Finance Council has always to remember that his work must have the approval of his party colleagues

people is about the composition of the bulk-sold article now being distributed; one speculation (and a plausible one) being that so much of the authentic mustard seed is required for poison gas that substitutes (any powder colourable and flavourable) are being foisted on the public. Here is an allegation which even amateur microscopists might verify. Returning to medicaments, another thing complained about is iodine. Elderly people can remember the time when an iodine stain on the skin could not be removed, but had to be left to "wear off," as they say. Now, there is no difficulty. Whether the explanation lies in dilution or substitution no one can tell.

Turning next to tobacco. A few days ago we tested a cigarette—one of a well known proprietary brand. We lighted it and laid it down across the flange of an ash-tray. It burnt away like a slow fuse; and had completely turned into ash in fifteen minutes. Why? The paper had been whitened with saltpetre. Nothing else. The same tobacco wrapped in untreated paper, would cease to burn when the cigarette was not being actually smoked. Since practically every popular cigarette to-day is wrapped in treated paper, readers may like to compute the collective weight of tobacco being wasted in idle combustion day by day in this country. In the test just described, the money-rate of the waste was 1d. in thirty-five minutes. The burning of wheat and coffee at intervals strikes the imagination of the public, but the unheeded continuous and equally contrived destruction of tobacco overtops those spectacular emergency-measures. The tobacco trade, like the mustard trade, keeps solvent on waste in consumption.

It may seem a curious thing, incidentally, that, having regard to the fire risks inherent in smouldering cigarettes, the insurance interests do not use their influence to eliminate them. We know, of course, that premiums are adjusted to cover risks as they are; and no doubt most insurance companies number tobacco securities among their assets, in which case one might say that their dividends on wasted tobacco covered claims arising from burnt houses. Let us hope this is not true; for it would set a bad example to such people as Mr. Leopold Harris and his fellow fire-raisers. But there is another probable explanation. It appears that the saltpetre lends weight, thickness, and stiffness to the paper, without which—so it is said—the tongues of the cigarette-rolling machines could not lick up and gulp the papers one by one at the speed they do. So the untreated paper has to be rolled or filled by hand. That, of course, is a form of "waste" which, naturally, the arbiters of economic policy cannot be expected to tolerate. We shall have to wait for the Age of Leisure—or, as our esteemed contributor, "Old and Crusted," would put it—the Age of Vocation, when, perchance, every man and maiden, with nothing better to do, will roll his or her own cigarettes, and be the better in health as well as in pocket by doing so.

To sum up, statistics of cost are valueless until related to reliable indices of durability. Just have a look at the household utensils, etc., whether of wood or metal, exposed for sale in the popular stores to-day. They all bear time-honoured names; but ask yourself (or invite someone with a long memory to tell you) how many of them live up to their names, or, more appositely, will last up to them. Cheap!—yes; but what about frequency of replacement?

As to new houses, it is unnecessary to say anything

more than to refer to *The Times*, which was quoted in these pages recently, as virtually saying that the building schemes now in progress will provide employment for people engaged on repairs and renewals. It was something like recommending a sales-push in cheap kettles and saucepans as a means by which the purchasers could afterwards employ tinkers and solder.

Declension in quality is disguised price-inflation, and when that is said readers of this journal will need no further prompting as to the value of investigation and propaganda on this aspect of our existing finance-economy.

Money Power in Australia.

[Reproduced from a leading article in *The New Economics*.]

Every time the Loan Council meets the Commonwealth Bank Board meets also. Some simple minds think this a coincidence, but in fact it is all pre-arranged. Indeed it must be so; for without the Commonwealth Bank Board to approve or disapprove of the Loan Council's "suggestions," and without the presence of the Loan Council as the medium through which the Commonwealth Bank Board instruments its policy, nothing would occur. Both are essential to the effective wiring of the Credit Control Circuit. Everyone is familiar with the procedure connected with this Super-Parliament of Australia. Visiting members usually assemble at the same hotel, so that ample opportunity is provided for making contacts and exchanging ideas. Reports are prepared by a committee of Under-Treasurers, those self-appointed watch-dogs of "sound financial policy" and "economy," and these reports form the basis of discussions. The deliberations of both chambers are secret, and the Press perforce has to preface its news by "it is learned" or "it is believed." Occasionally when some members of the Loan Council exhibit a disinclination to accept the dictates of the bankers we read that "the Chairman of the Bank Board addressed the Council," or that the Prime Minister, chairman of the Loan Council, and the Chairman of the Bank Board, and another, perhaps, "left the Council for a private conference."

And if some individual member commits the unpardonable act of venting his indignation at the Bank Board's attitude, in public, as happened on this recent occasion, then the stately Board condescends to furnish a brief, curt explanation as given below.

"The board did not fix or stipulate any particular amount to which the States' deficits should be limited. It has no authority to do so.

No stipulation was made that any portion of the £2,000,000 relief granted by the Commonwealth should be applied to reduce deficit figure.

It was competent for the Loan Council to approve of any amount it thought fit for deficits for 1934-35.

The board did indicate that it would prefer that such deficits were financed by a loan on the market, instead of by Treasury bills, in view of the changed condition of the market. The success of the last two loans indicated that ample money is available for Government loans. The board intimated that the time had come when the use of Treasury bills for the purpose of providing for deficits should be discontinued.

At the request of the Loan Council it was subsequently agreed to continue the practice to finance deficits for that particular financial year on the condition that at least 50 per cent. should be raised on the market before December 31, 1934, and the balance before June 30, 1935.

The board did inform the Loan Council that it was seriously concerned with the amount of finance asked for.

The question-begging humbugging nature of this explanation is apparent at a glance. Suppose, for instance,

if it is "competent for the Loan Council to approve of any amount it thought fit for deficits for 1934-35," that the Loan Council had proposed £15,000,000 instead of £8,000,000. Does anyone imagine that of itself, or the Governments it is presumed to represent, it has the power to incur those deficits? Nothing of the sort. The Loan Council hasn't the power to incur the deficit of £1 without the sanction of the Banking System, which alone holds the power of creating that extra £1 to finance the deficit. Power to make a decision resides in the power to create money, and it is because individuals as well as Governments are deprived of that power by the Banking System that talk of Governmental and individual freedom in financial matters is not only a mockery, it is a lie.

As predicted by Mr. John Dix in the *New Economics* of February 2 last, in an article entitled "Finance and the Constitution," the Federal Budget Surplus has been appropriated to reduce the States' deficits, and upon terms which in no way mitigate the States' dependence upon the Commonwealth for financial aid. This writer's remarks are worth quoting:

"From the viewpoint of Finance, it is iniquitous that any Government should fail to balance its budget, and that it should have a deficit which may have to be financed through the finding of money by the banks. But it is even more preposterous and unthinkable to the minds of our financiers that another Government should, at the same time, have a surplus, and actually distribute that surplus amongst the community by 'extravagant' spending. It is probable, therefore, that the Federal surplus will be applied in whole or in part to reducing the deficits of the States. But it is unlikely that the money will be either given to the States, or that the Commonwealth will vacate any fields of taxation in favour of the States. The money will be dispensed on conditions that will in no way increase the real independence of the States."

Frustrated Culture.

By John Hargrave.

In an article published in *THE NEW AGE* some time ago, I wrote of our present culture as pre-Social Credit and, therefore, frustrated culture—"a 'culture' as culturally poverty-stricken as the Age of Scarcity in which it has developed."

Social Credit itself, as an idea, is the offspring of culture. It depends upon culture, if we define the word as meaning intellectual development. The expression of the idea depends upon a logical process of reasoning, and especially upon mathematical logic demonstrating that intellectual development. Social Credit is the child of centuries of intellectual development. The word "offspring" was deliberately chosen above. Social Credit "springs" clear out of the past into the present, and is opposed to the past and the present.

Very well. Is not that so with all the other aspects of our present culture in all its manifestations? No, it is not. And that is the whole point. Social Credit may be said to be "by" an abnormally logical intellect and not "in" it, and because of that the idea of Social Credit is not only a dynamic contribution to the cultural inheritance of mankind, it is also the starting-point—the spring-off—of a culture that cannot be the "culture" of this Age of Needless Poverty.

We shall say at once, and I think we should have no difficulty in producing example after example to prove, that our present "culture" (by which we mean concretely intellectual achievement in all the arts, in

philosophy, and in science) is, except for the actual mechanical progress of inventive engineering—and even here the dead hand of frustration is to be found strangulating every effort that jumps too far ahead and so threatens entrenched financial positions—unborn.

For the most part, the "culture" that we know to-day is no more the offspring of the cultural past than a stillborn child can be said to be the offspring of its parents. Unable to come forth from the womb of the past, it may be likened to a degenerating embryo. It has failed to spring off—to spring out of—the past. It is painfully conscious of its own frustration, and because of this it keeps turning head-over-heels, being "modern," going ga-ga; "stunting" because it is stunted. It has a morbid desire to be "new," and the very word "new" has become an obsession with it. It is hopelessly conscious of this, and begins groping its way back to one or other classic foundation—only to find that it is performing yet another silly antic. Hither and thither it twists and turns, frantic, lost within the matrix—unable to come forth out of it.

So far as literature is concerned, what is there now—now that Social Credit has sprung into the world of ideas—that is useful to the writer who is a serious craftsman? Only the writer himself, the world about him, and (for ourselves) the cipher-series of twenty-six letters of the alphabet that have come down to us from the Phoenician, Babylonian, Hebrew, Egyptian, Greek, and other cultures of antiquity:—

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz.

Of course, but the world about him includes all the culture of the past and the present: he cannot ignore it, cannot avoid it? No, why should he? The chick that is forming within the egg does not ignore or avoid the nourishment contained in the egg. It absorbs it, uses it, pecks its way through the shell—and comes out.

Keeping to the simile, we shall say that the eggs are defective and mostly infertile: that the hens producing these eggs are either too fat, too thin, have gone "broody," are diseased, and unable to lay a good egg.

A serious writer to-day, sensing the world about him—a world in which the idea of Social Credit has come forth—can find but one theme that will allow him to become dynamic in using the cipher-series of twenty-six letters. That theme may be called *The New Economic Theme*. It does not follow, of course, that because this is so, he will be able to do anything worth doing with this theme. He may be so frustrated, thwarted, diverted, spoiled, by the economic and cultural environment in which he finds himself as to be unable to take hold of it and use it. Nevertheless, because the economic issue is now the all-dominant question before industrialised mankind, any attempt to avoid it, to skip across it, to treat it flippantly, or to confuse it with mysticism of any kind, will result in nothing but further cultural frustration.

We shall find, and we are already finding, that the literary forms that could, for example, be used fairly successfully in carrying and projecting Socialism cannot be used to carry and project Social Credit. One of the chief reasons is, that Social Credit is an idea, fully formulated and expressed in a formula of logic, whereas Socialism was, and is, an ideal incapable of any very definite formulation at all.

From America we have been told that "A very interesting Utopian novel could be written showing concretely the working of the Douglas scheme." So it

several contrasted movements with the Canzona as the central figure.

Other important works are his "Seven Pastels from the Lake of Constance," Op. 96, which are perhaps the most successful impressionistic pieces ever written for the organ; "Cathedral Windows," Op. 106, in which Plainsong melodies are subjected to modern harmonic treatment with wholly enchanting results; a "Partita," Op. 100, which is, roughly speaking, a sort of organ equivalent of Ravel's "Tombeau de Couperin," where ancient dance forms are exploited with every conceivable variety of colouring; a Chaconne and Fugue Trilogy with Chorale, Op. 73, and an immense amount of smaller works, all of interest and charm.

Incidentally, the Oxford University Press have recently issued his last completed works on a large scale, "Kaleidoscope" and "Music for Organ."

Karg-Elert was unique in that he combined the polyphonic fluency of Bach or Reger with the harmonic resource of Debussy, the result being a most fascinating style, full of variety, with an instinctive feeling for form (in the best sense of that much-maligned word) that rendered a whole programme of his music entirely free from any suspicion of oppression or monotony.

His idiom was also instructive in that it decisively proved that the diatonic-chromatic system is still full of possibilities for a composer of originality.

When one adds that his published works run to Op. 145, in addition to unnumbered and unpublished works, including Fifty Preludes and Fugues in preparation (1), numerous transcriptions, including piano scores of Elgar's Symphonies, and various theoretical treatises, it will be seen that he must have possessed enormous fertility plus a phenomenal capacity for work.

By this I do not mean mere mechanical facility of the Hindemith order; I mean that genuine fertility of invention plus a desire for beauty, which has characterised the work of all the great masters. That is what Karg-Elert possessed, and that is why his music will assuredly outlive the sterile, arid, alleged "neo-classicism" turned out with such depressing regularity by the Stravinsky-Hindemith mass production factory.

England has already done Karg-Elert considerable honour. He was created Doctor of Music at Edinburgh and a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists; some of his best works have been published in London, and in 1930 he was accorded what was probably the most remarkable expression of appreciation ever given to an organ composer in his lifetime, namely, a festival of ten recitals devoted entirely to his works.

It is therefore a matter of infinite regret that he is practically unrepresented on the gramophone, and I suggest that we in England might go one important step further and inaugurate a Karg-Elert Society on the lines of those already so successfully established, for the recording, not of his complete output—that would take at least a decade—but, at any rate, of his finest organ works.

I am convinced that this project would be commercially possible, for Karg-Elert enthusiasts are ubiquitous, and we have in England some of the best organs and organists available for the job. But if the recording companies have any doubts regarding the response, let all those who do not know Karg-Elert study his scores for themselves.

CLINTON GRAY-FISK.

Review.

Cinema Quarterly. Summer Number. 24, N.W. Thistle Street Lane, Edinburgh. 1s.

This excellent review is indispensable to serious students of the cinema. Specially commended in the current issue are John Grierson's article "The G.P.O. Gets Sound," and Ralph Bond's criticism of "Man of Aran"—"one more example of the Barnum method of beating the big drum furiously on the principle that the more noise you make the better must the picture be."

DAVID OCKHAM.

NOTICE.

All communications requiring the Editor's attention should be addressed directly to him as follows:

Mr. Arthur Brenton, 20, Rectory Road, Barnes, S.W.13.

"Humour and good humour are virtues in the private sphere, but elsewhere they are a cowardice and a thinness of the blood."—*New Economics*, Melbourne, June 22, 1934.

The Films.

"Ces Messieurs de la Santé."

The Academy has inaugurated its autumn season of new films with a satirical *exposé* of the methods of bankers and company promoters that should interest Credit Reformers. The authors are no respecters of *la haute finance*; they show how the launching of schemes demanding large sums of money are made possible by cynical rascality on the one hand, and an immense gullibility on the other. A film of this nature helps one to understand the Stavisky affair and Mme. Humbert, and to realise how easy it is for a man of no reputation and less money to start a bank in France. It is unfortunate that Jacques Colombier, the director, should be so lacking in a sense of the cinema; this is a photographed stage play and not a film, has too much dialogue, and could be cut with advantage. The English titles are also in need of improvement; "smart" is no equivalent of "malin," and "you place bets" is a masterpiece of stiltedness. The principal character is played by Raimu, looking uncommonly like the late Edgar Wallace.

Short verdict. How much better this would have been done by René Clair.

"The Affairs of Cellini."

Yet another of these pseudo-historical reconstructions, which might almost be re-titled "The Private Life of Alexander Korda." It is amusing enough—indeed, very amusing—but might have been a costume piece of any period, and is completely devoid of the atmosphere of Cinquecento Florence, or of any atmosphere, save that of Hollywood. Federico March, as Cellini, and Frank Morgan as the Duke of Florence, contribute lifelike impersonations of Douglas Fairbanks and Lionel Barrymore, respectively; Fay Wray—for banks and Lionel Barrymore, respectively; Fay Wray—once unharassed by gorillas or octopuses—is unexpectedly good as an excessively "dumb" young woman; and Constance Bennett is also unexpectedly good, although her impersonation of a medieval Florentine duchess is hardly praiseworthy. The scenario writers have wisely avoided all "periodicals," and the like, but in so doing have verged too much on the colloquial; "that's fine," "running around," "open up," and "don't be any dumber than you need" smack more of the Bronx than of the Renaissance. Charles Rosher's photography is, as usual, admirable. This mixture of light-hearted assassination and intrigue is being introduced to the British public at the Leicester Square.

DAVID OCKHAM.

"The House of Connelly." Fox Film Production. Directed by Henry King. Regal.

The unusual combination of Janet Gaynor and Lionel Barrymore has given good results. There is a Pollyannaish element in the film—presumably inevitable where Miss Gaynor is the star—but the sugar and the uplift have been kept within reasonable proportions, and it is refreshing to see the camera taken out of doors and concerning itself with real people. This picture is admirably acted and directed, is good entertainment, and special mention should be made of Hal Marr's photography.

"Men in White." Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Production. Directed by Richard Boleslavsky. Empire.

If this picture, which is based on Sidney Kingsley's play of the same name now running in London, had consistently maintained the high level of its best moments, it would have been outstanding. Actually it is extremely entertaining and absorbs the onlooker, but it has been badly edited apart from the unintelligent cutting by our censorship that mars the central episode—and the convenient death of Barbara evades the main dramatic issue. Acting and photography are admirable; Clark Gable is extraordinarily sympathetic, and that sterling actor, Jean Hersholt, for once a role worthy of his talents.

"Men in White," with its hospital background and the realism of its atmosphere, is definitely

DAVID OCKHAM.

The Theatre.

"Family Affairs." By Gertrude Jennings. Ambassadors. Produced by Auriol Lee.

If Gertrude Jennings set out to make her audience laugh, she has certainly succeeded, for this is a most amusing play. But it is not a particularly good play. The dialogue is in great part a shade too naturalistic—so many dramatists have still to learn not to photograph the speech of real life—and Miss Jennings has shirked the solution of the two problems in the family affairs of the Madehursts. Rose, the young wife, would no doubt be cured of her infatuation for the handsome hairdresser man she met on a holiday cruise by meeting him in his shop, complete with scissors and apron, but he would scarcely end the romance by touting for orders for a permanent wave. That belongs to farce, not comedy. And the complications attending the return of the prodigal are dissolved in a gust of sentimentality verging on the mawkish, which is not an improbable termination, but is not of a piece with all that has gone before.

The cast is dominated by Lilian Braithwaite, who gives an admirably finished performance as the gentle, and nearly role, as though it were knockabout farce; this is a besetting sin of a talented actress, whose mannerisms have now become fixed to the point of being both monstrous and obtrusive. Miss Seyler is not, however, entirely responsible; her producers should insist on her playing roles as intended by the author.

Apropos of production, may I point out that as the horse-shoe shape of the Ambassadors' auditorium prevents occupants of the extreme right and left hand seats from seeing of the audience to allow members of the cast to group themselves on either the O.P. or P.S. side of the stage.

Please do not run away with the idea that this play is not worth seeing. Actually, it is most entertaining, if a trifle on the long side. But Miss Jennings is a playwright of such reputation and experience, that her work calls for detailed critical dissection. She has written a comedy that makes a good evening's entertainment, but she ought to have done better.

VERNON SOMMERFIELD.

Food Prices in the South of France.

"Hotel life at Nice is cheap. For the price of bed and breakfast in London, say 8s. 6d., one can live a whole day. One sees advertisements everywhere, Frs. 30 or even less. One can obtain a bedroom from Frs. 8, petit déjeuner 2.50, déjeuner 10.00, dinner (without meat) 8.00 or less. Now, if you are a vegetarian, there is an old-fashioned shanty in the old town where you can fill up for about Frs. 5 a meal: vegetable soup, pate with butter and cheese, fruit, bread and cheese.

Although bread, butter, meat, tea, etc., are double the prices paid at home, allowance must be made for the climate, London, to which one needs much less stoking than in France. If it is not so, how do we live on our meagre income? I must warn you it is an expensive luxury to die, but that's an affair for the living.

English people often talk about the low standard of living of the people in the South of Europe. We have half-a-dozen men constructing a house in Avenue —, and the meal at 8 o'clock this morning compared more favourably with what their likes in England would have. One man, an Italian, sucked two eggs, followed by tomatoes, cheese, along with tomatoes, salad, and fruit. These workers earn from 35 to 50 francs per day. Another lie about taxation. Something like 30 per cent. to 40 per cent. goes to the "fisc" out of every 100 francs spent in the shops. Direct imposts are not so steep as at home, but income and municipal taxes account for Frs. 1,000 of my insufficient income."—From a letter sent by a reader at Nice.

The New Age.

Index to Volume 44.

A limited number of copies of this Index (covering the half-year November, 1933, to April, 1934) are available. Will any reader who wants one send a post-card to the office, 70, High Holborn, W.C.1. There is no charge.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

MR. MUIR ON FINANCIAL POLICY.

Sir,—Mr. Muir refers to the monetary system as an obscure and thorny problem; which in his (Mr. Muir's) opinion, is rendered unnecessarily difficult by the jargon of the experts. What he should have said is that out of regard for the awe which the unknown is reputed to inspire, the whole money business is *purposely* made obscure in order to delude people into the belief that the financial system runs the universe; just as the priests of the old pagan religions with their oracles and trickery used to humbug the people into accepting their doctrines.

Mr. Muir's assertion that purchasing power can only be increased by increased production is a fallacy which breaks down in the face of mechanisation.

W. WEST.

BANNING CINEMA-BUILDING.

Sir,—Students of Social Credit require no introduction to the "New Bureaucracy," but they may be interested in a recent manifestation that has escaped the notice it deserves. This concerns the power of local authorities to forbid a man to spend his own money on the furtherance of his own legitimate business, and has developed out of what the cinema industry terms the "over-building menace," that is, the construction of new picture theatres in localities that are already adequately served.

Admittedly, the building of cinema theatres is being as much overdone as that of "luxury flats" in London and its suburbs, and many people will no doubt lose money in both ventures, but so far local authorities have not stepped in to veto the construction of flats on the ground that it might prove a bad investment. In effect, this is, however, the attitude of certain authorities when they are asked to license a new film theatre.

The latest example comes from Wells, that charming little town in Somerset. It has already one theatre, which, on the face of it, would seem to be adequate to requirements. A local resident wishes to put up another. Asked by the Bench whether he thought the new venture was likely to be successful, he replied that "was his own funeral." His counsel had previously, and rightly, told the magistrates that the economic aspect should not weigh with them at all. After a somewhat lengthy hearing the Bench decided, but not unanimously, to reject the application, a decision against which there is, I believe, no appeal.

Readers of this journal will not need to have the implications pointed out to them. But there is this to be said. At a time when the social and economic life of the country is cankered by continuous large-scale unemployment, a scheme that would provide work for months for quite a large number of people, and would thereafter give permanent employment, even if only to a few, is banned by the ukase of a few local magistrates. But the would-be builder is at liberty to leave the money idle at his bank, and his bankers are at liberty to employ it as they like.

DAVID OCKHAM.

France Wealthy and Poor.

"According to the assertions of certain French writers on economic subjects, the wealth of France has become greatly reduced during the past twenty years. They show that quite one-third of the national fortune has been lost beyond recovery since 1914.

"On the other hand, it is beyond doubt that the productive capacity of France has prodigiously increased within twenty years.

"It may be, as M. Jacques Duboin, a former Under-Secretary of State for Finance, asserts, that—in a collective sense—the French people have never been wealthier than they are now. They are over-supplied with foodstuffs. There is an extraordinary amount of motive power. Of coal there is such an abundance that the pitheads are simply choked with it. The production of electricity beats all records.

"As for gold, there has never been such an enormous stock of the yellow metal at the Bank of France. It is, therefore, evident that from the point of view of material wealth the fortune of France, far from having become diminished, has so increased that she is overstocked with the good things of this world. Individually, the average Frenchman is becoming poorer and poorer.

"Small wonder that there should be so much hoarding in France. There are not in France such big personal estates and fortunes as in England, for monetary wealth is more evenly spread. Nevertheless, there are large numbers of very respectable fortunes. The owners of these are a little afraid of the present position of affairs. They do not like the general political outlook in Europe. They doubt if all is well with the economic future of France itself."—*Financial Times* (Paris Correspondent), August 24.

The Social Credit Movement.

SECOND PHASE.

Supporters of the Social Credit movement now affirm that:—

1. An error has been proven in the cost-accounting of Industry and the Book-keeping of the Banks.
2. This error is the strength of the "law" which creates poverty, insecurity, and crime.
3. The error is infallibly proved in the Thesis and Theorem of Major Douglas, most particularly in his first-published work, "Economic Democracy."
4. It is, consequently, an urgent matter of public and personal importance that this "law" be resisted so as to secure:—
 - (a) Public admission of the error;
 - (b) Restitution of citizenship duties.
 - (c) Release of His Majesty's Judges, Civil and Military Services from the compulsion of its repressive mechanical control. L.D.61.

Forthcoming Meetings.

The New Age Club.

[Open to visitors on Wednesdays from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Lincoln's Inn Restaurant (downstairs), 305, High Holborn, W.C. (south side), opposite the First Avenue Hotel and near to Chancery-lane and Holborn tube stations.]

The London Social Credit Club.

A meeting will be held at 7.45 p.m. on Friday, September 14, 1934, at the Blewcoat [sic. Ed.] Room, Caxton Street, S.W. Discussion: "The A + B Theorem," introduced by Mr. Ewart Purves. Mrs. E. M. Dunn, L.R.A.M., in the chair. Visitors are welcome.

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