

# THE NEW AGE

INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER"

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART

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## NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THE Allied Conference is destined to fail. It was an economic failure before it was called together; therefore its political success is an impossibility. M. Theunis may harangue M. Herriot from Whitehall to Highgate and back every day for the next twelve months, but all his arguments will not obliterate facts. The delegates are ingenious word-spinners and they may yet weave a formula which shall veil their fundamental differences from the eyes of the anxious people, but even so they will not know from one day to another when to expect the darkening of the sun and the rending of the veil that will signal the crucifixion of the New World. It will be all to the good if the Conference does not discover its formula, thereby openly confessing that it is helpless, for then there will be so much the more time to explore the avenue of escape to which THE NEW AGE has been pointing these six years past. And if our statesmen are not all living in a mules' paradise the exploration will assuredly be commenced, and quickly.

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In a speech during the Commons debate on the Foreign Office Vote on July 14th, Mr. A. M. Samuel touched on the vital difficulty in the Dawes scheme. He said:

You seek to get £125,000,000 annually in gold values from Germany, and that involves a foreign trade for Germany amounting to £3,000,000,000 a year. We have roughly a trade, in and out, imports and exports, of something like £2,000,000,000 a year and the total foreign credits that we were able to secure out of that as a result of our foreign trade last year, as stated in the *Board of Trade Journal*, was £97,000,000. To get a credit of £125,000,000 in the same way, Germany must have a similar foreign trade of something like £3,000,000,000 annually. Where is it coming from? You cannot pull it out of the air. And it must be an additional trade.

She can only become prosperous by taking existing trade out of the neutral markets, and, accordingly, as she becomes prosperous we become unprosperous. There is not in the world a fresh reservoir of £3,000,000,000 of annual foreign trade for Germany to draw upon to create £125,000,000 of annual foreign credit for reparations.

He summed the whole argument up in one phrase: that Germany would "pay us with the profits of trade captured from us." The Dawes plan proposes to make her a loan of £40,000,000 to enable her to commence this operation. The wonder is, not that France is putting obstacles in the way of this kind

of "settlement," but that she should be alone in her opposition to it. Fundamentally, France is instinctively (we have nothing to do with her conscious motives) resisting the suppression of national self-determination by an internationalised system of bond-holding, a system under which all European Governments and peoples will become the serfs of anonymous cosmopolitan absentee bond-lords whose decrees will issue from Wall Street. France's method, the occupation of the Ruhr, is, of course, futile from an economic point of view; it has dried up German reparations. But it is far from futile from the point of view of military security. Military power precedes economic bargaining power. Now, if France's contemplated use of this bargaining power is conceived as being restricted to the mere extraction of reparations from Germany, her military irruption into the Ruhr, besides being provocative, was a waste of energy. But wider bargaining power than that is involved. Foreclosure on German assets may stop reparations, but it also stops German trade rivalry; a rivalry which will threaten the industrial stability not only of France herself but of other nations besides. It has been a popular charge against her that she has only been pretending to want reparations, and has never wished Germany to be able to render them. We can only ask her critics in this country to walk round our industries and ask British producers if they want them either. Mr. T. Johnston, speaking in the same debate as we have previously mentioned, quoted instance after instance of opinion decisively hostile to the idea, citing from Mr. Asquith, the *Glasgow Chamber of Commerce Journal*, *The Money Market Review*, Mr. Runciman, Messrs. Samuel Montagu and Co., Sir Oswald Stoll, Mr. Arthur Chamberlain, and the *Manchester Guardian*. We reproduce one of the passages, from a speech made by Mr. Arthur Chamberlain, as Chairman of Tube Investments, Ltd., in Birmingham in 1921:

"The chief, I had almost said the only, thing that we can do to help the situation, is to reduce the amount that Germany owes to us, which we can do by cancelling her indemnity, and, so long as there is any unemployment or under-production in the country, every sovereign's worth of goods we receive as indemnity from Germany is a loss to our workpeople of the amount of labour that Germany has put in to produce it."

The truth to be realised is that the peoples of France, Britain, Belgium, Italy, and even America do not

want to receive either reparations or debt repayments. Yet, as *nations* they are all assuming the necessity for the repayments to be made, and are now engaged, France against all the rest, in a controversy how the operation is to be carried out. What a singular divergence of interest—the people who are the nation, against the nation which is the people. Sir F. Wise, spoke in the debate alluded to, and we are indebted to him for a remark of his—“There is a very great difference between the people and the nation.” The bearing of it had reference to the fact that, as he said, “Up to the end of last December Germany has paid £421,000,000 to the Allies. All that has been paid by inflation. It has not cost Germany one penny.” Mr. Morel intervened at this point to ask: “When my hon. friend says that, does he suggest that the middle classes in Germany, who have been very largely ruined by inflation, have not paid a very large proportion of that money?” To which Mr. Wise replied: “Of course, the middle classes and the credit of Germany are absolutely in default, or practically in default, but it has cost the German nation nothing. It has cost the German people, which is a very great difference.”

This divergence between the people's interests and the nation's interests is manifest everywhere, and can only be explained by supposing that when the “nation” acts it acts by some other will than that of the people who comprise it. Mr. Garvin, in this week's *Observer*, illuminates the subject by making the comment: “Bankers must bring the statesmen to reason before the statesmen can bring the bankers to business.” If he had said, “The nations must bring the peoples to reason,” and so on, he would have spoken the same truth. Leaving aside the vital considerations of what is this “reason” and what this “business,” it is clear that Mr. Garvin is declaring that representative institutions (politics) must give way to the non-representative institution (finance). The statesman is the “people” and the banker is the “nation.” Elsewhere, in the same journal, the “Diplomatic Correspondent” says: “There is the further and more important difficulty that the bankers in the last resort have the whip hand in any scheme which concerns international finance.” It will be recalled how Lord Balfour once declared that Britain ought not to bind herself to repay America without reference to whether her own debtors repaid her. He was taking the “people's” common-sense view that if we owed so much, and were owed the same amount and more, we ought to be able to stand out and let the ultimate debtors settle with America over our heads. But Mr. J. P. Morgan lifted an eyebrow and Lord Balfour disappeared. Very soon afterwards our Government unconditionally surrendered and agreed to fund our debt. And during last week Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Lloyd George were engaged in tossing to each other the responsibility for the surrender. What does it matter? As the same “Diplomatic Correspondent” says: “New York is frank enough not to conceal its disinclination to invest money in any European concern unless the British Government can be made to stand as ultimate security. The transactions of 1917, when America refused to lend money to France or Italy except on a British endorsement, were an illustration of a principle which is still operative, and the history of the intervening years has vindicated the judgment of New York on purely realist lines.” Whether Mr. Baldwin, Mr. Lloyd George, or any other statesman were saddled with the responsibility, any one of them, if he were frank, could plead *force majeure*: so let there be an end to this kind of altercation.

It is quite plain why Great Britain is held security by Wall Street for all the European Allies. At any

time the United States Army can foreclose on Canada, just as the French occupied the Ruhr. Canada's water power alone is a sufficient exploitable asset to cover all the so-called “risks” attaching to American loans to Europe. Therefore, Great Britain's statesmen—of all parties—have been obliged to act as cat's-paws of the Federal Reserve Board, visiting the ruin of deflation upon the British people, and then being driven inevitably into a policy of dragging France and Italy into the same course. If we want to retain Canada we must help America maintain the market value of her gold hoard. That in doing so we run the grave risk of involving ourselves in another European war—well, we suppose the moral is that we ought never to have borrowed money from America. It looks as if the green backers who held our coats when we fought the Junkers must have held them upside down.

The *Observer's* “Diplomatic Correspondent” describes in his report how “it had been assumed by the politicians—that the bankers would have no hesitation in giving their approval to the loan and possibly to underwriting it,” and points out that Sir Robert Kindersley, a director of the Bank of England, must have considered the guarantees enumerated in the Dawes scheme good enough or he would not have signed the report. But immediately he proceeds to say: “The financial disapproval came from New York in the first instance.” A little later he comments: “The mere fact that Mr. Lamont has committed himself to the view that the security is not good enough has already done harm to the prospect of raising the loan.” The plain man will be inclined to ask why private investors in Britain and America could not manage to raise a comparatively small loan of £40,000,000, but the writer of the article explains the reason: “Even if the loans were underwritten by the Stock Exchange underwriters in the two countries, they would be dependent, to some extent, on the promise of bank overdrafts.” A much more pertinent question would be why the banks of European countries (chiefly, of course, in the circumstances, those of Great Britain) are so dependent upon American participation in a loan of such small dimensions. But the answer would be: Are they? We suggest that they are well capable of creating credits to the amount in question. Great Britain alone could. American participation may well be part of a deeper scheme. The spectacle of Mr. Lamont disparaging the security behind the proposed loan should not be taken as meaning that the interests he stands for are indifferent whether they come in or stand out. Those of our readers who remember our article on China, entitled “Loans and War Risks,” will not require felling that haggling over terms can go on contemporaneously with the most ferocious determination to force a loan on a country.

The condition of the floating of the loan is that France shall leave the Ruhr and shall sign away her freedom to go back on her own initiative. But, to cut through all verbal subterfuges, France knows very well that if she leaves the Ruhr now when her mere occupation of it is so much economic bargaining power in her hands, she will never go back, whether Germany “defaults” or not. And the second consideration is that in so retiring she will be facilitating the internationalising of the Ruhr, which involves putting Germany on a “sound currency” basis and adding one more to the list of nations who, having lost their inflationary tails, will naturally exert pressure on those who have not done so to set about it. Only a few days ago the *Daily Mail* said that if the Dawes plan were found to work successfully it could be made the model of another “Dawes” system for the settlement of all European indebtedness. To this, Mr. Garvin adds, in the current *Observer*: “The further and more

sanguine hope is that the bankers at a later phase will solve the financial problem of France by floating vaster loans on the strength of German industrial securities, and capitalising reparations in advance to the tune of £800,000,000.” We should like to know what there is in this prospect to attract France out of the Ruhr. She has seen something of what has happened to her neighbours in terms of unemployment, bankruptcies, and emigration across this world or into the next as a result of the “solution” of their financial problems; and who can be surprised if she retorts: “Je ne mange de ce pain là.” We recognise that it is only natural for those who have been “had” themselves to desire the same experience to befall their fellows; but anyhow it is not worth fighting them about. If France's retirement from the Ruhr and her submission to sound financial discipline would restore our lost prosperity we should speak differently; but neither action will contribute in the slightest to the solution of the real problem. Loans! The world got into debt through the floating of loans. And now it is told that only more loans will get it out of debt. Who, then, has hidden the world's money?

In a world denuded of purchasing power, as Mr. Churchill has described it, it is obvious to the most casual observer that America and Great Britain as the two creditor countries of the world cannot possibly get repayment in money from the rest. But they can only too easily get payment in goods and services, which, as Mr. Churchill has also pointed out, the world is much better equipped to produce than before the war. It is for them to address themselves seriously to working out a plan for accepting these goods and services; a plan which will extract prosperity and not, as now, trade stagnation, from their arrival. The principle underlying such a plan is well known. It is that imports should be recognised as being, which they are, additions to national wealth—as the equivalent of fresh home production. If, as is the most convenient method of distribution, the citizens of the receiving country are to acquire these goods and services by purchase, financial credit should be created to enable them to buy them. The question of who shall immediately receive the credit, and how its benefits will be diffused through industry and society can be treated as a matter of detail. The essential thing is to give effect to the common-sense financial principle that for every pound's worth of real wealth that comes into the country for nothing our credit system should create a pound's worth of purchasing power. The orthodox cannot plead the “inflation” objection to the principle itself, because the money claims to the goods would appear at no faster rate than the goods themselves materialised. The effect of this plan would be that our home industries would persist unscathed by these imports, for the community could buy them all and still have as much money to spend on home production as they had had previously. Gone then would be the fear of reparations. Gone would be the difficulty of getting for her to finance their production has been long committed to the public. Major Douglas drew it up and submitted it to Mr. Lloyd George in respect of Great Britain's debt. It was published in “Credit Power,” and afterwards embodied in a leaflet entitled, “Great Britain's Debt to America,” which is still available at the office of THE NEW AGE. It will serve as a model for any debtor country to investigate. The great obstacle to its adoption is, of course, the unbelief of the majority of citizens in every country in its feasibility. It is high time that they question their incredulity, and ask themselves whether it arises out of their independent reasoning, or has been imparted to them by the custodians of their present credit system

—the high financiers. That system is destined to early failure, and we are looking for signs that its controllers are awake to the fact. If not, there are signs that the industrialists are. The recent action of the Federation of British Industries in questioning the interest-rate policy of the Bank of England is one portent. The petition of the National Union of Manufacturers which Sir William Bull and Lord Birkenhead are to present to their respective Houses, asking for a Committee of Enquiry before this country is committed to the Dawes Report, is another.

Revolt, in some place or other, is bound to occur unless the bankers in some country or other forestall it by making the necessary changes themselves. If the revolt should have to come, it would create the less disturbance the higher up in industrial and social circles it showed itself. That is why we are glad that bodies like those we have mentioned are showing enterprise in the matter, and that journals with the traditions of the *Spectator* are taking such an independent stand in regard to it. The evil is too deep and the remedy too wide for any hope to reside in the revolt of any small section of the community. The co-operation of all classes is needed. And the scheme of their emancipation, which we have preached so long, commends itself in that while they are yet seeking their own interests they can be saved. National prosperity built up on individual self-interest is the promise we hold out and the promise we can make good. As for the assembled delegates at the Allied Conference, let them all go back home. Peace is not buried in an “international” tomb; she is sealed with a golden seal under the bank vaults of each impoverished country. It is the third day, and long shadows of disconsolate peoples are streaking the path to Emmaus.

## Question Time.

### NOTES ON SOCIAL CREDIT AND THE EXCHANGES.

A fair number of people, who agree with the Douglas Proposals as far as they concern home production and distribution (internal exchanges), are unconvinced of their practicability in respect of foreign trade (external exchanges). The idea seems to be that whereas we can do what we like in regard to linking up our money with our own industry and commerce, we cannot do what we like in regard to linking it up with foreign industry and commerce. We might, it is held, be injured by a slump in the value of the £ sterling abroad. This attitude is quite reasonable, and it is our duty to give attention to it. But there is one important thing we must lay down first; that is that when we discuss the external effects of the adoption of Social Credit principles we must demand that their internal effects are assumed to be what we have claimed they would be: for it is clearly futile to inquire how the Douglas Proposals will work abroad unless we set out from the premise that they are working at home.

Now, what would be this situation at home which we are going to take as our starting point? It would comprise the following main features:—

- A very cheap market for consumable goods and services sold for immediate consumption—due to the “Just Price” factor.
- A correspondingly cheap market for all other goods and services (“capital” and “unfinished” goods)—due to the fact that the home demand had led to a largely-increased output, whereas “overhead” (fixed) charges remained practically unaltered.
- The ability on the part of the home population to buy the whole of the manufacturers' output—due to

the fact that the "Just Price" factor would have brought them into that position.

To make the position more graphic, let us use a few figures. Suppose that the production of the country before the adoption of Social Credit had been 3,000 units of goods, and that its citizens could buy only 2,000, and the other 1,000 had to be exported in order that the producers should recover their costs. Next, suppose that the new régime has brought about a total production of 12,000 units, and that the national credit authority has it in its power to distribute sufficient purchasing power at home to enable the population to buy the whole quantity. This would mean that producers could now recover their costs on their total output without the necessity of selling a single unit of it abroad. The money problem would have been solved for them, leaving only the problem of importing raw materials.

This, then, is the starting-point of our inquiry. It will be observed that the old problem would have been reversed. Whereas the difficulty was to find buyers across the sea, now it has become one of finding sellers. It would thus have become a common-sense problem—one of getting what we require instead of getting rid of what we require.

Now, the logic of the situation can be dealt with very briefly. Given that the purchasing power of the British £ sterling were greater within Great Britain than anywhere else on the globe (i.e., that the British price level were the lowest in the world), the value of the £ sterling must rise above that of all other currencies. As the ultimate value of all currencies is measured by how much can be bought with them, the value of the £ would be the highest. If it were not, if some mysterious influence were to send the £ down below par, the world would be confronted with such a travesty of economic logic as would compel a re-investigation of the whole theory of exchanges. But, further, it would lead to consequences of a more practical nature, which we shall survey in following articles.

(To be continued.)

## Current Financial Policy.

[This article was written some months ago, but is purposely left unchanged by the author with the exception of two sentences.]

The recent attempt by a member in the House of Commons to raise the question of monetary policy was successfully "damped down." But those concerned cannot hope to succeed indefinitely by the use of these tactics, for the subject is likely to reach the stage of a practical problem in the near future. If discussion of the difficulty is taboo in the financial Press that is an excellent reason why it should be ventilated.

The dollar rate has declined gradually since March, 1923, it has fallen approximately 6 per cent. in twelve months. The Bank rate was raised in July last year, to correct the New York exchange it was said. The inflation of credit that has taken place during the past year has its inevitable sequel in rising prices. Hence £s will be worth less. The reflex is the decline in the dollar value of sterling. This is one of the "inexorable economic laws" that the financial Press does not find it convenient to advertise.

The following is a quotation from the annual report of the Federal Reserve Board:—

In carrying out its credit policy the reserve system has not relied upon changes in discount rates as the only means of influencing the general credit situation. A reserve bank can do much by other means than changes in discount rates to establish effective supervision and control of the credit released.

Incidentally, this furnishes a good answer to the question, "Do banks restrict credit?" It should be noted that penal rates were not imposed. It would be expected that a credit policy such as is indicated by the report would prevent rising prices. Reference to

the index number of wholesale prices (all commodities) published by the F. R. B. shows the figure constant at 163 since September, 1923, till February of this year. There has been a slight fall since. Quieter trade in the States is also reported.

A number of people on this side have been disappointed about this. The hoped-for rise in American prices, as a result of inflation there, was relied upon to restore the £ to parity, if not to a premium, thus permitting an expansion of credit, a rise in prices, and resuscitation of industry here. But New York does not intend so readily to surrender the goal of an exchange premium.

The question that has agitated those who decided our financial policy may be put briefly as follows: Are we to pursue our own course of a rejuvenation of industry by expanding credit, in which case the dollar rate would decline still further, or, is New York to impose upon us her policy of credit restriction, which we must accept if we are to maintain the exchange rate?

The decision has already been made. Are there any indications of the course of events? Forward purchases of dollars are reported. If this has occurred to any extent it may fairly be said that such operations presage a further decline in the sterling rate. In the absence of deliberate manipulation, such a development would indicate a divergence, on the part of London, from the policy of New York. A continued expansion in the total of clearing bank advances and deposits and a steady increase in currency notes would confirm this view. This would be all to the good. There is, however, an obstacle—the "legal" limit of the fiduciary currency issue. Why this arbitrary embargo upon the community's means of exchange is called the "legal" limit is a mystery. It was instituted by a Treasury minute of December, 1919, and there is no reason why it should not be withdrawn with the ease and absence of compunction that attended its imposition. The most pertinent criticism of the Cunliffe policy is, that while it provides for a contraction of the currency it does not provide for an expansion. Force of circumstances alone, then, compels its eventual modification. Alternatively, failing other means, e.g., an increase in the gold holding and a transfer of Bank of England notes to Currency Note Account, in order to maintain the limit a restriction of credit will be applied. In this connection it may be noted the wholesale price index tends slightly downwards at the moment. Whether this movement is anticipatory the course of events will prove.

The anxiety with which industrial interests regard the dilemma finds an echo in the constant call for "security, stability, freedom to produce, confidence," and all the other "tags" broadcast, purporting to explain the absence from industry of the vitalising draft. Mr. Baldwin's suspicions of "endemic unemployment" will approach realisation if the New York policy prevails. "For one reason or another we shall have a great many unemployed on our hands for (say) the next ten years." This is a recent statement by Sir William Beveridge in the *Nation*.

What are the intentions of our financial dictators? Are Industry and Society again to be sacrificed, this time to the expediency of the illegal limit? The present fiduciary currency issue is approximately 242 millions. The limit is arbitrarily fixed at 248 millions. Six millions is a very narrow margin if industry is to be allowed to re-employ the million or more workless. If the limit is intended to prevail, the plea will be, "a sound financial policy." As always, this means a sound policy for Finance. Its basis is the anti-social axiom, "The essence of money is limitation." More orders of Finance. Industry—Money scarcity the principle of Finance. It is clear that, if the workless are to be re-employed, a larger volume of currency will be required owing to

the larger wage payments necessary. If the currency is limited, then, either the workless must remain in that state or those already employed must receive less.

Assuming it has been decided to proceed with the re-vitalising of Industry it is difficult to see how the challenging of the fiduciary currency limit can be avoided. In the meantime, what of the dollar exchange, to which so much importance is attached? Inflation here, by driving down the exchange rate, inflates our American debt in £s. The problem could be dealt with in a manner similar to the case of the franc. This would entail borrowing, or the pretence of it, in New York; and the facilities may, or may not, be forthcoming.

The most striking feature of the situation is the part played by, and the reliance placed upon, prices. Price is the pivotal point of the whole controversy. Credit issue is admittedly simple, but price regulation!—is also simple in the hands of those who have the formula.

K. O. GLENN.

## Inflation and Slump.

AN ANALYSIS.

By G. Biddulph.

Although technical improvements are continually developing the productivity of industry, the cost of living rises proportionately, and wages have now less purchasing power than those of the early XVIIth century, while destitution increases as periodical gluts are aggravated.

I. The running costs of industry are financed mainly on bank credit, because, unless trade profits were lower than the rate at which money could be borrowed, it would not be possible for private capital to compete with "bankers'" capital. Credit is at present issued against an estimate of the amount of money—which is limited—that will be available when the production financed by it is marketed; not in relation to the productivity of industry or the needs of the community.

Inflation is the result of an increase in money demand without a contemporary and equivalent supply of goods purchasable by that money; and it is exhibited by rising prices. It is inherent in every method of improving production; and were money not in use, inflation would be more dramatically exhibited by a reduction of output during a period of work not immediately productive. Fresh credit functions as demand in the form of wages earlier than the supply of commodities appears for the production of which it is issued; and the cost of living is inflated, because the current output of goods absorbs the expanded volume of money. Therefore, when the increased output is at last available, it should be obtainable free of capital costs, since these have been paid for already by inflation of the cost of living, and that inflation should now be cancelled by correct Deflation.

A restricted legal tender produces Interest, and restricts production, and this enables the owners of Capital, which is perishable, to charge for "depreciation," which is perishable, to charge for "depreciation" three times.

(1) Past, by Interest, because of restricted legal tender.  
(2) Present, by Depreciation, because of restricted capital.  
(3) Future, by the inflation of the Cost of (restricted) living.  
The result is that as industry expands, the proportion of capital charges to direct costs rises, the cost of living is correspondingly inflated, and the credits necessary have to be progressively increased. The

cost of financing new industry is largely abstracted from the contemporary circulation.

Normally the issue of legal tender is not proportionate to the increase of credit; and since the velocity of currency cannot be accelerated sufficiently to overtake the high prices of expanded trade, the banks are compelled by the depletion of their cash reserves to reduce their loans, either by demanding negotiable securities, or by raising their discount rate. Prices fall, orders are cancelled, trade declines, men are laid off, demand falls, more unemployment ensues, and the slump produces a glut.

But though Legal Tender could be issued, the Financial Interests prefer Deflation, for while Inflation brings increased discounts, it reduces the value of gilt-edged securities and bonds of the National Debt. Inflation is preferred, however, to an increase in legal tender, on which no interest would be paid.

The outcome of Inflation—demand in excess of supply, is Deflation—supply without demand. Since past output absorbs present demand, goods now for sale can only be bought by credit issues for further production. But how can a glut be removed by producing more?

The object of business is to keep demand in excess of supply, and that is attained by a relatively excessive Capital development with a restricted output of necessities. This is favourable to Finance, for the rising prices which result cause the circulating tender to be quickly returned to the banks, while export of capital and frequent movements of bullion increase the profits on discounts and bills of exchange.

"There is no form of business activity which assures such high profits as the issue of securities and the flotation of foreign loans," but it is only a tribute on the production of real wealth.

Gluts of Capital can be temporarily absorbed by (a) Government expenditure through borrowing; for taxation is ineffective, since it is the business of Finance to include all "expenses" in prices.

(b) Increased exports and their result in the present state of competition for the available Markets—War.

Both these create Debt, which has to be repaid, and the last state is worse than the first.

II. Industry is thus based on Debt instead of on wealth, and the "Unemployment" resulting from technical progress produces destitution instead of leisure, because existence is made conditional on rendering services in exchange for a single commodity, the supply of which is restricted—Money. It follows that "Vested Interests" become obstructive to the success of their own activities. Their members are dependent for a living on the maintenance of the very conditions which they are presumably attempting to diminish. The practical motive of self-interest is opposed to the theoretical objective of their "profession," and Industry is run to provide Employment (for Capital or Labour) and not to give that Leisure in which other than material needs may be satisfied. The result of basing distribution on a system which was only suitable for conditions of scarcity no longer prevalent has been to completely invert the principle of economy; thus a strictly limited prosperity is only attained at the expense of the maximum waste and disorganisation.

Prices now consist of Cost multiplied by the ratio of money demand to the purchasable supply of goods; but with a correct system of credit, the ratio should be that of actual requirements to productive capacity. The Real cost of output is the fraction which is consumed in its production, and the Correct price is therefore that fraction of cost (as now estimated) which depreciation bears to productivity.

### The Current Conflux.

"The Reichsbank cannot give credit without sacrificing the stability of German currency, and therefore the thought of the loan of £40,000,000 involved in the Dawes Report is as delectable to the business world as the thought of rain for his parched fields is to the farmer."—*Daily Mail*.

"I am supposed to be responsible for hundreds of millions of pounds of revenue and hundreds of millions of pounds of expenditure, but I confide to you that I have never seen a single penny. (Laughter.) I suppose it must be somewhere."—*Mr. Philip Snowden*.

The new [German Gold] Bank . . . will be fully independent of the Government. . . . Credits to the Government may not be higher than 100,000,000 gold marks.—*Daily Herald*.

"The Dawes Report. Full economic and fiscal sovereignty for Germany, subject to supervision. . . ."—*Daily News*.

"There is only one way in which we [the Communists] can be killed—if the Tories and the Labourists can set the industrial machine in full operation once more."—*Workers' Weekly*.

"Cologne, Tuesday.—The Lanz Engineering Works at Mannheim has notified its 5,000 workers that the concern will be closed on Saturday owing to the shortage of capital and the failure of efforts to arrange credits."—*Reuter*.

Commissioner E. C. Plummer, vice-chairman of the United States Shipping Lines, who has just arrived in London, told a *Daily Mail* reporter recently that Congress was determined upon getting 50 per cent. of the shipping business going into and leaving the United States. "If we do not get it," he said, "there is no doubt that Congress will alter the shipping law to enable us to do so. We can carry cargo cheaper than anybody else, and if we have to cut rates we shall do so. Congress has provided £6,000,000 for operating the ships of the United States Lines this year. This means that we are now in a position to lose that amount of money in getting business, although we do not want to, of course, if it can be avoided."—*Daily Mail*.

### Mannigfaltig.

By C. M. Grieve.

#### BEYOND MEANING.—V.

A characteristic trick of the contemporary reviewer of the conventional type, dealing with a book written from a point of view with which he is not in sympathy or which he does not understand, is to read it through in the hope of discovering a passage in which the author indicates what would be a wrong approach to the phenomena with which he is dealing, and then, having done so, to write a review which calmly conveys the idea that the author does, in fact, proceed along the very lines which he expressly stigmatises.

In a review of that very "sane" and conservative study, *The New Vision in the German Arts*, by Herman George Scheffauer, a writer in the "Times Literary Supplement" provides an excellent example of this when he declares that:

In Mr. Scheffauer's essay on *The Visible Symphony* there is amusingly brought to the surface a confusion of thought which is felt to be lurking throughout his volume. He is describing a new use of the cinematograph celluloid ribbon by a young painter named Walter Ruttmann for a visible

symphony of colour, and he speaks of it as "an attempt to detach the film from all reality and to infuse it with a new æsthetic, spiritual and sensuous content." Now here is evidently a form of art with great possibilities, but the obvious thing about it is that it has nothing whatever to do with the art of the film. It merely makes use of the material support of the film and of its means of projection—that is to say, artificial light. The connection between it and the film is not closer than that between oil-painting and kitchen aprons, because the same substance, canvas, happens to be used in both. Mr. Scheffauer, in short, has fallen into the common mistake of confusing the machinery of a form of art with the factors which really constitute its medium. "Film," as we have come to understand the word, means the photographic film or nothing, and even that engaging creature "Felix, the cat" is irrelevant to the film's artistic resources. In justice to Mr. Scheffauer it must be observed that the word "film" itself, as we have come to understand it, is a bad word, because the photographic film was known and accepted as a term long before the film was attached to the celluloid ribbon of the cinematograph—or even to the flexible roll of the snap-shotter. If it means anything definite it means the sensitised film of gelatine—or it may be collodion—in which the photographic image is actually formed. The mechanical support, whether glass or celluloid roll, rectangle or ribbon, is neither here nor there. But this is not a quarrel about words, it is an attempt in the interests of clear thinking about the arts in general, and the German arts in particular, to define what really is the meaning of Mr. Ruttmann's new form of art. In two words, it is coloured light; and the moment you grasp that you see that the new art is likely to be hindered rather than helped in its possible development by thinking about it in its purely accidental connection with the art of the film. . . . The new art may be "better than" the art of the film; the point is that it is not a betterment of the art of the film, but something quite different. . . . He has failed to consider clearly what it is that really distinguishes "an art" from the vague something called "art."

This is typical of the sort of criticism all "left wing" developments have to encounter at the outset. Even if all this patient explanation were offered in good faith—even if the point made by the reviewer was a legitimate one, at all, in any respect—I should be irresistibly reminded of that passage in the preliminaries of the trial in Bernard Shaw's "St. Joan," where Courcelles is protesting against the reduction of the number of counts in the indictment:—

COURCELLES: . . . It seems to me that there is a conspiracy here to hush up the fact that The Maid stole the Bishop of Senlis's horse.

CAUCHON (keeping his temper with difficulty): This is not a police court. Are we to waste our time on such rubbish?

COURCELLES (rising, shocked): My lord, do you call the Bishop's horse rubbish?

Or, later, CAUCHON: I may say that we have sent to the girl's village to make inquiries about her; and there is practically nothing serious against her.

THE CHAPLAIN Nothing serious, my lord—  
COURCELLES What! The fairy tree (rising and clamouring together) not—

CAUCHON: When I say nothing serious, I mean nothing that men of sufficiently large mind to conduct an inquiry like this would consider serious.

That's just it. Such books should never be entrusted to such reviewers. The whole review consists of bishop's horses and fairy trees, and the essential issues are not so much as touched upon. The reviewer is in a state of "invincible ignorance," and misses the point by a thousand miles. Mr. Scheffauer has given us an invaluable book of a sort that is useful, however, only to the very few who are actively engaged in the arts, or actively interested in them (in Croce's sense, which holds that the appreciation of a work of art is itself an æsthetic activity finding expression). It is a piece of creative criticism or interpretation calculated to be helpful to artists: instead of that type of criticism which abounds in this country, consists in the meticulous labelling and classifying of arts and artists, is exclusively used in schools and colleges, and is of no earthly use to anybody. The confusion in the

latter case is, in my opinion, infinitely more confounded than the type of confusion of which the writer accuses Mr. Scheffauer. Pursued to their logical conclusion, the statements of this reviewer lead to the reductio ad absurdum that, since "the medium must be found before you can begin to talk about art," the forms of human expression which employ ink and type and paper can legitimately be called the art of literature—good, bad, or indifferent, as the case may be, but all literature—whereas poetry extemporised and spoken or sung, or drama spontaneously created, cannot be literature, whatever else you care to call them, unless you deliberately confuse your terms. Apart from that, does "film" to the average cinema-goer mean gelatine or collodion or anything of that sort? Is it not a colloquialism for what appears on the screen? The cinema is liable to develop—the present methods may be entirely superseded (just as hieroglyphics have been)—is "the art of the film" to be arbitrarily restricted to the present phase, and developments as arbitrarily named new arts? But the essence of this matter, which I have purposely dealt with at length, because all the recent developments of the arts and all efforts towards any fusion of them have been attacked along similar lines, and fusion has been everywhere stigmatised as mere confusion, is that the charge is not made in good faith against Mr. Scheffauer, who expressly guards himself against it; and, in so doing, no doubt unwittingly suggested to his reviewer this particular method of disparagement and misrepresentation, which invariably goes down exceedingly well with our so-called literary public.

How far Mr. Scheffauer is from making any such elementary faux pas in his handling of such matters can be best discerned (although his keen discrimination and thorough competence are obvious throughout) from what he says in his essay entitled, "The 'Absolute' Poem," in which he discusses the work of Rudolf Blümner in his "Ango Laina":—

Every poem in an unknown, exotic language would (if Blümner's theory was correct) be absolute poetry to us. Perhaps it is, perhaps it must be, by virtue of that mystic force that operates beyond the word and seeks its throne in sound, pulsating from race to race. Both tongue and ear are forever teaching each other or being taught. The plastic, impregnated air about us forms our speech; the newspapers in which we root and wallow deform it. The native soil rumbles and declaims underfoot as at Elsinore or Delphos; and the trembling grains in the tympani of our hearts and brains respond. Ears that have not lost their mystic communion with the mother soil are able to hear coming events cast their echoes before, as one may hear the murmur of the far-off train already murmuring in the rail. Artificial languages that reek of the camp instead of the soil can take no real root—Volapük, Esperanto, Ido. But can poetry find a universal form or speech—like music or colour? Rudolf Blümner of the "Sturm" declares that he has found it; but has he not rather lost poetry and found merely another form of music? He has closed the doors and shuttered the windows and left us in the dark, with a barbarian chanting in a strange, melodious tongue—incomprehensible to us. We demand sense from speech, if not from sound. . . . But when the impulse is upon us to make a primitive, spontaneous oral music, in which we are at once composer, instrument, theme, and conductor, then we may abandon ourselves to some such spontaneous composition, unbridled by anything save the ear. The beauty of sound remains independent of meaning—as when we hear a rich voice singing but not the words sung; or when the nightingale attacks our hearts at night. Blümner's theory is highly subjective, but it is also rooted in instinct and nature, and so it cannot be dismissed as mere nonsense. It may even develop itself into an art—akin to the dance. But sense is the body of poetry, and we do not wish to disembodify it into mere sound, any more than we wish to disembodify the flower into mere perfume.

That is sufficient, perhaps, to reveal the typical disingenuousness of this reviewer, but, at the same time, we must recognise anew in dealing with the reactions of other people as compared with our own towards these endeavours to secure forms of art which will conduce to a fuller precipitation of life than many of us nowadays consider the older modes capable of,

that, as Conrad Aiken puts it, "we only perceive these things to which we are attuned, and no matter, therefore, how we spin a logic in defence of our tastes, all we do is to stabilise the net of our temperament, the snare of our imperious desires, from which we are never destined to escape." Or, to return to our essential theme, meaning is an incomprehensible, yet communicable thing. Meaning is one thing: meanings are quite another; and, however artists may make use of the latter, the former is their primary concern, and the latter should be used to diminish the incomprehensibility, however infinitesimally, and increase the communicability rather than the illusions of, and substitutes for, it which the older modes principally afford.

### The Theatre.

By H. R. Barbor.

#### THE EVERYMAN RECORD.—II.

In Fernald's adroit translation of Ciarelli's brilliant comedy, "The Mask and the Face," Italy has made a contribution to the gaiety of London. The piece is now running successfully at the Criterion, whither it migrated as a result of its original appearance at the Everyman Theatre. C. M. Marcus's "Bushido" marks, so far, the only attempt that Macdermott has made to express the various aspects of Oriental dramatic conventions and subjects.

Of modern English plays which have had their first production at the Everyman only two stand out in any æsthetic prominence. These are Halcott Glover's "The Second Round" and C. K. Munro's "At Mrs. Beams'." Strictly speaking, the latter piece had been seen before, since the Stage Society had performed it before members some years ago. Macdermott's was, however, the first public presentation, and as a result, Munro's comedy of boarding-house life was taken up by Denis Eadie, who appeared in it at the Royalty, where a most satisfactory run ensued. Although Franklyn Dyall, who created the part of the moody crook, was sadly missed in the revival, Jean Cadell improved a well-merited reputation as an exponent of "odd" character parts as the loquacious Mrs. Beams.

Glover's piece before mentioned was a most ambitious and much more deeply conceived work, for "The Second Round" cuts down to the nerves of a man's spiritual reaction to society and his protagonist, the warped sea-captain, exemplified certain mental and moral reverberations which are peculiarly racial, which belong as much to a sea-going people as do those of Ibsen's Brand to the white silences of Norse mountain tops. To have cast an actor, albeit of extreme brilliancy of talent, inherently endowed with the characteristics of an alien race, was therefore to have courted the disaster which followed. For it was nothing less than a theatrical disaster that "The Second Round" did not come through its trial run at the experimental to wider popular suffrage in a West-End playhouse.

Another English piece of promise which never got beyond the trial stage was "The Marsdens," a dialect comedy of Yorkshire mill-town life, by J. R. Gregson. Several other modern pieces of comparatively negligible value have been launched at this theatre, but, taking a broad view, one feels that insufficient attention has been paid by the management to original and contemporary work. One would imagine that a considerable portion of the Everyman's activities would centre round the discovery and embodiment of new British work. This, however, has not been the case. Numerous plays by the younger generation of English authors have been published, and among this post-war crop are several which should have bloomed in this forcing-house of the drama. Presumably financial insecurity will be Macdermott's response to this tentative criticism.

But while the lack of new pieces may be deplored, we can have nothing but gratitude for the numerous revivals of works by English authors which have figured in the lists. Granville-Barker, Galsworthy, Bennett, Dunsany, Masefield, Chesterton, Ervine are names that occur in this connection.

One of the major events of the Everyman history was the first production of John Drinkwater's historical-tragical "Mary Stuart," which enjoyed a considerable run here. Macdermott was not responsible for this piece, which was presented by a co-operative company of artists who had been associated with the director at various times, and who took over the management for a summer season. But although the director was not concerned as a principal in this venture, it was by virtue of his initiative and acumen that this and similar experiments by other groups was made possible since he had called the theatre and a nucleus audience into being. This is also true in the case of Sutton Vane's greatly successful "Outward Bound," which was originally put on here and nursed into a West End, and later into an international theatrical event of the year. G. R. Chesterton's "Magic," similarly revived by a co-operative group, was transferred to a central London theatre. Indeed, the Everyman is employed and watched by managers generally as a producing centre, where inexpensive tests are possible, and in this regard it is of inestimable value to the "commercial theatre."

It has also functioned usefully as a training ground for actors. More than this, it has given us a chance of seeing many of our "arrived" players in rôles of more histrionic and intellectual interest than the popular theatre generally affords them. Several leading artists have done some magnificent work on the little stage of our little theatre.

Several of our younger artists, owing to the considerable opportunities here given them of coming into direct touch with public and critics in effective parts, have graduated to positions in the London theatre which, in spite of their talents, the ordinary conditions of theatrical employment would probably have prevented them from obtaining for many years. Among these must be mentioned Leslie Banks, to whom reference has already been made; Harold Scott, noted for his assumption of low-comedy characters and "seedy" individuality and a clever portrayal of tramps or odd fish with a strain of spirituality (Parsifals of the gutter and hedgerow), and Richard Bird, who, after delighting us with some studies of fresh manly youngsters, has now left for the States to resume the part in which he has won London's esteem, that of the "Babe" of his battalion in Harry Wall's "Havoc."

Yet, in spite of the interest and value accruing to theatrical London generally and to the commercial theatre, both directly and indirectly, Macdermott has not yet succeeded in establishing this theatre on a basis of secure finance. Beginning with the narrowest margin, the original resources of the company (The Everyman Theatre, Limited) were soon exhausted. Of course, there were many lessons to learn, and the learning cost money as well as tough continuous work and not a little of heart-ache and disillusion. A few, a very few, people of means came to the rescue of the theatre in its hour of need, but several times the theatre has seemed to be in extremis. Often it has only been possible to carry on by the loyal and self-sacrificial support of the players and staff. All the same, the director has contrived, not only to keep the theatre in active being, but to achieve a series of productions which, with a few exceptions, might well be envied by the wealthiest impresario in the world—and might be emulated by some of our more fortunate theatre-men to their increased credit.

Macdermott's practical technique of the stage embraces many of the features of the practice in vogue in German and American playhouses. He uses built or architectural elements which can be employed in different associations in various plays, thus reducing

production costs to a minimum. Decoration rather than realism is the keynote of his work, which is generally simple to a degree by no means inconsistent with beauty or with genuine theatrical illusion. These built scenes are generally coloured in neutral or half-tone pigments, which serve as an unobtrusive background, setting the actors in strong relief, and thus insisting on their importance in the action of the piece. Such a practice is particularly congruent with a small theatre, where vivid settings, full of finicky detail close to the audience would dissipate much of the interest belonging properly to the drama itself.

The rear wall of the theatre is distempered dull blue, thus serving as a "heaven," which can be flooded with suitably coloured and intense light. Lighting indeed is one of the director's chief enthusiasms. He has resisted the more or less prejudiced demands of critics and actors to instal foot-lights and, in place of floats, he floods his stage from the auditorium with atmospheric light, projected from powerful lamps. A complicated but easily operated switchboard, the work of Macdermott and Walter S. Veness (the most inventive and imaginative of stage-lighting experts in this country), enables remarkably suggestive and subtle effects of illumination to be employed, thereby assisting the decoration of the stage, and once more economising running costs. I recall one veritable poem in terms of light which was a feature of the production of Lord Dunsany's "The Tents of the Arabs."

After the garish, pseudo-realistic and insistent scene-painting of many of our playhouses it is indeed pleasant to find a theatre where it is realised that the play is considered the thing, and where nothing is allowed to detract from the prime assertions of author and actor. The harmony and reticence of Macdermott's scene are not the least effective contributions that he is making to the contemporary English theatre.

As has been said, a loyal nuclear audience has now been obtained, but this is still far from sufficient to assure the efficient and regular continuance of the work of the theatre. More regrettable still, the small number of reliable patrons does not permit of those more hazardous experiments which are perhaps the most valuable part of the work of such an organisation.

The director considers that when a reliable two-thirds capacity audience has been secured, the end of his financial troubles (He is quite capable of looking after the rest!) will be in sight. Maximum capacity in terms of cash means an income of about £80 per performance, or £560 per week of seven shows. Two-thirds of this, say, four hundred pounds per week, would assure the efficiency and success of what is probably the most vital impetus at work in the British Theatre to-day. Fourteen hundred people for a weekly change of bill, or two thousand eight hundred for the more practical fortnight run, are all that would be necessary to make London's only repertory theatre a self-supporting and permanent organisation of the first cultural importance.

One person in every two thousand five hundred of the population of Greater London. It does not seem much to ask.

#### "A CORRECTION."

Sir,—In my article in THE NEW AGE of July 24, par 6, line 4, a printer's error has ascribed to Mr. Bernard Shaw "constructive nationalism." Lest this should have perturbed Mr. Shaw and distracted your readers, kindly inform all and sundry that "rationalism" not "nationalism," was intended. Trusting this will have been received in time to avert the most serious consequences.

H. R. BARBOR.

## "Les Affaires Sont Les Affaires."

Alfred James Career-Hunter, General Manager of Messrs. Loveall, Treatwell and Co., Ltd., Warehousemen, Basinghall-street, E.C., was feeling very pleased with himself and the world in general. He had some justification for his self-satisfaction. The shareholders had just unanimously voted him an increase in his salary of £500 a year, in consideration of his untiring and successful efforts on their behalf. They had also expressed their appreciation of the efficiency and loyalty of the staff by giving them—a hearty vote of thanks.

He was conscious that he fully deserved this handsome acknowledgment of his services. Reorganising the business, and thereby increasing the dividends from 10 to 20 per cent., had been an exceedingly difficult, and, in some respects, an uncongenial, task, for it had been necessary to ruthlessly cut down working expenses. Only that day he had been compelled to discharge a clerk who had been absent for some weeks owing to neurasthenia. He was very reluctant to take such drastic action after the poor fellow's twenty-one years' service with the firm, but he was obviously a physical and mental wreck, and the firm could not afford to carry any passengers. The doctor alleged that his complaint was caused by the undue pressure and anxiety entailed in carrying out his business duties; but that was sheer nonsense.

In all probability his nerves had been shattered during his four years' service at the front. However, he had felt sorry for the poor devil, and he had given the cashier instructions to pay him a month's salary. That would put him on his feet while he looked round for another and more suitable occupation. "Les affaires sont les affaires." He could not afford to let his heart dominate his business instincts.

He smiled reminiscently as he thought of his own first interview with the firm. They had been rather dubious about giving him the position because of his well-known political Labour sympathies. But he had overcome their prejudices by assuring them that his political opinions would in no way clash with his duties as General Manager, and he had also prophesied that a Labour Government was imminent and that his position as a potential M.P. would add to the prestige of the firm. His predictions had proved correct. He had made good both in business and politics. He had won a seat which had hitherto been a Tory stronghold by a tremendous majority. A Labour Government was now in office, and the Premier had hinted that a position in the Cabinet would be found him at the first opportunity. His speech in the House the previous night had been an outstanding success—the crowning achievement in his long fight against stupendous odds. As Chairman of the Alliance of Employers and Employees he had enhanced his prestige in the City. He had received many congratulations on his last address, in which he had emphasised the folly of the class struggle, the necessity for the complete organisation of both employers and employees, and the value of trade boards and industrial councils for the promotion of good will, and the proper development of the trade interests of our great and glorious Empire.

Moreover, his policy of paying some of the members of his staff a little over the minimum wage-rate, conditional upon their working overtime occasionally without pay, although rather a dangerous experiment (for it might be construed as a violation of the Agreement) had proved highly successful. In conjunction with the formation of staff councils, it had prevented many from joining the Union, which was in danger of becoming too strong. Thanks to his initiative, the Employers' Association had been

enabled to reduce the minimum of 80s. to a much lower figure.

He glanced round his handsomely-furnished room, with its few rare etchings, and profusion of flowers tastefully arranged in simple but costly bowls, with pardonable pride. The roses not only pleased his aesthetic tastes; they also ministered to his sense of material well-being. He inhaled their delicate fragrance with a new sense of elation—a poor man could not afford such exquisite blooms. It gratified him to be surrounded by flowers all the year round.

Fools had told him that money could not buy happiness, and that business and labour ideals were incompatible, but he knew better. He thought of his beautiful wife and children, his handsome house and its spacious grounds, and smiled. Money could buy everything that constituted happiness—the choicest books, pictures, wines, and the society of charming and accomplished people, who, unlike his Labour colleagues, did not bore one by boasting of their superior virtues. Only fools wallowed in the mire of poverty.

It was true that his dual capacity as a business man and also a social reformer was sometimes a little trying, but his diplomatic qualities had, hitherto, enabled him to overcome these difficulties. In principle he believed in trade unionism, just as he accepted the more difficult theories of credit and the necessity for price control in the interests of the community. But only fools made martyrs of themselves unnecessarily. Under the present economic system it was only possible to progress by very slow stages, and owing to the half-educated state of the masses it was necessary to put a brake upon one's own inclinations, and the activities of the more ardent members of his party.

The struggle had been a long and arduous one, but he was rapidly achieving the summit of his ambition, and he had not sacrificed his ideals in the process. His own indomitable courage and sterling qualities of mind and heart had gained him the victory so far—he would yet reach the top.

A knock at the door interrupted his reflections. "Come in." "Yes, Miss Cawington, what is it?" "A letter for you, sir, marked 'Personal and Urgent.' I thought you might wish to deal with it at once." He "Thanks; wait a moment, I may need you." He glanced at the inscription on the back of the envelope, frowned, and tore the letter open with a gesture of impatience. As he read, dismay and anger distorted his features. "Get me the Commercial Employees' Union, Miss. Thanks, you can go."

"Hello! is the secretary in?" "Speaking?" "I've just received your letter. It's like your infernal cheek. You can go to blazes. If you think you can intimidate me, you are mistaken. I do not consider it is necessary in view of the administrative position I hold to join a union. In any case, your union will not benefit by your discourteous and ill-considered action. I will join some other trade union organisation. You can then expose me to my constituents if you choose, and be damned to you."

"There is always a fly in the ointment," he muttered angrily as he sank wearily back in his easy-chair.

PERCY ALLOTT.

## The Price of Civilisation.

The history of etiology probably contains no volume wherein is to be found more evidence of painstaking research than is exemplified in Mr. Barker's latest book.\* That it has been written by a layman is a fact which is certainly not detrimental to the value of his clearly expressed conclusions. For, contrary to the average professional opinion, the orthodox medical and surgical associations do

\*"Cancer. How it is Caused and How it Can be Prevented." By J. Ellis Barker. With an introduction by Sir W. Arbuthnot Lane. (Murray. 7s. 6d. net.)

not hold a monopoly of the faculty of scientific investigation of diseases which seem to be inherent in a certain type of mind. The proverbial phrase that "Doctors differ" should for ever warn medical practitioners against the easy assumption that in nosology the findings of a non-professional, even though he be a trained thinker, cannot be "accepted" because he has not the legal privilege of tacking certain cabalistic letters after his name. There are numerous members of the many branches of science who are not capable of thinking scientifically—in the fundamental sense of that much-abused term. Likewise, there are many scientifically-minded thinkers about disease who do not "belong" to any particular professional institution, but who nevertheless have made a lifelong study of the subject, which is, after all, more personal than almost any other. Mr. Barker's fortunate position as an "outsider" has thus enabled him to expound his theory in that atmosphere of detachment which seldom prevails in the groves of Academe.

It was Shelley who wrote: "Poets and philosophers are the unacknowledged legislators of the world." In the same way it may be declared that isolated thinkers on the disease called Civilisation are the unacknowledged physicians of the future. Our author, indeed, concludes that the rapid spread of cancer within recent times is mainly due to the march of civilisation. He traces its cause to the chemical adulterations used in the name of "preservatives" in our food supply; to the eating of polished rice, pearl barley, white bread, etc., which have been "improved" by wasteful milling processes; to an insufficiency of fresh vegetables and fruit in present-day diet; to an excess of sugar in many forms; to defective teeth caused by eating soft foods; to the lack of a proper amount of walking exercise since the advent of railways, tramways, motor-cars and other methods of modern transport; and to the want of a liberal supply, night and day, of fresh air in the home. He confidently asserts that the modern scourge can be arrested only by a properly regulated diet, rich in vitamins, and with a strict regimen of exercise and fresh air. In other words, he advocates that prevention is better than cure; but that, where the fell disease has already been diagnosed and is not too far advanced, it is better to resort to an operation.

Mr. Barker finds that a deficiency of vitamins in our diet is one of the main causes of cancer to-day. But Dr. Hindhede, the Danish authority on diet, expressly states that Denmark has the highest death-rate from cancer in the world, and yet the Danes grossly overfeed with milk and its products, which are rich in vitamins. Moreover, Dr. Monckton-Copeman, F.R.S., has pronounced as his considered opinion that cancer is due to an excess of vitamins in diet. Since the elusive vitamin has not yet been isolated by Science it is perhaps understandable that opinions utterly contradictory of each other should still be held by sincere members of the medical profession. It is, however, only by concerted attack on both sides of the subject that the etiological fort of cancer shall at last be taken.

Though Dr. Robert Bell is mentioned once in this volume it would have interested many to know that so long ago as 1804 Dr. Bell, at that time senior physician at the Glasgow Hospital for Women, renounced the operative treatment of cancer. He was impelled to this course after his own long experience in the use of the lancet, and has been treating the disease regularly ever since by non-operative methods. In 1904 he came to London to take up private practice. At the Battersea General Hospital to-day he is continuing his non-operative treatment of cancer, chiefly in the out-patients' department, with consistently satisfactory results. No book on cancer can be considered complete unless it contains either a reasoned refutation of Dr. Bell's

methods or an explanation of their success. In the meantime the words of Sir Arbuthnot Lane, from his Introduction to this volume, may give encouragement to many: "Mr. Barker has shown us the way how to conquer cancer. Let us listen attentively to what he has to say, and let us support him with the utmost energy and enthusiasm. Thus we shall stay the plague which at present is desolating the world."

SCOTT CURFEW.

## Reviews.

**The Reconstruction of Agricultural England.** By Montague Fordham.

Mr. Fordham knows his subject, and finds no problem of production in agriculture apart from the restrictions due to our financial system. He further recognises the destructive effects of our confused system of education—"there has been side by side a practical scientific education leading to great productive possibilities in all directions, including agriculture, and a social education expressly or implicitly teaching to rich and poor alike a destructive economic policy, which, when put into force, reduces production and stops progress, and thus causes our present social catastrophe" (Page 157). Again, "the case for education . . . a question of funds . . . still an impression that there is a shortage somewhere . . . a mistake . . . funds ample, but in control of financiers." We wonder if Mr. Fordham realises that these funds are potential and not actual? Our civilisation has reached the top of the hill and is regarded by many as likely to slide down the other side to destruction. However, "we have in the last half-century accumulated much new knowledge of science and economics," this "new learning" we must make haste to understand before it is too late. "Creative evolution is possible." This work is being done by innumerable thinkers, and the author is taking his part by the preparation of his agricultural scheme. He hopes that it would "secure good profits for the farmer, high wages for the labourer, and fair prices to the consumer." The system of organisation outlined proposes the elimination of waste and also of the middleman, and Mr. Fordham has a good word to say for the latter, even suggesting his compensation. We are afraid he would find it required more than an organisation to *fix prices*, although it should be possible to *regulate the general price level*. But the poor will remain with us, as with fixed prices and a food budget tending to become a settled thing, "a matter of great importance to poor people," we hardly see how the housewife is to gain anything by removing the necessity to bargain, besides which some of them might resent it. As the "mere process of fixing prices" is merely expected to result in "a saving to the consumer of 5 per cent., and probably more," it would seem that, despite the elaborateness of the scheme, the poor consumer qua consumer is not expected to get very much from it. However, Mr. Fordham admits the possibility of introducing a "just price," as also the necessity of high remuneration for the producer, accompanied by low prices for the consumer. His two principles are "just prices" and "direct delivery from producer to consumer" (Page 87), but these must be supported by "an intelligent credit system." However, he does not propose a solution of our financial difficulties, but considers his scheme will clear away the financial obstacles blocking rural progress. The chapter on Money is interesting, but not very constructive. He has nothing good to say about the orthodox economist, and if he would accept the view that money is merely a way of doing things, the science of the new economics could arrange even a lower level of consumer prices, consistent with a high remuneration for the agricultural producer class, for whom our author is so solicitous. Perhaps even something for the middleman. The attacks on him are

frequently a red herring to direct attention from the "basic defects of our system" (Page 21). Mr. Fordham places emphasis on the possibilities of increased employment, and seeing that he recognises the importance of science as a factor in production, it is disappointing to find no vision of less employment and more purchasing power.

**Contemporary British Artists. Draughtsmen:** Edna Clarke Hall, Henry Rushbury, Randolph Schwabe, Leon Underwood. (Ernest Benn. 8s. 6d. net.)

The latest addition to this useful series of monographs under the general editorship of Albert Rutherford contains nine illustrations of drawings done by each of the artists, or 36 plates altogether. This volume is again of that standard of excellence which we have come to associate with the name of the publishers. When the works of four executants whose technique is so widely different are reproduced between the covers of a single book it is impossible to avoid comparisons. Indeed, that is the main pleasure in handling a work of this nature; for the reactions to a given subject must obviously be dissimilar in separate personalities. For instance, the studied economy of line in that slightest of sketches by Mrs. Clarke Hall, "Boy on a Cliff" (Plate 8), is as wide asunder as possible from the lavish use of lines in Henry Rushbury's "Selling Ducks, Montreuil" (Plate 12), wherein one almost feels as though the artist had measured each separate building and counted every person and cobblestone. Again, in Randolph Schwabe's nude study (Plate 24) and in his "Seated Figure" (Plate 27) we note his ability to capture with swift precision the tantalising third dimension without his having to overload the drawings with shadow; and his technique is balanced by that of Leon Underwood, whose nervous search for beauty leads him to abandon the use of the academic line, as in his "Dancing Figures" (Plate 34), and to experiment in abstract combinations of plastic volume and rhythm. It is for the artist to choose the formula which pleases his own aesthetic; and from that basis alone can his productions be fairly judged.

## Pastiche.

**NEW WINE IN OLD BOTTLES.**

By OLD AND CRUSTED.

**THE ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE.**

But the seller of the ware,  
The prys and profit have shalle.

Ben thanne siche marchantz wise?  
No, but fooles in every wise.

Say what you like about the Duke's Diurnal, but it is never vulgar or dull. Open it any day of the week and you will be amused or annoyed, yea, even exasperated, according to your temperament and outlook on life—but never bored. Neither will your olfactory nerves be offended by such refuse as the daily ebb of the syndicated tide deposits on the domestic beach, though, alas! the banners of both patrician and parvenu bear the same disfiguring device, "Nothing for nowt, and very little for sixpence."

Even roses cannot escape. There was in pre-war days a magnificent white rose named Frau Karl Druschki, which by reason of unpleasant Teutonic associations was renamed Snow Queen—but it had one fault—although by no means gaunt or bleake, still it was "a blossom of scentless breath." Now this defect has been remedied, and a Mr. George Lilley of Cippenham, has produced a perfect white-scented rose and named it Marcia Stanhope. It is interesting to learn that it received the only gold medal at the great rose show.

So far so good, but what does the foolish fellow do who achieved this marvel? He actually lets it appear in his catalogue at the low price of 2s. 6d., although, as Harry Hotpurse pathetically reminds us, "his stock of plants is comparatively small," and goes on to say that "had he

known what the decision of the judges would be he would have been justified in withholding the rose from the market till able to meet the great demand which will assuredly arise, and he could also quite reasonably have trebled or quadrupled the price."

But the wretched man's crowning sin is that "he seemed perfectly happy," and was cheerfully booking orders at the modest figure named in his catalogue.

Think of that now! I take my hat off to Mr. Lilley. He is a great artist. He has produced a thing perfect in its way and he has not besmirched it with greed. I only hope that some of my old friends and neighbours, the artisans of Laceham, who are counted amongst the best rose growers in the world, have secured a few specimens.

## ALMOST CLEVER.

By G. E. Fussell.

Of the four Civil Servants who were chatting, the most important was James Houghton. He was a war-time importation, and had rapidly made good, becoming the envy of others who were permanent, and had possibly therefore not progressed so rapidly.

"I suppose now that the Ministry of — is to be closed down old Tom Dickson will be coming back. Done rather well, what!" said one.

"Dickson," said Houghton. "Didn't you know they wanted to send him back, but the Ministry wouldn't have him?"

"You astonish me," said another. "He was a jolly good chap."

"Yes, but they say that if he comes back he will have to have a job over the heads of men who are senior to him, and it wouldn't be fair to them," explained Houghton.

"What rot," said the first speaker. "Dickson ought to . . ."

"Oh!" put in Houghton, "you know what I think of Dickson. He just missed being a clever man. Just a little unbalanced. It is only that trifle of balance he wants to make him a success."

"At any rate you can't say he is lacking in ideas. He is brilliant that way."

"True," admitted Houghton, "but though he has got ideas, he has not got balance. Remember that time he went down to — just after he had taken up a new job, and came back wanting to teach everyone how to get on with it?"

"Well, he may have been right in his ideas, mayn't he?" queried one.

"No, he was not," replied Houghton. "I know the men who were doing it, and he rushed in with a wild scheme." Then with the air of clinching the argument, he added, "Do you know what he did once? He received a minute from the Secretary, and didn't agree with it. Did he go and see him? Tell him what he thought in a judicious manner? No! He must needs write on the official file, 'I think your suggestion is immoral.' You see that's where he fails! Just a little more balance and he would be a clever man. What I think of him is that he is almost clever."

The three permanent men uttered various noises, presumably indicative of assent, and Houghton turned away with, "Well, cheerio! I must be off now."

## BOOKS RECEIVED.

**Jezebel: A Tragedy in Three Acts.** By H. R. Barbor. (Brenton. 6s. net.)

**Yoga as Philosophy and Religion.** By S. Dasgupta. (Kegan Paul. 10s. 6d. net.)

**Nara Ratna Mandir Indore: An Account of the opening of the Holkar State "Home of Greatness."** (No publisher or price given.)

**The Economics of Freedom.** By David Atkins. (Duffield and Co., New York. \$4.00 net.)

**The Marriage-Craft.** By D. H. S. Nicholson. (Cobden-Sanderson. 6s. net.)

**Arlie Gelston.** By Roger L. Sergel. (Huebsch, New York. \$2.00 net.)

**The Unclaimed Wealth.** By H. Abbati. (Allen and Unwin, Ltd. 6s. net.)

**The Witness.** By Jessie Platts. (Hutchinson, 5s. net.)

**A Biography of Annie Besant.** By Theodore Besterman. (The Theosophical Society. Limited Edition (200), 15s.; ordinary edition, 2s.)

**The Garden of Folly.** By Stephen Leacock. (The Bodley Head. 5s. net.)

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