

THE NEW AGE

INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER"

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART.

No. 1666] NEW SERIES Vol. XXXV. No. 16. THURSDAY, AUGUST 14, 1924. [Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper.] SIXPENCE

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

These "Notes" were all written by August Bank Holiday. By the time they reach our readers we shall have spent ten days in lazy contemplation of sand-excavation operations on the part of the juvenile section of our fellow citizens, and shall then be on the point of returning home more impressed than ever with the profundity of the observation that if man need not work he won't.

Just ten years ago the "war to end war" broke out. Six years ago it was suddenly suspended, and a "peace to end peace" hastily established. To-day the world's rulers seem fated to resume the war in order to escape from the peace they fought for. How similar are the events of 1924 to those of 1914. In 1914 the British Government was faced with the task of dealing with an armed Ulster which was threatening to invite German co-operation in its resistance to Home Rule. In 1924 it informs us that it is faced with the same task because of Ulster's resistance to the Boundary Commission's terms of reference. In 1914 we were displaying the massed power of our Fleet to the Germans—inviting them to "feel our muscle." In 1924 it is the turn of the French to finger the same flexed fibres at Spithead. In 1914 the Government was anticipating with apprehension the threatened onslaught of the Trade Union Triple Alliance on "Capitalism." In 1924, although that industrial combination, as a combination, inspires no fear, yet the Government is threatened all round with strikes and rumours of strikes. In the years leading up to 1914 Great Britain was working with France, Spain, and Italy for the purpose of closing up the whole of North Africa—Morocco, Egypt, Tripoli—against German penetration. To-day she is engaged in trying to undo the penetration of France into the Ruhr, and in resisting, on her own account, the Egyptians' demand that she shall come out of "their" country. All these years have been a history of penetration and counter-penetration in the quest of a "balance of power," which was in truth a preponderance of power. The only territories which the Powers agreed to regard as impenetrable appear to have been their own thick skulls. How right they were in that diagnosis we call upon the citizens of the world of to-day to bear witness.

Ireland is a flagrant case in point. The reader of the newspapers, having been scared out of his life by the awful military spectres which were to spire themselves up out of the London Conference, if it failed to reach agreement, and scared back again by the equally malignant economic Iffrits which would snatch at him when the same Conference did reach agreement, is now invited to consider the prospect of a world war about two Irish counties. Well, well; it may come true; but search as he will through the feet upon feet of leaded type in all the chief daily newspapers, he will not find the slightest hint why. He will find the whole space filled with references to what is meant by a "boundary"; what Article XII "provides"; what interpretation Mr. This and Mr. That put upon it; how Mr. This risked his political career by standing by the Irish Treaty on the supposition that Article XII. meant one thing, and how unfair to him if it should now be held to mean another; why there must be "delay," "reflection," and so on in the hope of "settlement by consent," and all, and all, and all. You pays your money and you hears a voice. And all the voice communicates is an uncomfortable feeling. It is beyond meaning. There is one passage, however, that disturbs a corner of this inarticulate veil, and it appears in Mr. Garvin's article in the current *Observer*. He says: "Ulster, in the last resort could always make brilliant terms in Ireland by hauling down the British flag. An independent all-Irish Republic with an Ulster for ever alienated as a *spearpoint of anti-British hostility planted between Great Britain and the Atlantic* is a very thinkable result of these transactions. But it is as vain to speak to the incredulous about these things as to talk to the born-blind about colours." The words we have italicised do convey an idea of underlying issues; and it is just these issues of which the public ought to be informed. The fundamental fact about the whole controversy is that *Ireland is the strategic key to Great Britain's back door*. We said so, in this identical phrase, in *Public Welfare* in September, 1921, when commenting on an article of Mr. Bernard Shaw's in the *Daily News*, which appeared at that time. Mr. Shaw had stated that military strategy played a large part in the problem of Ireland, and had discussed her position in the event of war between Great Britain and the United States, visualising the attempted violation of her neutrality

by both sides and quoting the instances of Belgium (violated by Germany) and Greece (violated by Great Britain) in the late war as affording precedents. In our comment we pointed out that this was no new discovery of Mr. Shaw's (not that he would claim it for a moment), but that it had been stated and implied in THE NEW AGE on several occasions during the two previous years. But however that may be every statesman in the world knows it; and says nothing about it, on the principle, no doubt, that Democracy cannot be trusted to hear it. The doctrine, *Vox populi vox Dei*, works compatibly enough with that of *Aures populi aures Diaboli* in the present dispensation; which probably accounts for the hiccup which Lord Birkenhead (we believe) once professed to detect in that *vox*.

The British Admiralty still occupy naval stations on Bantry Bay and Cork Harbour on the South Coast (Irish Free State territory), as well as on Lough Swilly and Belfast Lough (Northern Ireland territory). In that way Great Britain is able to protect shipping proceeding between the western ports of England and the Atlantic Ocean. This reservation from full political sovereignty is at present willingly acquiesced in by Ulster, because the Northern Government regards itself virtually as part of the British Government, but the attitude of the Irish Free State is logically and actually different. The Government accepted the situation under the Treaty, but Mr. de Valera, who has recently been released from prison, is still an irreconcilable opponent of the Treaty, and has been giving public warning that whereas they (the Republicans), having suffered military defeat, must perforce use reason and argument, they are ready again to use any and every means to gain their ends. Now, since every established Government which tries to function within the framework of current financial law must inevitably play into the hands of its leftmost opponents, Mr. Cosgrave cannot be sure of dominating the Republicans for any length of time. Sooner or later there will come a conflict between industrial classes, which will at once be used by Mr. de Valera as an argument against "British domination"; and, in an ultimate sense, it will be a fair argument, for the Free State Government will have precipitated the trouble by attempting to discipline and tax its citizens under a financial code of law imposed upon it by the City of London. On the other hand, it will be an insincere argument if the supersession of Mr. Cosgrave by Mr. de Valera is going to lead no further along the path to "freedom" than to substitute New York for London as the spiritual home of the Irish Republican Treasury.

In this connection the significance of the loan which Mr. De Valera was permitted to raise in the United States must be allowed full weight. This took place, remember, just when violence was in full stream in Ireland. To raise a loan like that involved active co-operation on the part of the American Press and at least benevolent neutrality on the part of the money Powers there. Beyond all motives of a material order there is the fact to be reckoned with that a large part of the white population of America is of Irish descent. The census of 1890 showed that the number of Irish then alive there, but born in Ireland, was no less than 1,871,000, whilst those born there of Irish parents was 4,900,000. In addition to these two classes, it was officially estimated that there were about 20,000,000 persons "of Irish descent." These three classes aggregated about 27,000,000, out of a population of 63,000,000. It is not surprising that the Irish vote is the crucial element in every election. Mr. A. G. Gardiner wrote some two years ago, "The most brilliant writers on the Press are Irish.

Nearly every political caucus is under Irish control. Most of the great cities have Irish mayors. The police are almost invariably Irish." With all this material to work on, who shall deny the power of Wall Street to mobilise it at any time as an extra grip on London's financial policy. It has only to set the Advertising Clubs of America to work with slogans like "Irish Republic," "Freedom of Small Nationalities," and in about one month the whole Irish population of America would be stirred into a support of Southern against Northern Ireland which would leave the de Valera Loan a mere change-for-a-shilling transaction. All that would be needed to effect this would be money, and the money would come from where it all comes from—down out of the air! There is no reason on earth why American finance should not at any time lend money to Southern Ireland (or to a united Northern and Southern Ireland, such as Mr. Garvin envisages, for that matter), and if it did, there are no precedents to be urged against the arrival of American advisers to the Irish Treasury, to earmarking of certain Irish revenues for the service of the debt—in a word, to American economic penetration of Ireland with its unwritten corollary of military occupation. And if such occupation were invited by the people of Ireland, and were well advertised as the cementing of a blood-brotherhood, the whole episode would be made to look like a Grand Moral Gesture. None of this looks likely, it will be objected. Well, does anything tremendous ever look likely until it has happened? We are prepared to be scoffed at by the public, but we, and our many readers who have mastered the credit analysis of Major Douglas, know that until one of the Powers makes the vital change in its domestic economy to which he has pointed, the temperature of economic penetration and domination will rise and rise until its military flashpoint is reached.

The danger of renewed civil war in Ireland has little concern with how the issue goes there. It lies in the fact that the re-opening of a "decided" question there will signalise the re-opening of numberless other questions all over the world in which this country is concerned. It will not be that Ireland is at war, it will be that Ireland is split and drafted into the opposing armies of a wider warfare. That is inevitably the destiny of a people who occupy ground of strategic value. Key positions are always cockpits. Our minds go back to Mr. Armstrong's book, which we have quoted from more than once. Speaking of the Versailles Treaty he made this comment: "All of them got what they went after. The Money Trust secured the recommendation of the Gold Standard, the Catholics paved the way for the restoration of the temporal powers of the Pope, and the Jews obtained the restoration of Palestine." No-one can demonstrate the correctness of this classification of the interests involved, but we have found it the most likely generalised theory whenever we have tested it against events since. If such a compact was made, it would explain why, after the Zionist question was settled in the interests of the Jews, and the Gold Standard planted in Austria, Hungary, and now Germany, in the interests of Money Trust, the expectations of Catholic Ireland should now be given fulfilment in the temporal interests of the Vatican. Wall Street—Rome—Jerusalem—the Triangle of Internationalism. It is at once credible and symmetrical. The organisation of money power working with the organisation of economic power on the one hand and that of spiritual power on the other. To this majestic consortium the secret of every heart and every ledger lies open, and if the revealed laws of the Money Trust could by any chance persist in the face of the hidden laws of human life their triumph would already be here. But

they cannot; the tendrils of life are even now reaching through their joints; suddenly the stones of the mournful mausoleum will fall flat, and—behold, a Dutch garden.

For instance in an article entitled "Irish Currency" in the *Irish Statesman*, John Busted is reaching out in his own fashion towards a realisation of what it is that limits economic freedom. He is not contemplating anything more revolutionary than the substitution of Irish for British currency in the Free State, but an incidental passage in his argument shows that he has been thinking along right lines. He says:—

I estimate, as shown later, that there are £22,000,000 of Bank of England notes, Treasury notes, Treasury Note Certificates, and British silver and bronze coin in the Saorstat. They came here in exchange for goods and services which we exported to Great Britain. In exchange for goods we received pieces of paper representing claims against Great Britain. All currency, whether issued by a bank or a Government, constitutes a liability of the issuing authority to the public. No interest is paid on this debt. Currency notes and bank notes are redeemable on demand, i.e., the debt is a floating debt. In actual fact only the fringe is floating; the body of the issue is never redeemed. Hence the Saorstat has provided Great Britain with a non-interest-bearing quasi-permanent loan of £22,000,000. Can we afford to do this? If the Ministry of Finance issued Saorstat notes in exchange for the existing currency and invested the proceeds in early-dated gilt-edged securities, it would receive interest of nearly £1,000,000 per annum. And the Saorstat notes would have 100 per cent. sterling backing. The British would still owe us the £22,000,000, but would now be paying interest on it.

Anyone who describes money as "pieces of paper representing claims" is, little as he may know it, saying something creative. His immediate aim may be nothing more than a plug in an economic leak, but behind it is the impulse to cut the plug. Opinions on what should be the final practical credit policy are likely to multiply as time goes on, and their clashing may seem to obscure the fundamental principles which students of Social Credit are trying to uphold. That is why they have been wise in not trying to cast the creative item in the mould of any particular scheme. We notice that Mr. W. B. Yeats, in a "Dialogue" contributed to the issue of the *Irish Statesman* already mentioned, makes one of the characters say: "I have held both opinions in the same hour, perhaps in the same minute. It sometimes seems to me, too, that there must be a kind of politics where one need not be certain. After all, imitation is automatic, but creation moves in continual uncertainty. If we were certain of the future, who would trouble to create it?" The reference of this reflection was to a controversy between two other characters, one of whom wanted English to be made compulsory in the Irish schools but Gaelic spoken, while the other wished to retain the present practice of speaking English and making Gaelic the compulsory subject. Mr. Yeats (speaking through the character quoted) takes both sides, as will be seen from another passage: "In fact, I am almost certain that the Education Office that would please me best would choose schoolmasters much as a good hostess chooses her guests. It should never invite anybody to teach who is a bore or in any way disagreeable." Then, in explanation of his attitude: "Perhaps it might be possible to choose a schoolmaster as we choose a painter or a sculptor. There is so-and-so, we would say, 'who thinks that Ireland should be Gaelic-speaking, and because he is a very able, cultivated and learned man we will give him a school and let him teach. We ourselves think that he may be wrong, but, after all, what does anybody know about it?'" This admirably expresses the spirit which should animate the stewards

of the Social Credit philosophy. Major Douglas himself, two years or more ago, said that when his discoveries came to be applied very few people would recognise them. The one thing certain is the universal truths contained in them. Beyond that, the manner of their legislative embodiment—the *how* of their rising—the body with which they will come—"what does anybody know about it?" Listen to Mr. Yeats again, speaking through the same character: "I think the knowledge of the Greek language must have come to Renaissance Italy in much that way. No two men, perhaps, would have agreed about its future. To some it meant a better knowledge of the New Testament, and to others . . . a re-established worship of the Homeric gods." That is how Creation works. In the midst of an apparently eternal equipoise of conflicting vehemence something gives a lurch. Finished. The very uncertainty of Creation is its glory, its infinite variety. "Dear me, how stupid of me," is her eternal song. She took pains to suspend the internal organs of the human race in scrupulous conformity with the idea of their crawling about on all-fours, and while she turned to change her apron they all stood up. She gave man Pain for a warning of something wrong inside, but forgot to ensure that the pain should always occur where the ill was. She has gone one better and given man a moral pain—War, and has left him for centuries under the conviction that its cause was moral too. What new trick will this daughter of sublime caprice play us? Has she got an economic theory? If so, it is certainly not "stabilisation"—if that be any mitigation of our uncertainty.

The following letter, signed "A Canadian Reader," appeared in the *Newcastle Daily Chronicle* of July 26. Our reason for publishing it will be clear to all those who have followed our "Notes" in recent issues relative to Anglo-American relations.

Sir,—I notice Professor C. Delisle Burns, of London University, has created some stir in the Press by announcing that large quantities of poison gases were being made by U.S.A. during the Washington Conference. Just why this statement should cause any fluttering is beyond me. Every person on this Continent knows all about it. Our Government has made no secret of the matter. Brigadier-General Amos A. Fries, Chief of Chemical Warfare Service, has at frequent intervals told us, through the medium of the Press, exactly what has been done by his staff at Edgewood Arsenal, Maryland. At the Hague Conference of 1899, the United States of America, through its representative, the late Admiral Mahan, refused to agree to the prohibition of gas warfare. At the Washington Conference, Mr. Charles E. Hughes, U.S. Secretary of State, proposed the abolition of chemical warfare. The proposal was not ratified by all the Governments represented, and therefore is inoperative. Secretary Hughes has pointed out clearly that a party in power may sign a treaty, but its successor in office is not bound by that treaty.

The situation in respect to chemical warfare is further complicated by the action of the League of Nations in endorsing the use of gas and chemicals as permissible weapons in war. Last November the special committee appointed by the League reported this form of warfare to be humane and recommended certain types of apparatus for nations to accept or reject. Do the people of Britain understand all this? Frankly speaking, they do not, and the fault is almost entirely due to the attitude of the British Press. At the time of the Washington Conference this was the type of eyewash to be read daily in the British Press. "What a vision of brotherhood and mutual understanding! Canada and the U.S.A., whose frontier stretches 3,000 miles from the broad Atlantic to the vast Pacific, with never a gun or soldier across the whole domain." What bunkum, and what blatherskite! In view of the fact that two and a half billions of American dollars are invested in Canada, thereby placing financial control of Canada almost in American hands, one would scarcely expect to find steel cupolaed fortresses along the border. However, at strategic points along the border there are strong posts of the United States military

forces. At the time of the Washington Conference additional troops were posted to the border posts. Regiments of the National Guard Artillery were equipped with motor-drawn cannon, and training camps of the Guard were in many places located within rifle shot of the border. The U.S. Naval Militia has units at every port on the Great Lakes, and the training vessels sail those waters without hindrance. What it all meant and still means puzzles me, but politicians dispose of armies and navies; and politicians are puzzling creatures. Doubtless, some politician thought that a military display would scare the Canadians, and that in turn would scare Britain; and the United States would have the Conference hammer-locked.

Perhaps some reader will consult the map, and then explain why Buffalo, N.Y. (as far from Canada as Gates-head is from Newcastle), in addition to the regular army at Fort Porter, boasts the two largest armouries in the world.

Question Time.

SOCIAL CREDIT AND THE EXCHANGES.—III.

We have seen that the money of a country whose internal price level is below those of other countries must stand at a premium over theirs. Secondly we have considered what happened as a result of the over-depression of the German mark in the London money market (not to speak of other markets) and have indicated thereby how inevitably the "hammering" of any exchanges, if not justified by differences in price-levels, will react against the industries of those countries who administer the hammering.

Thus we are led to see that the financiers in control of one credit area (e.g., the United States) can only effectively strike at those in control of another (e.g., Great Britain) by sacrificing the industrial prosperity of their own nationals. An artificial writing down of British currency rates by Wall-street would be tantamount to the coercion of United States manufacturers to cease exporting to Great Britain and to increase imports. It would increase unemployment in America and decrease it in Great Britain. British imports could, of course, be kept out by building up a high protective tariff, but only at the cost of a general rise of prices in America which would take place under the shelter of the tariff; in which case the American bankers would have either to inflate credit to finance the internal market at the new prices or to see the volume of production and consumption contract until its new value at the high prices was brought down to the old value at the low prices.

An important consideration that is always overlooked by people who argue that Great Britain might be deliberately starved of raw materials and food is that there is quite as much competition to sell these things as there is to sell anything else. The argument seems to rest on the assumption that producers of metals, coal, corn, timber, and so on are independent enough to choose to whom they will sell, or to choose not to sell. A short visit to the Dominion exhibits at Wembley ought to be sufficient to dispel that idea. It is very easy to imagine Great Britain being denied access to overseas markets for food and materials, but it is not so easy to suggest who is going to buy them if Great Britain does not. If there were a world shortage of these things, the task would be easy. But in normal times the boycotting of Great Britain would create for instance, what the farmers of America would say if the financiers of New York were to cut off the British market from them. They would want to know what quid pro quo was going to be given to them. Of course, it would be easily within the power of the Federal Reserve Board to create suffi-

cient credit to buy the surplus from the American farmers. Disregarding the inflationary effects of their doing so, there is this fatal objection from the financiers' point of view, that such procedure would look dangerously like "financing consumption"; that is, they would be repeating themselves the very "sin" for which they were imposing penalties upon Great Britain.

There is another aspect of the case that is even more important than the difficulties that might be created by foreign financiers within their own countries, and that is Great Britain's resources for increasing her own food production. And when we say Great Britain, we may reasonably include the Dominions. For it is unlikely that the Mother Country, in embarking on the "new economic" financial policy would not be followed in that course by at least Australia and New Zealand. South Africa might initially hang back, for she would fear the consequences of the abandonment of the gold standard. Canada, too, might conceivably delay the financial change-over for prudential reasons. Taking then Australia and New Zealand alone, is there any doubt that supplies of really necessary staple foodstuffs and important raw materials could be supplied by them in progressively increasing quantities? Remember always that in every Social Credit country whatever proportion of current output was not consumed at home could be sold abroad at any price—even given away or destroyed—without affecting the balance of her domestic money accounts, without impairing the solvency of her producers apropos of their debts to the banks. All that would happen in the event of the "surplus" being dumped abroad for nothing would be that the home consumer had been denied the enjoyment of it. But since (ex hypothesi) he would be already living at a scale of comfort perhaps double what it is now, the loss would not hurt him particularly, nor would he feel any moral injury at the deprivation if he knew that it was a necessary move in economic strategy.

The more the whole question is studied, the more powerful will be the purely economic fighting reserves of a Social Credit country. Guarantee that the fight between the old and the new system is limited to the field of economics for sufficient time to allow it to get up speed, and the new system must win hands down. But since the guarantee cannot be depended on—since the loser in the field might try to recover its loss, and reverse the result by the appeal to arms—the real question is not so much "Will 'Douglas' work here while the rest of the world remains as it is?" but, "Are we well armed enough to protect ourselves while we are starting it up?"

THE PROPAGATION OF THE SPECIE.

Credit, Social Credit!
By this my soul is born, my speech made holy
Enveloped in its folds your soul joins mine
Nearer!
This sacred vesture suffocates
O Trance ecstatic, Dream divine.

Speak not, Beloved!
If nightingale did aught but sing
She then would cease to be
The messenger of thoughts transcending common words.
This Force divine, it tingles every sense
And carries souls made perfect each to each.
To die thus interwined is but to live
Beyond the discord of my human thoughts.
When as you leave me darkness comes
My only hope, my Winter's consolation is
To know that in the "Midland's" womb
"Meccano" hides the joy of Spring.

S. B. B.

Mannigfaltig.

By C. M. Grieve.

ARNE GARBORG.

The death of Arne Garborg in his seventy-third year has robbed Norwegian literature and nationalism of its most powerful and distinctive figure, and progressive movements in Europe of a doughty champion. He began his literary career as a writer in the customary Riksmaal, or Dano-Norwegian; but soon espoused the cause of the *maalmenn*, and thereafter wrote almost exclusively in the Landsmaal, or New Norse. As a consequence, he has almost completely forgone the world reputation to which the quality of his work entitles him. His works remain untranslated, and practically untranslatable. The pioneer of the Landsmaal was Ivar Aasen (1813-1896), and it was justly said of his work that "up to this time no language restoration has been planned and conducted with such all-embracing knowledge, with such sureness and comprehensiveness of view, and with, at the same time, such a genius of artistic touch. Aasen was one of the great artists among the linguists of the last century." As early as 1836 Aasen pointed out that the new political independence of the country needed to be completed by "an ideal and national language, this being the principal characteristic of a nation," and thereafter he set himself to the creation of a standardised literary language out of the diversity of the many local dialects—an enterprise of endless difficulty, since the vocabulary of these dialects was only adequate to the usual simple sphere of ideas of the people, and some forms were so difficult in the dialects that it was practically impossible to arrive at an agreement in the choice between them. The Landsmaal so created was practically a new language to all, although in the country districts it was more readily understood than in the towns. The natural conservative view was that expressed, for example, by Professor P. A. Munch, who pointed out that if "it had been framed for the philologist, it must have started from the Old Norse to arrive at the (actual) popular language, while it now proceeds in the opposite direction," but (i.e., Aasen's Grammar)—which is bound to be cautiously added, "How far a book of this nature scientific in any case—can realise the author's intention, whether it will not be the philologists all the same that chiefly use it and study it, and whether in that case it would not have been most convenient to arrange it for their use, are things that remain to be seen." But, as has been said elsewhere, "Aasen had a strong practical sense, and understood perfectly well that by following Munch's advice—that is, by 'antiquating' the new literary language—it would be much easier for him to gain the support of the literary and scientific people, among whom National Romanticism reigned supreme at the time, and such support he thought necessary to arouse the interest of the people. On the other hand, he was well aware that if he were to give the people the cultural lever that he wanted to prepare for them, the people must not only be interested in it, but actually feel it to be their own natural language, only with such modifications as its wider range made necessary, and therefore natural." The extent to which he triumphed in this complex and unlikely task is evidenced in the present position of the Landsmaal, and pre-eminently in the magnificent work in it of Arne Garborg.

Garborg's early work (in the Riksmaal) was dominated by Ibsen, on whose "Emperor and Galilean" he anonymously published a critical essay, which amusingly enough ran into a second edition. It is the point of view of a conventional Christian moralist and aesthete. His journalistic work for a while thereafter was as strikingly at variance with his subsequent development—e.g., a defence of the

University authorities who had refused to lend a hall for some lectures by Georg Brandes, because Brandes had written attacking orthodox Christianity and conventional morality. "Garborg's point was that the University as a public institution was not only entitled but morally bound to close its doors to adversaries of the religion and morals recognised by the State. To the objection that the University was only an institute for scientific research and teaching, Garborg replied that its task also included the moral education of its students, and thus it ought not to admit any person whose influence was regarded as pernicious by the community; no one should have thought that the man who forwarded such arguments was soon to become the most intrepid champion of absolute liberty of research and of discussion in moral and religious as well as in scientific questions."

With the publication of his polemic addresses on "The New Norwegian Language and Nationality Movement" in 1877—still the most comprehensive armoury of the movement—Garborg became the leader of the *maalmenn*. The year previous he had become president of Det Norske Samlaget, a society formed in 1868 for the propagation and development of New Norse; and he now began to write in it himself and in the autumn of 1877 started a paper, *Fedraheimen* (Our Ancestral Home), radical in politics and free in religious questions, and on the purely literary side already defending the realistic tendencies Ibsen and Bjørnsen were beginning to display, without committing itself to any particular programme in this connection however.

Garborg soon began to supplement his propagandist meetings with poems and fiction in the New Norse. But his internal evolution was now proceeding apace—along a familiar line not dissimilar to that of James Joyce in his relation to the Irish National Renaissance. His first long novel, *Ein Fritenkjar* (a Freethinker), marked a significant point in his development—and incidentally so alarmed the timid placeholders that he failed to get a grant from the Storting to enable him to occupy himself exclusively with literary work. *Bondesudentar* (Peasant Students), his next novel, has been well described as a "slashing satire on every form of flight from life's realities, be it by romantic dreaming, or by religious or social hypocrisy, or by any other of the innumerable means invented by a prolific moral indolence." The proscription of Hans Jaeger's *Fra Kristiania-Bohemen* (From The Kristiania Bohemia) marked another turning-point in his career. A recent writer on Garborg's career says: "Jaeger's book was a most naturalistic exposure of the present system, where marriage seems to have for its inevitable reverse—prostitution. The book was confiscated by the police, and most well-minded people seemed to agree with the Government in this measure. Of the authors who had a name to risk only Jonas Lie and Garborg took up the defence of the poor author.

Garborg thought this the moment to get up a serious discussion of the whole question, and was indignant at seeing it stifled by the police. He had almost finished a book on a similar subject when Jaeger's appeared, and now he rewrote it, and made it much cruder than before, in order to have it confiscated, too; for thus he hoped to force people into a discussion. But he did not succeed. The Government refused to confiscate *Menfolk* (1886), and most of the people he had hoped to tease out of their passivity remained silent as before. . . . Its thesis, in so far as a purely descriptive work can be said to have any, is that mutual love is the sole and sufficient moral foundation for sexual relations, and that marriage in this respect is of no account. But the thesis and the way in which it was expounded was more than the pillars of society could endure from a man who lived on public money. Garborg had, in 1883, been elected Audit Commissioner, and soon proved to be one of

the ablest and hardest-working Commissioners there had ever been. His work gave him an economic independence, which he availed himself of to fight for his moral and religious ideas in the way we have seen. But the powers that were did not favour his uncalled-for zeal, and took his work from him." At the next election of Commissioners (1887) Garborg was not re-elected, and retired to a remote mountain farm, where he devoted himself entirely to literary work. None of the Norwegian theatres dared to put on his play *The Irreconcilables* (1888). The following year he published a volume of essays, entitled *Free Discussion*. Of one of these, *The Principles of Religious Cognition*, Brandes has declared that it is one of the most important Scandinavian contributions to the discussion of religious authority versus free thought.

Space only permits mention here of Garborg's most important works thereafter—*Hjaa No Mor*, his most uncompromisingly realistic novel (1890), which won a 1,000 marks prize awarded by the Berlin Freie Bühne, a welcome relief to Garborg, since it was not until some time later that the Storching found a form for giving him a certain amount of support without any air of recognising his opinions; *Troette Maend* (Tired Men) (1891), a delightful "novel" in diary form, the hero of which ends his evolution in the bosom of the Church, for, as the author said, his practical purpose being "to combat dogmatical free-thinking, or, rather, to deliver people from the newest seminarism. . . . I have amused myself a good deal at the bewilderment caused by 'the conversion of the free-thinker,' although I am perfectly aware of the reasons for being sad about it, too"; *Fred* (Peace) (1892)—a brilliant analysis of religious doubt, unrest, and peace; *Haugtussa* (1895), the story of a poor peasant girl told in a series of almost independent poems—Garborg's most distinctive and most beautiful work, ranking as one of the rarest masterpieces of Norwegian literature—and only unsusceptible of world recognition by reason of its essential untranslatability; the five-act play *Laeraren* (The Teacher) (1896).

The latter deals with a student of theology for whom the emotional and sermonising religion of his compeers is futile, and who, after a long and intense struggle, realises that he can only follow Christ by literally obeying his orders—especially the first: to sell his property and give it to the poor. He is, of course, denounced as a madman or a hypocrite or a dangerous anarchist. His attitude is expressed thus: "This sender of swords, this overthrewer and remoulder of everything, the man who came to make high what was low and low what was high, to rouse kings and princes to a world-fight against himself—him we have made into a gentle Jesus, a ladies' Jesus, a prayer-book Jesus, nay, into a pillar of society, a padlock for our larders and money-chests, and a night-cap for our good ratepayers; and the gospel for the poor we have turned into a bulwark and a stronghold for the mighty of this world."

In his next book, *Den Burtkomne Faderen* (The Lost Father) (1899), he cries: "Man has forgotten how to live. Life ought to be art, but it has become commerce."

"Through all his life," says a recent critic, "Garborg has been an intrepid champion for freedom and independence in every field, beginning with national and political freedom, then passing to freedom of thought and research; he next took up the same standpoint with regard to love and marriage, a field where liberal ideas are tolerated even less than anywhere else; and, lastly, he has brought the same principle of personal freedom to bear on that economic question. A highly receptive and impressionable nature, he has in all these respects been our national conscience for more than a generation,

giving his warning whenever the free growth of individual or national personality was being tampered with. At the same time he has been the great artist with the gift of reproducing his own rich sensations in the creation both of living characters and of the most exquisite lyrical poetry, in verse and prose."

The only book of Garborg's so far translated into English is "The Lost Father," of which an American edition appeared in 1920.

Reviews.

Is It Good English? By John o' London. (Geo. Newnes. Price 2s.)

This is the first of a series of books which the publishers say will represent "John o' London's" part in "many pleasant dialogues" with the readers of his weekly. It is a very readable book, by which term we mean that you come to the end of a chapter at the end of every fifteenth line on the average. It is a scrapbook of information on everything connected with literature—grammar, syntax, punctuation, etymology, derivation, and so on. The author chats fluently on all sorts of catches, tricks, and curiosities, and gossips about well-known authors. We were rather glad to discover that in the Breeches Bible of 1589, "balm in Gilead" takes the form, "Is there no *treacle* in Gilead." We were interested to learn that Shakespeare handled the enormous vocabulary of 21,000 words against Milton's 7,000. Wherever the author offers opinions he writes with common sense. His book is a good corrective for all pronunciation good-grammar faddists. He is pleasantly instructive, and if the aggregate instruction is of no great volume you have no right to grumble, for at least you have not been bored. If left about at home we should think the average youngster would sample it without prompting—and trip you up with it afterwards.

The Martians' Plan for World Peace and Permanent Prosperity via a New Monetary System. Pp. 94. (Providence. \$1.)

The Martians unfortunately extend their passion for anonymity to over thirty of their references. The value of all statements which cannot be easily verified lies in their authority, and half a dozen of the most interesting of these observations are mysteriously attributed to "an historian, a N.Y. District Attorney, an English monetary authority; (2) a British member of Parliament, an English writer, a former President of a New England University, one of the world's monetary authorities, and a victim of the money monopoly; while two extracts dealing with the U.S. debt are merely in quotation marks.

Commenting on the general ignorance of money and finance, an illustration is given of the "report(?) that temporary Liberty bonds amounting to over \$1,000 million have not yet been turned in by purchasers in exchange for the permanent bonds on which interest may be drawn. In hundreds of instances holders have appeared at the banks with money to pay interest on the bonds they had purchased." This certainly shows innocence of current methods of finance, but it is hopeful as revealing a true appreciation of realities. They, at least, did not imagine they could "pay for the war" by getting something for nothing.

"The reason the instability of the value of money has not been widely recognised is due largely to the custom of charging the causes of fluctuations in prices to labour and merchandise when it is really money that is dearer or cheaper."

"The actual costs of the war have already once been paid for by the labour of the working world. Why should it again be called to pay the costs, not once more, but a third and fourth time? These charges are merely for the use of credit and paper currency, both of which the several Governments themselves actually supplied."

The promise of this analysis is not fulfilled in the solution advocated. It comprises: the adoption of a uniform world unit of purchasing power; the issue of money to the amount of £30 per head; commissions to fix prices and the volume of currency; the elimination of gold as money; the issue of money to finance government expenditure (inflation); "death penalty for counterfeiting and imprisonment for overcharging the fixed prices!"

Of these it may be said: That it is not the issue of money but the circulation that produces prosperity; that to fix prices and to inflate at the same time is impossible; and that the last proposal is ridiculous, impossible, and unnecessary.

First Blood.

By H. R. Barbor.

Late in the afternoon the drumming ceased. For the first time in, how long? Forty-eight, seventy hours? Eternity? The silence—unspeakable. We waited.

Miles, the acting District Commissioner (Wilberforce had gone down to the Falls after his second attack of blackwater fever six weeks ago, some ten days before the trouble started at N'bala) went to the window and peered through the matting. He stared; not with curiosity, just stared across the compound.

The major threw down a newly-lighted cigarette irritably. Irritably he lit another.

"Wish they'd start again," he grunted.

"Swine."

Hicks laughed. He had felt strangely superior to these tense soldiers during these last few hours of peril. Science, his inscrutable beloved, did not fail the "doctor-man" as Bellona failed the soldiers and as Justice seemed to fail the D.C. Grenville Hicks, M.D. Oxon., F.R.S., F.Z.S., F.R.G.S., an authority on all manner of tropical unpleasantnesses, from sleeping-sickness to snake-bite, from Bantu psychology to malarial swamp drainage, Hicks couldn't see what all the fuss was about. If it happened—well.

What was the use of retiring these scattered solitaries of the African forest fastnesses? If it came, it came. Idiomatic, calling these half-dozen whites together into the Jesuit mission house, just because it was more easy of defence than the D.C.'s quarters or the major's bungalow at Bokala. Hicks felt no safer here than at Kobar, whence Government instructions brought in by a native police runner a week back had dragged him unwillingly from the study of the habitat and behaviour of a pestiferous arachnid. If the north-eastern tribes were up, the trouble might spread southward from N'bala. If it spread south we were all done, unless Lazenby sent adequate troops. And Lazenby wouldn't.

Lazenby never sent troops till someone was murdered. "Punishment's better than prevention—it's the only prevention in the long run," he had told the commission that enquired into the murder of the Lake Ferguson survey party four years ago. And the commission had agreed. Probably the same "policy" was being pursued now. We were in the unenviable position of providing the bait for a new attack by the forest-men. If they got us, Lazenby would send a punitive expedition, hang a hundred natives for each of us, burn a few villages, loot the chief's ivory, send the tribal fetiches back home to the Museum. Just to teach the niggers the white man's mettle. Then another enquiry into this "regrettable incident." Specious arguments by Lazenby of the "surprise attack." Man on the spot must know best, say the commissioners. New D.C., new doctor for the Kobar station, promise of more effective policing. Same old game restarted. So Africa is brought under the finer civilising influences of the Empire.

This afforded small satisfaction to the bait dangling over the jaws of Crocodile Africa. We could only hold on and hope for the best: hope the old enmity between the north-eastern tribes and the Masuke Balangui, the amiable chief of this tribe, would live up to his Most Catholic reputation (Father Boyne had nabbed him as a convert seven years ago), and the shabby pith-helmet that the old rascal wore on state occasions. Boyne wasn't sanguine about the conversion business holding good if the north-eastern messengers offered much in the way of cattle or wives, but he thought the helmet might shield us better than the robe of newly-acquired vir-

tue. It was a very large helmet, lined with red silk. Three brass buttons, an old nickel knife-handle, and a bunch of snake-vertebrae (much big medicine) had turned it into a very attractive piece of millinery. Boyne thought the helmet might yet save all our heads. But the young men of the tribe were jumpy, and His Most Catholic Majesty was discreet enough not to make trouble for himself now that he was getting long in the tooth. Anyhow, he had apparently allowed them to fetch out their war-drums three days ago. That incessant rhythm; a grey-toned monotony of menace. All day the drums and all night. Every night, too, the ceaseless song of the young men, well braced with palm-beer. Ready for any mischief at any moment.

And now the drumming had ceased. Boyne was reading his office. Hicks had a six weeks old "Nature" on his knee, but he was not reading; listening. Miles finished his solicitous furbishing of his big game rifle, a double-barrelled .470, handiest of tools against lion or hippo.

"Damn funny," he growled. "We've got these," he tapped the twin tubes friendlywise, "and 'all modern conveniences.' Yet—here we are." His fingers played up and down barrel and stock. "Striking force of round about fifteen hundred foot-pounds per square inch—and here we are." He stood the powerful killer in a corner. "Age of miracles only just begun really," he said then. "Yet—here we are."

The major stared out across the brown-dried grassland towards the village.

Everyone started when Tom Tag spoke. The runner had entered noiselessly from the back room.

"Willy wanta go, boss," he announced quietly in the guttural voice of the Basuto.

The major turned. "Go? Where?"

"No say, boss. Tink wanta jest go."

"Tell him, I give him another cow when we get back to his village."

"Done tell him, boss."

"O, have you? Then punch his head, Tom Tag."

"Done punch him, boss."

"Very well. Then tie him up."

"Done tie him, boss. Fix him on table, tight, so," said the efficient Tom in a tone of evident satisfaction.

"Bin fixed good time. Till drum stopped, Willy stay, never move. Now he fight. Put bad eyes at me; say med'cine."

"Well, you don't mind that, do you?"

"You boss, you give order. All same I tink let Willy go."

"Why the devil?"

"Last night gal come, nice bit skirt, so fat! I watch at back, Mistah Hicks, he watch here. Gal come quiet round house—"

"You're lying, Tom Tag," said Hicks. "I saw no one."

"Yaas, boss, gal come, nice fat gal. I speak gal; tell the tale boss. You get me?" He made a lewd gesture—his grin was even more eloquent.

"Afterwards gal call me Willy. I say, 'I not Willy.' She say, 'I want Willy.' I say, 'No, Willy.' She call damn village send gal get Willy. She call 'Willy.' Willy come. I punch Willy; send gal kicking. Bet you, Willy want that gal now. Gal know how to look at a fellow—Oh, ah! She nice fat. Willy want her, yes, boss. Reckon you let Willy go. No damn good fixed on table, eh, boss?"

"You get back where you belong, Tom Tag," the major ordered. "I'll speak to Willy."

"Right, boss."

As soon as Tom was gone the major went over to Boyne.

"What d'you think, padre?" he asked.

"Best see Willy, major," the priest answered.

He was grave. He knew what the martinet explorer's "seeing" meant. But—"Don't you think so, doctor?"

"Sure. *Cherchez la femme*," Hicks advised.

"Wily old blighter, your chief, Padre."

"M'm. They're all wily," Father Boyne replied.

"That's terrible."

We could hear Major Cross "seeing" the bearer Willy. We could hear Willy's howls.

"There is no other way."

"Perhaps not. I used to believe differently, though. Even now I hope so. But after two spells out here I can't say that I know it. Perhaps one day—." The priest broke off meditatively.

The Major's noisy chastisement of the would-be renegade black troubled us all. But Willy was the Major's boy—the only one of five bearers who had come in to the Catholic mission with the explorer a week ago. The other four had cleared out the first night. Next night the converts, some of whom had spent practically their whole lives in the adjoining huts, had followed Cross's boys—God and Africa knew whither. The unrest up north had communicated itself mysteriously to these hitherto tractable, reliable boys, and they had answered Africa's call, leaving us to Africa's will.

Willy, a stranger of another race and tongue, had heard the call. Hicks voiced a new doubt.

"What about Tom Tag?" he said.

"O, I'll go bail for Tom Tag," the Major answered. He had returned from his task; he looked hot and dishevelled. "By the way, Doc, you might have a look at that scalliwag. I think I've hurt the swine. He complains, anyhow. I've given him a pretty gruelling. It won't do to have him fall sick on us."

Hicks went into the back premises. The Major poured himself a drink.

"I don't think Willy'll bother us for a bit," he said, grimly.

"I wonder," said the padre. All were silent.

Suddenly Hicks ran in excitedly. "Say, there's a white woman and a man coming up the track. They're alone."

We were alive again. With incredulous ejaculations we surged out of the room. Hicks was right. Six hundred yards away was the beginning of the bush. Half-way across the open two white people walked leisurely towards the bungalow, pushing their laden bicycles.

"My God, a parson and his mem-sahib," growled the explorer. "That complicates matters. Bloody fool."

Over dinner that night we began to make the acquaintance of the Reverend Wilfrid Kimber. Mrs. Kimber, pleading headache, had retired to the room which Miles had vacated for the newly-arrived couple. She was a pleasant-voiced, lower-middle-class woman of about thirty, with soft West Country speech, and a fresh colouring with which her short sojourn in the forest belt had not yet played its wonted havoc. After the first surprise of her arrival, and despite the complications which she brought into our affair, we had all looked forward to the rare event of having a woman to preside over our evening meal. Even the impenetrable Major had responded to femininity sufficiently to get into speckless white. Hicks had dug out a tie of lusty green. Miles had trimmed his beard, which had fallen somewhat into disrepair. But, after all, Mrs. Kimber withdrew. As events proved, it was just as well.

Her husband, however, did his best to make up conversationally for her absence. He talked for two, or a score. In his thin North-country accent he chattered away, informing us naively of his views on life in this and the next world. He was, it appeared in charge of the United Methodist Mission at Ukasi, some eighty miles to east of us. He had taken over the

church and school there three months back after putting in two years in Bulawayo. His ignorance of Africa and its people was only equalled by his zest for information. He knew only a few words of the local dialect, and had never heard of Major Cross, whose Central African explorations were the gossip of the Cape and of the sports clubs of all the European capitals. But he was very happy to make the Major's acquaintance and chockful of curiosity and questions. He managed to drag Hicks and Miles from their antepandrial pegs to see the latest thing in thorn-proof tyres with which his bicycle was equipped.

"If Mrs. Kimber had only had these on her machine we should not have been hung up by that puncture, and had to walk the last two miles," he assured them.

Such a mixture of willingness and sheer inability to realise Africa! But ignorance and curiosity were alike excelled by his amazingly benevolent optimism. Compared with him the Jesuit missionary was a case-hardened cynic.

When he first came in we had thought he must be the pluckiest man in Rhodesia. We were soon disillusioned. He was, it appeared, totally unaware, or, at any rate, incredulous of the perils through which he had blundered—or rather cycled. He had left his own place to visit a new mission-house in the charge of a native preacher from the Cape, a Zulu. Finding the station deserted and the huts untenanted, he had been nonplussed, as he put it.

"Curious, as you might say, wasn't it," he remarked. "But there was nothing for it but to return home and await developments. We had ridden about fifteen miles when we met two police boys, with the instructions from the military that we should come down to Father Boyne's mission. So we turned south and, well, here we are, safe and sound."

"Sound, thank the Lord; but safety's another matter," said the District Commissioner.

"You really think there is danger?" asked the little missionary, his eyes open wide, but without a shadow of fear in them. Cross made a harsh noise, half snort, half laugh.

"My dear sir, *they're up*," said the doctor.

"Oh, but it will blow over. The black man realises now that the white man is his brother—"

"Family quarrels are not always the least painful," observed Boyne, anxious to avoid the outburst promised by the Major's heavy brow and tightening face muscles.

"Alas, no. But—"

"Whisky, Kimber?" said Miles, realising that the fellow could not grasp the situation, and anxious to divert the conversation.

"No, thank you. No, thank you."

It appeared that he was an abstainer. He always took a little lemon squash with his evening meal when at home.

(To be continued.)

THE WAY OF IT.

When we were young, my friend and I,
Each of us had a sweet of all;
And mine was like the morning sky,
And his was like the evenfall.
And mine was like a little tree
Of throstles crying in the spring;
And his was like the minstrelsy
Of holy places where they sing.
But my love mocked me in my need
And laughed and tossed her merry head;
And his beloved would not heed
The many tender words he said.
She that I loved looked at my friend
Desiring him all through the day,
And his love's eyes without an end
Would follow me along my way.

A. NEWBERRY CHOICE.

Music.

THE DEATH OF BUSONI.

No greater calamity has befallen music within living memory than the untimely death of Busoni at fifty-six years of age just recently in Berlin. With him is gone one of the greatest personalities in music of any time and a pianist of an order so immensely great, so utterly beyond anyone else of our time, that among true connoisseurs he was placed, as Pachmann said of Liszt, "alone on a mountain top." This description applies with especial felicity to Busoni and the aspects of him as personality, as interpretative, and as creative artist. That immense, lofty aloofness, that sense of *planer audessus*, that extraordinary cold white fire of intellectualised emotion—emotion so great as to transcend and obliterate altogether that body of feeling so called in everyday life, that almost terrifying personal and intellectual power—made of Busoni, compared with other pianists, what one feels a Brahmin adept would be, alone in a Himalayan hermitage, compared with the wandering jugglers who will perform their tricks, mystifying and wonderful enough for what they are, where and whenever there is prospect of reward. To attempt to describe, even to give a faint idea of one's reactions when listening to Busoni, is a task practically impossible. One can, of course, speak of a technique so unique and gigantic that it passes all conceptions; of a command of variegated tone quality that could leave one gasping breathless at the black magic that could make an indifferent piano an instrument (as a rather intelligent member of the Critics' Circle put it to me) "with as many stops as an organ"; the stupendous intellectual mastery and power of the interpretation, but one cannot describe how the whole work was set alight with electric fire so that it seemed another thing. A re-creation of masterpieces through the medium of a master interpreter for once of an order commensurate with the music of the masters that he played. This power of re-creating, of turning into an organism of superhuman vitality and life, of making the most hackneyed and much-mauled works sound so that one realised one had never before heard them, of making one hear them, in fact, in a way one had never dreamed, entrapped many people whose temerity in criticism is only equalled by their colossal ignorance into accusing Busoni of "distorting" the classics. To begin with, the idea that Mr. Blank of the *Daily Post*, Mr. Asterisk, of the *Hour*, or Mr. Dagger, of the *Morning Telegraph* has either the musical or intellectual qualifications to pass judgment on the views of a master like Busoni, whose knowledge of music was only equalled by his powers of interpreting it, a man, into the bargain, of immense culture, would be grotesquely comic were it not unspeakably disgusting. Again, when startled, amazed as by a sudden sight of hidden forbidden things by Busoni's reading of a particular work which one had not seen in notes for years, or which one had of necessity imperfectly known, one would come home and study the music, at once it would be revealed to one how, so far from *distorting*, Busoni's interpretation then appeared.

The work of Busoni, the creative artist, seems to me—and to many other competent judges as well—a complete summing up and triumphant affirmation of the qualities of Busoni as interpreter. As I had occasion to remark some years ago in the old "Sackbut," when coming away stunned and overwhelmed by the experiences that a Busoni recital, including a couple of his own works, had given me, all the intense aristocratic distinction, the proud aloofness, the tremendous intellectual power, and the dominating personality, the utter aversion from *cliché*, commonplace, abhorrence of facile thought, all are present, intensely present in his creative work.

They gleam, his compositions, like burnished steel, and they are as keen-edged as a razor—idea and expression are fused into an instant, lightning-like projection, there are no blurred edges, no "wazziness," no "atmosphere" (Celtic fog or bog or Maeterlinckian morass). I should be inclined to date Busoni's definite emergence as a master in creative work from the stupendous Concerto in five movements with closing male chorus (dating so far as my memory will serve away from all chance of verification, from 1903 or 1905). This magnificent and splendid work, although not in the fully developed manner of the Toccata and the Rondo Arlecchinescho or the "Faust" fragments we heard a few years ago, is all the same a completely characteristic and individual work. It is epic in its grand spaciousness of style, and with all its mighty length never falters nor palls for a moment. The influence of earlier masters is to be felt occasionally, but such a change does the influence undergo, or, to speak more accurately, to such a degree does Busoni succeed in changing occasionally familiar forms of expression, the current coin of music with his own quality, that one ceases to be conscious that they are familiar forms of expression. The work is remarkable for the satisfying fusion of widely varied and what might at first appear conflicting modes of expression, and must surely take rank as one of the supreme concertos written for the piano. The "Fantasia Contrapuntistica" is much later, and in a much more developed style. The possibilities of the Fugue are here surely pushed to their extreme of mastery and power; every imaginable device is turned to use, but with such logic, such conviction, such inevitability, that, in the majestic and stately onward flow of this superb work, one is not immediately conscious of the architectonic skill that has gone to its making. The "Faust" fragments (this work is said now to be completed), the later Sonatas, the Toccata and the Rondo Arlecchinescho are in the fully-developed manner; if a master of such widely diversified processes as Busoni can be said to have a manner, they sum up and complete what has been foreshadowed in his earlier work. In them we see his uncanny power of occasionally seizing hold of matter or expression in itself quite ordinary, e.g., the Fantasia on "Carmen" and the "Indian Fantasy," and so "possessing" it that it loses all its own identity and becomes a part of him, of his thought. Particularly is this noticeable in the "Carmen" "fantasia da camera." Busoni invests the comparatively commonplace Bizet "tunes"—for that, in effect, is all they are—with a strange and sinister charm and beauty which certainly has nothing to owe to Bizet! It is this quality of strangeness, hints and suggestions at dangerous powers and forces lurking just within or without reach, "Black Magic," as some would express it, and the fantastic, unreal, eerie beauty of this music that makes its hold over some of us so strong and its fascination so inescapable, so ineluctable.

Merely to see Busoni come on to the platform, but, above all, to stand in his presence and speak with him was to feel oneself in the presence of an artistic and intellectual Titan, like one of those divine men of the Renaissance, da Vinci or Buonarroti, men so stupendously great that they cease any more to be human beings, and can no longer be appraised or measured by human standards, however exalted. It is interesting that almost the only two contemporaries of whom one can think as comparable with those marvellous multifaceted geniuses of the Risorgimento should both be musicians, Busoni, and his friend, the great Dutch master, van Dieren, and it gives one cause to hope for the future that two such superb artistic mentalities can happen in our time.

KAIKHOSRU SORABJI.

The Theatre.

By H. R. Barbor.

THE FINANCE AND THE ART.—VI.

The debates occasioned of late by the setting up of an anti-union organisation of actors, a "good-will" institution embracing alike employers and employed, has called forth the most varied comment from sundry, if not from all, elements of theatredom. I have already indicated the line of policy of the Actors' Association directed towards the "closed shop" or completely unionised theatre. This is the chief bone of contention betwixt Guild and A.A., the other point in dispute being inter-union federation (alliance between "artists" and stage hands and musicians)—which is but a corollary or rather a condition for the effective closing of the theatrical shop.

One of the most amazing pronouncements arising out of these debates has been that of Sir Frank Benson, who is well known throughout this country as a producer and player of Shakespearean repertory. Sir Frank has a wonderful record of work for the best drama behind him. He has not only reintroduced and popularised Shakespeare in his provincial and colonial tours, but he has put through his producer's mill many of the finest artists now practising on the English stage. Oscar Asche, Matheson Lang, Henry Ainley—no, it would be easier to catalogue those among the most powerful performers of the "legitimate" stage who are not rather than who are Old Bensonians, and whose position to-day is in no small measure due to the plays produced and the methods employed by Sir Frank. But this manager is not omniscient. During the war, for example, so small apparently was his belief in his life-work, that he left it in favour of "war-work." Thus while in one German city, to take but one example, during a victorious Allied advance, a whole cycle of Shakespearean drama was presented, in order to strengthen the spirit and catalyse them to sterner endurance; in England Shakespeare's lip—and time—servers decided that there was a time for everything, and that this was war-time, not genius-time; albeit that genius expressed the very form and pressure of Britain at its most British. So the "highbrows" took a back seat—or fell off altogether. British impresarios of the type of Mr. J. L. Sachs (since Sacks) the Derewski (or Rolls) type of revue, musical comedy, swept into theatredom. Syndicates were as often as not unjustified of their dividends; rents soared and values downward to the æsthetic mess still to be cleaned up, that a few of our leading "intellectual" managers had not sufficient belief in their job to stick to their lasts; and that they would not or could not persuade the community (and its communes) that in the winning of modern wars, theatres have, if not as big, at least as definite, a place as hospitals. The one prepares the mind, the other patches the body.

To return to our sheep, Sir Frank Benson did not believe in all this. And the reason of his disbelief is now made clear. For Sir Frank has now publicly stated that the plumbers and bricklayers (*vice* the working classes) have no right to a say in the economic conduct of the theatre. As a touring manager and thank whatever god looks down in kindness on Sir Frank would, one might think, go on his knees the playhouses for a practical demonstration of the fact that the common men and women of England to-day are still sufficiently interested in the theatre to bother whether it sinks or swims. Instead, we find Sir Frank (as President) and Mr. Percy Hutchison (as Chairman) of the organisation of touring managers deploring the interest of millions of organised workers in the industry in which these gentlemen operate. The Trades and Labour Councils up and down the country have sent countless resolutions supporting the Federal Council of the

A.A., N.A.T.E. and M.U. Also they have, in common with many other working class and professional organisations, proved themselves ready to assist in stabilising conditions of theatrical employment and thereby raising the stage from the dubious dignity of "the profession" to the decencies of other departments of organised labour.

Sir Frank and Mr. Hutchison (yes; a curiously contrasted pair!) oppose this interference with the century-old right of the manager to do as he pleased with actors and drama. Now, while the manager did well with the drama, which incidentally connotes doing well with its exemplars, there was little reason for outside interference, save by the simple expedient of staying away from the worse and patronising the better wares. But nowadays the theatre is not a number of dissociated and more or less patriarchal groups (with the actor-manager as a sort of Father Abraham). It is a highly capitalised and diversely organised part of the commercial system of the country—even of the world. Certain actor-managers are still (the "still" is to be marked) permitted to operate in this industrial nexus for the simple reason that they can act. But they are no more "free labourers" as Sir Frank described himself recently, than is a subaltern, a Scotland Yard detective, a secondary school teacher or a corporation dustman. Everyone is, within limits, free to stop working—and starve. But starvation is a sort of freedom more honoured in the avoidance than the acceptance.

Sir Frank's attitude towards the theatre harks back to the patriarchal period before mentioned. But Father Abraham has given place to the by-no-means paternally-emotional capitalist. The Abraham, to put it in methaphor, has adopted a final "s" to his name. If Sir Frank Benson will prove to me that he has never had to compromise his artistry at the dictates of finance, I will reconsider the arguments which I have put forward in the preceding articles of this series.

The reason that touring managers generally are opposed to unionisation of the stage are easily apparent. If actor-managers (as opposed to merely financial backers) would look below the surface of economic effect and attempt to discern cause, they would cease their vain bibble-babble, recognising that they, alike with "stars" and snobs, were being used as a lever to hoist the theatre into the control of the syndicates and non-artist financiers. And if the financiers could envisage the true *raison d'être* of the theatre and the absolutely essential condition of its prosperous operation, they would recognise that the control of the theatre must be left primarily to the artist-mind, that weird magnetic amalgam of apparently adverse elements which alone in our society produces anything to attract the man in the street into a playhouse with the regularity and persistence necessary to maintain that elaborate and expensive institution.

Probably it is too much to expect that Finance will allow itself to be advised by Art until Art has proved its case. Perhaps it will be left to Finance to prove the case of Art by killing the Theatre. Personally, I do not imagine this will happen, for Finance is a wily bird and Art, we know, is long—and damned tenacious. But the other alternative, complete organisation of all the producers (impresarios, stage hands, actors, choristers, musicians, electricians, dramatists, cleaners—all the body politic of the theatre) will certainly help to vitalise the industry and out of a vital industry will emerge inevitably the finer products of a more efficient and more earnest craftsmanship.

When those myriads of organised workers whose manifestoes cause Sir Frank Benson some present discontent, see the theatre that they have helped to restore functioning to their individual and social delight and advantage, then will be the time for the

artist to assert himself (in the style of Sir Gerald du Maurier, Miss Lena Ashwell, and others) *qua* artist. But by that time he will not need so to do.

Sentimental tom-noddy about "high callings," "friendly co-operation between artists and managers," must give place to definite sectional organisation, with inter-sectional administration as a matter of course. The vigorous counter-play of such organisations will serve, as M. André Charlot recently pointed out, to bring to the fore the best and most effective system of theatrical organisation. It will teach the various elements the how and the why without which sound team-work is impossible of achievement.

Team-work is the first requirement of any theatre.

Pastiche.

NEW WINE IN OLD BOTTLES.

By OLD AND CRUSTED.

COAL, GOLD AND CATAclysm.

When poor old John Sedley's business in the city collapsed the good man made many futile attempts to regain his former prosperity. Amongst other ventures was an excursion into the coal trade. It was in Amelia's handwriting that the circulars were addressed which informed the old gentleman's former acquaintances that he had become an agent for the supply his friends and the public with the best coals at —s. per chaldron.

Strange how the unfortunate seek a refuge in coal! The latest and most pathetic example of this general tendency is an ex-Prime Minister, who failed badly in the coalition business, to the great discomfiture of holders of ordinary liberal stock, also of the unfortunate investors in conservative cumulative preference shares and the humble folk who had put their little all into 4½ per cent. labour debentures.

Being unable to get back to the old discounting business at No. 10, where you could get anything from 5 to 5,000 promises on your note of hand only—no business done with miners in those days—he is trying to persuade trusting folk "Coal and Power" trade—ignoring the very promising opening in the Credit Power line—with all sorts of temperance side-lines and profit-sharing schemes to attract that large section of the pious and predatory who are assiduously endeavouring to make the worst of both worlds. The names of the distinguished peers who will join the board on allotment have not yet been disclosed, but it is expected that Lords Super-head and Rathmore will be amongst their number. Of course, the underwriters and bankers will have something to say about the terms and conditions set forth in the prospectus, but the enterprising and experienced promoter of this plausible scheme is probably calculating on the attention of the financiers being deflected to the consideration of what will happen when Professor Miethe's successful experiment of extracting gold from mercury has been developed into a sound commercial proposition. According to "our Berlin correspondent"—

the result would be cataclysmic for the whole of human society, since the possibility of limitless quantities of gold at a negligible fraction of the present current value would destroy all the bases on which modern monetary systems rest and, consequently, on which our present conception and measures of material values depend.

Would it really? Well, anyhow, that cataclysm is overdue, so hurry up, Herr Professor! What visions the mere possibility conjures up! One can picture the "schadenfreude" of the chuckling Teuton as he deals out dollops of synthetic gold to the panic-stricken French, and the dismay of the Morganites as they contemplate their vast stores of yellow metal and realise that the vaults of their bomb proof banks would be more profitably occupied by so many cases of the right usquebaugh.

Talk about poetical justice! The only man who could have appreciated the irony of such a situation died in Paris on February 17, 1856, he of whom Matthew Arnold wrote:—

The spirit of the world,
Beholding the absurdity of men—
Their vaunts, their feats—let a sardonic smile,
For one short moment, wander o'er his lips.
That smile was Heine!

THERE IS A THING BEYOND HER BEAUTY.

There is a thing beyond her beauty
I cannot tell her now,
A thing akin to a singing-bird
On a shining bough.

Or a lily lifted on a pool
For a golden cup;
There is a fire like the flame of the moon
Can burn my body up.

Lady, lady, be you wise
And make the most of me,
Before the million stars by night
March out to set me free.
A. NEWBERRY CHOYCE.

THE ENTHUSIAST.

Each morning she devotes to Freud:
Then lunches on an iron jelloid.

On Dr. Jones she dines at length,
Delighting in her new-found strength.

And still at tea, despising scones,
She takes her fill of Ernie Jones.

At night she yields to Freud agen
What time she sips sanotogen.

And so she lives from day to day,
The happiest maid in all Cathay!
MORGAN TUD.

SUNDOWN.

Peace crept over the fountain
And over the brooding wood;
Only a rabbit faltered
Timidly where I stood.

Earth lay mute for a moment
To witness that sweet lord die,
And never a star-roused creature
Opened its mouth to cry.

Like a spent king he tottered
Terribly from his place
While the pale moon supplanter
Rose with her thin wan face.

But many a tarnished city,
And many a broken tower
Gave praise to the crumbled builders
In that last long splendid hour.
A. NEWBERRY CHOYCE.

THREE MOONS I REMEMBER.

Three moons I remember. . . .
And one I might have had
If any could have thieved it
To give a little lad.

And one was lit for sorrow.
The night my father came
Unto the quiet churchyard,
A pale and frozen flame.

But ah! the honey-golden
Moon of my memory
That burned one night, Beloved,
Over a tall black tree.
A. NEWBERRY CHOYCE.

ADVICE.

After the tumult of the forum,
And the drums of the market-place,
Hie thee to thy tri-sanctorum—
For a space.

Ponder there the clitter-clanging,
Rub thy hands with wide grimace:
Thou hast saved thyself a hanging—
For a space.

Soon the crowds will come, unruly,
Shout thee traitor to thy face. . . .
Banker, banker, laugh thee fully
For a space!

MORGAN TUD.

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Published by the Proprietor (ARTHUR BRENTON), 70 High Holborn, London, W.C.1, and printed for him by THE ARGUS PRINTING CO., LTD., 10 Temple Avenue, E.C. 4.