

THE NEW AGE

INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER"

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART.

No. 1670] NEW SERIES Vol. XXXV. No. 20. THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1924. [Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper.] **SIXPENCE**

CONTENTS.

| | PAGE | | PAGE |
|--|------|---|------|
| NOTES OF THE WEEK | 229 | ALL ON A SUMMER'S DAY. By John Stevenson | 235 |
| REGENERATION IN ORGANISATION. By A. G. Crafter | 232 | PRAYER AT THIRTY. By A. Newberry Choyce | 237 |
| CURRENT SENSE | 232 | THE THEATRE. Plays, Players, and Publicity. By H. R. Barbor | 237 |
| WILFRID BLUNT AND EGYPT. By G. B. | 233 | LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: The Single Tax. From René Charles Dickens and M.B., Oxon | 239 |
| MANNIGFALTIG. The Scottish Muse. By C. M. Grieve | 234 | PRODUCTION AND CREDIT | 239 |

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

In this week's *Observer* Mr. Garvin resumes his discussion of the issues at Geneva. He again emphasises that the League of Nations must be broadened by the inclusion of Germany and Russia, and that "Arbitration is the only possible master key" to peace. From that he proceeds to refer with approval to the American idea, which, he understands, proposes that "arbitration shall be absolutely compulsory and universal," and reminds his readers that as far back as 1919 he had supported the same idea in these terms: "The spirit must be expressed not in fourteen points, but in a single Commandment—'There Shall Be No War.'" Nevertheless, he recognises that "commandments" are not enough—that, in fact, they are worthless unless means are provided for enforcing acceptance of the awards. And they will remain so, he says, "unless the United States joins Europe in establishing a new world-system of justice or mediation, and in enforcing its awards." For "the idea of a through transport of motley armies through various countries to repress and punish a declared aggressor is entirely chimerical." The true means of deterring any country or group of countries from "defying arbitration and risking the ban of 'outlawry' are *economic, naval, and aerial*." To these means, no nation is now immune, "and none would challenge them if the repercussion were certain." But Britain, he points out, no longer possesses the unconditional command of the seas. "She divides their control with the United States. Without friction with Washington we cannot set up any considerable blockade. *There must be entire agreement and partnership with America to bring into play at need that quiet and bloodless but deadly means of making arbitration prevail.*" Mr. Garvin concludes with a reference to the revision of the Versailles map of Europe as a "last thing" that would be required "for the world of twenty years hence or later"; and announces consideration of the subject in a future article.

We cannot persuade ourselves that Mr. Garvin has any faith in the efficacy of the above plan. He puts it forward, we suppose, as the only scheme which will fit into the framework of the militaro-economic system existing at the present time. He certainly does not need telling that an international court of justice, considered as an analogue to a national court

of justice, is an impossibility. The keynote of justice is disinterestedness. Whether it is a judge or a jury, there must be no possibility of an "award" being deflected by secret considerations of a private nature. The public conscience demands that an unsuccessful litigant, or a condemned prisoner, must be satisfied that even if a judgment is not a right one it is at least not a perverted one. According, whether justice be administered professionally by the Great Paid or as a hobby by the Small Unpaid, there are existent careful safeguards for the protection of its subjects. A local landowner whose birds are alleged to have been "confiscated," will not sit on the bench when the accused appears to answer the charge; or a jurymen cannot take his seat in the box if a litigant objects to his trying the case; or again, the venue of a trial may be changed where public prejudice is so wide as to endanger the impartiality of citizens empanelled on the jury: and so on. In fact, it is only with these safeguards that the principle of "arbitration" buys its prestige at all, why it is resorted to (when they can afford it!) by citizens who cannot solve their disputes themselves. The law is allowed to be an Ass (stupidity is at least undiscriminating), but not a Fox. With this in mind, is it not vital that the sponsors of an international court of justice—whether a tribunal at The Hague or the Council of the League of Nations—should inform the world how they propose to imbue it with the supranational spirit? For ourselves, we can think of no man under heaven whom we should choose—or who ought to be chosen—to decide the well-nigh superhuman issues which await settlement. The rebuking of strong nations afar off is for the roar of a god, not for the plaintive pipings of perturbed plutocrats.

But leaving that aside, and looking at the plan Mr. Garvin lays in front of us, we are brought up sharp against the suggestion that whatever number of magistrates on the contemplated international "bench" adjudicated on a case, *two alone among them control the means of enforcing the award!* One has to ask what would happen if Britain and America happened to be in a minority on any given judgment? They might accept it; but, on the other hand, they might not be able to do so. In the latter alternative, would they be likely to lend to the Court the means to coerce them? No: the writ of the International

Court of Justice will not run—nor ought it to run—in any one direction unless it can run in every direction; and its writs cannot be invested with ubiquity until the Court has exclusive control over “economic, naval, and aerial” forces greater than those possessed by not only the strongest nation but the widest alliance of strong nations reasonably imaginable. Otherwise, the Court, to save its own prestige, will have to restrict its judgments to issues in which these strongest nations are not vitally concerned. And that that is what would happen we have the comparatively recent Corfu incident to remind us. Further, the more nations that co-operated to support this ideal Court the more weakly would it function. From the point of view of its efficiency the obvious thing to do would be to appoint to it those nations which provided its “police”—in the present instance, Britain and America. This would, of course, involve too blatant a recognition of the principle “Might is Right”—but, then, we are living under a system wherein, somehow or other, what is immoral works and what is moral does not. Make (if you can) Britain and America arbiters of the fates of the rest of the nations and you could reasonably rely on those two countries at least to keep friendly—at any rate, for a considerable time ahead. That would be something gained, whereas the “all-in” scheme would result in everybody falling out. Happily, too, it so happens that Britain and America are the two great creditor nations of the world (to use the phrase of Mr. Goodenough)—which fact is a strong argument for an Anglo-American Cosmic Court, for if there is one popular incontestable proposition it is that to be a creditor is “right” and to be a debtor is “wrong.” We should therefore be reassured that whatever the shortcomings of the new Authority it would be a force for righteousness—and what else matters to popular sentiment? Who but a pedantic mathematician would blear the miraculous prospect of a day arriving when every nation would be a creditor? Do not doubt it can be done. Nothing is impossible to Finance. Unlike the servant of old, it can say “Lord, I hid thy talent in the earth: behold I have gained beside them five talents more.”

But let us go back to first things. War is the result of irreconcilable foreign policies. And what is a foreign policy? The dictum of Mr. Orage will serve well for the answer: it is merely “an extension of domestic policy.” And what is the object of foreign policy? The *Morning Post* once defined it as being to maintain and increase the “economic opportunities” of a nation in the world at large. To complete the analysis we must inquire what “domestic policy” is, and the reply has been indicated by Major Douglas in an assertion to the effect that the prime duty of a statesman is to ensure adequate subsistence for the citizens of the country he serves, and that no Government can maintain itself in power for long unless this duty is carried out. A little reflection will show that under our present system the statesman is between the devil of internal discord and the deep sea of external rupture. If his own nationals do not fare well they have no use for him. If, on the other hand, they are to fare well, he must get them orders from countries which do not really need to buy their goods. And note, it is not a mere exchange of orders (or goods, or services) that is required; what is essential is that his nationals must export a surplus (in money value) over what comes back—and the larger the surplus the better. That is how Britain and America became creditor countries. It is of the utmost importance that this point should be constantly in our readers’ minds. The orthodox economist always counters criticism of an intensive export policy by saying, “We have to export to pay for our food and raw material.” The answer is that if no country, as they seem to assume, did more than exactly balance its

import values by means of export values, there could not have arisen the present situation with its debtor and creditor countries. Of course, we do not mean to imply that a continuous monetary counterpoise between countries is practicable or even desirable; but we do strongly insist that a policy of forcing out export surpluses without providing for or even permitting imports in the long run to the same value, is not merely undesirable, but is the immediate cause of international friction leading to war.

Unfortunately, that is what we and other nations are engaged in attempting, and we are so engaged because we see no help for it. In this country the Trades Union Congress and the Federation of British Industries are both agitating for more employment and more remuneration. Involved in that demand is the will-to-live of the majority of the individuals composing the community. This is the root cause of war, and it is a purely domestic cause. And as it is paralleled in America, France, Germany, Russia, Italy, Japan, and all other civilised countries, is it not clear that the problem of international comity is not an international one, but essentially a national one? It is the problem of enabling the home market to absorb the home surplus. Merely to pose the problem is to see the solution in physical terms. The home market in this sense is an aggregation of individuals’ appetites. Are they satisfied? No, not by a long way. Can the “surplus” be made assimilable? Yes, quite easily. Then, what are we waiting for? Money. What money—marks, francs, dollars? No, British credit, British currency notes. And so the New Economists might go round Europe and say to each nation, “You can solve the Peace problem by adjusting, not the ‘world’s,’ but your own system of financing and pricing your own production.” What is the position in the meantime? It is roughly true to say that the most advanced industrial countries are producing a quarter the quantity of goods they could produce, and are exporting (or trying to) anything up to one-third of that one-quarter. That leaves only one-sixth of the possible volume of production actually available to satisfy their peoples. Yet, instead of setting about the obviously possible task of increasing home production and home consumption by anything up to a fourfold volume, they must piffle about and have a war all in order to raise that exported one-third of one-quarter up to, say, one-half of one-quarter. It is lunacy. The prime responsibility for it lies with our financial experts, but that does not exonerate our engineering, accounting, and other experts for their persistent obliviousness to the situation. The only apparent obstacle to domestic contentment was removed for once and all six years ago, when Douglas announced that *expansion of credit and reduction of price can proceed simultaneously and progressively*. The implications of this announcement are of enormous moment. They mean (among other things) that it is within the power of any Government to fill the order sheets of its nationals’ factories and the larders of their homes without recourse to the purchasing power of its neighbours. And since, as we have said, it is this “recourse”—this agitated competition to sell to the foreigner against his will and to his detriment—which leads to war, any Government may avoid that disaster by its own act. As for the League of Nations, it can do no more for any nation than that nation can do for itself. This is speaking very restrainedly, for, as a matter of fact, the influence of the American lords of the League is definitely against the idea of national financial initiative of the sort we have recommended, and therefore the League is itself likely to remain a danger to its own professed ideal of Peace.

The presidential address of Mr. Purcell to the Trade Union Congress has provided the *Daily News* with the subject of a sermon. The particular heresy

of Mr. Purcell’s which occasions its uplifting discourse was in the following passage: “As surely as we lift our eyes from the workshop we weaken and dissipate our strength in the very place where capitalism for eight, nine, and ten hours every day, hits us hardest and hurts us most.” From this and other parts of his address the *Daily News* gathers that “he is not much interested in Parliament” nor is he “greatly interested in European peace,” but “he is interested in one thing only—in the condition of the industrial worker.” Commenting on this positive interest of Mr. Purcell’s, it meekly adds, as though to deprecate any sudden ebullition of animosity on the part of its hearers, “we are not blaming him; we are merely stating the fact.” And true it is that the *Daily News* refrains from casting the first stone, but it keeps looking over to where there happens to be a heap of stones. It contrasts Mr. Purcell’s “severe” Trade Unionism with the spacious altruism of what it terms “the real Socialist” who, it explains, “will be eager to improve the conditions of the workshop, and to raise wages and shorten hours, and to reduce the price of food; but will regard these things as means to a great end, not as ends in themselves; and will certainly not, in order to attain any one, or even all of them, neglect or sacrifice things which will make impossible the new Society of his dreams.” Mr. Purcell’s views, on the other hand are “limited to one end, and to one end only; the improvement of the condition of the worker.” Well, as between the preacher whose arm flourishes to “The world is my parish,” and the one whose finger points to “This is my parish,” we confess to a furtive fancy for the less acquisitive of the two. The whole being greater than the part, we admit the plausibility of the proposition that care for everybody is a greater thing than care for somebody; but we have more faith in the efficacy of the selective principle. A loved everybody can only too frequently be composed entirely of neglected somebodies. And it so happens that the concluding sentence of the *Daily News*’s otherworldly reverie suggests that its “great ends” are sails full-bellied by an ill wind, for it runs: “But the idea that society can be maintained in prosperity without work, or with much less work than at present, is a delusion.” We believe that one of the canons of exegesis is that words and passages in Holy Writ should be primarily allowed their natural meaning, and that a spiritual significance should not be attributed to them unless it seems to be demanded by, let us say, the occasion. It is possible, then, that in a year or two when (we hope) society is seen actually to be prospering on much less work, the *Daily News* may explain that the Bouverie hieroglyphics formerly translated “work,” and mistakenly interpreted as “human energy,” really conveyed the idea of “mechanical energy.” It may even publish the romance of how improved Zeiss lenses enabled the Higher Critics to correct a very natural misunderstanding of their predecessors, who mistook the symbol of a machine-belt *in situ* for that of a labourer’s bowed shoulders. In the meantime, although Mr. Purcell’s objective will not of itself restore the lost health of industry, it is an economic objective, and is susceptible of attainment within the coming New Economic synthesis. His “ends” may not be “great,” but at least they are comprehensible and desirable. Let him be a wise dog and keep his economic bone. There are enough politicians diving for the other sort.

We presume that the Independent Labour Party’s special committee will be back soon from the seaside, ready to renew their investigation into the most practical methods of financing nationalisation. We therefore offer the following extract from the *Financial Times* as a sort of schedule to our “Notes,” which were distributed at their York Conference, under the

title, “Socialist First-Aid for Private Enterprise.” The “Labour Correspondent” of that financial authority writes:—

In my opinion, the railway companies and the public will do well to prepare themselves for an exceedingly costly programme of demands. I know that some of those who hold high places in the railway service are prepared for this. In fact, an official frankly stated to me that the day was not far distant when the railway companies will welcome nationalisation as the easiest solution of their economic problem, and be prepared to hand over to the State the burden of running the railways of the country.

Railway workers have for some years now “demanded” nationalisation. It will indeed be an irony of circumstance if they are joined in that demand by the directors and shareholders of the railway companies. Certainly, with the salary which the Canadian Government is paying Sir Henry Thornton for managing the Canadian National Railways, general managers will not look askance upon such a proposal.

As it is a time-honoured custom among the sincere rank-and-file of a political movement to scrap any item of their programme that pleases the “enemy,” we look forward to the elimination of Nationalisation from the repertoire of the I.L. Pierrots.

Everyone who has realised the import of the New Economic principles will be encouraged to learn that they have come under the notice of Dr. Annie Besant, president of the Theosophical Society, and that she has recommended the subject for the study of its members. It has been said that what is true in one plane of life is true in all planes. Mrs. Besant, with her genius for appraising fundamentals, has, without a doubt, happened across our Notes of some months ago wherein we compared the function of Money with that of the Catalyst, and has swiftly apprehended the importance to civilisation of the analogy—if true. We emphasise this reservation on her part, for, with the absence of dogmatism which characterises the true spirit of enquiry, she simply lets it be known that the subject has awakened her interest and leaves the matter there. Whatever may be the attitude of our readers towards Theosophy, or their understanding of it, they will recognise and appreciate the important service which Mrs. Besant has rendered to the New Economic movement by lending her prestige to the sympathetic passages which we quote. It is rarely that an established leader of a world-wide organisation has shown such independence of orthodox inhibitions as has inspired her to select and mention this subject among the wearisome multitude of schemes and ideals which the must constantly be pressed upon her notice. The passages we quote are taken from the *Clarion*’s report (issue dated July 4) of the last speech at Queen’s Hall of the series she recently delivered under the title “Civilisation’s Deadlocks.”

We all of us know that no nation possesses in what they call precious metals anything like the value which is disposable at its hands in what is called national credit.

The broad theory which has been advanced is worthy of all study because you get into difficulties and deadlocks to-day where the materials are in one place and in another place are the workless labourers. The point is whether you cannot bring the labourers and the materials together, and whether you cannot get the desired result from labourers and materials for the houses of people who are houseless.

Here, again, the present position seems to belong to a lunatic asylum. In one place there is material for building houses over there. In another there are people over there who want work. And, yet again, there are people who don’t want the workmen and the materials to come together, because there are what are called “financial interests” in the country who think that they would be injured if the three things were brought together, the labour, the materials, and the credit. That is really rather mad.

A method has been suggested of utilising credit. Curiously, the Sankhya philosophy in India has incorporated this ideal of organising credit. No bank pretends to have in its cellars

the amount of gold for which its notes circulate. If all the money were demanded at once the bank goes bankrupt.

The Sankhia philosophy says there are two factors in the universe—one is matter, the other is spirit. Matter has all the materials for the production of everything. Spirit cannot produce anything. But when spirit comes near to matter, then matter begins working by the proximity of spirit. The theory of the Sankhia philosophy is that nothing is done with the spirit itself, but through its presence near matter. Nature produces because spirit is close to it.

Now there is a certain chemical process, which is only comprehensible to me because I knew something about the Sankhia philosophy. I have read that there are catalyst bodies which do nothing themselves but accelerate action in other bodies. Given sulphur dioxide, for instance; they may want sulphur with three oxygen parts to it. Well, there is a lot of oxygen about, but sulphur dioxide is not friendly to it, and will not make room for an additional part of oxygen. But they apply some platinum, and the moment the platinum is near, the sulphur dioxide and the extra part of oxygen rush together and they get sulphur tri-oxide. This catalyst causing the action is curiously like the Spirit of the Sankhia philosophy. The platinum never diminishes but it always brings about the union.

And the theory is that we can utilise credit in the place of money, and that money is our commercial catalyst; that credit is the real thing we have to work with; that we can make any amount by producing notes, and getting the articles we want by bringing together the materials and the labour.

Fundamentally the idea is true. We ought so to be able to deal with labour and material that we can employ the labour on the material to create wealth, and that the people who produce this wealth have the necessary funds with which to buy their own product.

Will readers note the address of the Organising Secretary of the Social Credit Movement, Miss M. Alexander, Fern Cottage, Grindleford, near Sheffield. It is repeated in the Social Credit Movement's announcement on the back page of this issue, and will remain there for reference until further notice. Correspondence *exclusively* concerning the movement should be sent direct to her. Correspondence concerning THE NEW AGE, or containing orders for literature, should be sent to 70, High Holborn. If anyone wishes, as a convenience, to send correspondence on two or more subjects in the same envelope, it should be addressed to 70, High Holborn; but in that case the matters intended for Miss Alexander's attention should be on a separate sheet of paper, so that it can be forwarded with other correspondence which may arrive for her without entailing transcription in London.

We call attention to the announcement in this issue of the Week-End Lecture School, which will be held from October 24 to 27 at Hayes, Swanwick, Derbyshire. The Society of Friends, who are responsible for its promotion, are trying to secure representative speakers to open the discussions, and their names will be forthcoming shortly. We hope that every reader of THE NEW AGE who is able to go will do so.

Regeneration in Organisation.

By A. G. Crafter.

In his useful and welcome contribution to (as the present writer still sees it) THE NEW AGE—Orange-Douglas outline of social credit economy, Mr. Hattersley (in his "The Community's Credit"), like so many others, seems undecided whether, and (observe) how, the new spirit should precede the new institution, or the institution the spirit. Certainly, since the subject was fully discussed in this journal some years ago, old readers and contributors can have no hesitation in the matter. It is true that as things are (e.g., chaos) "economic power precedes and dominates political power," but, after all, as was long ago determined, in the end the psychological factor, nevertheless, precedes and determines both. In other words, precisely as in modern physics, modern theology, modern biology, modern psychology, so also in modern

economy must we build from the ground, from the thinker, the observer, from man. Indeed, our main object is not economic at all; our ultimate purpose is to establish the supremacy of man, creating thus positive men and a positive society in place of that we now suffer, the supremacy of things, a negative society—masses of all classes obsessed with an irresponsible notion of "duty" (and "loyalty" and "patriotism") imposed from above.

At the same time, we have, I suppose, unlike our friends of the central and lesser Labour autocracies, no illusions as to the necessity or possibility of gaining the understanding support of the majority masses. We know that this never has been or can be forthcoming. Consciously, on the contrary, as all, for that matter, do unconsciously, we, at any rate, estimate the potentialities of mankind not from the sordid or vicious, not by its thoughtless, its passive, its savages, criminals, or fools, but rather from the achievements of genius, "peaks of the race" who throughout history have given us every positive thought, inspiration, aspiration, and other values: themselves dispassionately and disinterestedly consumed with the social sense of responsibility, and who, moreover, have seen (as Croce puts it) that the first duty of man, preceding and involving every other duty, is to preserve the dignity of man. In other words, the Social Credit Movement is a clearly visioned appeal from and to men everywhere of this culture, from the responsible to the responsible, from the free to the free; certain that if and when we win a majority of this small, active minority, then this fight, which, nevertheless, is for all, is won.

These (both the above), I suggest, are crucial subsidiary facts which must be accepted before we can sanely proceed to the paramount task of organising the movement as a whole. For just as in the organisation of the old order, the old system, their parts or institutions, the existing disorder, and existing political parties (including Labour and the I.L.P., etc.) is to be found the fundamental error of that civilisation as a whole, so also must the new organisation, in all its parts as a whole, contain and express in principle both the new spirit ("responsibility," rather than "duty") and its material or economic manifestation (social, rather than private, control of credit), two aspects of that one idea which together, in our opinion, can alone restore order, and a new order, to this already new world.

After all, the Zeitgeist of this new world is neither that of the old nor that of its institutions or leaders. And it is in expressing this as a whole, not only in its economic aspect, that we shall inevitably win.

CURRENT SENSE.

Why are you not able to confiscate the railways peaceably? The trouble is that not all of us are consentors. It is no good blaming the capitalists. You would all be capitalists if you could.

You have no right to punish those people for a wrong that is a national wrong far more than an individual wrong.

What magic is there in war that you do things successfully, and when you come to peace you become foolish in action?

We have to work by reason, by argument, by proof of a better way, by persuasion, by trying to stimulate human qualities in every man and woman.

I call upon them especially to show a better example to-day than merely to utilise the force of numbers to crush down those who are privileged.
[From Address by Dr. Annie Besant on "Civilisation Deadlocks."]

Wilfrid Blunt and Egypt.*

Wilfrid Blunt first arrived in Egypt in 1876, after having spent the two previous winters in travelling through Algeria and Asia Minor. He had as yet "though not enthusiastically the common English belief that England had a providential mission in the East and that our wars were only waged for honest and beneficent reasons." He had been for ten years in the Diplomatic Service, and was "intimate with Lord Currie, who for many years directed the permanent policy of the Foreign Office, with Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, Sir Frank Lascelles, Sir Edward Malet, Lord Dufferin, Lord Vivian, and Sir Rivers Wilson, all closely connected afterwards with Egyptian history. It is with a full knowledge of their individual characters that I am able to speak of them and judge them, and I could not well be deceived by the common insincerities which are the stock-in-trade of diplomacy or mistake for public policy action which was often only personal. It is far too readily believed by those who are without individual experience of diplomacy that the great events of the world's history are the result of elaborate political design and not, as they are really in most instances, dependent upon unforeseen accidents and the personal strength or weakness, sometimes the personal whim, of the agents employed."

The winter of 1877-8 he was in Mesopotamia, and that of 1878-9 in Arabia, and there his outlook on the East was changed. "In Nejd alone of all countries I have visited the blessings of which we in Europe boast, though we do not possess them, are a living reality. Liberty, equality, names only in France where they are written up on every wall, are here practically enjoyed by every free man. Here was a community living as our idealists have dreamed, without taxes, without police, without conscription, without compulsion of any kind, whose only law was public opinion, and whose only order a principle of honour. Here, too, was a people poor yet contented, and, according to their few wants, living in abundance, who to all questions I asked of them had answered invariably: 'Thank God, we are not as the other nations. Here we have our own Government. Here we are satisfied.' It was this that filled me with astonishment and pleasure, and that worked my conversion from being an idle on-looker at the misfortunes of the Eastern world into one filled with zeal for the extension of those same blessings of liberty to the other nations held in bondage." He went on to India, to visit Lord Lytton. There he found the same heavy taxation, government by foreign officials, and waste of money as in Turkey. "I don't see much difference between making the starving Hindus pay for a cathedral at Calcutta and taxing Bulgarians for a palace on the Bosphorus. Want eats up these great empires in their centralised governments, and the only way to make them prosperous would be to split them up. We take their money and build jails and lunatic asylums and memorials to Sir Bartle Frere, and insist on their feeding armies of policemen and magistrates and engineers. They want none of these things. I never could see the moral obligation governments acknowledge of taxing people for the debts that they and not the people have incurred. All public debts, even in a self-governing country, are more or less dishonest, but in a foreign despotism like India they are a mere swindle."

I.

In 1863 Ismail Pasha, a grandson of Mohammed Ali, succeeded Said as Viceroy of Egypt. Said had abandoned the Viceregal claim to sole landlordship

* "Secret History of the English Occupation of Egypt." Being a Personal Narrative of Events. By Wilfrid Scawen Blunt. 2nd Ed., 1923. Secker, 30s.

of the Nile, had fixed the land tax at 40 piastres, and had given other encouragement to the fellahin, and "though in his latter years he had granted a number of concessions to European adventurers on terms which were becoming a heavy burden to the State, Egypt was the most prosperous province of the Ottoman Empire. The revenue, though small, was easily collected, expenses of administration were insignificant, and the public debt amounted to only £3,000,000."

Ismail was a Turk "of inordinate greed and vanity. He had been a wealthy landed proprietor of some commercial astuteness, and he looked upon his office as primarily a means of aggrandising his private fortune. He raised the land tax from 40 to 160 piastres, and, though not daring to confiscate openly, by intimidation and administrative pressure, he managed to get a fifth of the cultivable land of Egypt into his hands at merely nominal prices. This, however, proved to be disastrous, for the more he spent on improvements the more he was robbed by his contractors and managers, and he was unable to gather from his lands a fraction of the revenue they had brought in taxation when not his own. To supply his deficiency he loaded the peasantry with irregular taxation, and this, coinciding with the fall in agricultural prices, especially of cotton, was the beginning of their ruin as well as his." In addition to the sums he wasted on building palaces, on entertainment, on fat women, and on fast horses, he spent millions in procuring from Constantinople the title of Khedive and the alteration of the Viceregal succession in favour of his son, in conquering the Upper Nile, and in the attempted conquest of Abyssinia. Here in 1876 his ambitions were checked. Ratib Pasha, his commander, was defeated at Kora, and Loringe, the American chief-of-staff, and seven thousand men were killed.

To provide for these immense expenditures money had to be raised on the European Stock Exchanges. "The notorious Muffetish," Ismail Sadyk, his Minister of Finance, who was the chief agent in fleeing the peasantry, organised the loans, of which Ismail received hardly 60 per cent. of the nominal amounts, and on which interest was charged at rates from 12 to 26 per cent. In 1875 this usury amounted to £4,000,000, and, unable to borrow more, Ismail applied through Colonel Staunton to the English Government for assistance. Lord Derby, the Foreign Secretary was averse to such enterprise, but Disraeli arranged for the purchase of the Khedive's Suez Canal shares, the London Rothschilds advancing £4,000,000. Ismail then applied for a commission, of inquiry, "hoping to get a report in favour of his solvency, and so reopen the European Stock Exchanges." Mr. Cave, who was sent out, unfortunately lacked experience of the East, and was easily deceived by the Khedive, who concealed part of his debts, producing, with Sadyk's assistance, an imaginative Budget; and, everything being arranged beforehand, the misery of the fellahin was concealed from the Commission. "In justice, and it might have been maintained in law, Ismail's debts were private, but Cave's report led to their recognition as a public obligation, and this was the beginning of European intervention in favour of the bondholders."

Other financial missions followed and the Goschen-Joubert settlement of 1877 arranged for a payment of £7,000,000 annually. This extortion followed two bad seasons and in the winter of 1877-8 there was famine throughout the country. "Thousands died of starvation, and the tribute could only be collected from the ruined peasantry by forcing them under the whip to mortgage their lands to the Greek usurers, who attended the taxgatherers on their rounds." Ismail was bankrupt, but a final attempt was made by the bondholders to secure intervention, and Sir Rivers Wilson was sent out as English Commissioner to the inquiry.

G. B.

Mannigfaltig.

By C. M. Grieve.

THE SCOTTISH MUSE.

I referred en passant last week to Mr. John Buchan's new anthology of Scots Vernacular Poetry, "The Northern Muse" (Messrs. Thos. Nelson and Sons, Ltd., 10s. 6d. net). A definite anthology of this field has long been a desideratum. Mr. Buchan has discharged a peculiarly difficult task almost perfectly; and his preface and notes leave little to be desired, provided the fact that he is essentially a Conservative is discounted. (An intransigent Scot might have produced an anthology which would have discovered aspects of Scots verse palatable to ultra-modern taste; but it would not have been a better anthology on the whole, and it would certainly have been a smaller one.) "Many Scots poems have a vogue entirely independent of their poetic merit; these I have neglected," says Mr. Buchan in his introduction, "and have confined my choice to pieces which in varying degree seem to me to be literature, from a bottle-song, just redeemed from doggerel by some quaintness of fancy, to the high flights of Burns and Dunbar." The highest flights of the former—from any high European standard of poetry—may seem like the lamentable efforts of a hen at soaring; no great name in literature holds its place so completely from extra-literary causes as does that of Robert Burns. I do not propose, however, to go into that matter in the present place. Fifty-eight authors are represented in this collection, which covers upwards of five centuries; thirty-two of these are represented by only one poem each; there are only 245 poems in the volume, and of these almost a quarter are by Robert Burns. Next to Burns in number of pieces chosen, comes William Dunbar—the only major poet (writing in "Braid Scots") Scotland has so far produced, if we are permitted to call Burns song-writer in contradistinction to poet. Next to Dunbar comes George Outram, a humorous poet inferior to, say, Calverley, amongst English poets, and Mrs. Violet Jacob, one of the eight contemporary poets included, who is certainly on a lower plane than Alice Meynell, and some half-dozen other modern English poetesses, and is nevertheless the finest poetess (writing in the Vernacular) Scotland has yet produced. The book comprises practically everything that has been produced in Braid Scots verse which by any stretch of the term can be regarded as literature, and the proportion that is "just redeemed from doggerel" is even so extremely high—while the only items that occur to me as worthy of inclusion alongside some of the stuff included are J. B. Selkirk's "O Flodden Field" (a much finer poem than the only example of his verse here given); William Nicholson's "Aiken-Drum" (which, however, is a long poem, scarcely lending itself to quotation, since what merit it has depends upon its cumulative effects); James Beattie's "John o' Arnlea" (certain passages of which are as graphic and vigorous as Burns at his best in such poems as "Tam o' Shanter"); and certain ballads by Edwin Muir, who is known to readers of THE NEW AGE in very different connections.

The book is one that cultured Scots will treasure second to none. It does for Scottish verse what Palgrave's "Golden Treasury" did for English (or rather for British verse). But a large proportion of the items will be appreciated for quite other reasons than are admissible in literary criticism; and with the exception of Dunbar and Burns (the latter with the qualifications already suggested) the whole collection is definitely one of minor poetry. It is, in fact, a "puir show for puir auld Scotland."

We have been told so often and with such fervour that the "soul of Scotland is in Scottish song" and we have heard Scots expatriate so rapturously on "the astonishing range of Scottish song and the intimate completeness with which it mirrors the soul of the people," that it is difficult to realise at first that it is all here in this book—that there has been "sae muckle cry and sae little 'oo'" over a period of five centuries. It shows the small extent to which poetry has ever mirrored or influenced Scottish life. Is there any other Western European country with (in proportion to population—and that is allowing nothing for special features of Scottish psychology or for the boasted excellence of Scottish education) a poetry of so narrow a range, alike in subject-matter and in technical resource—with so small a body of poets of the very slightest consequence over such a period of centuries? Only fifty-eight poets are represented in "The Northern Muse"—not three per generation over the period covered. Think, too, of the infinite number of doggerel-mongers, whom Buchan ignores, and their tremendous vogue—out of all proportion to the majority of the poets he does include! They are more truly representative of Scottish talents and taste (or their absence) than all these fifty-eight except Burns. So far from the folk-song having attained the "art song" standard in Scotland, as we are sometimes told, has not the conception of the art standard to be lowered to enable Scotland to make a show at all? Would work of the quality of almost three-quarters of this anthology find a place in a representative anthology of French, Russian, German, or English verse? "A puir thing but oor ain" is the only verdict that can be given to Scottish vernacular verse by any Scot with a *welt-literatur* standpoint.

Why should this be? Anyone who knows anything about the Scottish vernacular knows that it is one of the subtlest, most searching, and most fully expressive of all languages. I personally think that there are reasons for regretting that Middle-English (of which Braid Scots is a variant) did not survive instead of modern English. Again, anyone who knows anything of Scottish psychology knows that it has depths and darknesses, ardours and endurances, unrepresented in this Anthology—over which the false trail of the Kailyard and Harry Lauder schools, which demonstrably falsify and cheapen it, have been desolatingly drawn. The Scottish preoccupations with religion and metaphysics, with subtle intellection—where are they? Why have they not found poetic outlet? Even the physical robustness and recklessness of the typical Scot—how are they travestied into canniness and sickly sentiment? The answers to these and kindred problems lie in the history of Scotland—the baneful and devastating influence of the Reformation, the subtle subjugation and assimilation to England, and so forth—a congeries of inhibitions that are so extraordinarily involved as to be scarcely susceptible of removal—apart from the desuetude of the Doric, the mimiety of mediocrity, the demoralising influence of the Press and commercialism generally, and the denationalisation of Scottish education. Nevertheless, there is a movement for the revival of the Scottish vernacular; a realistic Scots nationalism with a pronounced Sinn Fein element has recently asserted itself; subversive tendencies are at work which may undermine the odious morality and the false senses of humour and pathos which have hag-ridden Scottish letters; and, given a little group of determined, ruthless and competent artists, the latent potentialities of the Scottish vernacular may be realised in ways of consequence to European literature however abhorrent and unnatural to contemporary Scottish conventionalists. Stranger things have happened in literary history.

All on a Summer's Day.

By John Stevenson.

I.

A cloudy, sultry morning in early July. Though the hands still pointed to 10.25, the clock in the tower of the great Norman church on the opposite side of the cobbled market-square had just chimed the half-hour. Magistrates gathered in the retiring room at the back of the Moot Hall, simmered into activity, and began the preliminaries of folding up *Times* and *Morning Posts* preparatory to following their hook-nosed old barrister-chairman into court.

Under the placid portrait of a Caroline ducal bastard stood the Right Honourable the Earl of Markwick, his elbow resting on the heavy Adam mantelpiece, apparently engaged in the light task of studying the slim

CALENDAR OF PRISONERS

OF THE

GENERAL QUARTER SESSIONS OF THE PEACE,

but actually pondering dimly whether at the Mayoral luncheon that would conclude the morning's business he could succeed in convincing Colonel Rawlinson, Chairman of the local Conservative Association, that young Poppleton was the *only possible* man for the vacant candidacy. His Lordship had reason to fear that Captain Tremayne—"truculent beggar, wish he'd stayed at sea"—might even at that moment be pressing an individual claim on the burly Digby Brown, the Farmers' Union President, over at the other end of the room. More reason not to let present opportunities slide.

He turned to impress himself on a little group composed of the retired solicitor who presided over the deliberations of Flinton Urban District Council, three farmers of varying acreage and importance, and the ex-London linen draper turned agriculturist who had recently purchased the manor and advowson of Puddleton. Happy thought! Perhaps the last, if judiciously handled, would present son Hugo to Puddleton. What a good thing Hugo had expressed a desire for Holy Orders now these confounded Labour men were making such a fuss about "qualifications" for the public services. Who'd ever heard of qualifications for the Diplomatic, save family ones? And where'd Labour find talent the equal of Scarsdale's sons, he'd like to know? Marquis, now, eh? Salisbury promised him that. Didn't keep it, though.

In the middle of the room, lonely as a marooned mariner, a little brown-eyed man fiddled nervously with a conspicuous nickel watch-chain, on which tinkled an Oddfellows' badge. His shoulders were humped with much stooping in the fields, and his thick, tweed suit, creaseless and rugged as himself, made the muggy air seem even moister. But partly-shaven the queer frieze of the old-time labourer's beard began beneath his chin, and covered his throat like a scarf, forming traditional protection against winter chills. . . . Much good he could do among these gentlefolk. Quite polite, mind you, but with their own ideas of justice. Kept you in your place, too!

"Ah! Higgins! Made you a magistrate, now, eh?"

"Yes, ma'am, yes," he replied mildly.

Mrs. Montague, an energetic Guardian-Magistrate with social cum Parliamentary ambitions—brushed past on her way to discuss the details of the Loamshire Hunt puppy walk with the Rev. Eugene Fitzroy, M.F.H., useful slow bowler, peer's younger son, and parson.

A knock sounded, and the bald-headed magistrates' clerk entered, carrying depositions, and papers for signature. . . . Some chair scratchings, pen scrapings. And then the pettish voice of

Thomas Featherstone Powell (of the Inner Temple, barrister-at-law) cut into the bevy of conversations.

"There is only one criminal case for trial, ladies and gentlemen, but in addition, two appeals await hearing, and render it desirable, in order to carry out public business more expeditiously, that we should divide into two courts. Lord Markwick, will you form a quorum? . . . Excellent. Lord Markwick, Colonel Rawlinson, Mr. Digby Brown, Mr. Bloggs, and Mr. Steelyard, will form No. 2 Court? . . . Yes, in the Borough Justices' room."

Yes, we are quite ready, Mr. Ward."

Slowly, sleekly, with a Sunday Matins deportment, the Justices of Loamshire filed through the doorway, and so to the crescent-shaped dais of high red-leather cushioned chairs, below the ornate Royal Arms. A muffled shuffling indicated the upstanding of those already assembled in court. A settling into places. . . . More shuffling. Silence.

II.

"And the same oath that your foreman has sworn on his part, you do faithfully swear to observe, keep, and perform, on each of your parts."

Ephraim Septimus Bullock and his fourteen fellow "esquires" sank once more into their pen, made a half-turn in the direction of the dais, and composed themselves to the generous half-hour of sermonising on the universe in general, and the (alleged) heinous conduct of Albert Simpkins in particular, the which was styled "Charge to the Grand Jury." For the most part they looked on the proceedings as a nuisance, a blarney nuisance, for which their ennoblement, mincingly bestowed by the Chair, as "Grand Inquest for the County of Loamshire" and "the thanks of the country for their services," which would inevitably precede dismissal, formed but a miserably inadequate compensation for the loss of the day's leisure. . . . Pompous ass, Powell! Would think they'd never heard him bray before.

"You, who are the time-honoured guardians of your land's legacy of liberty (glance towards the scribbling reporters). . . saviours of the subject from oppression. . . bulwarks against harsh and tyrannical governments. . ."

And so, at length, when it almost seemed as if in the torrent of verbiage would be swallowed up the principal actor in the day's tragi-comedy, to wit, Albert Simpkins—amateur burglar and bungler—

"I am glad to be able to inform you that your labours to-day are not to be of protracted duration." (Each word slowly and portentously double-hyphenated.) "In fact there is only one case in which it will be your duty to decide whether the person accused shall be placed on trial before a petty jury. . . . Simply, the facts which it is endeavoured to substantiate are . . . that about

1 a.m., during the night of the 16-17th May, a Mrs. Mary Pitcher, licensee of the Bell Inn, Bilney St. Laurence, in this county, was awakened by a noise which appeared to proceed from her front parlour.

Lighting a candle, and arming herself with a poker (laughter) she descended the stairs, and opened the parlour door. In the room she discovered a young man (alleged to be the subject of this indictment) over the lower part of whose face was tied a pocket-handkerchief, so as to form a mask. She threatened tone of voice, he demanded money. She screamed "Murder," dropped the candle, and the man, who seemed frightened at what he had done, ran away. . . . Enquiry was set on foot, and as a result a man was apprehended the same afternoon by Sergeant Wilkins, of the County Police. He had in his possession a pair of silver nut-crackers and an electro-plated sugar basin, since identified by Mrs. Pitcher as her property. On being asked to account for his possession of the articles, he said, 'I know it was very wrong and silly of me. I suppose I was drunk. I had no money, and can't get work.'

When before the Petty Sessions, he reserved his defence for this court and pleaded 'Not Guilty.' . . . "If, therefore, gentlemen, having heard the witnesses for the prosecution—remember the defence is in no way your affair—you decide a prima facie case has been made out against the prisoner, it is your duty to return a True Bill. If, on the other hand. . . ."

The wordy spasm, exhausted, finally died away. The grand jurymen retired to inquire into Mr. Simpkins's simple fracture of the King's peace. Mr. Powell retired to refresh his energies with sherry and biscuit, and to enter affably, if a little patronisingly into the perennial discussions on the prospects of game, tithes, and crops, with his bucolic fellow-beaks. The petty jury designate, and witnesses, retired also to divide their patronage between the Markwick Arms and the Dolphin's Head, round the corner. Save for a solicitor's clerk or two (eyed hopefully by four be-wigged members of the junior bar), a few policemen and other supers of Justice, and a section of the local unemployed (ever admitted gratis to dock or gallery), the court stood empty. A buzz of conversation arose. The church clock chimed, once, twice.

Then, as suddenly, energy replaced lassitude. In came Chairman and magistrates. The Clerk of the Court hurried to his seat beneath the bench. The Grand Jury surged in, presented their True Bill, and withdrew amid compliments.

"Put up Albert Simpkins." A thin, shambling youth, ill-clad, with watery eyes, and a slack mouth, fair dank hair tumbling over his forehead, appeared in the brass-railed dock.

III.

The church clock struck four just as the Clerk rose to "call upon" the prisoner, and ask the semi-rhetorical question, required by law, why sentence should not be passed upon him. The proceedings had not differed greatly from ten thousand similar trials summarised annually in a neat Blue Book entitled "Indictable Offences—Statistics for 19—." Mr. Matthew Dawkins, representing the Treasury, had marshalled his case with considerable skill, cross-examined the prisoner with a brilliance of wit that must ensure the continuance of his vogue among the solicitors of the neighbourhood, and had concluded with an admirably lucid and succinct *resumé* of the facts. The jury, as became twelve good men and true, had listened dutifully, save for an occasional irritable yawn, to the Chairman as he summed up *pro-Rex* and *con-Simpkins*, and had just returned after a decent interval, with the expected verdict. Remained only the unveiling of Simpkins's past history and the small matter of his disposal.

The prisoner hardly seemed to hear the Clerk's question. It was repeated, a little impatiently. (What did the fellow want to waste time now for? Should hardly catch that train as it was!)

"No, gentlemen." What was the use of saying anything? They couldn't understand how he felt. "If you would give me a chance. . . . I'm sorry. . . . If I could get some work. . . ."

"Nothing else to add?"

"No, sir."

The heavy police superintendent (how like the old battalion sergeant-major he was, thought Simpkins) climbed into the witness-box, took the oath ponderously, and slowly unfolded some blue-coloured foolscap.

As slowly he began speaking: "Prisoner was born at Bilney St. Andrew on October 12, 1899—

"Very good, sir. After leaving the Council School he worked for some time on the land, and in 1917 was called up for military service. In all he served two years and seventy-six days, including eight months in the B.E.F., France. His discharge papers were marked "Very Good." Up till 1921 he worked

in the Bilney Oil Mill as a general labourer, but was discharged with other hands owing to slackness of trade. Since then he has been unemployed."

"Any previous convictions?"

"Two, your worship. In 1912, at Rounham Petty Sessions, for larceny of three pheasants' eggs—six strokes of the birch. In 1922, at Flinton Petty Sessions, fourteen days' hard labour for vagrancy."

"Do you dispute the convictions tendered against you?"

"No, sir."

The Superintendent stepped down, tramped heavily back to his seat.

"Albert Simpkins, you have been found guilty of a most serious felony, an offence for which you could be sent to prison for the rest of your natural life. (The man in the dock gulped, gripped the brass rails convulsively. Surely they wouldn't give him that!) You have committed robbery, and have used violence to gain your wicked ends, an offence punishable with the lash."

Mr. Featherstone Powell paused a moment unctuously, to observe the effect of his words, before continuing.

"This is not your first essay in crime. . . . I cannot overlook it lightly. . . . A bad beginning. . . . Be careful lest your end be on the gallows. . . . You must go to penal servitude for the term of three years."

Faintly, above the tumult of the dispersing crowd, the chimes sounded the quarter. A carrier's cart thundered over the cobbles of the square. A boy's voice could be heard shrilling the evening papers. Down below the court a cell-door slammed, dully. . . . Three years! Dear God; and he is a son of the open fields.

IV.

His Worship the Mayor specialised in charity functions, though, in fact, any function of sufficient moment to justify the donning of the furred scarlet gown, the gold chain, and the tricorn hat of office was to him a sensuous delight like unto the sipping of genuine Napoleon brandy. But more especially did he look forward to functions which might ensnare royal, "county," or other celebrities, whose lives and interests were not confined within the crumbling wall that encircled Market Marshborough. Hospitality, to the right people, he reckoned among the greater Christian virtues. Hence, the gathering of nicely-dressed, quiet-voiced folk assembled in the wild rambling garden at the back of his fine old Jacobean mansion in winding Duke-street.

A mingled scent of stocks, and roses, wallflowers and carnations sweetened the air; the conversational hum of human bees sounded above the lesser noises of the garden.

Tea was just over, and a squad of waiters from the town's famous confectioner were busy packing away the *debris* of foodstuffs and piling up the crockery. On the spacious well-rolled lawn, a group of local notables were listening with studious attention to the concluding words of the guest of the afternoon, no less a person than Sir James Little, K.C.B., one of His Majesty's Prisons Commissioners who had been invited to address the annual garden party "in aid of that highly valuable organisation, the Discharged Prisoners Aid Society."

Finally, ladies and gentlemen, let me impress upon you this fact. The reformation, the restoration to society of the 'habitual criminal' is well-nigh an impossible task. Once let the impression sink in a person's mind that he is an Ishmael, that every hand is against him, so surely will you become to him a natural prey. Conversely, if, on his first lapse, he is humanely and mercifully treated, there is every chance that he will become a reputable citizen. Not one in ten of those released under the

First Offenders Acts ever trouble the courts again. . . . Prevention is better than cure. An old tag, but nevertheless very true. Those whose business it is daily to administer justice in our criminal courts have discovered it to be so. I am sorry to have to say that the harshest sentences are not nowadays the work of the Judges of Assize, or of the Recorders of the larger cities, but of honorary magistrates. . . . I hope sincerely that you, in Market Marshborough, who have so well attested your sympathy with this society's aims and objects, will ever see to it that Justice is tempered with Mercy."

The nobler words of the Commissioner's address trailed away into compliments and thanks.

In the heart of the great beech, whose lower branches swept the lawn, a cuckoo sounded mockingly his July call.

Carried by the faint, early evening breeze, the music of the church clock's chime floated overhead.

"Oh, Lord, our God,
Be thou our guide,
That with Thy help
No foot may slide."

Six struck.

V.

The sunny promise of the afternoon had not been maintained. In the west a yellow, watery sun sank below the horizon. The clouds, forming a "mackerel sky," heralded a rainy to-morrow. Around the grey walls of the County Prison at Yarwich a chill wind blew.

In a barely-furnished, white-washed cell a man sat lonely by the side of his plank bedstead. The shaded electric globe in the corridor gave but little light save as was sufficient for the patrolling warder. Thus, even were there anything to read except the plainly-bound Bible and the copy of Prison Regulations posted on the wall, it was too dark to see the print.

Convict No. 64 (alias Albert Simpkins) felt very bitter against the world, and more especially against the little group who formed the Bench of Loamshire. . . . Hard old devils. Much they knew or cared about him. . . . How the gaffers 'ud be talking in Bilney Ship. Wilkins, he'd be there, in plain clothes, a-preening of 'isself, and wondering when he'd be made Inspector. And carpenter Quantrill, who never had a good word for anyone, would say he'd always said it would happen, and how them Simpkins were all wastrels. . . . He'd show 'em though. They wouldn't keep him at Yarwich long. The warder said so. He'd be for Dartmoor, where he'd meet the real clever chaps, who'd put him wise how to get money quick when his time was up. . . . Might as well be hanged for a sheep as a lamb, now things were so contrarywise. Anyhow, could never show up at Bilney again. . . . Still, the Governor (he remembered him in the Loamshires back in the war days—sporting old chap) had told him he could appeal to the Judges in London. No saying that if they let him down lighter that he wouldn't have another try. . . . It all depended. . . .

Still thinking deeply, he undressed to the coarse prison shirt, lay down to try for sleep. To-morrow, he'd find out about that appeal.

To-morrow. . . .

In the yard outside, the prison clock tanged metallically the hour of nine.

PRAYER AT THIRTY.

Suffer I bring one blossom in my hand
When to the reckoning Thou shalt summon me;
One flower from my Life's field . . . I would not stand
Empty before Thy gates all utterly.

Lend me, O Jealous, yet one other hour
Whose half is done; for there is all to do.
Keep faith, O Faithful, now . . . a flower, one flower
For one whose hands have plenty, but of rue.

A. NEWBERRY CHOYCE

The Theatre.

By H. R. Barbor.

PLAYS, PLAYERS, AND PUBLICITY.

The whole matter of Press publicity as affecting both performances and performers needs drastic overhauling. The theatre of to-day has to make up its mind with regard to the Press. Owing to past inefficiency or dishonesty the attitude of the Press towards plays and players has come to be suspect both by the public and the business people concerned.

At the beginning, we must differentiate between two departments of Press activity in regard to amusement. On the one hand, we have the critic pure and simple, and on the other the paragraphist—the differentiation roughly being between Views and News. Both of these, of course, should carry out a useful function, useful both to the amusement interests concerned and to the journals.

Unfortunately, of late years there has been an increasing tendency for the paragraphists to be discovered at variance with the critics. The reasons for this are manifold, but depend very largely on the operations of outside Press agents. There is another tendency which one must mention at the outset, that is, for newspaper editors to promote to important critical functions men who know little or nothing of the technique and the comparative values and traditions of the show upon which they pontificate.

The London Press possesses a fine company of first-class critics, and an average consensus of their opinion will serve as a guide to the merits or demerits of a theatrical performance. Unfortunately the exceptions are not infrequently found in the more popular journals whose directors boast it is that they give the public what it wants instead of adopting the more responsible formula—that is, giving the public the best that can be obtained. Unfortunately again, the general reader of newspaper criticisms nowadays, owing to the operations of the paragraphist, must find it difficult to form any concrete values. For as often as not, artists and productions that are roundly attacked or kind-heartedly ignored by the understanding critic are boosted or persuaded into undue prominence by the news-writer. Miss Flossie Tiptoe, who prevailed on a backer to prevail on the chairman of an amusement syndicate to prevail on his producer to permit her to appear in "Eyes Right," may be soundly rated for her inability as dancer, singer, and comedienne by every critic in London on one morning. Yet the next may quite possibly find her name and the name of her favourite tooth-paste and houseboat writ large in the gossip columns of innumerable journals, while her photograph adorns (in her opinion) the pages of the illustrated dailies, even the expensive illustrated weeklies.

Again, Mr. Hildebrand Roscommon, whose hair would make Marcel invent a new type of permanent waver, having, owing to directoral astigmatism, been cast as leading man in a revival of "Oedipus Rex," will find that the critics have dealt with him, no less harshly than he deserves. But he will find, too, that his news value as a ping-pong champion or as a night-club habitué, combined with the insistence of his Press agent, have assured him write-ups in the Press on a scale to which a Lucien Guitry or a Reinhardt or a Matheson Lang could never aspire. This may sound fantastic, but it is a patent fact.

The "eyes and teeth" publicity may flatter those self-accredited stars whose easy vanity can be assuaged for the lack of that intoxicating roar of a first-night audience by the long-drawn tarra-diddles of penny-a-line hacks. But I am convinced that the only assistance the Press can afford towards establishing and maintaining the reputation of any player or play is understanding criticism—possibly extended as need arises by the reasonable

relation of actual news facts. With this theory I expect a number of professionals and probably a greater number of journalistic authorities will disagree. Many capable and successful artists who despise Press puffing for its own sake are yet thoroughly convinced that it is necessary on business grounds. They give interviews at great expenditure of time and patience to journals they despise, and elaborate views on all sorts of extraneous matters, politics and the like. They reel off more or less veracious records of their family and personal history, and all because they imagine that otherwise their reputation and therefore their business also will suffer, if only as a result of the competition in the number of appearances of an artist's name in the popular Press.

Without seeking to deprecate the august dominion of the Press, one cannot help believing that no actor's reputation and commercial standing has ever been materially advanced by the "puff" method. Bad plays, it is true, may perhaps be boosted into short-lived popularity. Yet if any manager wishes to cover his losses on a "dud" English play by selling the American rights at a premium, I most strongly recommend him to invest in the advertisement space of the Press rather than in the gossip columns.

Whatever is the case in regard to plays, however, the reputation of an artist can only be made in the eye of the audience. It does not matter how often the artist is divorced or has twins—nor does the golf handicap nor the bobbing of hair—nor the nocturnal festivities at Muro's—nor the addresses on behalf of the "Inaudible Clerics' Aid Association"—nor the Savoy lunch in aid of the "Nigerian Famine Relief Fund." All these may be forgiven to an artist whose professional duties leave him or her time for these disports. But their news value does not add an emotional cubit to a gesture or another inflection of persuasion to the voice. And when the ordinary member of the public, who—let us not forget—is the final arbiter, goes to the theatre, it is because of these and not because of those that he returns. Press paragraphing can never be anything but a sop for the failure to obtain critical esteem. Indeed, it is only of permanent value inasmuch as it re-insists on the decision of the public and the critical Press.

I may perhaps be forgiven one individual illustration of this argument. I suppose no artist has had a more profuse and laudatory Press than Miss Sybil Thorndike. In my professional capacity, I have heard innumerable explanations of this. Not the least ridiculous was the suggestion from one disgruntled player that Miss Thorndike had received a legacy that almost ran into five figures, and had spent the whole on a gigantic Press bribe. Another theory was that perhaps Miss Thorndike had obtained the services of several ex-editors to thrust her name at the public on every possible occasion. Now, while I know nothing whatever of Miss Thorndike's business arrangements, this vituperative nonsense can be written off at its face value—nil! Miss Thorndike, after many years of restless hard work in comparative obscurity—relative, that is, to her present popularity—came to the West End at a time when the English theatre was almost at its lowest ebb—when, indeed, reasonably intelligent people had no reason to visit the plays then current. She appeared in quick succession in a large number of varied and interesting works, and her talent won for her quite naturally the estimation of the critics, and compelled the newswriters to have her achievements and her plans continually at pen-

point. The inevitable result of this has been to place Miss Thorndike at the forefront of the *personages célèbres* of the theatrical world. Any artist with an equally varied and arresting programme and equivalent histrionic gifts could claim equal pub-

licity. The artist who seeks fame at the hands of Mercury must woo the news-god by offerings of intelligence and excellence. There is no other way to persuade him to wear out his winged sandals on the pavements of Fleet-street. In short, genius and "the goods" must go into the star's suitcase before he make a trip to the major constellations.

At the moment there are many indications that we are at the beginning of a new and better era of things theatrical. To advantage the theatre, raise its standard, and encourage the best in all departments of showmanship, the Press is perhaps, next to the author and the actor, the most powerful body. Journalism has a grave responsibility to the theatre, but there are many issues upon which it behoves the leading members of both professions to come to an understanding. Undignified and usually unfounded sensations writ large on the placards of the evening papers may make up for a temporary lack of news, and therefore help immediately to extend circulation, but one ventures to think that the dignity of a great institution like the Stage might receive more consideration from newspaper proprietors.

The fact, for instance, that a theatre-manager (who turned out not to be the manager of a theatre at all) and his cheques (which turned out to be quite in order) should not only receive a write-up incommensurate altogether with the importance of the case, but that the case should have been announced in shrill placards a week before it came on, may lure pence from the pockets of the sensation-loving. But surely one great national institution ought to have more respect than this for another.

Is it too much to hope that the leading associations allied to the theatre—the various unions and managerial bodies—will confer with the Newspaper Proprietors' Association for purposes of mutual assurance and assistance?

While many players, *via* the journalistic scandal-scouts and paragraphists, are expounding their views on every topic under the sun, and have the minutæ of their behaviour chronicled for the delectation of the unduly curious, can it be that they are ignorantly sacrificing one of the player's most valuable assets? The mystery and comparative secrecy that surrounded the player of former days was probably a not inconsiderable asset. To turn the theatre inside out will probably result in leaving the audience outside. After all, the stage is, and must remain, the world of make-believe, and the more we know about the eighteen-year-old ingenue's eighteen-year-old son's athletic abilities, the less, surely, we are inclined to credit her ingenuousness, although we may marvel in quite another fashion at her ingenuity. The green-room of the old theatre was an untrodden temple of wonder for the average playgoer. Nowadays the green-room is gone, and its modern equivalent is spread wide in the pages of the illustrated papers.

Let it not be inferred that the publication of photographs, discussions of the artistry, and of the player's and the dramatist's work should be withheld from an interested public. The more of this there is the better for the theatre, and the more profitable doubtless for the paper. But let the artists of the theatre and the journalists who write about them remember that the things of the theatre should come first, second, and third, and that the rest are private matters best withheld from journalistic indiscretion.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

THE SINGLE TAX.

Sir,—May I be permitted to point out what your correspondents on the Single Tax seem to have overlooked thus far? The Theory of Rent and the Theory of Currency are two *equally* essential parts of Economics. If either Single Taxers or Currency reformers start with the pig-headed maxim that the

part is greater than the whole, they can only manage to construct from that peculiar concept formulæ which require re-handling.

The only logical conception I can imagine of Currency is that it is *documentary buying power drawn upon an entire community*. Whether the document is stamped upon copper, silver, or gold, printed or written on paper, coin, bank note, Treasury note, cheque, draft, promissory note, or I.O.U.—it is all currency *so long as it retains buying power*. Currency may be good or bad, private (cheques), semi-private (bank notes), or public (Treasury notes), redeemable or unredeemable, adequate or inadequate, but it must possess the one thing essential to it: buying power.

Where people may differ is here: what form should currency take? By whom should it be issued? How much of it should there be? What should it be issued against? The man who thinks all these questions to be *indifferent* is both pig-headed and narrow-minded and quite useless as a public guide, be he Single Taxer, Finance Minister, or what he will. Mr. Jones says:

The Single Taxers presuppose stable currency conditions in which to launch their reform. . . . They only desire for their reform a simple regulation of the currency to avoid deflation or inflation. At present such a regulation is being exercised.

If Mr. Jones would kindly tell us how he can prevent the High Finance from writing down a currency for less than it is worth (thus breaking the equilibrium of stable conditions) otherwise than by getting the Governments to fix the international value of money or by regulating prices, I, for one, should be pleased to know the system. The rest of his statement is tantamount to saying that the present currency arrangements are all that can be desired. I should be glad to enlighten his profound ignorance on this point, but meantime I am pleased to be able to quote his own master on the subject (Henry George): (Social Problems," page 169).

Instead of doing what every public consideration impels us to, and assuming wholly and fully the *exclusive function of the General Government the power to issue paper money*, the private interests of the bankers have, up to this, compelled us to the use of a *hybrid currency*, of which a large part, though guaranteed by the General Government, is *issued and made profitable to companies*. (Italics mine.)

This is what Henry George "made clear in his U.S.A. campaign at the close of last century." But it is certainly not what the 221 members of the Land Values Group in Parliament are going to back up. Henry George would demand (1) the abolition of the Bank of England; (2) the entire repudiation of the so-called National Debt ("Social Problems," pages 153 to 162); (3) the abolition of all currency save Government currency—and therefore of bank notes and of all cheques or drafts *not backed by a deposit of Government money notes in the issuing bank*.

If Henry George had lived to finish his last work ("The Science of Political Economy") *all this would now be a part of the official Single Tax programme*. The Single Taxers ignore it because it was dealt with by Henry George in a small book. The section of the large work mentioned, dealing with money, was only just opened when Henry George died.

If Single Taxers of to-day are unable to *stand by what Henry George has written*, let them stop quoting him. I challenge Mr. Jones to mention a single conspicuous member of the movement who is in favour of the points I have advanced, and upon which Henry George stood immovably "pat."

Yours respectfully,
RENE CHARLES DICKENS.

Sir,—It may be of interest to look at the Land Taxation problem in a very schematic way. If we take the community as a whole and inquire what the results of such a process will be, we see (1) that the

taxation is merely shifted to other shoulders; (2) that the labour which will be employed will come (either directly or indirectly) from the unemployed, and that the wages paid direct to the worker will offset the present indirect payment via taxation and doles. Hence the total purchasing power will be as now. (3) As the result of cultivating the land Nature will present us with (say) corn (but, thoughtlessly, will provide no money to buy it). This—under present arrangements—can only be distributed against purchasing power, and as the latter has not been increased, some other goods must be left unsold if it is to be bought. In fact, it has displaced foreign corn, which represented in its turn so much (say) coal. So that as by (1) and (2) we have shifted payments from some shoulders to others, so by (3) we have done the same for employment, and *as a whole* the community is just where it started. Someone may be better off, and someone worse off, but even if by magic the "hoards of the wealthy" were equally distributed, I think Sir Leo Chiozza Money once showed that this would only represent a few shillings a head! Of course, if Bank Credit is going to be involved in the scheme the condition will not be as before, but worse.

The fact remains that what is now wrong is a shortage of purchasing power (to which I think almost everyone now agrees), and the only escape is to invent some way of creating *new* purchasing power, not of shifting the present purchasing power round.

M.B., OXON.

PRODUCTION AND CREDIT.

Major C. H. Douglas is fairly well known as the exponent of a rather drastic scheme of currency and credit reform. Roughly speaking, his theory is that all our industrial evils spring from under-consumption and its resultant, deliberate under-production, by those who control industry. Because effective demand is too low—due to defects in the distribution of wealth—capital (which controls industry) restricts production. The remedy, Major Douglas holds, is the creation of "bank money," in order to supply additional purchasing power. But this purchasing power is to be put at the disposal of the consumer, and not the producer. Major Douglas has already expounded his theory, in some detail, in a small pamphlet. In "Social Credit" (Palmer, 7s. 6d.) he is concerned with the philosophic and economic bases of the theory. Much of his writing here is a destructive criticism rather than constructive policy. As a critic, he has much to say that stimulates thought; and even those repelled by his positive conclusions will find the book well worth reading. The essence of his theory may be summed up in a sentence. He wants the industrial and financial system of the country so arranged that the consumer "shall always have the financial means to exercise full call on both the actualities and potentialities of production."

[From the Birmingham Post of April 11.]

PRELIMINARY NOTICE.

Industry, War.

FINANCE : Unemployment, War.

A WEEK END LECTURE SCHOOL

WILL BE HELD
OCTOBER 24th—27th
at THE HAYES, SWANWICK, DERBYSHIRE.

Programme :

1. The Present Banking System.
2. Finance and War.
3. Nationalization of Banking.
4. Stabilization.
5. Social Credit.

Speakers will be announced later.
Fees: £2 2s. from Friday Evening Oct. 24th to Monday Morning, Oct. 27th.

Applications which should be accompanied by Booking Fee of 5/- which will be credited against the Fees, should be sent at once to—EILEEN M. D. THORNE, Devonshire House, BISHOPSGATE, LONDON, E.C.2.

THE SOCIAL CREDIT MOVEMENT

SECRETARIES OF LOCAL GROUPS.

- ABERDEEN.—J. Crombie Christie, 12, Pitstruan-place.
 BELFAST.—E. Salthouse, 172, Albert Bridge-road.
 * BRIGHTON.—J. E. Whitome, Stanford House, Stanford-avenue.
 BRISTOL.—W. Arthur Evers, 12, Aberdeen-road, Clifton, Bristol.
 CAMBRIDGE.—Rolf Gardiner, St. John's College.
 CARDIFF.—C. H. Williams, 47, Whitchurch Road.
 COVENTRY.—H. E. B. Ludlam, 12, Grantham-street, Coventry.
 CROYDON.—T. Gillis, 66, Southbridge-road.
 DUBLIN.—T. Kennedy, 43, Dawson-street.
 EDINBURGH.—Lawrence McEwen, 9, Douglas-crescent.
 GLASGOW.—H. M. Murray, 73, Ingleby-drive, Dennistoun, Glasgow.
 * GOLDERS GREEN (The Hampstead Garden Suburb).—Mrs. K. Roche, 32, Hogarth Hill, N.W. 11.
 HAMPSTEAD.—Mrs. H. Cousens, 1, Holly Hill, Hampstead, N.W.
 * HIGHBURY.—S. A. Potts, 116, St. Paul's-road, N. 1.
 * KENILWORTH.—W. F. Alty, Windy Arbour.
 LARKHALL.—W. McPheat, Laurel Villa.
 LEAMINGTON SPA.—John Willows, Arno Villa, 63, Willes-road.
 LEEDS.—Geo. Kay, 7, Wyther Park-avenue, Armley, Leeds.
 * LEICESTER.—Chas. Crisp, "Edyson," Hobson-road.
 LIVERPOOL.—R. J. Pankhurst, 22, Beckenham-avenue; F. H. Auger, 45, Fieldway, Wavertree, Liverpool.
 * LONGTON, STAFFS.—D. Amyas Ross, 66, Trentham-road.
 LONDON, CENTRAL.—W. R. M. Stevens, 6, Palgrave-road, Stamford Brook, W. 12.
 LONDON, S.E.—R. Edwards, 28, Westmount-road, Eltham, S.E. 9.
 * LONDON, S.W.—William Repton, 5, Pentland-gardens, Wandsworth, S.W. 18.
 MANCHESTER.—F. Gardner, Edge Bank, 105, Queen's Road, Cheetham, Manchester.
 MIDDLESBROUGH.—Mrs. Ella M. Dunn, 2, Linden-grove, Linthorpe, Middlesbrough.
 NELSON (LANCS.).—M. Harrison, 11, Lane Ends.
 NEWBURY, READING.—Leslie Forrest, Rosedale, Thatcham.
 NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—Arthur Bartram, 107, Morley-st.
 OXFORD.—Rev. V. A. Demant, 5, South Parade.
 PAISLEY.—R. K. Reid, 47, Oakshaw-street.
 PLYMOUTH.—F. R. Crowe, 1, Beaumont Road.
 PUDSEY.—Joseph Smith, Smalewell Hall, Pudsey, Yorks.
 PORTSMOUTH.—Thos. K. Justice, 34, Dunbar-road.
 RICHMOND, SURREY.—N. Dudley Short, 32, Marlborough-road.
 ROTHERHAM.—R. G. S. Dalkin, 41, Wellgate.
 RUGBY.—W. Bramwell Bridges, Frowlesworth, Rugby.
 SHEFFIELD.—A. L. Gibson, 9, Paradise-square; W. H. Bolton (Theosophical Society's Group), 8, St. Paul's Parade; H. Delamore, 47, Broad Oaks, Darnall, Sheffield.
 STOCKPORT.—Alex. Gordon, 86, Kennealey-road.
 * STRATFORD-ON-AVON.—W. H. J. Woodward, Arden-street.
 SUDBURY (Suffolk).—J. Rimmer, Station Road, Sudbury.
 SUFFOLK.—T. J. Faithfull, The Hall, Walsham le Willows.
 SWANSEA.—J. A. Rees, 23, Hanover-street.
 SWINTON, ROTHERHAM.—E. G. Trowbridge, Glenholme, Station-street.
 * WATERLOO.—W. Coles, 16, Queen's-road.
 WESTERTON (Near Glasgow).—Jas. Gibben, 5, North View.
 WORCESTER.—F. G. Davies, 47, Hill-avenue.
 * YORK.—W. M. Surtees, Elmfield College; W. Hallways, 38, Lindley-street.
 * No group yet formed, but correspondence invited.
 Hon. Secretary: Miss M. Alexander, Fern Cottage, Grindleford, near Sheffield.
- SOUTH AFRICA.—A. Stedman, Hon. Sec., South Africa Social Credit Movement, P.O. Box 37, Johannesburg.
 CANADA.—The United Farmers of Alberta, of Lougheed Building, Calgary, Alberta, are willing to accept subscriptions for THE NEW AGE, and may sometimes be able to put inquirers into touch with people interested in the Social Credit Proposals. In this last connection the Editor of the Ottawa "Citizen," Ottawa, would doubtless advise correspondents.

DIRECTORY

- Names and addresses of Social Credit Advocates or Adherents who are willing to (*) answer queries on the subject or who would be pleased to (†) exchange views with others similarly interested. (This list is supplementary to that of the local Secretaries of the Movement given on this page.)
 * BROOM, E. J., 70, Marylands-road, Paddington, W. 9.
 * DOUGLAS, Major C. H., 8, Fig Tree-court, Temple, E.C. 4.
 * DALKIN, R. G. S., 9, Morthen Rd., Wickersley, Yorks.
 * GALLOWAY, C. F. J., 37, Cale Street, S.W. 3.
 † KIRKBRIDE, J. S., The Old Hall, Lowdham, Notts.
 † MONTYRE, A. HAMILTON, 9, Townhead-terrace, Paisley.
 † MEADE, Miss S. F., Sandpit, Horsington, Templecombe.
 * O'NEILL, JOSEPH, 31, Hayfield-road, Clarendon Estate, Pendleton.

CREDIT RESEARCH LIBRARY

TWO NEW PAMPHLETS.

Socialist "First-Aid" for Private Enterprise!

A reprint of the "Notes" in the "New Age" of April 17th. A critical examination of the I.L.P.'s "Nationalisation" policy from the "Social Credit" point of view. A useful pamphlet to distribute in Labour and other reformist circles.

The Monetary Catalyst—Need Scientific Discovery

Entail Poverty? A reprint of the "Notes" in the "New Age" of June 5th. Written with the special object of attracting the attention of business, technical and scientific men.

Both pamphlets are the same dimensions as the "New Age" pages, and will fold conveniently and neatly for posting in an ordinary foolscap envelope. Single copies will go for 1d. postage, as "printed matter," if the envelope is unsealed. The price of each is 1d. (postage 1d.). Larger quantities: 10—10d.; 25—2s.; 50—3s. 9d.; 100—7s.—all inclusive of postage.

"The Community's Credit."

A reasoned consideration of the theoretical content and practical implications of the DOUGLAS CREDIT PROPOSALS.

By C. MARSHALL HATTERSLEY, M.A., LL.B.

"It is interesting to record the publication of books like this; they are evidence of careful thought, and serve to guide men into the ways of clear thinking. Original thought is all to the good, and the perfect galaxy of it in 'The Community's Credit' is an earnest of future advancement. . . . The work will form a useful comparative volume to read alongside some of the more academic economic treatises."—*The Bank Officers Guild*, June, 1923.

"Here, then, is a book for those who wish to grasp the essentials of the problem, the very primer of credit-economics wherein the lesson is made plain. There is no excuse now for the criticism so often urged that Douglas was 'obscure' . . . Mr. Hattersley is a splendid guide and his book is a triumph."—*The Fellowship*, June, 1923.

" . . . Should prove helpful to the Social Credit student who wants a bird's-eye view of what has been thought and said on the subject to the present time. . . . Mr. Hattersley's quotations from orthodox economists, financial leaders and writers on Social Credit are well chosen. . . . In the chapters dealing with constructive credit in principle and practice, Mr. Hattersley offers a good deal of thought-stimulating comment, particularly while dealing with international relations."—*Credit Power*, April, 1923.

Crown 8vo, 165 pp. Price 5/- Nett (Postage 2d.)

Catalogue of other books and pamphlets free on application

CREDIT RESEARCH LIBRARY, 70, High Holborn, W.C.1

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

The Subscription Rates for "The New Age," to any address in Great Britain or Abroad, are 30s. for 12 months; 15s. for 6 months; 7s. 6d. for 3 months.

Cheques and Postal Orders should be crossed and made payable to "THE NEW AGE PRESS."

All communications should be addressed, Manager, THE NEW AGE, 70, High Holborn, W.C.1.

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.