THE

# NEW AGE

INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER"

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART

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## NOTES OF THE WEEK.

"Barclays Bank Operatic Society will give 'Merrie England' at the Ambassadors Theatre from December 21 to 24 inclusive," runs a Press notice. We'll not spoil the grace of the gift by any comment except to express the hope that there will not be any difficulty in printing a ticket for every seat.

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Viscount Rothermere has written an article from New York, and it appears under heavy headlines in the *Daily Mail* of December 15. It is entitled "Through Power to Prosperity." We must, it appears, take immediate steps to reconstruct our sources of power supply; to go in for centralised mass production of electric power instead of "patching" and "paltering" with the coal industry. In doing so we must make the United States our model, because it is in that country where the practical organisation of such power has been successfully carried out. So:

> "I therefore suggest that the Government should take the first steps towards revitalising British Industry by inviting an American expert of international experience to make an investigation of our industrial and mineral systems with a view to the generalisation and the use of electric power in England."

In attempting a justification of this piece of impertinence, he says that although—

> "Some of the most highly equipped electrical specialists in the world are of British nationality—consulting engineers like Mr. Charles H. Merz, or students and experimenters such as Sir Ernest Rutherford and Sir J. J. Thomson, of Cambridge University—"

the "business before us" requires actual experience, which "can only be found in the United States." Well, supposing that be granted: then what? He proceeds:

> "And then, when his [the American expert's] recommendations have been examined and approved—"

(if we lack the necessary experience over here how are we to examine and approve?)

> "—let us meet the difficulties of peace with the same broad, bold measures as enabled us to face the crisis of war, and make a supreme effort to re-establish British industry by giving it modern equipment."

It will be seen that Lord Rothermere's scheme volatilises into a peroration just when it should have been cast into a solid block of essential information, namely—where the money is to come from. Is British credit to be created for the purpose, or is his lordship's allusion to the "bold measures" we adopted during the war intended as a hint that Uncle Sam will lend us some more dollars? The latter alternative seems the more likely, for, with all the will in the world to believe in the altruism of the United States, we fail to picture her re-establishing the competitive machinery of her most dangerous trade rival without first getting a mortgage-grip on it. In an early paragraph of his article Lord Rothermere gives us the significant information that the United States has 29 millions h.p. of electric power established in her factories—a force that is estimated, he says, as the equivalent of 290 millions of human workers, her total population being only 118 millions. The result is that "her industrial production increases by leaps and bounds." Quite so, but the point is, are overseas orders for her production (let us say, heavy electrical equipment) increasing by equally long leaps and bounds? If not—and we suggest not—American interests already foresee a trade slump and are taking early steps to postpone it by "investing" their surplus equipment in "developing" this li'l ol' country. The present prosperity of Americans need not be denied, but the suggestion that this prosperity has come to stay is false. And the very fact that they are putting up Lord Rothermere to get them an invitation to reconstruct Britain is a plain sign, to the discerning, that their continued prosperity partly depends on their receiving it. No; if Wall Street wants to see us prosperous, all it has to do is to lift its Gold-Standard embargo off our freedom to create and use our own financial credit in whatever quantity is necessary for reconstruction work. British experts are as capable as Americans. The sole reason for the practical success of the American experts is that they

were provided with money for applying their ideas, whereas ours were not.

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Our final word is this. Take our "backward" and "wasteful" industrial organisation just as it is, and simply bring its output up to its present capacity by scientifically accurate pricing methods applied to distribution, and Britain could soon show America what prosperity really means. Tall figures representing America's horse-power mean nothing. How much of it is actually working? There was a music-hall song current over here a year or two back. Its title was "All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go." It will soon become topical across the Atlantic.

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We see that Mr. J. F. Darling is still continuing his agitation against the adoption of the Gold Standard. Addressing the Manchester Association of Importers and Exporters last week, he discoursed on his familiar text that it had made Britain a satellite of the United States. He advocated the granting of legitimate trading demands for credit, which meant "a banking policy *largely independent for internal purposes* of the gold standard, since a genuine trade demand for credit cannot cause inflation." (We quote from a summary by the City Editor of the *Daily News*.) Alter "cannot" into "need not" in the last clause, and we agree. The important thing is that our banking policy should become disentangled from that of the Federal Reserve Board, so that, for instance, a boom in stocks on Wall Street could not force the Bank of England to raise the price of financial credit all over the Empire. Mr. Darling wants this Empire to become one independent credit area, and pool its resources of gold, which would thereby be "set free," and would become a "means of great economic strength and unity." We shall not quarrel with his affection for gold so long as he continues to preach the doctrine that its quantity can be ignored in connection with the credit created and employed within the United Kingdom and between it and the Dominions. While the industrial world is scrambling for "foreign trade" the gold standard is a convenient if clumsy method of rationing shares of that trade: but when the Empire finds it can keep its population prosperous on its own production, and no longer depends for solvency upon revenue from external trade, it will drop the golden pilot by common consent.

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France has just appointed M. Doumer her Minister of Finance for the ensuing month. The last five moons have seen MM. Clementel, de Monzie, Caillaux, Painlevé and Loucheur appear and disappear. La Belle France is a virtuous maiden still, and all the world wishes her a continuous succession of such Ministers who betray so engaging a propensity for falling from power when the public coughs. All the same, we hope M. Doumer will not get his dignity affronted by an earlier determination of his office than the official twenty-eight days, although we are bound to admit to ourselves that a man who is a "supporter of taxes on consumption and on the use of wealth for luxury purposes," and who wants to improve the "machinery for the collection of the income tax," cannot reasonably reckon on being left at peace by his countrymen for much longer than a fortnight. However, perhaps the French people have now got into the rhythm of the lunar cycle, and will tolerate M. Doumer for as long as the others in the name of symmetry.

* * *

The Trade Editor of the *Daily News* discusses the "Future of Trusts" in the light of the Stinnes and Vickers cases. This juxtaposition of names is significant.

> "On examination of the Stinnes breakdown earlier this year, the German banks—"

(Observe the artful suggestion that the breakdown had not been brought about by these very banks.)

> "—came to the conclusion that branches of the trust must be lopped off and put under separate ownership, their definite view being that an amalgam of so many different branches of industry could not be brought under a unified control."

This is exactly as if a homicidal maniac made it a practice to shoot red-haired men, afterwards holding an "examination" of the lethal "breakdown" of his victims, and reporting that red pigment in human hair was destructive of life! It is not true that many branches of industry cannot be brought under a unified control—in fact, there is a strong case for the contrary view, that the more numerous and *various* the component industries are, the more easily can the "amalgam" be moulded, if only for the reason that there are fewer external and uncontrollable contingencies to take into account. Besides that, there is the actual fact that Stinnes did bring about such a unified control. His trust broke down, true. But why? Not because it embraced too many activities, but because it embraced too few. Stinnes did not acquire, or form, *a bank of issue*; he manufactured pretty nearly everything, but he did not manufacture financial credit. From accounts we have heard, that would probably have been his next step. But the banks took good care to nip in first and effectively starve his trust for money before it was able to improvise its own. The Trade Editor above quoted, obligingly underlines this interpretation of the event. He points out that in the report of Mr. Docker, Mr. McKenna, and Sir William Plender on Vickers' affairs "we see what is in essence a similar opinion to that given by German bankers on the Stinnes concern," and accordingly quotes from their report as follows:

> "It would appear, however, that the management had not the special experience required to direct and control so large and varied a body of industrial undertakings—"

Now listen. (Our italics.)

> "*—particularly during a period of protracted and severe depression.*"

That is to say (returning to our analogy) red-haired men have not the necessary experience required to keep alive when the shooting begins. But here, the analogy is not wide enough. In the "severe depression" referred to the shooting was indiscriminate, and every colour of hair brushed the dust—from the one-man concern to the world-wide organisation. The question of "experience" did not arise, for the universal failure arose from a deliberate restriction of financial credit—a commodity that no "experience" can command. Is there any practical business man who will believe for a moment that if the demand for Stinnes' or Vickers' output had not been restricted, nor their access to financial accommodation denied, by the deliberate deflationary acts of the bankers, that those concerns would have found the slightest difficulty in co-ordinating the production and distribution of all the varied products they controlled?

* * *

There is no doubt at all in our mind that the object of all this financial dismantling of large-scale industrial structures is closely connected with the quickening public comprehension of the nature and functions of credit. The more the industrialists can be split up into small competitive organisations the less practicable any general scheme of financial reform can be made to appear. We would refer our readers to our article "The New Accountancy" of a week or two ago. We showed there how the accountants of a nation-wide trust would have to modify their methods of pricing; and the reason, it will be



recalled, was that they discovered that inter-purchases between member firms of the trust were not "costs" in the ordinary sense. We could have drawn the conclusion then, as we do now, that a nation-wide trust *could to-day dispense entirely with financial credit for all such inter-purchases*. These transactions between member firms of the trust could be carried on with the trust's own "money"—exactly as movements of tools and machine parts are now transferred from one department to another in a single factory. In other words, all purchases by one firm from another could be effected by the interchange of priced requisition notes. The only bankers' credit required would be such as was sufficient to pay the wage and salary earners and the shareholders. We say that any group of experienced accountants would find all this out for themselves. And, short as the Stinnes Trust was of being national in scope, we say that the accountants of that concern would not have taken long to realise the possibilities of displacing external bank money by internal trust money. *The whole "danger" of the comprehensive trust is nothing other than the "risk" of its discovery and exploitation of the truth and implications of the A + B Theorem.* Whose is this danger and risk we need not define.

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The *Daily News's* Trade Editor probably did not compose a word of the article. We suggest that it came out from the central propaganda department of the Big Five, or of one of them. It is not news, nor is it independent opinion: it is a banking-trust prospectus—and probably the appropriate advertising rate was paid for its publication. Here is a passage:

> "The biggest combines in Great Britain are the railway companies and the banks. Both of them have been unmistakably of more benefit to the public because of their being made into large amalgamations. The reason of that is because *they must be responsible to public demand*, and because, varied though their operations may be, they are all parts of a *single stream of business*. Moreover, in their organisation the necessity for relying upon and *not interfering with experienced skill* is a paramount principle."

No "Trade Editor" would have thought of that. It is an unmistakable overdraft of hot air. "Responsible to public demand." Notice the careful selection of the word "responsible" to suggest the meaning "responsive" without specifically lying. "Single stream of business." We wonder if anybody knows what that can mean in its present logical context, or would recognise anything answering to the idea of single-ness were he to read the Memorandum of Association of any one of the large banks. "Interfering with experienced skill." We can get on better with this. It means—"We bankers specialise on creating credit out of nothing, which is a skilled operation: we do not go in for manufacturing and selling goods in competition with you: that is your job: so don't you start trustifying production and distribution; for that is going to lead to interference with our job." It is true that one could ask questions about the acquisition of the "bankers' fleet" and raise quibbles about whether a foreclosure on a factory interfered with experienced skill—or the exercise of it; but that would be ungracious, for we know the banks do not like having to do it. They would much sooner keep finance entirely distinct from industry—or those accountants might get to know too much.

* * *

Mr. Justice McCardie, in dismissing Captain Bentley's claim for £300,000 as the inventor of the "tank," said that this weapon was "a culmination of many experiments." Various men such as General Sir E. Swinton, Sir W. Tritton, and Major W. G. Wilson deserve much of the credit, and there is no doubt that the skill and knowledge of many other people went towards the perfecting of it. This episode illustrates the difficulty of deciding who should be the beneficiaries of the fruits of inventions and discoveries in general. It may appear a hardship to Captain Bentley for him to receive no reward at all after making some contribution to this invention, and it may seem a mean principle to reward nobody at all, just because the credit does not lie with one person. But it would not be a wide guess to say that probably the idea occurred to thousands of people, most of whom have never been heard of. There is no practical alternative to allowing the benefit to remain diffused among the whole community. And if we cannot reward the creator of an instrument of efficiency, much less can we recognise any claim from those who merely make use of it. Assuming that it be true that tanks won the war, what would be said if the soldiers who piloted and manned them were to claim a preferential share of the fruits of victory? Yet that claim is inherent in the Socialist and Communist axiom that Labour creates all wealth. It is true that more or less human labour is associated with all methods of wealth production, but that is an entirely different proposition. The only just—as well as practical—principle to apply is to credit the community with the fruits of economic development. It is said that Invention has a mother—Necessity. Let her lodge her claim then, and in her universal name—the Consumer.

* * *

Is the popularity of Mr. Lloyd George's Land campaign likely to spread outside the ranks of the Liberal Party? We ask because, among the pitiable victims of the land monopoly the outstanding example was given by the *Daily News* last week in the case of Messrs. Rothschild, of New-court, St. Swithin's-lane. Eighty years ago this firm took out a lease of its premises at a rent of £1,000 a year. It recently wanted to determine the lease, which had another thirteen years to run, and take out a new one running for fifty years. The landlords, the City Corporation, have asked and got a rental of £7,000 a year in respect of such renewal, asserting that they consider this "a reasonable increase." Reasonable or not, Messrs. Rothschild have taken it lying down. What an opportunity lost. The spectacle of the Rothschilds, their books, their desks, and their clerks, forming a dejected assemblage of evicted skill and equipment in the middle of New-court, would have made an Albert Hall audience weep to fill the Dead Sea. No wonder Mr. Lloyd George has fled in disgust to Italy. How is he to fan popular revolt against the lords of the land when even the lords of the landlords bow to their exactions? But one must not be hasty. Messrs. Rothschild may have picked up a warning as to the likelihood of something of this sort happening when they last heard Mr. Lloyd George at Limehouse some years back; and it is possible that they have been anticipating this valuation of £7,000 per annum in their calculations of what to charge for overheads ever since. In fact, when one comes to think of it, there was nothing to prevent their guessing higher, and a great deal higher. Let us hope so, for it would mean a break with an alluring past for us to hear that this old concern had been obliged to wheel its weatherbeaten stall for the last time out of the financial market-place. Not everybody could afford their wares, but their naphtha lamp was the pride of the whole market.

* * *

The Agent-General for Reparations Payments has issued a report of the work of the first year under the Dawes plan. The Berlin Correspondent of the *Daily Mail* says that the report is written with "great caution," and that its chief value lies in the fact that it serves to remind people outside Germany

that the Dawes plan has hardly been tested up to the present. Of course, reparations have been paid, he says, but "mainly from money borrowed by Germany abroad for the purpose." We can only pray that Providence will, in the New Year, enable us one and all to pay our debts in the same manner. "To him that owes shall be lent even that which he owes" is little less than a divine idea, evoking the same chord of chagrin and hope as sounded in the urgent question of the old Scotchman who, having made his first acquaintance with a racecourse, and having been induced to stake a shilling on a horse which won, held his winnings of eight shillings out in his open hand, asking, in bewilderment, if they were really his own. Upon being assured by his sophisticated friend that that was indubitably so, he burst forth: "Mon! an' *hoo lang has this sort o' thing been goin' on?*"

### "THE NEW AGE" ANNUAL DINNER.

**It is hoped to arrange the Dinner in London for Saturday, February 6, the day after Major Douglas's first address at Caxton Hall. If so, this will enable readers who can extend their visit to London to attend one, if not both, of Major Douglas's meetings. We expect a record attendance, and advise everyone to make early arrangements to be present. Further particulars will be announced later.**

**On the Sunday Mr. D. Mitrinovic will deliver an important lecture under the title "The Christian Idea of Faith, and the Social Credit Idea, in the Light of Psycho-Analysis."**

### "THE REVENGE COMPLEX."

Your new Credit Scheme *may* function all right,
But for something more drastic *my* choice is;
That to *us* all the good things of life shall allot,
And snatch from the rich their Rolls-Royces.

For whereas, of old time, to the saints in the sky,
Gazing down on the hot lake below,
The squirms of the damned, seen clear from on high,
Were far the best heavenly show;

So, if we're all rich, as you say we shall be,
And no one at all is to suffer,
Your heaven, I see, is no heaven for me,
And Douglas for sure is a duffer.

PHILIP T. KENWAY.

### CAROL.

["Ye man who standeth upright in a sinking fog is like to suffer a stroke of ye sonne."—*Ancient Warning.*]

God save ye, long-faced gentlemen,
That ye go stumbling by.
The fog around is wide as earth,
Yet only four feet high.

God sight ye—bodies bended low
To spy your journey's way.
The fog around is black as night,
Yet three feet up—the Day.

God help ye, now on hands and knees
Ye fumble in the dark.
The fog around is still as death,
Yet two feet up—the Lark.

God mourn ye, now like worms and snakes
Ye crawl in blind despair.
The fog around doth stab your breath,
Yet one foot up—the Air.

At last the end: with face to earth
Ye cry "Thy will be done."
Turn round upon your backs, your backs—
God's Sun, ye fools, God's Sun.

A. B.

### PRIZE ESSAY.

The *Spectator* is offering £100 for the best essay on "Unemployment, its Cause and Cure." Essays are to be sent in by January 26 next.

## The Re-organisation of Messrs. Vickers, Ltd.*

By C. H. Douglas.

II.

Contrary to the generally accepted idea, idealists are persons of defective imagination. To be a realist requires vivid imagination, a truth which was indicated by Mr. Bernard Shaw. John, Chaplain to the Cardinal of Winchester, clamoured for the burning of Joan of Arc, to satisfy an ideal, and was only reduced to abject penitence by the spectacle of her martyrdom. In his case, the sight of Joan's torment brought him to his senses; it is to be feared that financiers will require something more personal to clarify their views. Pending the arrival of that interesting event, it may be remarked that men who will sign a report which states, inter alia, that "the sum needed to write down the assets of the company to the figure which we consider can reasonably be regarded as their *approximate present value*, and to provide for contingent and other capital liabilities of the company is twelve million, four hundred and forty-two thousand, three hundred and sixty-six pounds, *six shillings*" (my italics), betray a habit of mind peculiarly out of place in connection with an engineering company.

The danger which confronts this country, and many other countries, as a result of the endeavours of orthodox financiers, the modern representatives of the Sanhedrin, to realise their common ideal, arises from the fact that they know not what they do. The point might be made a little clearer by considering the remarks of Lord Inchcape, a typical banker, at the recent meeting of the P. and O. Steam Navigation Company. It would take me too far away from the main argument with which I am concerned to deal with the whole of his lordship's speech. One observation is sufficient for our purpose. He said, "If an industry cannot carry on without aid from the taxpayer, it is better to let the industry go."

That is a sufficiently explicit statement of the financial ideal. The object of industry, according to this ideal, is to produce a financial result. It will be noticed that no qualification as to the nature of the industry enters into the matter. Similarly, in the Vickers report, there is no evidence that it matters what Messrs. Vickers make or in what quantities they make it, or who gets it when it is made. The report recommends that various subsidiary companies are to be shut down, officials are to be discharged, or their salaries reduced, and (at any rate by implication) that the sole test of efficiency is ability to show a financial profit.

To meet these conditions of financial success, Messrs. Vickers are obliged to find a way to raise their prices, and yet cannot sell their possible output even at present prices. The dilemma is to be met by appropriating that portion of the finance of the undertaking which was supplied by the public, or would be returned to the public, to pay a portion of these prices. That is to say, they are going to sell below financial cost, and the shareholders are asked, or forced, to provide the difference between price and cost.

Let me endeavour to drive this point home. While Messrs. Vickers, being an institution of human beings, may have made some mistakes, their position, in common with that of many similar undertakings, is due to Finance, notably to deflation in 1920, and subsequently, not to technical mismanagement. (It may be noticed in passing, that there are certain observations in the report which I think should be brought to the notice of professional Associations whose members are affected by them. It is becoming common to suggest that the position of industry in this country is due to technical incompetence. It ought to be possible to make it less easy to misdirect public opinion in this matter.)

Whatever technical excellence had been displayed, a point must have been reached at which it was impossible to continue to charge the immense overhead costs of their factories into the price of the product, while yet competing in the open market. The history of practically every rapid industrial expansion is sufficient to prove this, inductively. Industrial "reconstructions" are a settled feature of the modern business world.

Now when Lord Inchcape, speaking for the Banking mind, expresses an abhorrence of subsidies in aid of trade, I do not think he is seriously concerned about taxation as such, because all bankers support and assist taxation, but he is seriously concerned about the tactical effect of certain forms of taxation. It is a fixed and sound principle of the banker to avoid as far as possible provoking a solid opposition. That is why Death Duties, which are a Capital Levy imposed upon the public one at a time, are so much more desirable from the banking point of view than a Capital Levy under its own name.

It is quite obvious that each one of these periodical writings down of industrial capital is as much a subsidy as if the money were provided by taxation, but it is a subsidy which is only paid by the public in comparatively small numbers simultaneously. I think there is every prospect, however, that, if the Vickers reconstruction is taken quietly by the shareholders, further batches of reconstructions of the same character will follow with considerable rapidity.

A technical matter which is of interest in this connection concerns the exact relations which exist between large firms of auditors such as that of which Sir W. Plender is a member, and the banks. It must be remembered that practically all the accounts of a large trade undertaking are figures representing *prices*, in contradistinction to figures at a bank which represent *purchasing power*. It seems clear that the process of allocating sums (received from the public in the form of payments) to various reserves is a growing practice. For instance, large sums of money were received by Messrs. Vickers as premiums on shares. These all became mere figures in a reserve. The direct result of this practice is to reduce the sums distributed in dividends, to reduce thereby the purchasing power of the community, eventually to produce a business crisis, and in short bring the whole community still further under the power of the banking system. Is there any relation between the willingness of well-known firms of auditors to give a certificate that they are satisfied with their clients' accounts, and the allocation of these large sums to reserve? I think myself that there is. I think, also, that there is no doubt that every bank insists upon an auditor's certificate of the accounts as a pre-requisite to providing the usual banking accommodation. So to put the matter quite shortly and baldly, the immense difference between the sums actually earned in profits, and the sums which are distributed out of those profits as dividends, is a direct result of banking policy, and contributes very largely to the lack of home consuming power which is the cause of the difficulties of Messrs. Vickers and many other undertakings.

I have devoted some attention to this report because there is no doubt, firstly, that it is a model for a number of imminent industrial reconstructions and further because it is an indication of an intention to make banking policy still further paramount over public policy. I think the shareholders, not only of Messrs. Vickers, but of all other concerns threatened with reconstruction, should ask themselves whether they are prepared to accept a policy of a heavy Capital Levy imposed upon them piecemeal, every interest in turn being penalised excepting the banking interest, and further and more generally whether they are so satisfied with the surrender of British interests to foreign financial influences during the past few years that they are prepared to see the industrial power of this country re-organised in a form which makes it particularly susceptible to such influence.

If you do not hang together, gentlemen, you will hang separately.





## The American Mind.

By John Gould Fletcher.

II.—DOLLAR DEMOCRACY.

We have seen that, strictly speaking, there is no such thing as an American: racially he does not exist or has never been perfected. The force that produced such vital and original types as Whitman, Lincoln, Melville, and Grant, was to beget no successors. These men, who might have been founders of a tradition, became instead the legendary heroes of a vanished race. The America of the slum, the factory, the chosen land of the industrialist and the financier—to which European immigrants were lured in increasing numbers to "break strikes" and to replenish the population with their fecundity—this America became now dominant. Even before the Civil War the native-born population began to decline, as the inevitable result of transportation to the cities and into industry of what had been an agricultural population; and the troops which Grant had employed to break the power of the South were one-half German and Irish immigrants. After the war, the educated Americans came back across the Atlantic in despair, looking to Europe for relief and salvation. The less educated remained to deal with a country which was no longer anything but a geographical expression and an economic situation. And the economic situation, rather than the geographic locality, has led to the specific American "state of mind" which has been imposed on each successive wave of immigrants entering the country.

If these facts are disputed, let us look at the real motives that induced the United States to enter the late war. Despite all protestations, only a minority of the population could feel either sympathy or kinship with France, or Belgium, or England. The overwhelming majority were either disposed to admire Germany's military prowess, or were neutral. But the financiers of Wall Street were persuaded to lend the Allies money, and the steel magnates were induced to manufacture munitions for the Allied cause. America was thereby made to feel she could not afford to lose. When Russia collapsed the United States came in to avoid Allied defeat. And she came in for the purpose, now avowed, of seeing that her debts were paid.

It is assumed by most educated Europeans that the American is the sort of man who measures everything in life by its dollar-value. That is quite correct. But the reason is not, as generally stated, that the American worships the dollar. As the pound to the Englishman is a symbol of the liberties won from Charles I. to the days of Waterloo and Trafalgar, so the dollar to the American is a symbol of something else.

It is the symbol of democracy. In all of the States, a man can vote upon the payment of a poll-tax of one dollar. A dollar is therefore the symbol of American citizenship. And a man is not a man until he has earned that dollar. To the "one hundred per cent." American, the purchasing-power of money matters nothing. What matters is that his money be earned.

Many are familiar with the story of the Middle Western farmer who some years ago found himself

in the smoking-compartment of a Pullman alongside of a distinguished European pianist touring the country. "What do you do?" said the farmer—asking thereby the question that every American asks a stranger. "I play the piano," said the European. "But what do you do for a living?" retorted the farmer.

That this story is not altogether apocryphal may be judged by the fact that there is at present in New York a school teaching musical composition, the members of which are expected to earn their own living in other fields of commerce, while they are being trained as composers and executants. In America there is no such thing as a leisured class. And without a leisured class to absorb art, art cannot be created.

What America does, therefore, is to buy her art ready-made from Europe. The older established families of fortune buy old masters, not because they appreciate them, but because they have a social value. The possession of a few imported artworks entitles a man to rank himself as an aristocrat.

Backwoods sentiment is still solidly hostile to all art manifestations on the part of the native. Thirty years ago in the South it was commonly thought that Poe was an awful example of sinful conduct. The North never heard of Whitman or Thoreau till Europe took them up. In my own early days, even Mark Twain was looked upon askance—perhaps with reason.

When the moving-picture developed as an art, each State established its own board of censors to forbid immoral scenes on the screen. A kiss, for instance, can only be of so many minutes long; scenes with revolvers must be cut out, and so on. Alleged "comics," most of which deal with the torture of animals, are, however, encouraged. Tom Mix, Harold Lloyd, Douglas Fairbanks, or Larry Semon, who display in film after film their prowess in rescuing maidens from the grip of villains, are more popular than Charlie Chaplin. The latter is looked upon as a fool, and the American audience laughs at him, not with him. The ultimate morality of the American film is, indeed, as a young Englishman has stated, that the hero should "get away with the girl and the dough" in the end.

To get away with the girl and the dough. . . . From New York to San Francisco one sees the same look on the faces of Americans—the desire to rise economically, to be considered a man of solid financial importance. Those who have not this look are the failures. The true heroes of American life are not Whitman, Melville, or Grant—but Edison, Rockefeller, Ford. The self-made man is the true hero of American life.

The rage to be effective in the only way that America knows how to be effective—that is to say by making money—affects sexual and family relations. American wives respect their husbands, not for the money or position they have inherited, but for the position they have made for themselves. If a man is a poor man, his children frequently despise him. Races are estimated by their power to adapt themselves to money-making conditions. The Irish despises the Italian; the Italian despises the Hungarian; the Hungarian despises the Finn.

People from abroad become more prominent in America in the degree to which they are able to attract dollars to themselves. If a European author is a successful lecturer, or best seller in his own country, he must be worth troubling about. If he cannot obtain immediate success, he does not count. Maeterlinck, Lord Dunsany, Einstein, are failures; Michael Arlen is Broadway's latest success.

The democratic psychology which has set the power of the entire community upon a basis of cash prosperity or otherwise, and which instinctively pursues the course that will lead to more dollars—this psychology explains not only the mistrust that Americans frequently display for each other, but their mistrust for Europe. In no other country under the sun is it so common that two men who throughout their lives have been apparently loyal friends and business associates should suddenly begin defrauding each other. And though America owes to Europe her independence, her art, her ideas, her very life's-blood—for every American has been at some time or other, European—yet the only interest she officially takes to-day is in the collection of European debts.

Against the system of "dollar democracy" and the waste it entails—waste which ranges from the defilement of the American landscape by advertisements to vast Government scandals—the entire American intellectual class protests in vain, and when their protest becomes as it must always tend to become, a defence of good manners, of culture, of the tradition of moral integrity in commercial dealings, they are saluted with the title of reactionary aristocrats. They thereupon emigrate to Europe or become tragic failures. A man who has made one dollar is a man. A man who has made a million dollars is worth a million men. America is the country which has made the world safe for dollar democracy.

*(To be continued.)*

## Towards World Unity.

**By Guglielmo Ferrero.**

(Translated for THE NEW AGE from the *Europäische Revue.*)

1.

Never has the battle between optimism and pessimism, between the adherents of Ormuzd and of Ahriman, broken out so violently as in our time. Whither are we travelling? Upwards, or into the abyss? And what preparations are going forward in the gloom and difficulty of our age? Is the world falling back into the former chaos? Or is she equipping herself for a marvellous transformation?

Gloomy are the signs for the disciples of Ahriman. For to-day two feelings dominate the world: hate and fear. The continents, the peoples, the States, and the different classes hate each other, because one fears the other; and the fear is great because they hate each other. Humanity is to-day the slave of all the terrors which it created to indulge its hate.

Between Europe and America there is no love; but Asia hates and fears Europe. Italians, French, English, Germans, Slavs, Greeks, Turks, Chinese, Japanese, Christians, Mohammedans—never yet have they all regarded each other with such distrustful eyes. One might almost say that comradeship in arms had become as deep or even a deeper cause for hatred than being opposed in the war.

Every nation believes it has been sacrificed to its neighbour. For the first time in history there appears a huge sum of claims and debts as aggravation of all the many causes which have always set men at variance—competing ambitions, religious conflicts, trade jealousy, difference in customs and in race-colour. The world has become one gigantic court of commercial law in which there are no judges, and no means of executing decrees. The nations who are only debtors hate the creditor nations; these again cannot come to an understanding with the debtor nations; those who are both at once hate the debtors who don't pay and the creditors who want their money.

Never has there been so much money in the world, and never has the whole world been so badly off. Never were the goods of this earth so badly distributed that rich and poor, fortunate and unfortunate, all had to suffer from it. There are nations which are choked with their own superfluity, and nations dying of hunger. The latter are in despair because they cannot buy, the former find it unendurable that they cannot sell.

Everywhere the rich are trembling because the true value of their treasures has become doubtful. In no part of the world is there still a State which is sure of its laws, its institutions. The framework of the whole world seems to be getting loose, now that we have seen rocks which we thought must last for ever fall into sand. The world is condemned to restlessness. All have been thrown off the rails, all are miserable; rich and poor, townsfolk and peasants, victors and vanquished, oppressed and oppressors, the wise and the fools. Half Europe is in ruins; Asia is tottering and uneasy; America, Africa, Australia, think with fear of the future.

Monarchies are falling, kings are in exile; he who formerly obeyed, now seeks to command. Not only the yellow race but the black seeks to be recognised and treated as of God's children like all other members of the human family. All nations and classes appeal to right and justice, as if they all spoke the same language, and yet none understands the others'. If ever in the world there has been a gigantic, frightful living Babel, it is to-day. So might Ahriman speak, the god of pessimism. And yet let Ormuzd speak, the spirit of Good, the god of optimism.

* * *

Five hundred years ago man knew little of the planet which God has given him for a dwelling-place. Extent, form, distribution of population—all was strange to him. Every branch of the human tree stood alone, separated from the others. The oceans had been from eternity wild deserts which the eye of man had never seen. The world was unknown to itself.

In the fifteenth century the Europeans begin the methodical exploration of their planet, which in the nineteenth century was about completed. Gradually the peoples and races, the religions and cultures, and the continents learn to know each other; mankind discovers itself; the subdued earth becomes *one* world. This subjugation, this unification, for three centuries advanced only step by step, is accelerated in the nineteenth century, as fire, once only the domestic slave of man, becomes the almighty master of the world. At the turn of the century mankind might boast that it knew and spiritually dominated the whole earth-ball. Railway lines and telegraph wires are the nerves of this *one* great world-body.

The task which for 400 years the work of man has with ever mightier means unconsciously served, is the unification of the earth, which, it is true, cannot be called exclusively a work of sympathy, of love. As long as the different branches of the human race lived scattered and apart, they could remain unknown to each other without hating each other. It must be otherwise when they learned to know each other, for now attraction and repulsion alike entered into their rights. From difference grew hate and love.

The unification of the world came about through the Gospel and the sword, through brotherly love and the desire to exterminate, through peaceful trade and cannon balls. It is no accident that the discovery of America, and the invention of firearms came about almost simultaneously. In proportion as the unification of the world progressed it was afflicted by wars and revolutions of ever greater violence and extent.

For 400 years all great conflicts of peoples, of opinions, of races have led to unexpected combinations. Should we not be able to recognise in the frightful chaos of to-day the deepest confirmation of this mysterious rule? Certainly, we have experienced the greatest catastrophe of all times; only a blind man could deny it. And yet the human race has never so realised itself as *one* body, as *one* soul, in hate and in love, as in the midst of the most horrible of all the wars that have ever raged. Never with more justification than precisely in this war has the world been able to cry out: "It is myself I am wounding! I am my own irreconcilable enemy!"

This solidarity of the world at war with itself may be observed everywhere. Have not all monarchies become noticeably weaker through the fall of the Romanoffs, the Hapsburgs, the Hohenzollerns? And do not all democracies suffer under the military dictatorships which in certain countries have grown up, as it were, on the ruins of the war?

When the power of Russia collapsed, have not all the rich men upon this earth, the New York banker as well as the Indian rajah, trembled for their treasures? And who would have prophesied in 1914 that a war which broke out between Russia and Austria for predominance in the Balkans would end with the triumph of Catholicism and of Islam? And yet so it is. The political fate of Middle- and Eastern-Europe has weakened the Protestant and the Orthodox tendency, and strengthened the Catholic Church, which depends less on the power of this or that State. The collapse of the Russian Empire has freed Islam from its most dangerous opponent.

The war has intermingled races and nations. Americans, Australians, Japanese, Hindus, Egyptians, Senegalese, Moroccans, numbering millions in all, have come to Europe in order to fight. The leading spirits of their countries have followed the warriors in order to become acquainted with Europe, and it is gradually becoming clear what these individuals and what those multitudes after their manifold travels and contacts have left with us and what they have taken away with them. Already Europe was in process of becoming American, America-European, and what an impulse must not the war have given to this double movement! To-day Asia detests our Continent more than before the war, but she knows it better and is trying to get a deeper understanding of it—only, it is true, to injure it with the more certainty.

For four years England—for the first time in the course of history—has so to speak participated in Continental Europe, and who will believe that she will ever return to her former insular position? But the United States stand hesitating before the responsibility of the world-task which was theirs to fulfil, and seem to wish to limit themselves to their own continent, as if the last ten years had been but an episode in the history of the world.

"If America were more mature, her hour would have struck!" so a well-known diplomat of the New World wrote to me a few weeks ago. Mature or not mature, America to-day is no longer in the same position as ten years ago; the earth has altered its shape, the Atlantic Ocean has become narrower. Asia and Europe are the two sick continents, for a two-fold scourge, war and revolution, has struck them, and strikes them yet. But from their illness the whole world suffers, for its entire organism seems to be endangered and threatened by the unrest in ruined Europe, and by the slow fermentation in Asia. However the nations may hate and fear one another, never were they more indispensable to one another than now. They are all unhappy, for every single one, dominated by hate and fear, offends the other—and yet none can dispense with its neighbour.

There is no doubt about it; the present sufferings of mankind are the last, the most painful effort for the unification of the world, for the highest and noblest goal of our history during the last four centuries.

*(To be continued.)*

## Spiritualism.

The generation of empiricists who rendered so great a service to truth by destroying a host of superstitions on evidential grounds rendered also a disservice. It exaggerated the importance of evidence. As a result many ideas now stand on evidence which have no title to stand at all. It is, for example, widely insisted that a just attitude to spiritualism can be taken only after an examination of the evidence, entailing acceptance or rejection, or, at the very most, suspension of judgment pending the discovery of more evidence. If we have neither leisure nor inclination to sift a mountain of evidence for ourselves, we are commanded to honour the signatures of others, among them prominent and learned investigators who have tried the exponents of mediumship on our behalf. Other attitudes, however, are not only possible; some of them merit our consideration out of respect for ourselves, although they do not, in certain senses of the term, rest upon evidence.

It is less important to establish the evidence for communication with the alleged dead than to establish the value of what is communicated. Is it, granted its genuineness, worth the trouble of getting? Much that the best authenticated messages contain seems altogether irrelevant to this or any other worthy life. A proposal to undertake welfare work in the slums of beyond; nonsense about imaginary whisky, illusory cigars, and wishes that come true of themselves; philosophy and literature worthless by comparison even with the second rate word of mortals; these create such a sensation on account of their alleged origin that the unwary overlook their wretched quality. Messages from the world of spirits, if the bulk resembles the samples, do not warrant the labour of communication and record. Sinbad's evidence that he had been to the Valley of Diamonds consisted of diamonds. The medium's consists of dross.

It will probably never be known at how many seances in one evening Liszt gives piano-lessons; his private tuition appears to be broadcast. When I asked a prominent spiritualist why the masters of the past, musical, poetical, and pictorial, did not give their valuable experience to budding genius instead of wasting it on mercurial young ladies they did, but budding genius was unconscious of the fact, and accordingly ungrateful. Genius, however, while acknowledging indebtedness to all Nature and its Creator, is usually spending its life to better purpose than recalling and retailing the obvious platitudes of the mediums, or helping to justify purveyors of trash who lack both taste and talent. That conscious and deliberate communication with the souls of departed greatness—and mediocrity—leads to poorer work and expression than are possible without it, as it does, suggests that the whole cult of spiritualism is a waste of spirit, and that the departed who deign to talk to us have become frivolous at finding the after-life a fact after all.

If one were to draw conclusions on the evidence furnished by mediums of what the dead have to tell us, while taking the question of genuineness as settled in the affirmative on the same common-sense lines that we should adopt towards other communications, the results would be bad for the moral reputation of the blessed beyond. We might conclude that the dear departed, for example, members of a selfish generation, decline to prompt our yearning souls without explicit recognition or reward; we might conclude, as an alternative, that the rubbish they supply is intended to set us about our proper business, and to ensure them a little peace and privacy. If the denizens of the lower beyond have anything like the spirit I should expect them to have, the humanitarian welfare idea of ladies and gentlemen slumming in Purgatory met with a prompt response; over the notices already exhibited at the gate another was posted: No admittance except on business.

The case against spiritualism, allowing everything possible in extenuation of fraud, willing or unwilling, is that it is not fit to be included in the religion of a gentleman. If it is, true self-respect nevertheless commands disbelief. The contribution of mediumship to religion amounts at the best to a pretence that tainted evidence for a beyond not worth living in is superior to honest faith in a beyond that is worth living for. It is an impertinent assumption that we have mastered the life we are engaged in, and have time and vitality to meddle in one that is not yet due. Our eyes are not merely on the ends of the earth but our ears are beyond them. Before we are grown-up enough to learn the news of affairs in the next street or in the next continent we are pretentious even to the conduct of the next life. The case for spiritualism, stronger than all the evidence or wisdom on which it normally rests, is that nobody solidly in this world would invent such a practice.

Something serious must be the matter with people who find the affirmations of St. Paul unconvincing, yet who can find consolation in the words of Arthur Conan Doyle; for whom the promises of Christ are either replaced or strengthened by spirit-photographs which could be faked by the hundred with only a fraction of the spirit required to produce a saying of Christ. To cling to the reported testimony of ghosts on the worth of life is to doubt the testimony of nature, the prophets, and God. If we have to conspire with shades to get information about our destiny the reason can be only that God is not with us. Who does not find the Bible more enlivening, more reassuring, than the prattle of Raymond, Swinburne's swashbuckling atheism more hopeful than the medium's meddlesome devotion, is in a sorry way.

R. M.

## Foreign Literature.

**By C. M. Grieve.**

III.

Just as Saintsbury in 1904 was unable to learn from "any good authority" that his ignorance of, amongst other, Russian literature and criticism was unlikely to be fatal or even injurious to his purpose, so to-day there certainly does not exist in English any authority from whom any dependable account of recent Russian letters can be had. Some time ago I had reason to complain of the inadequacy of the references to contemporary Russian writers in Prince Miosky's *Manual of Modern Russian Literature* (Oxford University Press)—an exposition that leaves a great deal to be desired in other respects. Such references as there are are vitiated by political dissympathy or temperamental incomprehension—disabilities which attach to most of the few articles which have so far appeared in British reviews and literary journals on the newer tendencies in Russian literature. Babette Deutsch's and Avrahm Tarmolinsky's *Modern Russian Poetry: An Anthology* (John Lane) has an intelligent and fairly comprehensive introduction and gives examples of the work of Tessenin, Piotr Oreshin, Anatoly Marienhof, Lubov Stolitza, Anna Akhmatova, and one or two others, but confesses, unfortunately, to having found that the products of the ego-futurists "resist translation, except in the case of Severyanin, the early leader of the Petrograd group, whose work is, however, not typical." And there the matter rests so far as the English-reading public are concerned. The few who keep their eye on French literary periodicals, however, may be a little more fully and more sympathetically informed; and, in particular, I would direct attention to the extremely interesting account of "La Nouvelle Littérature Russe," by Joseph Kessel, the young author of *La Steppe Rouge*, etc., in the September *Revue de Paris*. He reports that while in the first three years after the Revolution—the heroic period of Bolshevism, so to speak—only poets flourished; after 1921 the prose writers began to multiply, and their efflorescence was as rich, as violent, as that of the poets, and, like theirs, conditioned by economic circumstances. "Aussitôt parmi les écrivains se dessinèrent deux courants, les deux courants qui, depuis Pierre le Grand, se disputent la Russie. Ce pays qui a deux visages, l'un tourné vers l'Europe, l'autre vers l'Asie, n'a jamais pu les accorder. Tantôt prédomine l'appel des hauts plateaux mongols, tantôt celui des plaines occidentales. La politique, pendant deux siècles, a subi ce balancement. La littérature aussi. Et cette vieille querelle s'est rallumée d'elle-même après la Revolution. Au point de vue artistique, elle est la seule qui compte, car les discussions sur la littérature communiste et celle qui ne l'est point n'offrent pour nous qu'un intérêt tout secondaire. Jusqu'à présent, il est hors de doute que la tendance que j'appellerai orientale l'emporte nettement. La Révolution a rejeté la Russie vers l'Asie autant par son essence qui fut anarchique que par l'isolement complet où elle se trouva pendant les longues années et qui, en fait, dure encore." As the representative Easterners of the younger set he names Vsevolode Ivanoff and Leonide Léonoff, while, as representing the Westerners he takes Eugueneï Bamiatine and Ilya Ehrenbourg. (The latter will be known to those who were readers of *Broom*, *Secession*, etc.)

* * *

Attention may also be directed to Jean Chuzeville's excellent article on "La Poésie Russe de 1890 à nos jours." Dealing with the most recent work, he says: "Parmi les innombrables problèmes que soulève la Revolution russe, il appartiendra aux futurs historiens de déterminer dans quelle mesure elle a desservi la cause des lettres et porté atteinte à la liberté des écrivains en général, prosateurs ou poètes. La production poétique passe pour n'avoir jamais été plus abondante en Russie que dans le cours de ces dernières années. Mais, quand on cherche les œuvres, on ne sent plus embarrassé. Quelques noms reviennent avec obstination: Maïakovsky, Essenine, et quantité de sous-Essenine et de sous-Maïakovsky. Jamais nous n'avons eu plus de raison d'être méfiants. Et puis, le surnombre des poètes n'est pas un indice d'excellente santé: on est poète aujourd'hui, voire 'grand poète' à si peu de frais. Les prosateurs, et j'entends par là ceux qui écrivent dans un genre déterminé: romanciers, critiques, essayistes, sont plus rares; beaucoup se taisent, ou ceux qui veulént continuer leur œuvre dans la ligne interrompue depuis la guerre sont contraints d'émigrer."

* * * *

To turn from Russian to Portuguese letters, little has appeared in this country apropos the demise last month of Dona Carolina Michaelis de Vasconcellos. She was, however, one of the most outstanding women critics and scholars of Europe and justice is due to her scholarship, at any rate, and some attempt is made to explain her recondite work to the average reader, in Aubrey Bell's workmanlike, if a trifle too academic, history of Portuguese literature. A personal friend, writing in *The Glasgow Herald* (November 28), says: "It is hard to conceive of any subject relating to the literature of Portugal, at least before the seventeenth century, which has not been affected by her amazing industry, and her notes and observations reach out through Spain into many out-of-the-way places in half a dozen European literatures. Her outlines of the history of Portuguese literature, published in Germany and France, are unsurpassed for their wealth of observation and accuracy of statement, and she has made indispensable contributions to our knowledge of Sà de Miranda, Gil Vicente, Camoens, the ballads of Spain and Portugal, folklore, proverbs, and a dozen other subjects, each sufficiently large to occupy average intelligence for a lifetime." I hope to return to some considerations of her work, and that of certain other contemporary Portuguese critics, shortly.

## The Death of Dostoevsky.*

II.

I could not restrain my tears. Fiodor began comforting me, saying kind and loving words and thanking me for the happy life he had enjoyed with me. He intrusted the children to me, and said that he believed in me and hoped I would always love and cherish them. Then he spoke words to me which not many a husband could have spoken to his wife after fourteen years of married life:

"Remember, Anya, I have always loved you ardently and have never been unfaithful to you even in my thoughts."

I was deeply moved by his dear words; but I was also alarmed, fearing that the agitation might do him harm. I implored him not to think of death, nor to grieve us all by his doubts: I asked him to rest, to sleep. My husband did as I asked him. He stopped talking; but his composed face clearly showed that the idea of death had not left him, and that the passing into the other world did not frighten him.

About ten o'clock in the morning Fiodor fell into a quiet sleep, with his hand enclosed in mine. I sat without stirring, afraid to break his sleep. At eleven he suddenly woke, raised his head from the pillow, and blood began to flow from his mouth. I was in complete despair; but I tried my best to preserve a cheerful air, assuring my husband that the flow of blood was very slight and that it would stop just as it did the previous day. To my reassuring words Fiodor shook his head sadly, as though perfectly convinced that his prediction of his death would be fulfilled that day.

In the afternoon relations, friends, and strangers began calling again, and letters and telegrams kept on arriving. Pavel Issayev (Dostoevsky's stepson), to whom I had sent a letter the day before telling him of my husband's illness, also arrived. He insisted on coming up to the patient; but the doctor would not allow this. Then he began peering through the chinks of the door into the patient's room. Fiodor noticed his peering, was upset by it, and said to me:

"Anya, don't let him in to me, he will upset me!"

Issayev meanwhile got very excited, telling everyone who came to hear of Fiodor's condition, friends and strangers alike, that his "father" had made no will, and that a solicitor ought to be sent for so that Dostoevsky might personally dispose of his estate. Professor Koshlakov, who had come to see the patient, learning from the stepson of his intention to fetch a solicitor, objected to it, and declared that Fiodor must not be disturbed, that such a business scene, which would demand his explanations and instructions, could only strengthen the patient's idea of his imminent death, and that the slightest agitation might kill him.

* From the volume of Mme. Dostoevsky's *Reminiscences*, to be published by Messrs. Kegan Paul. Translated by S. S. Kotèliansky.



Indeed, there was no need for a will: the copyright of his works had been given me as a present by Fiodor as far back as 1873. Apart from the five thousand roubles, which were due to us from *The Russky Vestnik*, Fiodor had nothing, and surely that small sum belonged to us, that is, to my children and myself.

All day long I did not leave my husband for a single minute: he held my hand in his and kept on saying to me in a whisper: "... my poor ... my dear ... how I am leaving you ... my poor ... how hard life will be for you!"

I reassured him and comforted him with the hope of his recovery; but it was clear that he himself did not entertain that hope, and was tormented by the idea that he was leaving his family almost without means. Indeed, the four or five thousand roubles which *The Russky Vestnik* owed us were our sole resources.

Several times he whispered: "Call in the children!" I called them in. My husband held out his lips to them and they kissed him; and then, as requested by the doctors, they left at once, Fiodor's eyes following them with a sad glance. Two hours before his death, when the children came in again at his request, Fiodor told me to give his New Testament to our son Fedya.

During the day a great number of people called, but I could not come out to them. Apollon Maikov was admitted to Fiodor and talked with him for some time, Fiodor answering his greetings in a whisper. About seven o'clock many people were gathered in our drawing and dining rooms, waiting for Koshlakov, who used to call at that hour. Suddenly, without any visible cause, Fiodor gave a shiver, slightly raised himself on the couch, and a trickle of blood again coloured his face. We began giving him little pieces of ice, but the hæmorrhage did not stop. At that moment A. Maikov and his wife came again, and the good Anna Ivanovna went off to fetch Doctor Tcherepnin. Fiodor lay unconscious; the children and I knelt by his side and wept, making the greatest effort not to cry aloud; for the doctor said that the last sense to leave a man was that of hearing, and that any emotional disturbance would prolong the agonies and pains of the dying man. I held my husband's hands in mine and felt his pulse growing weaker and weaker. At 8.38 Fiodor passed into eternity.*

When the end came, my children and I gave way to our despair: we wept and cried, and kissed the face and hands of our dear deceased. All this I remember only vaguely; but I was clearly conscious of this alone, that from that minute my personal life, full of boundless happiness, had come to an end, and that in my soul I should for ever remain alone. To me, who so ardently, so devotedly loved my husband, and was so proud of the love, friendship, and regard given me by this rare man, the loss was irreparable. During those truly terrible moments of parting it seemed to me that I should not survive the death of my husband, that my heart would immediately burst or that I should go mad.

Of course, nearly everyone has experienced in his life the loss of some one dear to him. But at such unforgettable moments most people support their sorrow in their own family, among their relations and intimate friends, and can express their feelings without having to restrain themselves. Such good fortune was not granted me: my dear husband died in the presence of a number of people—some deeply attached to him, and some quite indifferent both to him and to the disconsolate grief of his family. To increase my sorrow, among those present was also the author, B. M. Markevich, who had never before visited our house, but who now came at the request of Countess S. A. Tolstoy to learn of Fiodor's condition. From my knowledge of Markevich I was sure that he would not be able to restrain himself from describing the last moments of my husband's life; and I was deeply sorry that the death of my beloved husband did not occur in private, in the presence of those only who were devoted to him. My apprehensions came true. I learnt with grief the next day that Markevich had sent to the Moskovskya Vedomosti an "artistic" description of the sad event. In a few days I read the article itself, and a great deal in it I failed to recognise. I could not recognise myself in the words I was alleged to have said; so little did they correspond to my character and my inner state during those unforgettable moments. . . .

But God in His mercy sent me also a comfort: at ten o'clock that sad night my brother Ivan arrived. He had come up from the country on some business to Moscow, and having completed it, it suddenly occurred to him to go to Petersburg to see us. True, he had read in the papers of Fiodor's ill-

*Some one present (I believe it was Markevich) fixed the exact time of Fiodor's death.

ness; but he attached no importance to it, thinking that it was just a violent attack of epilepsy. The train was late, and my brother stopped at a hotel and decided to call on us in the evening. When he drove up to the house he saw all the windows of our flat lit up, and two or three suspicious-looking fellows standing near the entrance. One of these fellows followed my brother to the staircase and whispered to him:

"Sir, do us the favour and see that the order is given to us, please."

"What do you mean, what order?" my brother asked in bewilderment.

"We are from so and so, the undertakers, and wish to get the order for the coffin."

"But who has died?" my brother asked.

"A writing fellow, I can't remember the name, the house-porter told us."

My brother ran upstairs, entered the open hall, where there were several people. Leaving his coat there, he entered the study where Fiodor's body lay. . . .

On January 30 N. S. Abasa, Court Chamberlain, came to the afternoon Mass and brought me a letter from the Minister of Finance in which "in gratitude for services rendered by the deceased to Russian literature," I was informed that an annual pension of two thousand roubles had been conferred on me and my children by His Majesty. . . .

I must say that I remember with terror the two and a half days during which the body of my husband lay in the house. The most tormenting thing was that our flat was all the time packed with people: a dense stream of people, some coming through the front door, and others through the back, was continually passing through all our rooms, and coming to a stop in the study. At moments the air there got so heavy and so deprived of oxygen that the icon lamp and candles surrounding the catafalque went out. Strangers kept on coming not only during the day, but also during the night; there were people who wanted to spend the night near Fiodor's coffin; others wanted to read psalms for hours, and read them. . . .

Deputations kept on arriving. . . . I had to come out to them, and the head of each deputation, having previously prepared his speech, began talking about the importance of my husband to Russian literature, pointing out the high ideals he had preached, and saying "What a great loss Russian literature had suffered by his death." I listened to these speeches in silence, thanked the speakers, shook hands with them, and went back to my room. In a few minutes another deputation would arrive and wish to see me. And again I listened to speeches about the importance of my husband and of "the loss which Russia had suffered." Having listened for three days to many speeches of condolence, I was at last overcome with despair.

"Lord," I said to myself, "how they worry me! What does it matter to me 'whom Russia has lost.' Why don't you think whom I have lost? I have lost the best man in the whole world, the man who was my joy, my pride, the happiness of my life, my sun, my deity. Have compassion on me, pity me, and don't talk to me of Russia's loss at this moment."

And when one of the members of the numerous deputations expressed his pity for me, as distinct from 'Russia,' I was so deeply moved that I seized his hand and kissed it. . . .

On Saturday, January 31, Fiodor's body was removed to the Alexandro-Nevsky Monastery. . . . The funeral procession presented a majestic spectacle: long rows of wreaths, carried on poles, numerous student choirs, and a huge crowd of many tens of thousands of people following the coffin. . . . All institutions, societies, and associations, each on its own initiative, sent deputations with wreaths. All parties of all schools united in the common feeling of grief at the death of Dostoevsky, and in a sincere desire to honour his memory.

The funeral procession left the house at 11 o'clock, and it was after 2 o'clock when it reached the Alexandro-Nevsky Monastery. I walked with my son and daughter, and all the time I was oppressed by sad thoughts. "How shall I bring up my children without their father, without Fiodor, who loved them so well? What a great responsibility rests now on me to the memory of my husband: shall I be able to fulfil my duties worthily?" As I followed Fiodor's coffin I made a vow—to live for our children; I vowed to devote the rest of my life to the glorification of my husband's memory and to the spreading of his noble ideas. . . . Now, nearing the end of my life, I say, with my hand on my heart, that all the promises made by me in these painful hours I fulfilled to the utmost of my powers and ability.

# Music.

I was only able to hear Lamond play (and superbly) the great and comparatively unfamiliar Diabelli Variations of Beethoven at his second recital. The work is the purest, sternest Beethoven of the last period, and that of the man who has entered spiritually upon the third period of the ancient Hindu plan of life when, having passed through all worldly experience, he gives himself to the life of contemplation and renouncement. Almost here one may pursue the analogy from Hindu thought still further, and say he has become free from the "pairs of opposites," unattached, balanced, released. It was amusing to notice the increasing restiveness of some of the audience under the tremendous pressure of this lofty and austere interpretation—playing stripped of every quality beloved of audiences—just the supreme and masterly interpretation of transcendent music.

The Hambourg recital was startlingly and piquantly different. Here is a great and powerful musical personality, too, but one that stamps itself at times too heavily and indelibly upon the music to which it is giving expression through itself. Hambourg on his occasion was in one of his most wayward and capricious moods. Side by side with magnificent playing and interpretations—the B Minor Scherzo, for instance—were some quite dreadfully bad performances in some of the selected variations from the Paganini-Brahms work. But badly, nay, atrociously, as Hambourg can and does play on occasion, he always, on the same occasion, plays something superbly: and such is the vivid, vital, and masterful personality behind it all that listen one must. There is simply no help for it. The Chopin "Berceuse," played as an "encore," was absolutely exquisite in its clean, clear, fine-drawn delicacy and subtle emotional colouring. It is the power to do these things that makes it impossible for any but the pseudo-arty people among concert goers to deny that Hambourg is a great artist. To say that a great artist could not do (with parts of the "Waldstein" perhaps) what Hambourg did seems to me beside the point. As well say that the man who wrote some of those early, sticky glucosities in song could not write the Second Quartet in F sharp, or "Pierrot Lunaire."

* * *

It would have been quite understandable and legitimate if Mme. Kirkby Lunn had postponed her recital, taking place as it did after a day of specially bad London fog. Even a real fog of pure damp white mist and water vapour is not exactly a tonic to a singer's throat. When to this are added the poisonous gases and volatilised waste products of coal combustion the harmful and irritant effects may be more readily imagined than described. Mme. Lunn did not escape them, but nothing could conceal the splendid musicianship and the rare artistry, an artristry that is richer, wider, and more subtle now than it has ever been, and hearing her again after a lapse of some two years made one realise what it was that could make no less a singer and connoisseur than Santley declare that "since . . . (naming some great singer whose name escapes me) one great lyric artist has appeared at Covent Garden—Madame Kirkby Lunn." Her voice, purely qua voice, is one of unique and phenomenal richness and beauty, of a timbre and quality absolutely individual and unmistakable, like all the really great voices of the world—Calvé's, Melba's, Caruso's, Chaliapine's or Battistini's. It is a thousand pities that a certain shortwindedness and lack of staying power, inability to attack upper tones without manifest strain and at a lower dynamic level than *forte* or *fortissimo* should of late years be showing itself in Madame Kirkby Lunn's singing. This disability interferes badly with her singing anywhere beyond an octave and a third above middle C. It seems that muscular control has become defective and occasionally erratic. But such an artist at her worst is more aesthetically and musically satisfying to listen to than almost any dozen boomed "International Celebrity Concert" notorieties who could be named.

* * *

The immense activity in invention of new instruments of reproduction and means of recording, the promise of yet further appearance of fresh devices in the near future, inspires in one a hope to see a considerably greater degree of perfection in the gramophonic reproduction of music than has ever yet been attained, and that within a comparatively short time. I am greatly beholden to Messrs. Alfred Imhof, of 110, New Oxford-street, who, with their usual unfailing courtesy, have lent me the largest model of the new His Master's Voice instrument for comparison and review. It is certainly in many ways a remarkable instrument. As far as sonority and volume are concerned it is for a room almost more than enough, and produces quite a surprising impression of actuality. But the new recording is not so satisfactory—it imparts an acrid shrillness to upper string passages and a clanging metal-bar like resnonance to the middle of the piano that is decidedly unpleasant. One welcomes gladly the decided tendency in the new models to produce an instrument that is all (like the model lent to me) or nearly all instrument instead of a cabinet store cupboard first and a gramophone second a long way after. The next fetish for the Gramophone Company to rid themselves of is the downward direction of resonance chamber—that vicious convention that makes almost all cabinet machines the emphatic and marked inferiors of the older external horn model with its wide flared mouth and tonally natural upward direction, giving the sound room to spread and diffuse. But when all is said and done the new instrument is a very satisfactory advance.

KAIKHOSRU SORABJI.



# The Mass of Peace.

CHRISTMAS 19——.

**By "Old and Crusted."**

O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires.

And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones.

And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children.

—*Isaiah* 54, *vs.* 11, 12, 13.

It was the first Christmas after THE GREAT PEACE. Like its predecessor, the Great War, it had burst on an astounded world, to the utter confusion of those financial prophets and city pundits who are so very clever and so often wrong. Europe, from the Urals to the Hebrides, from Finisterre to the Golden Horn, had made the portentous discovery that it enjoyed a community of interests. The question began to be mooted, why, if emigrants from every race, Latin, Teuton, Slave, or Kelt, could live in harmony under Uncle Sam, the parent stocks should not enjoy a similar amity under Dame Europa.

When France, with her merciless logic, proclaimed for the second time in history that "man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains," and that it made no difference to the discomfort and disgrace if those chains were of gold; and when she finally refused point blank to be taxed out of existence to oblige Wall Street and Lombard Street, why—"even the ranks of 'Albion' could scarce forbear to cheer." She set an example that the rest of Europe was not slow to follow.

The Little Entente hailed the prospect of ructions with joy. Italy, weary of Mussolini and the gospel of "wurrk," longing for the bad old *dolce far niente* days, with lashins of Chianti and dollops of macaroni, cheerfully went on strike against the lords of high finance. As for Germania, after pondering a bit, she decided that this was a new-and-to-me appealing Weltanschauung and promptly started a "frische, fröhliche judenhetze." The rest had to join in, willy-nilly.

After a period of riots—there could be no war, for there was nobody to fight, except America, and she had cold feet—it was reserved for Great Britain to save Europe for the third time. All England lay in the grip of a general strike. The "big five" were scared out of their wits; they dared neither extend credit nor call in loans; they made frantic appeals for a week's bank-holiday and a train-load of Treasury notes—but it would not work twice—so, having "done its damndest" the system collapsed, and within forty-eight hours was replaced by "an Order in Council," stating that Parliament would take full control of the national finances and proceed at once to deal with the monetary system and all questions affecting credit and price regulation. In the meantime, to relieve the currency stringency, a "national dividend, paid in Treasury notes and equivalent to full T.U. rates of wages, would be handed to all who needed it." Any person found guilty of describing this interim payment as a "dole" was liable to a fine not exceeding £10,000, and for a second offence two years' penal servitude.

The nations hailed the "New Finance" with exuberant acclamation and dealt with their financial overlords each after his kind. Many of the children of Israel suffered grievously, but it was not the first time the Chosen People had got into trouble over golden calves and such like idols.

* * *

Long before the first rays of the winter sun had begun to filter through the chancel windows, to fleck the tessellated pavement before the altar with sacramental tints and restore the battered shield of the old crusader to some of its pristine splendour with heraldic purpure, gules and or, the country folk from manor, farm, and cottage were streaming in unwonted numbers across the leys to the parish church.

Never, perhaps, since the far-off days when their ancestors went joyously to an unmutilated church, to worship in undivided faith at the greater festivals, had such a congregation thronged nave and aisles of this stately House of God, once a collegiate chapel, now the symbol of peace for three villages.

Down "tun" lane, the road by which their Saxon forebears had stalked with spear and shield to the moot hill—still a landmark—came the squire and his brother warden, old "Garge," of the "Plough." Jim and the doctor, as zealous sidesmen, had been at their posts this half-hour past, for, although "all seats are free," country folk are great sticklers for prescriptive rights and it required more than a little tact, and a few muttered threats from Jim to punch certain bucolic heads afterwards, to get this record crowd comfortably seated. It was done at last. The old oak door studded with huge nails was shut with the usual clang—no one has ever yet succeeded in closing it quietly—and the memorable service began.

. . . . . .

Just as the wardens and sidesmen had seized the alms-bags and were about to gather in the bulk of the local supply of coppers, the rector moved quietly from the Altar to the chancel steps, raised his hand, and began a very short address. He had some difficulty in controlling his voice.

"My brethren," he said, "it is only just and fitting that at this our first Christmas Communion since the consummation of The Great Peace we should remember in our prayers the great services rendered by that small body of devoted men and women who, through good repute and ill, fought so doggedly and with such unshakable faith for the economic freedom of the world. They had not only the subtle stubborn enmity of the great monied interests to face, but they met with indifference and opposition in quarters where they might reasonably have expected to find eager, warm-hearted encouragement. Once again the high priests were in alliance with the powerful. Many a struggling incumbent of a poor parish, and his lay helpers, found their best efforts to bring light and healing to the people brought to nought by economic blindness in high places. That perverse misreading of Holy Writ which has caused so much blood to flow, so many bitter tears to be shed, had to give yet one more example of its maleficent power. 'He that will not work, neither shall he eat' was quoted again and again to induce obedience to an economic system based on the meanest of human passions—and yet, my brethren, the Scriptures are filled with exhortations to feed, to give, and to distribute. Week by week the sentences read to you during the Offertory contain such words as these:

'Charge them who are rich in this world, that they be ready to give and glad to distribute,'

not pausing to ask whether the recipient be deserving, or whether he have laboured a full day in the vineyard. Truly we have been blind, unfaithful servants, misusing the great gifts of God and ignoring the mighty powers His revealed truth has placed at the service of mankind; whereby we may reach a fullness of existence in this life and attain a development of our faculties which is at once a preparation for, and a foretaste of, the glories to come. Verily the words of the prophet Isaiah have a new meaning for us to-day:

'When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.

'I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.

'For I beheld, and there was no man; even among them, and there was no counsellor, that, when I asked of them, could answer a word.

'Behold, they are all vanity; their works are nothing; their molten images are wind and confusion. Amen.'"

. . . . . .

A few hours later there was a motley gathering of friends and neighbours in the great hall of the old manor. According to immemorial custom they had met by invitation of the master to exchange Christmas greetings and drink to absent friends. This year the old squire, mounting the daïs from which his forefathers had looked with pride on the men in buff jerkin and morion who followed their banner, gazed with dimmed eye at his familiar guests—his brethren who had also come through great tribulation and lived to see the dawn of a brighter day. Lifting his glass and calling for silence, he said, "My friends, I need not add anything to the solemn words addressed to you this morning by the Rector—but—I will give you a toast—and one only,

DOUGLAS and THE NEW AGE."

# Social Credit and the Landlord.

*By Arthur Brenton.*

I.

In reply to the case for Social Credit the argument of the Singie Tax school is to the effect that all attempts to provide the community with extra purchasing power will be futile so long as the landlord is left with the power to exact what rent he likes for his land; that as fast as Consumer Credit flows out from the State the landowner can sponge it up. It is agreed that he has that power. But this does not mean that he can thereby cancel the benefits of Consumer Credit. He can not. And the reason why is because of the pricing formula by which Consumer Credit is to be distributed through the medium of the "Just Price." This can be illustrated as follows:—

A community produces in January 1,000 tons of plant and 10,000 tons of food ("Plant" here stands for all means of production—capital development, "Food" stands for all those things which are the means of life—consumption). Let the money figures reflecting this production be: Plant £1,000, and food £10,000. If all the food be consumed, the Just Price to be charged for food during February would be ascertained as follows: Total production of both forms of products, £11,000. Consumption, £10,000. Ratio of total production cost to total consumption cost, 11 : 10. Therefore, the Just Price would be approximately 10 per cent. below the apparent financial cost of food.

Now introduce the landlord. Industry wants some land on which to erect new plant. Suppose we assume the landlord to ask an "impossible figure"—say, £11,000. Iudustry has to pay up, and, we will suppose, borrows the money from the banking system on February 1. Now, to make the extremest concession to the Land Taxer's case, let us imagine that the whole of this extortionate figure is lumped on to the costs of February's production, and will come forward into the prices for March food. In the meantime the financial effect of the land transaction will be to double February's total costs—£22,000 instead of £11,000. Now we come to *Price*. The total cost of production for February is £22,000. But what has been the total cost of the food consumed in this month? The answer is £10,000, and no more; for *this particular lot of food* has been unaffected as to its cost by the transaction with the landlord, because this cost had been incurred before he came on to the scene. His extortion is *only now* being brought into price—i.e., it will have its effect, if any, on March prices, not on February's. So the cost to be put down for February's consumption of food is £10,000. Accordingly, we get the ratio: Total production cost, £22,000; total consumption cost, £10,000. Ratio, 22 : 10. So the Just Price for food in March will be approximately one-half of its apparent financial cost—really 5-11ths.

What will be its apparent financial cost? Let us again make every concession to the Land Taxer and say that the whole of the total production cost, £22,000, is now accounted as the cost of food alone. Now take 5-11ths of this. And the Just Price comes exactly to £10,000 as before. The extortion of the landlord has not restricted the *purchasing power* of the community at all: that is to say, the community will be able to purchase the whole 10,000 tons as usual.

"But—but——" Exactly. We quite understand. You can't go and give one member of the community like this landlord a huge bonus of money without giving him the power to buy more than his share of the food.

The answer to this lies in considering not *how much money* he squeezed out of his fellow citizens on February 1, but *how much extra out of the* 10,000 *tons of food* he chose to buy with it during February. Now, in this illustration, he exacted enough money to buy up the whole of February's food production. But to suppose he actually bought it is to suppose an absurdity. If the community numbered, say, 10,000 individuals, and had therefore been accustomed to consume on the average one ton of food each, their *real* impoverishment could only be measured by the quantity of food the landlord had eaten out of everybody else's one ton. The amount would be imperceptible, however large his capacity for consuming.

But even granting that the amount *was* perceptible, we have to take into consideration another fact. The new plant installed (during February) on his land is going to expand the production of food (during March). Suppose the food supply goes up from 10,000 tons to 15,000 tons. Then, seeing that the Just Price will again be calculated out (at the end of March) at such a fraction as must ensure the total consumption of the enlarged quantity, the community, as a whole, will receive during April 1½ tons each as a consolatium for any "perceptible" abstinence caused by the landlord's extra consumption during February and March.

*(To be continued.)*

# LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

## PRICE AND PREJUDICE.

Sir,—It is evident that, generally speaking, people do not like the implications of Social Credit.

One gathers from the account of the meeting at High Leigh that the attitude of the audience was distinctly unfavourable, and a recent experience of my own indicates the same hostility towards significant aspects of the New Economics.

On two occasions, once at a women's club, and once in a private drawing-room, I witnessed the reactions of an audience of women towards the reading of a paper contending that "Work is an Evil"; compulsory work, that is—according to the speaker's definition—as distinct from free activity.

On both occasions the ensuing debate ran almost entirely against the proposition; and although the paper was well written and not too provocative, it hardly secured a vote. That the paper was written by a woman does not invalidate the fact that two separate groups of women repudiated the ideal of leisure.

All this goes to underline what really amounts to a truism, that a new idea of the first magnitude can only be received by the few; and it is a tragic reflection that the more a creative idea is needed, the less it is wanted—to adapt a remark of Orage on THE NEW AGE.

We hug our chains. Why not? They have become part of us.

I find it interesting to ask myself what really attracts me in this discovery of Douglas. It is its sweet dynamic harmony. The appeal is aesthetic.

For the rest, philanthropy, material advantages—though I could well do with them—increased leisure—though I could fill it with ease—these things do not really engage my feelings. I affirm them.

N. DUDLEY SHORT.

## FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

A Social Credit group is being formed under the auspices of the Ethical Church. Its inaugural meeting will take place as follows:—*Tuesday, January* 19, 1926, at the Ethical Church, Queen's-road, Bayswater. Mr. Arthur Brenton, on "Ethical Values in the Light of the New Economics." Time, 8 p.m. Open to visitors.

*Friday, February* 5.—Major Douglas on "Finance and British Politics. I.—Internal," at Caxton Hall, Westminster. Time, 6 o'clock. Tickets, 2s. 6d., from W. A. Willox, 70, High Holborn, W.C.1. Tickets for this and the succeeding address, 4s., if taken before February 5.

*Saturday, February* 6.—THE NEW AGE Annual Dinner. See provisional announcement elsewhere.

*Sunday, February* 7.—Lecture by Mr. D. Mitrinovic. See provisional announcement elsewhere.

*Friday, February* 12.—Major Douglas on "Finance and British Politics. II.—External," at Caxton Hall, Westminster. Time, 6 o'clock. Tickets as above.

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