

THE  
NEW AGE

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS,  
LITERATURE AND ART . . .

EDITED BY ARTHUR BRENTON.

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# THE NEW AGE

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## NOTES OF THE WEEK.

Speaking at Brixton on April 29 with reference to the Trade Union Bill, Mr. A. J. Cook said:—

"From to-night I have no personal differences. Cook, MacDonald, and Thomas are all one now. Thanks to Mr. Baldwin, the Labour movement has become united as never before."

"All one." Yes; all one Thomas, not all one Cook. The united Labour movement has decided to fight the Bill "with all its power." It has also decided to repudiate direct action as an instrument of obstruction to a Bill which virtually illegalises direct action. We recognise the practical wisdom of such a decision, but its logic is lost in the mists. Labour's leaders seem about to organise a national protest against being prevented from doing something which they themselves have condemned as immoral and useless. The only intelligible feature about the whole business is Mr. Cook's vote of thanks to Mr. Baldwin. The Prime Minister has truly earned it.

The *Irish Times* of April 22 reports in its "London Letter" that the failure of the Suzuki Trust was caused by the shortening of credit in Japan, consequent on the policy of deflation adopted with a view to restoring the gold standard.

"The interests of the Suzuki firm, with such immense ramifications, suffered more than others."

The implication of this comment is that the wider the economic basis of a business the greater its financial risks; or as we ourselves would say it, the stronger is Real Credit the less secure its Financial Credit. The reason is that whereas small concerns may conceivably be run on accumulated savings, the large ones must be perpetually borrowing from banks. In a crisis such as always occurs when the banks restrict credit, the small man may lose his money, but still has his business, whereas the huge trust is likely to disappear altogether.

A correspondent writes to point out that our definitions respectively of the "horizontal" and "verti-

cal" trust do not accord with those adopted by writers on economic subjects in the "Encyclopaedia Britannica" and elsewhere. We know. We also see his point that these double interpretations tend to confusion. Nevertheless the words "horizontal" and "vertical" are not copyright designations—they are ordinary descriptive adjectives. The natural connotation of "horizontal" in reference to trusts is "comprehensive"; that of "vertical" is "particularist." This is how we have applied the terms. Moreover, by so doing, we have established a clear and easily remembered antithesis. Other writers have not done so. We claim common-law rights in the use of the dictionary.

Mr. Hooley, in his "Confessions," described how, when he was at the zenith of his power, there was such a demand by the Press for "copy" about him that any journalist who had a new story to tell could be certain of getting ten shillings a line for it. Something of the same sort of boom seems to be going on in the *United States* about Mr. Montagu Norman. There are columns and columns devoted by American newspapers to his history and achievements. His history does not give them much scope, it must be admitted, for like all the great personages who are shaping the future of the world, he has no past of his own. The *New York Times* of April 3 prints a long article about him in which all the writer ("Clair Price") is able to tell is that he is a bachelor in the middle fifties, that he was "unknown to financial London" until he was first elected Governor of the Bank of England in 1920, and that his firm was Brown, Shipley and Co., "an American bank, better known in New York than in London." However, few and secondhand as these facts are, they are significant enough to merit repetition. They all go to reinforce our contention that Mr. Norman was Wall Street's choice of a deflation-agent to inaugurate and supervise Britain's compulsory return to the gold standard.

Commenting on Mr. Norman's re-election this month for his eighth consecutive term of office the writer refers to certain criticisms made about the Bank. It is of two sorts; one financial and the other industrial. The financial has relation to the rigidity of the Act of 1844 and seeks to "modernise" the Bank by putting it on the same reserve basis as the Federal Reserve Board, thus hoping to "liberate" credit from its present too complete dependence on the movement of gold. Of the other sort of criticism, the writer says nothing but that it has reference to the "hardships of deflation," a point of view which he dismisses with the contemptuous observation: "No doubt the hardships are there, but deflation is an accomplished fact." We should have thought that while the hardships persist deflation is at best only a partly accomplished fact. However, let us follow Mr. Clair Price on to more congenial topics.

"In 1920 the pound sterling dropped to as low as \$3.20. To-day it stands around \$4.85. To the men in the street that simple fact identifies Mr. Norman, and always will. The Bank's colossal achievement of a return to the gold standard ranks him among its great governors."

If Mr. Price is referring to ordinary Britishers in the ordinary street, and not to extraordinary Americans in Wall Street, we must inform him that their idea, when they think of the matter at all, is that the policy of deflation was voluntarily adopted by the British Government and imposed on the banks through the Bank of England on the advice of the Cunliffe Commission—a Commission (as they view it) of British-minded experts seeking the best way to subserve British interests. Then, as to the Bank's "colossal achievement," the only really difficult obstructions in the path were the coal lock-out and the General Strike. The General Strike was by far the greater, and it is generally regarded as having been suppressed, not by the Bank, but by the organised co-operation of the middle and upper classes with the army and navy at their backs. We note that Mr. Price holds the opposite view, namely that Mr. Norman did it all; that he imposed the deflation policy on the Government, who imposed it on industry, which divided in civil war in an endeavour to avoid the consequences. And now it is all over. Perhaps. Deflation is an accomplished fact. Perhaps. In the meantime we have no objection to Mr. Norman being presented with all these American bouquets: in fact, we urge all British business administrators to take particular notice of the ceremony. They may then scent out for themselves that British policy is controlled by a Dollar Diplomat in the interests of Dollar Trade.

Mr. Price's faithful representation of the financiers' doctrine that when a thing is accomplished it is too late for industrialists to cry over the consequent hardships ought in future to stimulate the latter to get busy at the beginning. They have a chance in the announcement that the Bank of England is proposing to take over the printing and control of currency from the Government. There is no sign as yet that any of them are going to resist, much less to protest. In all the London Press there is no hint of criticism, but an endless flow of gossip about the size, shape, and colour of the new £1 and £2 notes, in much the same spirit as would imbue a critique of a picture exhibition. If Mr. Benjamin Strong's face were going to be substituted for the King's on these notes there might be a stirring of suspicion; but the financial interests behind this ramp are too astute to go to that length of candour. Even so, there would be other difficulties of a psychological order. When captains of industry hear Mr. Mosley saying that he wants a Socialist Government to control currency in order thereby to force them to accept Socialist ideas for redistributing financial

wealth, they are not likely to worry themselves unduly when the Bank steps in first and takes currency out of the Government's control. "Better Norman's whips than Mosley's scorpions," they will console themselves. But this is an ignorant attitude. The crucial factor in industrial enterprise is credit; and the foundation of credit under the existing régime is currency. Immediately Parliament gives statutory recognition to the principle that the supply and control of currency is the prerogative of private enterprise, it debars itself (and therefore the industrialist) from interfering with that prerogative. In theory, of course, Parliament might subsequently do anything it liked in the last resort. But in practice it could not discriminate in its legislation between various commercial and industrial prerogatives. It could no more order the Bank to issue or withdraw currency while leaving other enterprises free to follow their own policies than it could order, say, the Soap Combine to make more or less soap under the same conditions. The Government, in form at least, must deal with Capitalism as a whole; it must not penalise one trade for the benefit of another. In any case, such would be the public attitude of the Bank if, having once got control of currency, the Government wanted to resume control. And the financial Press would support the contention.

We are not forgetting that there is a wide distinction between currency and soap, and that a future Government could counter the Bank's argument by pointing this out. Indeed, it is because of this very distinction that we say that the present Government ought to be prevented from handing over currency control to a private institution. Currency is not a commodity. Currency costs nothing to make. Currency is the property of the whole community. Sovereign power inheres in the control of currency. The Bank of England is already the effective sovereign power because all Governments control currency by the advice of the Bank. But it is not yet the Constitutional sovereign power. It will be on the day that Parliament yields up its rights to it.

Speaking with next to no legal knowledge, we venture on the submission that it should be worth while appealing to the Courts against this proposed act of the Government's. There must be some definite Constitutional principles delimiting the powers of political Administrations. Have they the power for instance, to sell the Navy to another country? Or, if that is too extreme a case to put, have they the power to give Armstrong's the exclusive right to decide on and supply our naval armaments? If not, we believe the farming out of monetary policy could be shown to be *ultra vires*. Whether we are right or wrong we urge that the attempt be made. It will cost money, and therefore can only be undertaken if backed by a combination of powerful industrialists. Some of them are already sympathetic to the idea of an enquiry into financial policy, and they must have been gratified by the relatively fine response elicited by the Finance Enquiry Petition Committee's small-scale (and boycotted) pioneering amidst public opinion last summer. It affords *prima facie* evidence that a strong representative committee of business men would have no trouble in raising a large sum of money to finance a test case. Irrespective of the final judgment, it would be worth the money for the sake of the publicity. In fact, we can imagine no better auspices for a financial enquiry than a Court hearing. You might wait till Doomsday with a million pounds in your pocket and not get a Royal Commission to examine your case; but with a twentieth of that sum you can set solicitors, barristers and judges at work whenever you want to. As a beginning we suggest that all those

public-spirited men and women who conducted the Finance Enquiry Petition should be re-assembled as the nucleus of a wider movement along these lines. This purposed act of the Government's provides the finest opportunity yet afforded for a definite and purposeful campaign against the unpopular financial policy of the last seven years.

To conclude with a warning. There is not the slightest doubt in our minds that the Trade Union Bill has been purposely introduced just now in order to raise a gas-cloud of Capital-Labour controversy, behind which Anglo-American finance has planned to sneak off with our currency. It will be necessary for our readers in both camps to exert all their influence to make masters and men alike realise the existence of the plot. Consider, for instance, the announcement this week that the Government propose to add a clause to the Bill making a general lock-out illegal as well as a general strike. Does anyone believe that the Government have only just now thought of the anomaly which they thus propose to correct? Is it not as good as demonstrated that this clause was purposely left out in order that its insertion later on should encourage Labour to increase its political agitation and to rally round its "white" leaders? And look at the result. There is not an effete and discredited leader in the movement, who was within a few hours of being sacked or pensioned off, who is not now posing before the enthusiastic multitude with a new contract of employment hugged up gloatingly in his breast pocket. They—they—have forced this concession out of the Government! Will someone, only one, kindly look at the concession? A lock-out is illegal. What then? An employer says to his men: "Look here, I am going to pay you 2s. a week less from next Friday." In the past the men had to sign an agreement through their union secretary. If they refused they were sometimes locked out. Now, an employer will only have to waive his exaction of a signature. That will not hurt him. All he need do is to say: "I shall open the yard gates as usual. If you come to work, your doing so will imply your acceptance of the lower wage. If not, you will have gone on strike." The position is entirely logical too. A trade union movement which discards the strike weapon and relies on politics has no more use for written wage agreements. The agreements were in effect promises that the men would not strike for a certain period of time. But if the strike is ruled out altogether, an agreement not to strike too soon is superfluous. Hence a lock-out is superfluous. And so, as the debates on the Bill proceed, readers on the watch will doubtless see Labour wring other concessions out of the Government. New clauses will be accepted and entered into the blank spaces left vacant for them by pre-arrangement. . . . And while these futilities occupy the politicians, the financiers will occupy the Mint—unless there are some people alert enough, and it is possible for them, to intercept the raiders with a Court injunction.

#### PRESS EXTRACTS.

"Mr. Montagu Collet Norman, the Governor of the Bank of England, is now head and shoulders above all other British bankers. No other British banker has ever been as independent and supreme in the world of British finance as Mr. Norman is to-day. He has just been elected Governor for the eighth year in succession. Before the war, no Governor was allowed to hold office for more than two years; but Mr. Norman has broken all precedents. He runs his bank and the British Treasury as well. He appears to have no associates except his employés. He gives no interviews. He leaves the British financial Press wholly in the dark as to his plans and ideas."—*Wall Street Journal*.

"The system of financing consumption is making headway in Germany, and assumes nearly American proportions. The systematic extension of buying by instalments to all goods which serve the needs of the masses is contemplated."—*The Central European Review*.

## Rural Life.

We have received the first number of a new quarterly magazine called *The Countryman*.\* It is owned, edited, and published by J. W. Robertson Scott. The present number contains eighty-eight pages. In introducing the magazine, the Editor says:—

"In this country . . . we have first-rate periodicals dealing with the cultivation of the land and the care of stock. What there is room for, and what is badly needed, is a periodical concerned with the welfare of the men and women who live on the land, and their cultivation. Without such a periodical everyone of us, working for that Rural Improvement on which a hopeful development of Civilisation so largely depends, feels that he or she is short of information and experience." (Author's italics.)

We need hardly record our entire approval of the objective and sentiment expressed in this passage, and unhesitatingly recommend readers who are connected by residence or affiliations of any sort with the countryside to support this venture. We have often insisted that a thriving rural population is vital to civilisation, and have just as often pointed out that in this and other industrialised countries the agriculturalist is the last to get an overdraft when trade booms, and the first to be told to repay it when trade slumps. Give economic security to these dwellers on the countryside, and we will trust them to show the townsman what culture means. The editor invites contributions from—but let him speak:—

"To Writers Who Have Not Written Before. We shall be disappointed if many of our contributions are not from men and women who have never written before, or have written very little. We care much more for communications from people who know what they are writing about and can't write, than from people who can write and—"

(Our italics.)

We thank Mr. Scott. This is just what we have often wanted to say, but did not think of it. Some of his contributors are, Lord Emle, Sir Francis Acland, Mr. Noel Buxton, Sir Daniel Hall, Sir Charles Bright, and Sir Frank Baines. There are some good plates—one, a voluptuous piece of scenery entitled "A Bit of Bibury, the kind of countryside beauty that is still ours," and another, a fine drawing by Anton van Anrooy, R.I., called "The Old Folk-Dance Fiddler." The magazine is as fresh as young lettuce leaves. We have no space to refer to more than one anonymous article—written by a woman of ninety-three, and entitled "As It Was." Here are the opening paragraphs:—

"Could my mother give Mrs. Hinks some newspapers to wrap her baby in?" is one of my earliest recollections of things heard in the big house in which my girlhood was spent.

"The wretched people in the cottages reproduced themselves like rabbits. As one poor woman told me, when I grew up, and was married, 'Our bit of love, 'tis our only tenderness.'"

A little later, this:—

"Far out in the fields on our estate, a labourer lived with his daughter. We were told one day that there was a baby there. No doubt existed that the girl's parent was the father. Such a beautiful creature that girl was!"

If this does not charm some half-crowns out of our rural readers we shall be surprised. We must conclude by referring to a feature which we hope will be allowed more space. "New Rural Tales." Anyone who can "cap these stories" is invited to do so, and "help to keep the countryside smiling." We look forward to quoting some of these from time to time.

\* *The Countryman*. An Illustrated Review and Miscellany of Rural Life. J. W. Robertson Scott, Idbury, Kingham, Oxford. Quarterly. Annual Subscription, 10s.

## Engineering, Money, and Prices.\*

By C. H. Douglas.

### I.

The subject cannot be covered in the space of the time available this evening with any approach to thoroughness, and I should like therefore, to begin by an apology and a warning. The apology refers to the necessarily wide, and therefore somewhat thin, treatment of the subject, and the warning is in regard to the danger of detaching any one aspect of the subject from the others. I propose to deal briefly with three points, each of which may serve as points of departure for further discussion.

1. The application of the word "engineering" to this subject.

2. The general nature of money.

3. An outline of the nature of prices.

#### 1. Engineering.

In regard to the first, the charter of the Institute of Civil Engineers defines engineering as "the application of the forces of nature to the uses of man." It is quite probable that what are commonly known as physical forces were in the mind of Telford when he framed this admirable definition, but I suppose that, on consideration, there is no one here to-night who would not recognise that such a restriction is unwarranted. It is not sensible to detach an engineering project from the purpose to be attained by it. The force of gravity is not half such a serious obstacle to the development of, let us say, the Severn Barrage scheme, as a lack of finance, and a strike on the Railway system of England is much more effective in paralysing transportation than an inferior valve gear. We are constantly being told of the necessity of good will and tact in industry. While these are obviously desirable, it seems to me that arrangements which require so much tact and good will are suspect, just as would be a machine which required too much oil, and that it is our business to look into those arrangements, even if it were only to enable us to conform to them intelligently.

A curious point in connection with this matter is, that the truth of what I have just been saying is fully recognised within the limitations imposed by the factory walls. No one would contend that it is outside the province of the Works Manager to make such arrangements as would tend to keep his men at work, but it is well enough understood both by the Works Manager and by the Trades Union agitator that the one difficulty which never remains composed for any length of time is the wages difficulty. On the other hand, during the past few years, we have witnessed the reconstruction of many of the largest engineering concerns in this country—a reconstruction the necessity for which has almost uniformly been attributed to bad management, but which can, in fact, simply be attributed to the inability to sell at prices which the market can afford to pay. That situation was the direct result of the policy of the Bank of England acting within the existing financial system, and management had very little to do with it.

These reasons alone would be sufficient to justify the inclusion of the financial system as an integral part of the production and distribution system. There are, however, many more reasons. The influence of finance upon design is predominant. The horse-power tax on motor cars has a great deal to do with the position, or lack of position of the British car in the world's markets. Those familiar with design during war, which is realistic, will remember how questions of performance, ease of production and so forth, outweighed questions of money. Peace is not realistic at the present time, and financial questions are apt to outweigh all others. It is often said

\* Extracts from a paper read at the Institution of Mechanical Engineers on April 22.

that we British allow other nations to develop everything that we invent. The reason is simple, and is financial.

#### The General Nature of Money.

The best definition of money with which I am acquainted is that of Professor Walker, which is that "money is any medium which has reached such a degree of acceptability that, no matter what it is made of, and no matter why people want it, no one will refuse it in exchange for his product." You will see that this definition rules out any physical properties in respect of money. The properties that are left, therefore, are not physical. They can be summed up in the word "credit," which is, of course, derived from "credere," to believe. The essential quality of money, therefore, is that a man shall believe that he can get what he wants by the aid of it. This is absolutely the only quality that it is required to possess, although, of course, certain minor attributes such as convenience, have a bearing on the decision as to what particular description of money, if it fulfils the major requirements is likely to come into the most general use. The cheque, no doubt, owes its popularity to this latter attribute.

Looked at from this point of view, money is simply a ticket. A railway ticket is, in the truest sense, a limited form of money, and differs only from any other sort of money in that the owner of it only believes, and is only justified in believing, that he will receive in return for it a particular form of service, i.e., transportation.

Now, if the whole of the population of Great Britain were to besiege the gates of the great London termini, under the urge of some necessity, such as, let us say, the invasion of London, to remove themselves to Scotland, and were to be told that there were plenty of trains, plenty of tractive power, and that, in fact, the whole of the railway system was physically capable of meeting their necessity, but that unfortunately only 15 per cent. of the tickets necessary to entitle them to seats were available and that the Traffic Department as a matter of policy, did not propose to print any more, it would probably be agreed that the Traffic Department would hear something to its disadvantage.

"It is on the recommendation of a poet that I have chosen the sort of potato I am going to plant this year. When I met Andrew Dodds, who has written some of the best Scottish rural lyrics of this generation, he was keen that I should try *Golden Wonders*. They are said not to yield highly, but to have a wonderful flavour."—J. Robertson Scott in *The Countryman*.

"I suppose one of the worst boiling potatoes is *Epicure*, which is, I am told, invaluable for the London 'chips' market. It was once decided by the Scottish Farm Servants' Union that a farm-worker, who, after the Northern fashion, received part of his pay in potatoes, might refuse *Epicure*, but could not insist on *Golden Wonder*."—J. Robertson Scott in *The Countryman*.

"In the days before reapers and binders, when the hired harvest workers had their food provided at the farm, a farmer one day went down to his harvest field. As he came to the gate he heard the line of reapers singing as they swung to their work, *molto ritardando*:

Barley—and—water  
Can't—work—any—faster.  
Barley—and—water  
Can't—work—any—faster.

This made him give his wife at the farm some new directions about the men's food. The next day when he went down to the field the men were again singing. But this time *prestissimo*:

Bacon and eggs mind your legs,  
Bacon and eggs mind your legs,  
—"New Rural Tales" in *The Countryman*.

## Scotland and the Banking System.

By C. M. Grieve, J.P.

(Member, Scottish National Convention.)

### III.

With reference to the extent to which an inimical system is battenning upon Scotland—and (consummate irony!) appearing a benefactor to its victims—let us glance at the annual report of the Bank of Scotland. Leading Scottish bankers do not discourse like their English brethren on current topics; they confine themselves entirely to the business in hand. Mr. McKenna and the like may create a diversion by pretending to let—not the cat but one or two of his miaows—out of the bag occasionally, but in Scotland the public is too docile even to need "circuses."

It is noteworthy that banking and national interests in Scotland are far more conspicuously divorced from each other than in most countries. Every Scottish industry has been—and is—passing through bad times: Scottish unemployment is 50 per cent. worse than English; our slum problem is the worst in Europe; in 1908 there were 119,000 permanent male and 13,000 temporary male workers employed in agriculture, as against 83,300 permanent and 13,000 in temporary in 1925; during the decade 1901-11 Scotland's total loss in emigration (or 54,689 more than that of Ireland during the same period); hundreds of thousands of acres have been thrown out of cultivation, and yet in Lanarkshire, from 1919-25, only seven out of 414 applications for small holdings were granted, and there are 67,081 unemployed in that area. So the facts could be multiplied. But the English-affiliated (and directly, or indirectly, English-controlled) banks of Scotland nevertheless continue to flourish all right—and apparently all the better the more difficult it becomes (i.e., they make it) for Scottish industrialists and agriculturists alike to get the accommodation they need. The banks are battenning on the accelerated ruination of all the mainstays of Scotland's well-being.

Bank balance-sheets by no means tell the whole tale, but even on the partial evidence submitted at the annual meeting of the Bank of Scotland the other day that undertaking is in a position (as it was last year, too) to declare a dividend of 16 per cent. less tax, while the amount set to reserve, written off for depreciation, and carried forward, represents as much as would have doubled that figure—32 per cent.! Let Scotsmen think of that—and relate it to the conditions in the Glasgow shipyards, or the Clydeside generally, where, as Mr. Ridge-Beedle declares, many of the old big-labour-employing enterprises have closed down permanently and are not being succeeded by any new ones, and in all our rural areas whence continual streams of our best men are being (for some unaccountable reason) drafted to Australia and Canada to do and to produce exactly what they ought to be doing and producing from their own land. What is the Bank of Scotland doing in return for its privileges if it prospers so disproportionately while it cannot apply its funds or its financing powers to the development of national prosperity—and, in fact, prospers in direct proportion the worse our industrial and commercial position becomes.

Wherever the financial aspect is concerned in relation to Scottish affairs it is the same story. What is true of the Bank of Scotland is true of the "national" Exchequer—it is battenning on our national desuetude.

At the annual Convention of Scottish Burghs the other day attention was drawn to the fact that Scotland's annual contribution to the national libraries

of England and Wales is approximately £40,000—and Scotland gets back for its own national library less than £2,000!

But it is insufficiently realised that this is not an isolated phenomenon, but is characteristic of the whole range of Scottish affairs.

Even more characteristic was the case of the Rosyth Naval Dockyard—a bare-faced preference of English to Scottish interests irrespective of the fact that Scotland has to pay its share (and more than its proportionate share) for the upkeep of the Navy—and is in equity entitled to a corresponding share of the "work." The outcry, and then "scuttle," of the Scottish Press in this connection was a supreme farce.

The Convention of Scottish Burghs (of which I have been a member) is the oldest municipal institution in Europe—it is also the most effete and powerless. Otherwise its continued existence would not be tolerated for a moment. Let it discuss with any "real determination" the effect of the amalgamation of Scottish banks, railways, etc., with English—or the relation of the banking system to the policy of neglect and deliberate "misunderstanding" which is ruining Scotland—and it will speedily see the end of its long history.

Scotland's only hope—a slender one—is through the Scottish Socialist movement, and, in particular, its Irish leader, John Wheatley. The closer inter-relationship of the two movements, their increasing identity of personnel, and, happily, their tardy concentration on the financial aspect, is the one promising feature in the situation, unparalleled in history, in which a whole nation reputedly hard-headed and patriotic, have been almost ineradicably persuaded by (mainly alien—or alienated) financial interests that black is white and white black until they wax only the more perfervid in their patriotic protestations, and the more diligent in their Sisyphus task of futile "thrift," the more their country is denuded of population, status, and prosperity. It is significant that the *Scotsman* and other Scottish papers, dealing with the new Draft Bill, are increasingly conceding the "advantages" of sentimental nationalism; but simultaneously warning their readers that "realistic nationalism" will be reactionary and profitless—"what Scotland wants is not a Parliament of its own, but more employment, new industries," etc., as if the present system was supplying these, and nationalism threatened the supply. Happily, writing some time ago (in the *Irish Statesman*, January 16, 1926) I was able to claim that "the Scottish Home Rule Movement is rapidly reorienting itself along realist lines, and has ceased to be mainly sentimental. For the first time it is looking before and after. It is concerning itself less with the past and more and more with the present and the future, and its membership is growing in direct ratio to its increased practicality. It is now generally realised that no form of devolution without fiscal autonomy will meet the case, and that merely constitutional means may not suffice." This is true—but the degree of realism achieved has not yet reached through to the financial backwork of our affairs, the real manipulation area, without control of which "self-determination" is only a delusion and a snare. This is not surprising—when that stage has not even been reached in the Irish Free State despite the long history of intense nationalistic activity there, and the relatively great measure of "political success" achieved. But the Scottish psychology differs from the Irish, and, nationalistically laggard as Scotland has been in comparison with other countries, there are grounds for anticipating that, once it does waken up, it will redeem the leeway at a single stride and be the first to penetrate into that arcanum which still foils even Mr. de Valera with its intangible and ubiquitous barriers.

## The Tree of Life.

By J. R. Donald (Vicar of Bradwell).

### III.

#### THE LIFE TREE.

TAPLEY: I say, Sykes, I'm not satisfied with your paltry attempt to deal with the "lead" versus "drive" question we got on to last time, and I'm convinced of this, that the more you get the whole problem into the light the less help you will receive, and the less you will give to others, for the action of this play is, by its nature, carried on in the dark, in the Unconscious. I sometimes think I'm a fair sample of "the Man in the Street," and I'm not sure that I put much faith in the New Psychology Religion, as yours might be called.

SYKES: I sincerely hope "the Man in the Street" isn't such a slave to his intellect, and as fond of what he might call "Pure Reason," in which I might see the cloven hoof of "Rationalisation," as to be classified with you.

PADRE: I'm very fond of Sykes's New Psychology Religion, and I feel that it's there, and there only, that Catholicism touches Science. Contact cannot be established between Religion and the Arithmetic of Star distances, or of the Creational Time distances, or of infinitesimals either. And Logic won't do it. But Religion, essentially in the heart of man, or, Psychologically speaking, enthroned in his Unconscious, and God found there, too—there's nothing much wrong with that. I don't think either would be immensely helpful elsewhere.

TAPLEY: So far so good. But are we, then, automatons?

SYKES: Let Psychology speak for itself. Before you can determine how much freedom of action you have, you must first decide on who you are. Are you the Great Thing, The Unconscious, stored and primed with hereditary tendencies and impulses? If so, you're as free to act as your little selfish will, in charge of the conscious psychic channels, will let you. Are you, on the contrary, the comparatively illusory Ego—should be spelt e g o if not left out altogether—the ego, then, attached to the ego-complex in which the conscious psychic channels tend to function, or to avoid functioning? In that case again you are free to modify and direct, either selfishly or nobly, as free as were Adam and Eve when they fell, and if you had more freedom than that your actions would be uncontrolled and accidental, things for which neither you nor your character could be blamed. But, as things stand, murderers are hanged, and rightly so, for their crimes are no accidents of exaggerated freedom. They are executed because they are murderous characters.

TAPLEY: An echo of David Hume! Which are you Padre? The Unconscious or the Ego?

PADRE: I'm the ego. But I have big authorities against me, in Gustave Geley and St. Paul. Here, perhaps, it is only a question of points of view. The facts are the same for both sides. To use religious forms of expression, I would say that "in the rough," the Big Life in us is the Life of God, trying to express itself in each individual, whose noblest achievement would be his conscious glad embodiment in that Life. St. Paul's error, if we call it that, was due to his having thrown in his will with that of the God Life, which will he then regards as his own. Adam and Eve made the opposite mistake, refusing such identification with the Great Tree of Life, and turning the mighty Powers of God from the Life Channels to those of mere selfish gratification.

SYKES: The poor half-caste looks for God in the right place, as we have defined it, and, in the warring Racial libidos, he doesn't find Him. Nor, indeed, does he find himself.

TAPLEY: I sympathise with that half-caste. Now, to put it bluntly, where is any "Lead" or "Guidance"?

SYKES: In pictures called up in the mind, in Parables, in "Collective Representations," see Cornford. In fact, in our great ancestral heritage, of instincts, impulses, libido, we can be in good company or in bad, and the pictures are the great help. For me nothing beats the Tree of Life, which is not merely a picture, but the Great Reality, the Stream of Life in which we find ourselves.

TAPLEY: Past, present, future, here, or where?

SYKES: Perhaps the easiest and most vital aspect of it is the life of this people to which we belong, this people of England. To begin with, to deny continuity would be absurd. A new generation is "the English people," as were its fathers, and, in the "germ plasm," the one lives on in the other. The life, the essential thing, with its desires, élans, powers, characters, and dispositions, did not perish. It merely re clothed itself.

TAPLEY: This looks a bit like "drive" again.

SYKES: Perhaps it does. But the driving force is not only influenced by the ancestral heritage. It is the ancestral heritage; the spirit, the inspiration of the people, passes on in this heritage, from one generation to another.

TAPLEY: H. G. Wells puts that clearly in "Mankind in the Making." The individual is but the inheritor under conditions, the temporary custodian of an heritage of the ages, passed on as was the Fiery Cross in the Highlands, from hand to hand, the Torch of Life, from father to son, while the Race endures.

PADRE: And the Tree will be the healthier and the stronger for our being in it, or—perhaps not. The Tree of Life of the Garden of Eden and of the Revelation is quite clearly also "the True Vine," "the Body of Christ," and that marvellous Temple of the Holy Ghost, into which we are built as "lively stones," through whom the Spirit flashes, binding us together "with one accord."

SYKES: The bloodvessels and nerves, in the Great Body would correspond to the Sacraments.

PADRE: They certainly do. But we cannot limit the power of the Spirit. The lightning doesn't always strike the conductor.

SYKES: And the Communion of Saints?

PADRE: Yes. In that we see the Spirit descend on us from our fathers, even as it flashes amongst ourselves.

TAPLEY: Wouldn't you, Sykes, call that Tree our Phylum?

SYKES: I would and do. The Phylum grows, produces us, lives in us, the better or the worse for our being part of it. Our "chief end," as the Scots church has it, "is to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever"; in other words, to find our places in the Phylum.

PADRE: That's where I get the only conception of Sin that I can understand. Hideous treachery to the Life, to which we belong. As if an infant could, and did, plunge a knife into its mother's breast.

TAPLEY: So far, Padre, I follow the picture with much interest. It embodies my own conceptions and expresses them with power. But why call it "the Body of Christ"? Wasn't he a mere man?

PADRE: Don't confuse "Jesus" and "Christ." If that confusion were justifiable St. Paul would not have needed to show that Jesus was the Christ. In the meantime leave out "the Jesus of History," and look on the Christ, the mighty Spirit and inspiration, the God Life in man. Let us take "Jesus is Christ" another time.

## Views and Reviews.

### THE FRANCHISE.

The essay by Wyndham Lewis entitled "The Revolutionary Simpleton" and published in his new review, "The Enemy," stimulates the reader to a degree attained seldom by current literature. I shall have more to say later on the essayist's thesis, and in disagreement with it. For the time being I would refer only to his criticism of the work of Gertrude Stein, whose content, Wyndham Lewis establishes, is derived from her valuation of life in terms of time, and whose style proceeds from her adoption of the child-pose. Wyndham Lewis is one of those rare men of ideas who, coming upon thoughts intuitively, work them out only far enough for their implications to be seen by the imaginative. Gertrude Stein, he perceives and illustrates, is the highbrow's Anita Loos. Indeed, the chief stylistic difference between the two is that Gertrude Stein has the stammer of the grave child, whereas Anita Loos babbles at top speed until her audience, at first tickled, is at length tired.

As a tentative explanation of the cult of the child-pose, Wyndham Lewis recalls that fifteen years or so ago there was a temporary flood of mob-worship for the immature books naively put together by children, of which the "Young Visitors" is the ready example. So much fuss was made over these children for their valueless prodigies that the victims ever look back with longing on the golden age of their fame, and foolishly try to recover it by retaining the same manner of expression at a time when, with a healthier bringing-up, they would think and speak like adults. I believe that Wyndham Lewis is on the mark with his facts, but short with his explanation, which would cover only the cases of individual writers who shared the hugging and spoiling meted out in the European dog-days of fifteen years ago, whereas the cult of naïveté is widespread.

The pose of childlikeness presents an avenue of escape from the life-problem of truthfulness and mental exercise. Affectation of simplicity, of freedom from guile, of transparency of motive, is nowadays the polite social attitude. It is regarded as good manners for the lender to pretend that he has forgotten the loan, for the man who paid for the last round to fumble for the next. Naïveté in literature seems to me only the sanction for the pose of naïveté in life. Mr. Robert Lynd—who is only one of a dozen or more employing the same device—pretends to have the simple soul and the formless likes and dislikes of the man in the villa. True, he does not lip in the kindergarten numbers of Anita Loos, but the result is similar in that distinction is aimed at by the pose of being the most undistinguished of all. On every genteel side a reputation for esoteric penetration is sought by means of the decoy of manifest ultra-simplicity and bed-time story candour. It is still the way to the heart of the public—few writers regard its head as worth respect—to boast of having neither wit nor words nor worth, and to tell it what it already knows.

Child cerebration is the recognised basis of the comic; and an adult can obtain a reputation for being comic by adopting it. Child thinking proceeds by short cuts, and avoids innocently all the subtleties and qualifications which have to be taken into account in aiming at a responsible decision to which consequences are attached. By the child-pose a person escapes the mental fatigue that follows directive cerebration, gaining a comic reputation without having to face the work required for humour or wit. So many of the social pursuits

and pastimes hint that the world of speed and machinery is suffering from neurasthenia due to sensational excitement that the child-pose is almost inevitable as one of the tricks of nature to secure repose by stratagem. If that, indeed, were the whole story, the pose could be encouraged. There are other motives, however, than the need to pretend that life is play for the period of necessary tranquillity following the tension of war beloved by Mr. Baldwin and his predecessors—unless they consciously regard it as a device for lulling the world-baby to sleep again.

The widespread acceptance of the child attitude is accompanied by an equally widespread repudiation of responsibilities towards society; by an attitude of make gay while the sun shines, for to-morrow is no matter. In the toy-town incoherence of the child dwells an incontestable right to be relieved of all duties and thought beyond one's own caprice. In addition the child-substitute offers a fetich for the expression of maternal and paternal emotion that the wretched present-day housing problem causes to be repressed. For a considerable section of the population to cultivate the attitude of babies learning to talk is one way of securing adaptation to environment that does not provide for growth. While the American woman may screen her *de facto* dominion over the male American behind a shop-frontage of guileless and open-eyed infantility, the English woman—and man—may use the same technique for producing the illusion that present-day England is a jolly nursery.

More than one motive has influenced the mode of dress of English women. Some undoubtedly care only to be unhampered in their movements, to be rid of the hypocrisy that prudery attached to their disguised shape. But in company anywhere two other sorts of women are easily identified. The "rights of man" woman is obviously tending towards the asexual; she is self-assertive, protestant, and enjoys giving the impression that she is not only fully able to take care of herself, but ready to get in first blow at any man suspect of questioning her superiority. I cannot avoid the conclusion that this type is accompanied by its opposite; that many women's cultivation of the young boyish figure is equally the cultivation of the young girlish figure—that is the child figure. Their object is apparently to preserve the outlook as well as the form of that merry irresponsibility freely granted by all civilised peoples for the period immediately precedent to adolescence.

This child-woman chooses for chum a man a good deal older than she, and reckons him wholly responsible for her. Her costume goes with her prattle, even with a predilection for books in the style popularised by Anita Loos. If the crowd which heartily recommends "Gentlemen prefer Blondes" could be gathered together it would look like a school picnic party. Perhaps the appeal—on whose efficacy somebody has wagered one or more hundred thousand pounds—to keep that schoolgirl complexion was addressed to these women; perhaps the emphasis is directed as heavily on schoolgirl as on complexion. Perhaps the mind which designed the advertisement, in a flash of intuitive revelation, perceived that the patronage of the people who long to be school-children all their lives is all that matters. From the pretty drawing-room gestures, the clapping of hands with delight at each fashionable knick-knack—popular opera figures, cats with springs inside—from the baby crowings at each new wonder, from all that passes for social life, surely a bigger lesson was to be learned than the way to propagate cleanliness and

to sell soap. One sign of the child-possessive that I have noticed is a tendency to conservatism in politics; and the suggestion is too strong for me to resist that Mr. Baldwin's proposals to enfranchise women from twenty-one years of age are an addition to the advertiser's wager. What motive can there be other than the faith that, although the minority of grown-up minds, enfranchised may remember the Government's career, the majority, consisting of child-women, will remember, at the next election, only that it was Mr. Baldwin's Government that gave them the vote.

R. M.

### Guild Socialism in Our Time.

To those readers of THE NEW AGE whose memories of this journal go back fifteen, or even ten, years, this report\* of an I.L.P. Committee will come with a strangely reminiscent air. Progressive Thought does, after all, make progress; and it has not taken the vanguard of Socialism much more than a decade to come up with a circle of ideas that the Guild movement, which formulated its first programme in this journal, had begun to explore in the years preceding the war. Revolutionary bodies, of course, are not to be hurried, and we must not complain that the protagonists of "Socialism in our Time" should still be occupying themselves with the policies of yesterday. Let us rather console ourselves with the reflection that if the present rate of advance is maintained, the I.L.P. may arrive at the discovery of the Social Credit analysis about 1935.

If this should prove to be the case, it is to be hoped that these somewhat belated pioneers may know how to make a better use of their material than they have shown themselves able to do in this instance. If this report had appeared when it was due, say in 1912, when the essential lessons of the reaction against politics, the large-scale strikes in the transport industries, and the philosophy of Syndicalism were sufficiently apparent to the observant, the I.L.P. might thereby have justified its existence. It would have provided materials for a programme which was at least relevant to the existing situation, and when efforts to sift, expand, and apply it were begun, discoveries as to its inadequacies might well have been made such as might have saved the Labour movement much valuable time and many thousands of pounds. But at the time the Trade Unions represented to the I.L.P. nothing more than a convenient means of brigading the Socialist vote; and when, two years later, the War provided a new subject for discussion to the democratic orators at Westminster, the I.L.P. became so busy conscientiously objecting to the terms on which military service was exacted that it forgot any objections it may have been imagined to cherish towards those on which industrial service continued to be carried on. Since the status of the worker appeared to remain a matter of indifference to those who had constituted themselves his champion, an *ad hoc* society had to be started to make this matter its concern, and exactly twelve years ago the National Guilds League was founded. It may reasonably be claimed that had this not been done, the I.L.P. would not, even in 1927, have produced a report on the structure and policy of Trade Unionism. Indeed, two members of the Committee responsible for this report, Mr. G. W. Thomson and Mr. Harold Clay, were keen and effective workers for the N.G.L., and it is doubtless to them that what is valuable in it is chiefly to be ascribed. If they had

\* *The Organised Worker: Problems of Trade Union Structure and Policy.* A report by the I.L.P. Industrial Committee. 6d.

been left, with Mr. Mark Starr (infusing the energy of the Plebs League), to carry out the task alone, the result might have been more promising. As it is, ten cooks have produced a thin and far from nourishing broth.

"The Committee," we are told, "has approached its task with a clear realisation of the importance of the political *economic* and social implications of Trade Union policy." Very little trace of any of these implications is visible in their report, and of economic issues none at all. While both structure and policy are supposed to be dealt with, attention is chiefly concentrated upon the former, and such policy as is discussed is of a purely immediate character, and almost entirely compatible with the maintenance of plutocratic control over industry. "It becomes essential," says the report, "that their (the Unions') struggle should include more and more effort for participation in the management and control of industry . . . they should conceive their task as no less than participation in the struggle for Socialism, and preparation for their ultimate functions." That the assumption of positive functions in industry by Trade Unions, transforming themselves thus into guilds, should be equated with "the struggle for Socialism" is, perhaps, natural to an I.L.P. Committee, but there is, of course, no necessary connection between the two; and if the Trade Unions are to be sidetracked into the prosecution of what is principally a political object, "preparation for their ultimate functions" is little likely to be advanced. The Committee, however, hasten to add that "the problem (of organisation) will not be solved merely by having regard to function and objective," and proceed thenceforward to dismiss any further serious consideration of either. True, they ask that their present report shall be read in conjunction with an earlier one, which may be more illuminating on these matters; indeed, it could scarcely be less so.

But even if "function and objective" are to be taken as having been already sufficiently considered, this report explicitly covers "policy," yet nothing but the mere elementary tactics of the wage struggle receive consideration. In other countries labour banks based on trade unions have achieved notable results; Major Douglas launched his Social Credit proposals on precisely this basis, and claimed the largest possibilities for such a development. This report makes no mention of the idea in even its least ambitious forms. The guildsmen took for their motto "encroaching control," and worked out schemes for a Collective Contract which would really have altered the conditions and, in a measure, the status of a group of workers who succeeded in negotiating such a thing. Yet even Mr. Thomson, who was prominent in the old N.G.L. group in Glasgow which elaborated the details and made plain the implications of this idea, has not prevailed upon his colleagues to secure that any attention should be paid to this or any other aspect of fellowship piece-work. Moreover, the work of the guild propagandists was not confined to theory; it led to experiments in the foundation of guilds which were at the very least instructive, both in their failure and in their no less deniable successes; but these architects of a future for the organised worker do not spare a single paragraph for the consideration of them. Again, nothing is said about relations between the salariat and the wage-worker, or about apprenticeship, on both of which subjects Mr. Thomson at any rate is known to be able to speak with knowledge and authority. Even of the crucial events of last year little more is said than that "the experience of the national strike undoubtedly was that the General Council . . . was not, by the form of its constitution, the best body to direct a large-scale dispute," thus laying upon structure responsibility for a failure which clearly depended primarily upon

defects in the sphere of ideas, and in the qualities of courage and will.

Brief sections discussing the scope and functions of Workshop Committees and Trades Councils seem more concerned to warn these bodies off attempting anything effective than in prescribing any positive tasks which might really serve as a "preparation for their ultimate functions." The final section deals with the International sphere, a subject always congenial to the I.L.P. mind, and perhaps for this reason has more vitality than what has gone before. But it is alarming, if not surprising, to find that "we welcome the work of the Economic Commission of the League of Nations and the calling of World Economic Conferences," for nothing is in reality more disturbing than contemplation of the consequences of economic tyranny and the fortification of plutocracy which are likely to follow upon such developments. It represents, indeed, a curious psychological problem that men who denounce a certain set of individuals as tyrants and exploiters when they are discussing their operations at home should appear to expect from the consultations of these same persons when they assemble with their like from other countries, nothing but prosperity and benevolence. It is a grave misfortune that the blessed word internationalism should exert so perilous and hypnotic an influence.

If one has been forced to greet the report with criticism, and even with dismay, that is not to say that it contains nothing of suggestion or of value. Page 14, where the problem of combining initiative with effective action is well stated, is distinctly interesting, if somewhat inconclusive; page 26, which discusses the "anti social potentialities inherent in international combinations," makes some good points. But matched with the peril and the opportunity of the moment the report is almost ludicrously feeble, ineffective, and even irrelevant. Interminable discussions on what constitutes an "industry" (which recall that grave legal problem—"What is a sardine?") can hardly expect to retain the interest of a society in which the demarcation of industries depends rather upon the particular banks controlling them than upon the products with which they are concerned. Even "amalgamation or federation" ceases to be a cardinal issue at a moment when emasculation and evisceration are the fates hanging over the trade union movement at the hands of the most menacing Bill with which British democracy has been threatened for a hundred years. It seems clear that those who, like the present writer, regard as essential a free and responsible future for the Trade Unions, but believe that this can only be founded upon a policy that faces economic realities, have no more cause in 1927 than they had in 1917—or in 1907—to look for leadership to the I.L.P.

MAURICE B. RECKITT.

### BESTIR, O DOLOROUS HEART!

She breaks a blossom on each thorn.  
She brings a minstrel to each bough.  
Fell Winter is a doom outworn  
And every mortal happy now.

Mark these sweet beasts at lovely play!  
Be sure their shrewd bright eyes have seen  
Spring the enchantress pass this way  
With shows we dullards miss, I ween.

Else why their brimming bowl of fun?  
Bestir, O dolorous heart! lest we  
With such wide merriment begun  
Shame all with our lame gravity.

A. NEWBERRY CHOYCE.

### Maleness in the Female.

By Ellerton Grange.

In quite primitive communities, the maleness of the male and the femaleness of the female are at a maximum. The man is little more than a fighting organism; he does little more than go forth to fight and bring in scalps and prisoners; the woman is little more than a cook and a child-bearer. She is alternately clubbed and caressed. According to some present-day fiction, woman has still within her psychic organisation a craving for this kind of treatment.

The more primitive the society, the more does maleness predominate. "Primitive" here is by no means a synonym for "ancient," for in some very ancient races, for instance, the Egyptian, there seems to have been a society in which woman was not at all the plaything of the brutal male.

In ancient Egypt she seems to have been in some respects regarded as the equal of man; polyandry and incest were practised, and descent was through the mother. Isis (a female deity) married Osiris, her brother. Indeed, it has been suggested that the incident of Potiphar's wife may be an allusion to this active wooing on the part of the woman.

But in primitive Hebrew society we can discern the predominant maleness of everything. The Ten Commandments, for instance, show this distinctly: all the directions are for men—"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife" has no corresponding—"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's husband." The woman is completely ignored; the context of the injunction, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," refers exclusively to the male. That this is so is made perfectly clear by Christ Himself, who expands it thus—"Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Here "whosoever" can only mean "whatsoever man"; the maleness of the whole situation is only emphasised; so that when in church at the present day, devout old maids solemnly promise not to commit adultery, the situation is not far removed from the ludicrous.

The Roman Catholic church early discovered this excessive maleness in the old Hebrew conceptions; there were no women in Heaven, no Goddess, so they introduced the worship of the Virgin Mary. This was in the ninth century, the "Ave Maria" itself was not introduced until the twelfth century. Thoughtful children often ask—"Has God no wife?" The penetrating psychological perception so prominent a feature in Roman Catholicism early discovered "this freedom" from female influence, and wisely, as some think, introduced the female into its worship.

According to artistic convention, "angels" are nearly always represented as females; but all indications are against this, for the Archangel Gabriel is a man, Lucifer was a male, and we are told that those inhabiting regions celestial "neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels which are in Heaven."

Now if we survey the world at this time, we shall have to admit that there is a new type of woman being evolved, and she is not advancing in the direction of greater femaleness. On the contrary, she is exhibiting more and more of male characteristics in her hermaphrodite mind.

The Great War may have been responsible in some measure for having released the latent masculinity in the female mental constitution as a consequence of the general disturbance of all things which that catastrophe induced. For war is in origin and essence a male affair; and many women, besides those who actually went to the war zone and drove motor cars in it, were affected for ever afterwards in their out-

look on life. For the moment, it is not the precise source or origin of it that interests us, but the fact that we have now in our midst a new type of femininity, a type approximating much more closely to the male than at any other previous time in the history of mankind.

Of this new type there are two sub-varieties, the athletic or out-of-door type; and the professional and political type. The former, man asked for; the latter, he did not.

The athletic type is the product of the last thirty years, the type produced by the large schools for girls where a great deal of stress is rightly laid on games and the out-door life. For girls to play cricket, lacrosse, or hockey, was once considered "advanced." The movement which founded public schools and colleges for girls has given rise to both the modern types we have in view; the athletic type and the professional and political one.

A few "advanced" women with little or no domestic or sex interests wished to enter the professions of Medicine and of the Law; and so they fought a notable battle at the Universities against the male inertia of position there; and after much bitterness they won the fight and entered into those hitherto exclusively male strongholds.

For just as in the Hebrew conception of the Heavenly host there was no woman, so in the Universities and allied learned professions her presence, gracious or otherwise, had never been legislated for. But by the principle of the widow's importuning, they won their freedom to enter and their equality when inside, until now there is an Act which declares that sex shall no longer be a barrier of entry to any profession nor to the holding of any kind of office whatsoever.

Surely this State recognition of the potential maleness in the female constitution is a great triumph for feminism. There had been in the past a few learned women who had attained to seats on the teaching staff of a University; of such was Laura Bassi; the cousin of the famous Spallanzani, who was one of the professors at Bologna. "Blue stockings" had been satirised as far back as Molière.

Thus was instituted the machinery for the higher education of women; and the newer Universities from the first were co-educational in that they had "mixed" classes. A few separate buildings for the teaching of women were instituted; but the principle of the free admission of women into University life is now accepted by Oxford, which looks like nothing so much as a girl's school on bicycles.

But not every girl educated at the great public schools for girls is (fortunately) going to enter one of the learned professions. The maleness of her character is expressed rather in the out-of-door life. This is the type man has especially called for; he said he wanted a companion: he complained that in woman he did not have a "pal"; he wanted someone to share his sports and peculiarly male interests; apparently now he has got such a being. Certainly the masculinised female is here. In the first place she dresses in the male mode, for she soon discovered that to do comfortably and efficiently what men do she would require to dress as men dress. She has ceased to be the stationary sex with clinging skirts and restricted movement; hence the breeches, leggings, and low-heeled boots of the man.

It was the war that clothed woman aright. If she was to make shells and drive cars—things of male invention—she would have to be garbed in things of male designing.

For playing golf, climbing fences, tramping over heather, tobogganing in Switzerland, and riding astride, the skirts, symbolic of dependence and inaction, were quite unsuitable; so that woman, so

adaptable and practical, adopted a form of costume, the male form, to correspond with her virile activity.

Each breaking forth into maleness on the part of woman has been the occasion of much head-shaking on the part of the older generation. The first woman to appear on the stage of a theatre in the time of Charles II. was considered *ipso facto* immoral, and women on the stage have been so considered almost up to the present day.

The first woman to ride astride incurred the displeasure of Queen Victoria. The first woman to wear "bloomers" had trouble with the inn-keepers on Thames' side; the first woman to ascend to the top of an omnibus was considered "fast" beyond computation. The first woman to wear a single eyeglass in Princes Street, Edinburgh, elicited from an elderly gentleman who suddenly came upon the apparition an expression more forcible than polite.

In the days of crinolines it was decreed that on no account should even the toes be seen from underneath them. Indeed, not only changes in clothes but changes in every other interest in female life, have been astonishingly rapid within the limits of a single generation. The number of things which "no lady could do" is only equalled in length by those which all ladies now do.

## Drama.

### The Transit of Venus: Ambassadors.

Mr. H. M. Harwood, author of "The Transit of Venus" earns a cordial welcome back to the London stage. Mr. Harwood is not afraid to bring politics into the theatre, and is able to do so without offending by propaganda, except in so far as the truth about politics must be propaganda. The frontage of "The Transit of Venus" is one of those gushing, empty-headed, women who believe that no man can see them without desiring them to the extent of readiness to forfeit everything else in life for possession. Naturally every man she meets flees from her, and, although she follows Captain Fairfax to Kherivan in Asian mandated territory, she has to be sent home in the end, because such idiocy as hers threatens even the British Empire. Athene Seyler as this Mrs. Telford, spared us none of the unpleasantness. Indeed, she laid the fulsome on so thick that the audience felt prompted to anticipate the High Commissioner's decision to pack her off home. Athene Seyler's study is a malicious satire of the woman of means whose only end is to have men at her heels like a horde of dogs. Unfortunately the study is over-emphasised; all the time Athene Seyler is in sight she insists on being in mind, which is too much like life and not enough like art.

On the background for Venus Mr. Harwood raises political issues to the universal plane. The camera incident, of course, in which Mrs. Telford is amazed at the Mohammedan's objection to graven images, is biased in the Mohammedan's favour because Mrs. Telford is chosen as the medium; but there are issues deeper, as the Khan Aghaba said, than religion—unless they are religion. So tense and hypnotic was the opening of the second act that I suspect Venus of really being Delilah for Mr. Harwood's Samson. He submitted to the shaving of his locks by Mrs. Telford lest his politics bring society about his head. This opening, it is true, was only dialogue, but the first act had so generated the atmosphere that a world of action was implicit. With the Khan Aghaba on one side and the head of the development syndicate on the other, the audience was too spell-bound to laugh at the wit. Mr. Harwood has done nothing so noble as this issue of character, religion, simplicity of means, individual prowess and skill, represented by the Khan, against machinery, combination,

and progress, whose enthusiastic missionary regarded them as their own justification, anyone who didn't recognise it at once being feeble-minded.

Why should the sheikh-charming hypocrisy of Mrs. Telford return to suggest how peaceful assimilation might be but for the caprice of women in search of excitement? No wonder her husband blinked at all the fuss about her, and stood aghast at the British Army, Navy, and Air Force being mobilised to fetch her back for him. She had apparently been carried off by brigands, but even they didn't want her, and brought her back. Troy could not repeat itself for Cynthia. Yet Mr. Harwood does portray how the spark of a boy's folly and a woman's idiocy—or any other triviality—may set afire the rick of distrust. But well as he has pictured Imperialism in the background, imaginatively as he shows the soldier and the development contractor tugging towards a row to warrant annexation, and the political administrator trying to please everybody with preserving his personal honour, I wished that all this had been the foreground. The drama of fate versus self-determination, empires against nations, machines against men, progress against character, was staged up to the middle of the second act in a manner to promise as great a play of ideas as exists in English. Dalliance with any woman, let alone Mrs. Telford, could not excuse the abandonment of such a theme. Nobody will find that Mrs. Telford's hats fit; people will only put their friends in them. But Mr. Harwood's political mirror throws limelight into the cellars of every empire.

This brilliant comedy—brilliant notwithstanding that its whole promise is not fulfilled—with a cast to match, not only adds confirmation to the excellence that London casting seems lately to have reached, but signifies once more the artistic earnestness with which the Ambassadors management regards the theatre. Allan Aynesworth and Nicholas Hannen as, respectively, Sir Evelyn Markham, the High Commissioner, and Mark Dacre, his political secretary, filled their parts with grace, ease, and distinction, the perfect poise of the former being an unending delight. In the rôle of Alexander Wesson, head of the Anglo-American development syndicate, Frank Harvey displayed the nervous tension and the suggestion of fixed idea required, while Barbara Dillon made a very straightforward and sensible young lady of the modern sort as Patsy Markham, daughter of Sir Evelyn. Nigel Playfair, in characteristic style, gave a splendid interpretation of Mrs. Telford's husband, refusing to be bullied out of his comic composure by anything his wife might do, or by anything others might think of it, while Raymond Massey, with the most picturesque opportunity, was towering and magnificent as the Khan. Archibald Batty played Capt. Ronald Fairfax, Mrs. Telford's puppy, sincerely and naturally, though he cannot get so deeply into the audience's memory because he belongs almost wholly to the Venus part of the play.

### Mr. What's His Name: Wyndham's.

In adapting, festooning with cynicisms, and acting Mr. What's His Name—after the French of Yves Mirande and André Mouëzy-Eon—Seymour Hicks must be approaching his diamond jubilee of such works. This is somewhat of a celebration, for I do not recollect one that gave him so unlimited a scope. French farce depends like French philosophy on original innocence; what it adds to Rousseau is the wink. In Mr. What's His Name the late Adolphe Noblet turns up as the hairdresser when his old friends are gathered in his widow's new home to mourn the fifth anniversary of his death. One of his friends, a hypnotist, discovers that another man was buried for M. Noblet, all he lost in the accident

being his memory and his papers. Not everybody is so anxious to preserve him from the shock of enlightenment regarding his wife's new husband and baby, as the doctor. Even his wife recognises in her dilemma that the virtues of the dead proceed from their deadness.

Amid a turmoil of lies, complications, and explanations, Adolphe's new wife arrives, and, since she proves comely and agreeable on examination, Adolphe recognises logic and submits to be re-hypnotised. He goes back to be Leopold Trebel, Don Juan of hairdressers, and father of two sets of twins. Although Seymour Hicks makes farce out of the re-hypnotising scene—saying good-bye to his old wife, and how do you do to his new one—he achieves pathos again and again. The play goes well because of the technique with which this actor flashes the spark between farce and tragedy, in revealing how a bigamist may also be a Christian martyr.

C. M. Hallard as Adolphe's supplanter, M. Corton, was vigorous and convincing, while C. W. Somerset's Auguste Chabonnais, old friend of M. Noblet, was a particularly enjoyable comedy character study. With one so energetic as Seymour Hicks at the centre of things, acting with arms, legs, nose, and eyebrows, apparently effortlessly on the strength of a life's experience of his mode, the women took by contrast either an air of immobility or an impression of strained effort. Only Margaret Yarde, as the cook of Adolphe's old and his wife's new ménage, found the spirit of the affair naturally, and preserved herself from being rushed by the delightful high-speed of the production into monotony of tone, apparently due to mental tension. This did not affect any actress at her first appearance, and possibly, as the piece gets into stride, it may disappear.

PAUL BANKS.

## Art.

### THE R.B.A.

A high standard of execution throughout is the feature of the Royal Society of British Artists' 167th exhibition at the Suffolk-street Galleries. While there is very little that is new, there is little that is really bad. There are the usual Italianate landscapes—pretty little toy-box towns perched on pleasant hills. Mr. George Rushton's "Lyons on the Rhone" reproduces the charm of the genre with commendable fidelity. English landscapes present the same pleasing qualities, well shown by Miss Evelyn Ince's rather thin "Northleach Church." The shimmering effect of Mr. Murray Urquhart's "Afternoon Sunlight" gives a vitality lacking in most of the other landscapes. The portraits are few and good, but not remarkable.

In all this mass of highly efficient work, a few pictures attract attention for more than a moment. The most notable is Mr. Claude Flight's "A Windy Day." The subject is simple—a woman hanging out washing. The colours used are also simple; almost to the point of crudity. It is not picturesque, in the accepted sense of the term. But one sees the wind in the clothes on the line and in the woman's dress. It brings fresh air into the small room in which it is hung, and its vitality is a reproach to the anæmia that surrounds it.

In Mr. W. A. Wildman's "Lancashire Folk," a medieval, almost mystic effect is obtained by the grouping of the three figures and the draping of the shawls. Miss Florence Asher treats landscape with novelty in "St. Paul du Var"; Mr. Reginald Higgins exhibits some excellent studies in "poster" style. Of Mr. George Drinkwater's "Paolo and Francesca"—several tons of sickly white flesh, with a sword thrown in to justify the title—it would perhaps be



better to say nothing, were it not that his portrait-study, "Gwendolen," shows that he can do pleasing work when so inclined.

#### MR. HENRY LAMB.

The exhibition of Mr. Henry Lamb's paintings and drawings at the Leicester Galleries shows him to be one of the most individual of contemporary British artists. He never becomes eccentric, however, thanks to the honesty of his purpose. "Straight" subjects are material for his art, but they are subjects too often neglected by the artist in the search for a delicate refinement which English life can rarely give. In "The Tea-Party" he has grouped a typical English family (not of the "county" sort. They are rarely typical), around a table covered with a red-checked cloth, in a room which has all the colour of provincial life. It is a room in which a provincial housewife would take honest delight, and yet it is not in any sense "photographic." The same insight into the life of the people is apparent in "Football Edition." It shows a street-corner in an industrial town in late spring. There are groups of men about, but no life. All movement is arrested, while a rhythmic attention is turned towards the latest scores. In the right-hand corner is a small dog waiting for the resumption of ordinary life—bored. The excellence of Mr. Lamb's art is not confined to these two paintings, though they dominate the others in size and merit. His studies of working-class types, "The Bricklayer" and "The Mechanic," are, perhaps, Semitic rather than British, but their hard pride is a welcome change from the usual emasculate type of working-man as seen by the artist.

WILFRID HOPE.

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

#### OF FOXES AND GEESE.

Sir,—Evidently you cannot propagate propaganda if you have not the proper geese. Ai, ai! That one possessing such a pretty wit as Mr. Helby should turn out to be a mere sad moralist after all—and (what is more damnable) a utilitarian—a disciple of that insufferable old twaddler, Jeremy Bentham!! However, *tout comprendre*, etc.; and I forgive him for writing me down a neo-Darwinian fox (natural *pietas* forbids me to say what I think about my venerable relative: besides, Nietzsche has already said it all to perfection). I forgive him, too, for failing, under the circumstances, to see what I was getting at. But if I tell him that I subordinate ethics to aesthetics, and that I don't care a cackle for "usefulness," it may help him out. Foxes exist to perform vulpine functions. If Mr. Helby is curious as to what these may be, I suggest that the works of that eminent naturalist, Machiavelli, supply some indication: also Wyndham Lewis's new book. I question if "to give sport to the gods" be one of them: it is a legitimate inference from Xenophanes (quoted by Eusebius, *Preparatio Evangelii*, xiii., 13, pp. 269, sq. ed. Heinicher, and by Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, vii., 4, pp. 840 sq. ed. Potter) that the gods of the geese are nothing but—ganders! But the "use" of geese is obvious: (i.) to lay golden eggs for Winston and the Bankers; and (ii.) subsequently to be plucked and eaten by financiers, politicians, land-sharks, jolly-dogs—and even by enterprising foxes with a taste for *pâté de foie gras*. And what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. But this correspondence makes my mouth water, and Michaelmas is a long way off. I hope to return very shortly to the hunting of the democratic goose; and I invite Mr. Helby to participate in the sport.

SAMUEL F. DARWIN FOX.

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