THE

NEW AGE

INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER"

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

The only healthy feature about the row in the Commons over the Scotland Yard examination of Miss Savidge was that it reflected the instinctive hostility of the general public to the police—not to the police as police, but to the police as one of the instruments of a disciplinary authority. The tax-collector and the soldier are victims of the same repressed suspicion and dislike. So would be prohibition officers if Lady Astor got her way and made wet-drinking illegal in England. But it is no use making a fuss when and if any of these functionaries appears to act beyond his legal powers as a functionary, unless you can show that he can produce the ultimate results required just as efficiently otherwise. That is the snag in all these cases. People like meat, but do not like the slaughtering of animals. They like their veal white, but do not like calves to be hung up and bled to death in a conscious state. If, now and again something disturbing leaks out, you get a sort of ranters' Bank Holiday with Commissions of Inquiry riding on the roundabouts. But ten o'clock soon comes—the children are sleepy, mothers are tired, and fathers are fuddled . . . The next morning the whole show, neatly packed on wheels, has rumbled off along the turnpike, turned the corner, and vanished . . . Come on, you revellers. It is time to dress yourselves. The great roundabout of industry with its giant organ of whistles and hooters is under steam, and waiting for you.

* * *

In his article in our issue of May 17, Major Douglas, discussing Mr. H. G. Wells's article entitled "Has the Money-Credit System a Mind?" which apeared in the *Saturday Evening Post*, dated May 5, referred to a statement by Mr. Wells that he had written the article "under invitation," a statement which Major Douglas remarked was "extremely interesting." What is more interesting is that in *The Banker* for May the identical article under the identical title is reproduced under Mr. Wells's name. Mr. Wells says that the Editor of *The Banker* asked him to write it, and also directed him in a "correspondence course" to certain literature on which he could base it. We are interested to notice that *The Banker* has had more courage than the *Bankers' Magazine*: it has not deleted the passage which struck us when we saw it in the American magazine, namely this (our italics):—

> "I find men whose practical abilities fill me with even greater awe than do bankers, setting about heretical schemes of credit and money, with an air of hoping nothing and expecting nothing from the men who ought to know and direct. *No, I am not thinking of the Douglas Scheme.* But I find a great man like Professor Soddy, of radium fame, writing with fury about money and credit as if no established science existed in the matter."

We cannot help the idea that the reference to Major Douglas by name is a tactical move on the part of the interests who commissioned Mr. Wells to write on the subject. As we have said before, impartial listeners to a controversy form their judgments, at least initially, on collateral evidence. That is why we have so insistently rubbed in the fact of the "Douglas boycott," and so frequently repeated our evidence. We have done so because we have relied on its having more power to influence independent people to consider our credit-policy than all the technical arguments we could bring before them. This was our wedge; and the place where we wanted to drive it was between the bank-financiers and their immediate producer-capitalist entourage. We hoped that in time some at least of these courtiers would begin to fidget and tell the credit-monopolists that "here are these Douglas fellows saying you are frightened of them and putting up a plausible case for it, too: you really ought to do something about it." In such an event the bankers might urge that Douglas was "dangerous," that his scheme was "fantastic," that to reply to him would advertise him and thus stimulate "subversive" forces for no useful purpose; but this attitude would not be a conclusive reply to any influential person, or group of persons, who said to them: "Well, at least explain to *us* privately what the flaw is." And we are entitled to suppose on general grounds that some-

thing of this sort is going on. More than that, we have particular grounds for taking it for granted. We know, for instance, some of the quarters where THE NEW AGE circulates, and have been told, on authority we trust, some of the names of people who read it. For obvious reasons we cannot publish the information. If such people read the journal with hostile motives the publication of their names would only mislead the hopes of our friends. If, on the other hand, those people are disinterestedly following our arguments, we should be foolish strategists to blab the names to our enemies. Any sympathisers whom we are fortunate enough to have found in high quarters must be allowed to judge if, how, and when they shall declare themselves; for full weight must be allowed for the complicated political implications of the economic programme that we stand for. They reach up into the region of the highest international politics. Although we can say with confidence what ought to be done to put Britain's industry on its feet, we cannot lay down an itemised programme showing in every detail how and where to begin preparations for the change. That is the function of political and administrative technicians to work out, because they have access to all the relevant data. In the meantime our duty is to insist on the essential principles of the new economic policy. Given their acceptance, there are any number of possible administrative schemes the choice of any of which is outside the power of the Social Credit student to foresee.

* * *

Our challenge, then, to the financiers is that they must defend their governing principles against ours. This is where we come round to Mr. Wells again. He has apparently been selected to articulate the attitude of non-financial society to the existing credit régime. His article having been commissioned, and in some degree inspired by those who have engaged his services, and (for all we know) syndicated out to a number of journals, we are bound to infer that his challenge is fashioned to suit the requirements of the credit-monopolists. Not wittingly so by him: on the contrary, we should say that Mr. Wells was easy game for the astute diplomats of the banking secret-service. Builders of new worlds are generally mugs; and the bigger their vision the bigger mugs they are. The bankers in our opinion had already decided that they must present a coherent front to outside attacks before they chose Mr. Wells. Their plan was based on the current House of Commons model, whereby, when a Minister wants to say something about something he arranges for an ordinary member to ask him a question on the subject which he wants to talk about. The most obscure member will do it. But in this instance the bankers require a challenge of world-wide reputation, because that will give the Press a colourable excuse for featuring the proceedings and ensure world-wide publicity for their reply. They chose Mr. Wells because he is an idealist; by doing so they are able to exploit the mental confusion of the public, which consists in assuming that the writer who paints the most alluring picture of a possible new world is the person whose opinion on how to attain it is best worth listening to.

* * *

Having arranged the preliminaries in this way, the rest follows. Mr. Wells, quite unconsciously, puts leading questions into his challenge; knowing, as he says, nothing about the credit-system, he puts up a series of desiderata of which not one touches a nerve. "Three main things," he says, the world requires from its money-credit organisation:—

(1) Trustworthy wages—wages that "will not evaporate"—wages which, if the worker chooses to hold them "can still buy what he reckoned to get when he earned them."

This is only another way of urging that the credit-money organisation must not permit inflation. They do not mean to; so Mr. Wells need not worry.

(2) Security of employment.

This assumes the persistence of the Work-State, in which, of course, security of *income*—which is what the "world" really wants—is impossible without security of employment.

(3) Restraint upon war.

Mr. Wells's elaboration of this point shows him to be advocating the suppression of armaments by starving militant nations of credit. The bankers are already seeing to that. Elsewhere in the article Mr. Wells had already acclaimed the Bankers' Manifesto against tariffs as being "perhaps the first open recognition of the pressure and conflict between the old traditions and the new synthesis." In other words, this was the first sign that the "money-credit system" had really got a "brain."

* * *

The brain of the money-credit system is quite able to hold its own if it can confine the debate within the dimensions which Mr. Wells prescribes. It can say that it agrees with his points and is endeavouring to carry them out. If Mr. Wells replies that he wants results and not mere endeavours it can always urge in the last resort that it knows how to produce them but is hindered or prevented by the resistance of peoples and their politicians. It can challenge Mr. Wells to deny that one can have brains without having power. It can tell Mr. Wells that if he can prevail on people to put faith and obedience at the service of its policy the proofs of "brain" which he asks for will be forthcoming. This would be untrue, because absolute obedience to the idea would make its falsity manifest to the world. But it would be an answer which Mr. Wells appears to have no means of resisting. Again, to present a problem to the bankers consisting of a catalogue of what "the world expects" of their system is to set them too easy a task. What the world expects does not go beyond what it can "reasonably" expect; and seeing that the credit-system lays down the law of "reasonableness," the world and Mr. Wells expect what the credit-system wants them to expect—namely, a job, in peace, for ever. That, by the way, answers Mr. Wells's query: "Has the money-credit system a brain?"

* * *

"No, I am not thinking of the Douglas Scheme." Assuredly he is not; and we are gratified that he says so. A scheme for giving the world no more than it expects is useless: what is wanted is a scheme for giving the world what it is entitled to expect under the real "iron laws" of economics. One of those laws is that the power of organised industry to feed mankind follows the curve of unemployment, not of employment. The introduction of a one-man-power machine into industry enables industry to feed one displaced man, in addition to those still employed, for so long as the machine lasts. The financial parallel of this law is expressed by the statement that free incomes can be distributed, equal to the previous earnings of displaced men, for so long as the displacing machines last. While science has been transferring labour from the backs of men to machinery, finance should have been paying the machinery's "wages" to the community as a free national dividend supplementing their earnings. But finance has done the opposite. For every addition to physical productive power it has destroyed personal income and subtracted from physical consumption power. This has gone on in every industrialised country, and the result has been an *intra*-national struggle of producers, each group seeking consumer

demand in the others' territory. To compose this *intra*-national struggle on the economic plane the several Governments are trying out the device of *inter*-national agreements on the political plane—as if the handshake of two diplomats could bring *new consumer demand* into the world, or a lowering of tariffs *create credit*, or a compact to keep the peace could remove this fundamental cause why nations lapse into warfare—namely lack of internal credit supplies which could make up the required demand.

* * *

The immediate question is not whether the money-credit system has a brain, but whether Mr. Wells has one. We do not intend this as an insult, but as an appeal to him to use the brain he undoubtedly possesses on clearly objective tendencies such as we have indicated. Let him leave the "mysteries" of credit alone; there is no need for us to require him to study the esoteric elements in the Douglas Analysis: he can find grounds for a real challenge to finance in the realm of physics alone. Our appeal is in his interests, not ours. We have no popular name to live up to; he has. And if he will only reflect for a moment he will surely realise that he is not at the head, but at the tail of the procession. He is saying nothing at present that is not being said all round him by employers and workers whom he despises in his heart. He is doing nothing more than synthesising their ignorance and confusion. He does it artistically; but that is the sole differentiation between him and them.

* * *

Mr Parker Willis's article in *The Banker* for May describes the speculation problem in America. He has referred to it in previous articles, but devotes the whole of this one to it. Brokers' loans made by Reserve banks have progressed practically continuously from 2,487 million dollars in April, 1926, to 3,979 million dollars in April, 1928—the last figure being a record. Mr. Willis remarks of this huge volume of credit that it is "protected by, or involved in," securities which have changed hands at "enormously high levels of value." Several favourite dividend-paying stocks are now yielding not more than 3 to 4 per cent. on their present market values, with very little prospect of higher earnings. He points out that therefore the securities pledged for these brokers' loans can very easily slump by considerable percentages. Even allowing a substantial margin between their present valuation and the amount of bank credit lent on them, he thinks that the banks are engaged in a "rather unstable land of loan."

* * *

Added to these loans are bank investments in bonds. Out of a total of 22,000 million dollars figuring as "loans and investments" the amount involved in brokers' loans and bank investments together comes to 13,000 million dollars. Mr. Parker instances the case of the Reserve Bank of New York, which has at times lent "more than 100 million dollars to a single bank for use in its stock market dealings." In March and April the situation has been approaching a "critical" point. He describes how the war defeated the intentions of the Federal Reserve Act, which provided that the system was to be purely a "commercial discount system," and which prohibited loans for carrying stocks and bonds, or for other speculative purposes. But it made an exception in the case of Government bonds. Hence, when the war came, with its accompanying flood of Liberty and other Government issues, the little speculative loophole widened until it had as it were destroyed a whole wall of the fortress. This process was assisted by an emergency amendment put through Congress legalising all bank loans made on "eligible paper." And now what is to happen? The enormous enlargement cannot be corrected immediately, says Mr. Willis, without causing more damage than help. Yet "a breakdown may come at any time," and "widespread dissatisfaction" with the management of the Reserve System is showing itself. Some critics, including bankers, object to the "readiness" with which the Reserve System "fosters speculation" in the United States, "masking such action behind the pretence of assisting other countries to go back to a gold basis." After mentioning other evidence of this sort he concludes that "it will not take a very great market—or financial—disaster to set off this train of explosives."

* * *

This situation becomes of all the more moment to Great Britain at this time when Parliament is transferring its right to control credit-policy to the Bank of England. The Bank is to all intents and purposes an integral part of the Federal Reserve System. If, for instance, the Reserve System began an attack on American speculation with the customary signal of a rise in its discount rate, we must suppose that the Bank Rate in London would rise in sympathy if not according to arrangement. If so, the whole British trading community would be laid under further credit-restriction for reasons which would have nothing to do with the Bank's gold reserve, its "margin of fiduciary currency notes," and all the rest of the pseudo-scientific sheep-dip in which Parliament is splashing about. It was a pretty tall order for the citizens of Britain (and for that matter, other European countries) to have to stand by and watch their industrial assets being bought up wholesale by dollar-finance; but what shall be said of a situation in which, just because American speculators have run the nominal valuation of those and their own assets up sky-high in New York, Europe should be compelled to contribute in further sacrifices towards putting the mistake right? Fair's fair. England had to absorb the shock of the cotton boom collapse (to mention no others): she has the right to ask that her convalescence should be undisturbed by similar collapses across the Atlantic. Threadneedle Street was not appointed the earthing-ground for Wall Street wires. Let us at least insulate our own credit-area even if we are fools enough to misuse our credit-power.

* * *

The prominence which the United States ought to have had in the Currency Bill debate was deferred until the week-end, when any impression the Bill might have made on the public was melted away by the sunrise of the peace pact. If America can ensure two things, first, that the restriction of English currency by the Bank of England in accordance with sound banking principles, bank-solvency and Wall Street opinion, and, second, that Britain shall not go to war with America, no matter how severe a financial hammering she suffer, nothing that British industrialists are able to do can recover Britain's overseas markets. The peace pact simply means that the nation which loses in the financial war may not resort—without a certain loss of self-respect—to any other sort of war to defend itself. Britain does not appear nowadays as capable of reading Continental opinion as she used to be. That the United States peace overtures, picturesquely called the Outlawry of War proposals, are designed in some way to attack Britain, has been alleged by many Continental writers. Unfortunately no public personage has linked together the peace overtures and the Currency Bill, between the two of which Britain allows its arms to be tied and promises not to use its feet.

NOTICE.

The M.M. Club will meet on Wednesday, June 6. Discussion at 6.15 p.m.

Group-Lunacy.

By W. G.

As was to be expected, the nineteen-fourteen to nineteen-eighteen European War produced an ever-increasing number of anti-war organisations, each with a specific for establishing a basis for permanent world peace. Whatever the organisation and whatever the impulse, it is doubtful whether the well-intentioned efforts will amount to more than last year's snow unless use is made of Miss Playne's recent contribution* to the psychological side of the question. To say that this study of the pre-war years lays bare the whole of the network of the actual origins of the war would be to go far beyond what the author would claim. It does, however, without any doubt, give a convincing explanation of the growth of the chief group complexes which made the war possible. Indirectly it goes further, and illustrates, without undue bias, the manner in which those complexes allowed, and still allow, the controllers of public and financial policies to have their own way. A key to the tone of the book is expressed in the first paragraph of the introduction—a quotation from J. A. Hobson's "The Psychology of Jingoism." Speaking of the civilised peoples of Western Europe, he says:—

> "Education has, among the better classes, been instrumental in producing scepticism and fluctuating dilettantism, while among the masses it has produced a low curiosity and indiscriminate receptivity . . . . a weakening of individual responsibility in the formation of opinions and a corresponding susceptibility to Jingoism and other popular passions. . . ."

That Jingoism flourishes under modern industrialism is obvious. The neuroticism generated by megalopolitan conditions feeds hungrily on excitement and sensation. The town-imprisoned human race is no longer of the family of nature. The obvious corollary to mass production of human requirements is the standardisation of human minds. Under latter-day industrialism the conditions of existence, for more than nine-tenths of the people, are such that the development of malignant neuroses is unavoidable. The influence of economic pressure on the mind, both individual and group, has been emphasised, for example, by Dr. Ernest Jones, who has said that it is "rare for anyone to think freely and behave normally where money is concerned. The effect of always being in need of money is in itself calculated to produce a diseased condition, and it is no exaggeration to say that this was the position of the bulk of the people. The struggle for a livelihood under Capitalism, or to improve the definiteness of the term by amplifying it, the system of Financial Capitalism with the ever-constant fears of unemployment and hard times, and mental tiredness and confusion resultant therefrom, work havoc in the ill-trained minds and under-developed morale of a people. The recourse of the patients to the most violently exciting forms of mental recreation and their response to every stimulant is understandable. Crude emotion ruled their lives; their lack of knowledge of their own pathology made their position, not better, but worse. Their ignorance was less bliss to them than to those in high position whose power of filling the vacuum of ignorance with the shibboleths of action put them in command of the situation.

The psychological acumen displayed by international leaders and their professional servants is worthy of a better motive. The gradual but sure preparation of the working people for war was an enormous task, and Miss Playne has not shirked the work and responsibility of telling how that task was accomplished. She reveals the whole process of the dislocation of ideas and the formation of subjective views consequent on the development of education.

* "The Pre-War Mind in Britain." By Caroline E. Playne. (George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., Museum Street, 16s.)

Class consciousness became an obsession, nurtured on fear and desire rather than on the understanding of an economic situation. Despite this, the hypnosis of the workers was not sufficiently complete in itself to make them willing tools. The big towns, with their over-crowded hives, harboured the germs of mental cancer. Industrialism gone mad made a bedlam with its constant *tap, tap, tap*, on the brains of the hurrying workers. The mills and factories, tabernacles of the gods of hustle, were left behind for the day only for the tired mind to be irritated by the feverish glare of advertisements inviting the small purse to reckless expenditure, or the nervous temperament to exciting excesses. Poverty was affronted by colour and blaze shouting aloud the luxury to be enjoyed by the economically free. The Press helped in the riot. The spirit of the age was reflected in columns of transitory interest, of flashes of unimportant news. Mr. Kennedy Jones gave a valuable clue to the profundity of the public mind when he admitted that the items which were most valuable in the selling of a newspaper were "war first and foremost—a State funeral—a first-class murder." The art of the times was in the throes of decadence. The abnormal growth of nationalism under such conditions is understandable. Similar conditions obtained in France and Germany. Nationalism became the expression of a phobia. The permeation of British diplomacy with an "obstinate Teutophobia," trade rivalry, all the keener because of that lack of probity which a grasping age had produced, an unscrupulous Press—and may I add a financial octopus that sent its tentacles into every country—all these were instrumental in laying the sticks for the big bonfire. Secret diplomacy, often actuated by the basest of motives, did not ease the situation, as it amply proved by the many volumes purporting to be the secret history of the time. Half the responsible ministers and officials have given us their revelations, the motive of which is to conceal.

Miss Playne has torn the cloak from them. They cry *peccavi* faintly. They stand condemned, and in nine cases out of ten, they should have been patients in a mental clinic. Under their influence the Press so juggled with the truth that the popular imagination reeled under the onslaught of sensational headlines. Mr. Massingham wrote that "the conscienceless and brainless attitude of the Harmsworth Press constitutes a danger to the public safety in a serious confrontation like that of Great Britain and Germany to-day." The armament combines, already doing well in the peace-time competition of the nations, were yet avid for more. They were one of the many sources of information to the Government. Germany's preparations for war were eagerly retailed to the private ear of the English Government, while the building of Dreadnoughts and the attitude of mind of Lord Fisher and others possessing the same megalomania, were used in Germany to force the shipyards to greater activity. Even the churches used the shadow of the Cross to add to the general hysteria, and wielded an olive branch as though it were a flail. A general anaesthesia concerning the higher planes of thought and feeling prevented the churches from perceiving the difficulties into which imperialism and the growing antagonism to Germany were leading up. Spiritual ideals were hidden in the miasma of a thousand less important things. A pacifist found as little peace in the close as in the recruiting station. Such were the conditions in which Chauvinism flourished. Small wonder then that war, with its direct challenge to decadence, came as a tremendous mental tonic. It meant, in innumerable cases, the break up of detestable existences. To the rich it offered a new sensation; it gave rich and violent experience with the additional blessing of virtue. For once the jaded mind might seek fresh fields of recreation under the pressure of the magical word, duty.

To the masses, sinking under the moral inertia and depression caused by the sordid conditions of the economic struggle, the call to glorious adventure meant release. It is significant that once war was declared it was accepted as inevitable. Miss Playne epigrammatically says: "The corollary of fear is belief in force." If that is accepted, the position of Europe is little better to-day than it was in those few years before the war. The belief in force is almost as strong as ever. The science of destruction is developing. Authorities are constantly informing us that the *next* war will be more terrible than the last. Aircraft will scatter poison broadcast, and whole populations will be wiped out. The world is still obsessed with fear.

The necessity for a new policy confronts us. The first step towards international peace is to make sure that no one will benefit by war. Press, pulpit, and publicist are at present reflections of an economic struggle, which in its turn reflects the machinery in the casinos of credit. To the analysis of the modern economic system Miss Playne has added an analysis of the mind that runs it and is run by it.

Music.

"Carmen": The Old Vic, May 10.

My readers know my opinion of this establishment on general grounds, so I must say that my reason in going thither was merely to hear Miss Enid Cruickshank in the title-part, knowing the good work she is capable of under other circumstances and in happier company. Given the lamentable partners with whom she had to play, Miss Cruickshank did as well as could perhaps be expected—the lack of adequate support from her companions, their failure to play into, up to, and with her placed on her the entire burden of creating any sort of illusion or *vraisemblance*, with the result that almost inevitably she overacted and underlined rather painfully at times. On the whole, Miss Cruickshank sang well—there is a certain lack of firmness and solidity in the tone of the voice; it has the effect of being insufficiently concentrated, as it were, and there is more than a suspicion of uncertainty in attack and too much *vibrato*, which, if not checked, may lead to the *tremolo*. A few years' work in a properly-run opera house, under conductors and régisseurs of thoroughness and capacity, would give Miss Cruickshank what she needs. Unnecessary to say that is not to be found in England. There is no one here who knows, let alone can teach, all that is necessary to make the difference between the makeshift and the complete performance of opera. The rest of the cast were negligible or quite bad. Mr. Harry Wendon and Mr. Sumner Austin passed beyond the limits of the probable in their behaviour as Don José and Escamillo respectively, and succeeded in looking quite unlike either. Mr. Wendon looked as though he had strayed out of Gilbert and Sullivan—and since when have sergeants of Dragoons in Spain of the period of Carmen been discovered to wear toothbrush moustaches? Mr. Wendon's behaviour in the second act, when he addressed the Flower Song to Carmen with half the width of the stage between them, was distant to say the least! Also, in the first act, when Carmen sings the Habanera, Miss Cruickshank had half sung it before he reappeared on the stage, whereas he should be there from Carmen's first entry, for she catches sight of him almost as soon as she comes on. The whole point of the Habanera was missed through this unwarrantable interference with Bizet's plain directions. He does not appear to realise that a hooting falsetto is not permissible as a substitute for genuine top notes. The voice otherwise is quite ordinarily pleasant, but shows no signs of being or ever becoming an operatic voice. The defects of Mr. Sumner Austin's technique which one had remarked in former years have become intensified to such an extent that now he does not produce anything like a good tone, and a firm, well-moulded phrase of sound escapes him altogether. The remaining smaller parts could hardly have been worse done. Among them they contrived to exhibit every known outrage against singing. The Micaela, the Dancaire, and Rementado especially must surely have been the ultimate examples of how not to do it. As for the chorus, though their singing at least was not unbearable, their behaviour and deportment, but for one single exception among the men—one gentleman who contrived to show more stage sense and intelligent realisation of what was wanted than all the rest put together—were fantastically inept. They were that dreadful old Italian chorus of Covent Garden years ago reincarnated and revived. The entire performance, with its lack of unity, co-ordinated action, or any sense of homogeneity was a scarifying comment on the claims to ensemble excellence so noisily and persistently made on behalf of the Old Vic by its admirers, as against an institution like Covent Garden, with its isolated "star" singers. But it seems that much lower down the line the same principle is followed at the Vic—one or two goodish or tolerable singers, the rest a blank. Further, I quite fail to see—another point always being stressed by Old Vic partisans—any educational value for a young singer in taking part in such a performance as this. The orchestral part of the performance was quite fair, and the chorus of small boys admirable and most enjoyable. Theirs was almost the only genuine acting in the whole performance.

Messiah (Beecham): Crystal Palace, May 5.

A very fine repetition under Beecham in the stronghold of Handel oratorio and of the worst traditions and cobweb habits of performance that have accumulated round it, which were all cleanly swept away, to the greater glory of this great work and the greater scandalisation of that type of oratorio patron for whom these things and not the work itself are the attraction. Again one had cause to marvel and admire, in a place as abominable acoustically and as grotesquely inapt for music as the Crystal Palace—one might as well have concerts in Waterloo or Victoria Stations—Beecham's ability to get such cleanness and precision. One suspects that this as much as anything upset people like the gentleman behind me who preferred Sir Frederick Cowen, and that the popularity of places such as the Crystal Palace as *loci* for music is to be found in the fact that they encourage and foster that slipshod and slovenliness of performance that is exalted into a merit by some people to annoy us. It is the equivalent of the drawl, the hesitant ar-er in speech of the woolly-minded who find the definite, decisive utterance of a clear mind disconcerting. Miss Stiles Allen, as at the earlier Albert Hall performance, was easily the best of the soloists, though she did not seem to be so happy in the music as then.

Wireless: May 2, 9.30.

The outstanding thing in a short programme of works by Van Dieren was the masterly playing by Frida Kindler of the remarkable Variations for piano, a supple, subtle, complex piece of music, the product of a powerful, original, and distinguished mind. Like that of his intimate friend Busoni, Van Dieren's work has a proud aloofness and an aristocratic exclusiveness highly unsavoury in an age of universal democracy-mongering, removed equally far on the one hand from the current gibber of the market-place and the fashionable jabber of the studios, hence its unpopularity in both of these quarters.

KAIKHOSRU SORABJI.

Drama.

Six Characters in Search of an Author: Arts Club.

Even the Lord Chamberlain seems to fall under the charm of either the chaste interior decoration or the comfort of the Arts Theatre Club. "Six Characters in Search of an Author" is the second play in a very short time whose production here has been followed by the Censor's pardon and reprieve. The play will accordingly be presented publicly for a run at the Globe Theatre by Sir Barry Jackson, who arranged the private performances. The title of "Six Characters in Search of an Author" is misleading, for the spokesman of the six characters gives the impression that, although they have lost an author, they have given him up as a bad job, and will be happy if they find a producer. When they arrive *The Producer* has his hands full, but *The Father* appears so reasonable and some of the others so unreasonable that their troubles hold out prospects of an actable play. Gradually each is soothed enough to stop shoving his personal views, intermixed with contradiction from the others, down *The Producer's* throat, and to fill an appropriate part in a coherent play.

In this process of "making a comedy" the characters fight one another for the rôle of greatest significance. When the actors take over the parts for rehearsal they are scorned by the characters for their pretentiousness in assuming that they can be what they are not. *The Producer* also comes in for contempt when he requires that the action shall be where and how a stage permits. Indeed, the author himself could have given this harassed producer no more cause for exasperation—not though he had been Shaw—than his only half-tamed creatures. They behave like an author's army, with no hesitation as to the relative importance of the author's share in a play by comparison with that of the mere executants. In the end the characters get the bit between their teeth and run away with the play, so much so that the action leading up to the two children committing suicide rather than live with the four grown-ups is so natural that the actors lose themselves in conviction. As the characters depart, their spokesman calling *The Producer* to redraw his line between truth and illusion, *The Producer* sensibly dismisses the whole business as a wasted morning, and turns to his job again. It is only, he might have said, Signor Pirandello playing a joke on me.

This satire of the theatre in which an author teaches his servants their places is good and enjoyable. Pirandello, to be fair to him, has not given the actors all the whipping, but has directed a generous proportion of his humour against the author by emphasising the preliminary incoherence of the characters before *The Producer* has licked them into shape. Thecream of the comedy, in fact, is in the writhing of *The Producer* between the unruly and self-centred characters on one side and, on the other, actors who regard their own persons as the central object of public approval and attraction. But this dramatisation of characters separate from the actors has tempted Pirandello to the exposition of a particular metaphysical convention. Whether he is able completely to accept it or not, he is so far from believing that the audience can accept it as to introduce the dialectic into the play. The characters were not satisfied to fight for their rights in the play being made from them. *The Father*, with whom the author must surely have discussed the metaphysic of art at length, could not refrain from embroiling *The Producer* in a subject out of his depth. With the aid of a solipsistic contrast between the *being* that belongs to a character and the mere *becoming* and *unbecoming* represented by an actor, he indulged himself in dissertations on reality.

For some minds this metaphysic may be novel, or it may give shape to ideas loosely played with previously; and, presented on the stage along with Pirandello's theme, may startle them into acceptance. It is even possible that Pirandello considers the metaphysical question of *being* versus *becoming* theplay's significant theme, and believes that he has thrown light on it. What seems more likely, however, is that, realising the primacy of truth over goodness or even beauty for the European theatre, he has deliberately tried to cancel out all tentative answers to what is truth, and to leave nothing but the question-mark. In either of these events he has merely expounded what he ought to have dramatised.

There is an aspect from which characters, from Othello to Hialmar Ekdal, are more real—if there be an order of reality—than any representation of them that an actor can give. A symphony, so far as it can be contemplated without an orchestra, may have an order of reality not shared by a gramophone record, since neither fire nor sitting on it can destroy the symphony. It is not an unthinkable fantasy that a symphony once rendered floats for ever in the ether, or that the Hamlet Shakespeare made lives out his doubt eternally. For the purpose of this world, however, it seems that the symphony once played is "re-absorbed," that the Hamlet of Shakespeare would be as irrecoverable as those of his contemporary actors if he had not left the equivalent, in his manuscript, of a gramophone record. That Shakespeare is dead while Hamlet lives—a corollary of Pirandello's thesis—is inconceivable. To become conceivable it requires an hypothesis of ectoplasmic parturition to explain dramatic creation—the ectoplasmic form to be endowed with immortality while the form that gave it life perishes.

That the universe passes out of existence at each instant to return to existence at the next instant does not mean that it is a different universe. Dr. Whitehead, with the same virus of flux in him as Pirandello, has written several books to prove metaphysically what eyes and mind can see—that it is not a different universe. The characters of a play have no manifestation—which is what the theatre is concerned with—but that which actors lend them. Characters—and all creation—endure from the fact that in a universe of becoming man craves for being, and the other helpful fact that stones and bronze and human forms endure at least long enough to allow replacement before they are "re-absorbed" into the flood of chaos. The assertion that characters are endowed with a being independent of author and actor is legitimate fancy, but it is neither good psychology nor good metaphysic. The means by which Pirandello renders the six characters manifest apart from the company of actors are *six other actors*. Necessity is pragmatic truth.

Among the company of actors, *The Producer* was played by Fewlass Llewellyn in a paternal and jolly manner, good enough to serve as a model for producers, and he conveyed the irony delightfully where he had to show a man "how to do it." Walter Pearce's *Father*, with just the right air for passing on the metaphysics, as though he really thought in them, was very fine, sustained, acting. The two children were so well done by John Denis and Betty Raymond that the audience regretted their not being provided with words. Dorothy Black, vigorous as she was, took *The Stepdaughter* in a way that made one think of an actress rather than of a character. It was she who made me conscious that in a play where the characters are shown as distinct from the actors, the actors have to behave like ordinary people at home, while the characters have to behave like people in a play. Although that is true it should not be evident.

PAUL BANKS.

Views and Reviews.

AMERICAN BELIEF.

By Alan Porter.

Scarcely a book comes from America which, to a European mind, has any depth or insight behind it. Even the most imposing works, the novels of Dreiser or Lewis, seem empty. They build up the façade of human nature; but we cannot avoid feeling "These masks are uninhabited, there are no souls here." Nothing at all in modern America gives us the sudden and startling warmth of being human.

And of all the cultural activities in America the emptiest are psychology and philosophy. No problem that an American philosopher raises seems to be a problem: no answer he gives seems to have any relevance to the movements of the human soul. There have been exceptions to the rule; William James and Josiah Royce were both *to the point* of human interests and discriminations. James himself is something of a miracle. It is hard to tell whether he was accommodating philosophy to the tastes of Americans, or insinuating it into them despite their tastes. Read as an American, he is shallow and an excuse for shallowness. But it is better to take him as an alien to American strivings, intent on taking them for revelations. Like Whitman, then, he adapted himself to American life and American ways of thought as if he loved them; and meanwhile gave them a splendour which he wished to see them possess.

Apart from James, America has no psychology. This in inevitable: it is the country where the knowledge of individuals is the least. Psychology, to have any backing, to have any blood, any reality, must be learned from seeing, handling, and engaging in the crises of human life, observing and controlling oneself, observing and helping others. It looks as if in America people had never met one another: they "mix," but never meet. The lack of deep encounter runs through their whole civilisation. Nowhere else, for example, is the problem of marriage taken so casually. Exactly where there is a hope of individuals coming face to face, finding out their conflicts, and living through to a knowledge of each other, divorce descends like a guillotine, and they can learn nothing further.

* * *

This is not the prejudice that one culture may rouse in the members of another. Wherever the need of the individual to grapple with tradition is strong (wherever, in short, there *is* a culture), men impress their spirit on all their actions in ways which will enrich the psychic life of other nations at least by astonishment and perturbation. In the American soul there is no spiritual tension, no heat. There is no sign that the crises of human life, the quite simple, direct and perpetual crises, courtship, marriage, the education of children, are being passed through with courage and subtlety; are being understood; are even being seen. The ordinary eternal human events seem not to have reached into the soul of the American. He goes through the same events as any man, but he appears to take no notice of them: he feels only external goals as worthy of human effort and consciousness.

The very life passes out of the study of psychology when it is given over to statistics and the laboratory. There is no *person*: the all-important singular twist of human nature has gone. A true and cultural science of psychology must be based on acquaintance with the living and concrete individual soul; there is no more attention to the individual in American psychology than in American education. The gross end-product of this *failure to see the man*, the Behaviourism of Watson, is no worse than the average level of American psychology. Indeed, it is more honest and amusing; since Watson has to take unbelievable pains to preserve logical consistency and keep problems at a distance.

* * *

The Professor of Philosophy at Princeton University covers an immense deal of ground at a breathless pace.* The questions he raises, or appears to raise, are among the profoundest and most ever-living questions of philosophy. There are many signs that he is writing of problems that closely concern all men: but the book is hard to get the hang of, very strange in its aimlessness and lack of cohesion. All the while it appears about to be meaning something, and at the end we feel we have set out from nowhere and have reached nowhere.

In so far as we can see the intention of Professor Spaulding, it is to buoy up the average citizen in the thought that he may "believe." His answer to the question "Who am I?" seems to be, "Despite the evidence of the determinists, there is no reason to deny that you are estimable." His answer to the question "What shall I do?" is (literally this time) "Think and then act." His answer to the question "What shall I believe?" is "You may."

There is something queer and uncivilised in the great burst of words we must submit to, in books and newspapers, all informing us that we may still believe something, and always leaving that "something" general, vague and undefined. We cannot help wondering what is behind this invitation to "belief." Why are we urged to believe? What advantage is there in believing? *What are people after* when they insist so continually that we should believe something or other, who knows what? We would imagine that a belief, to mean anything, must be a *particular* belief. One of the important works of culture must be discrimination between beliefs. It is impossible to say what the relative advantages are between mere belief-in-something-or-other and mere disbelief-in-something-or-other.

It is no wonder that sceptics hold the opinion that common forms of belief are impositions; that philosophers, moralists and religious leaders have something in their minds quite other than the imparting of revelation. It looks suspiciously as though belief were a common name concealing some quite different ulterior purpose. We can see that the *Daily Express* and the average American does indeed feel that if a man has said "I believe," quite independently of what his belief may be, he has said something to cheer up his fellows, to make us all feel safer with each other, more gracious and beautiful.

There can be no other judgment than that this general confession of belief, without specification, is an avowal of willingness to be deceived. In the end it is even worse; it is the avowal of *willingness to be controlled*. No doubt it is for this reason that the heart warms to those who make their confession; they are disarming themselves, and handing themselves over to the social system as it is. Belief in general can be no more than belief in things as they are; and this kind of faith is what Spinoza took all faith to be—obedience.

It is well that a man should be obedient to himself: it is well, therefore, that he should have defined his own beliefs, and should follow their light. It is sad that he should be obedient without caring *to what*. There But such obediences are typical of America. There are churches built at which "people may worship in their own way, without distinction of religion or creed." In *The King of Kings* two women who had never seen the Christ, and knew nothing of his doctrine, were cured of leprosy by jumping in his way and crying "I believe, I believe!" Their son had told them, "You must have faith," and out of the

* "What Am I?" By Edward G. Spaulding. (Scribner's. 8s. 6d. net.)

air they plucked this talisman, *faith in anything*. This is the motive of Christian Science and New Thought. It is the virtue of the slave. As Christianity fades, empty "belief" increases. Men even long for a "new religion," as if they had not enough religions already.

If any man believes, let him believe in *something*.

How to Get About.*

By Leopold Spero.

The art of travel is usually instinct only in those of us to whom there is also vouchsafed the art of writing travel-books. The people one sees in Rolls-Royces on the Riviera know nothing whatever about travel. One might apply to them, only in a limited sense, the aphorism of Horace:—

coelum non animum mutant qui trans mare currant.

When they run grunting across the sea, these beings change their skies. But since they have no minds worth classification, they still keep unchanged the things they think most about, the style of hotel which you find indifferently in the Strand or the Rue de Rivoli or the Linden or the Azure Coast. And there they meet their friends, and talk about money and furs and jewels and food, and how difficult it is to live as they feel they should live. But of life they know nothing, of its colour, its variety, its changes and surprises. To them travel means no more than so much spent in transport, and perhaps a change in the weather. The change of language does not affect them, for they have everything spoken for them. New customs or landscape do not interest them. For they keep their own customs wherever they go, and only look out through their own windows.

The inarticulate self-satisfied English differ from the vociferous American or the peripatetic low-brow of any other nation. But really there is an internationalism in the matter. Fundamentally they are all the same. And it is questionable whether they should be allowed to travel at all, for the damage they do to their respective nations is far more weighty than the benefits they bring to the local hotel-keepers and the Casino. Still, the farthest they wander from Europe is North Africa, save for certain ports of call dotted on the tourist track all over the world. And this is a great mercy, for it leaves many delights unspoilt for decent people, notably those lands which lie between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean, still unchanged, still unwesternised, inviting a challenge to the intelligence which is only accepted by those who know how to travel. But since there is no harm in the ordinary man and woman's liking for a measure of modern comfort, it must be an exceptional man or woman who goes out into the wastes and deserts to find the secret of their charm.

The English have their faults, yet it cannot be said of them that they do not understand the East. Your Englishman who sees the world makes a kind of virtue of not speaking other Western tongues than his own, save only Spanish, which he is curiously fond of showing off, however badly he speaks it. But with Oriental tongues he takes quite a different attitude. He is apt to master them without the slightest effort, unconsciously, as part of the day's work. And so, on balance, it is merely foolish to say he is a bad linguist. He is probably the best in the world.

And since this is so, we find that he often understands not only the language of the East itself, but its ways of life and thought, its atmosphere. That is why you get women like Gertrude Bell, whose first travel-sketches published grudgingly and anonymously in 1894, are here reprinted. It was her first real view of the East, her first visit to Persia, and most of the material was already used in her letters home. And while we are not inclined to rank these "Persian Pictures," with Kinglake's "Eothen" as the blurb on the white cover does for us, we do agree that they show all the fine quality of an eager observant mind, and a pen at once ready and discriminating. More than that, they give us the picture of Gertrude Bell herself.

Louis Golding is in a slightly different division of the same class. He, too, is a born traveller, and a greater artist than Gertrude Bell. But since he is a young Manchester Jew, which is something very different from the fortunate daughter of a wealthy Northumberland iron-master, he has the advantage over her of not having so many advantages to start with. She could always travel when and where she liked; but that only made her more discriminating in her choice of vagabondage. He looks Eastward because of the Jewish soul in him; and therefore material difficulties do not count. She is looking for anything, whatever the Arabian Nights may turn up for her. He is looking for something, for that dormant part of himself which Western birth and education have not been able to destroy. She seeks the gardens and fountains of Hafiz, he the forgotten synagogues of Lotus Land and the interplay of tradition and ideals which makes a spiritual battleground of modern Palestine. The strange thing is that it is the modern-minded Englishwoman who breathes the air of the past, and the dreamy Jew who mingles it so vividly with the quickening breezes of the West. But they are both artists. Reading these warm sketches of hers one does not think of Gertrude Bell as dead, for the art of the true traveller's record is that it lives after the traveller has passed on. And so in a hundred years these ancient islands of Louis Golding will warm into colour for the reader's eye. For he sees them as they are, as they have been, as they will be. Truly there is naught better worth writing than a good travel book nor better worth reading.

* "Persian Pictures." By Gertrude Bell. (Benn. 10s. 6d.) "Those Ancient Lands." By Louis Golding. (Benn. 12s. 6d.)

Contemporary Viennese Life.

The most strikingly symptomatic feature of the situation in Vienna is the slump in night-life. At the Café Sacher, which is reputed to have the best jazz-band in the city, there must often be more employees present than guests. In view of this state of affairs at one of the most popular resorts, it is difficult to imagine how the less fortunate establishments stagger along. Things brighten up on Saturdays and Sundays, but even at the beginning of the month the week-days are mournful in the haunts of pleasure. A spurt was made a while back in stealing motor-cars, and there was a very paltry imitation of the American bank-robbery, with revolvers and automobiles, but the effort was so languid as to awake the suspicion that it was the work of some bored newspaper man trying to manufacture a scoop. When "Jonny Spielt Auf" was first put on at the Opera, the boys belonging to the Germanic nationalist organisations held demonstrations each evening in the neighbourhood of the Opera against the introduction of jazz music in a State theatre. They were prevented from getting into the building or even close to it, and before "Jonny" had settled down to a regular place in the Opera repertoire the demonstrations ceased. The next negroid phenomenon, Josephine Baker, provoked a similar parley and fuss, which, too, has rippled out to flatness. She is still appearing here with considerable success. It is a remarkable thing that just at this season the popular entertainment of sensational trials should also fail. For months and months there have been no exciting murders, no succulent scandals; only dreary trials of bank officials and other tame routine work. This year is a Schubert year, and 80,000 visitors are expected for the Singing Festival to be held in summer. In view of the fact that the population of Vienna does not exceed two millions, and that these are already fairly well packed together as a consequence of the housing problem, the task facing the organising committee must be a distressing one. The preparations which have so far been made towards the quartering of the singers have been good-hearted and amusing, if not very efficient. However, when hotels and private apartments have been filled and the school board and pioneer corps have done their best, there may still be sleeping accommodation for the rest of the contingent in the cabarets.

If Mr. Micawber were still living he would undoubtedly be the best man to report on commercial and economic conditions in Austria. Indeed, there is reasonable ground for assuming that it was not to Australia he emigrated, but to Austria, and that his sons are as the sands of the seashore. The true accounting of finances here would surely justify excitement; nothing of the sort is observable. Great ingenuity is exercised on finding an appropriate label for the prevailing conditions: A latent crisis, chronic stagnation, inevitable inertia, a negative catastrophe—these tags and all the rest of their kind are thumb-marked and ragged, so there may after all be something to say in support of the statement of the chairman of the National Bank that matters are improving. Constant gazing at a skull will not keep the thoughts concentrated on death. Collapse here is hardly conceivable at this late period. Either the people who dictate the policy from abroad will continue by means of nominal loans to help the country keep at its present low ebb or they will allow the Austrians to manage their affairs again in their own fashion, which alternative bristles with difficulties for the people abroad.

F.

The Spike.

By W. H. Arnold.

At half-past five in the evening, after two hours of imposing upon private charity, we loafed down to the Casual Ward, where forty or fifty tramps were already waiting. It was a great block of a building of bilious yellow brick, and surrounded by an acre or so of flowerless garden shut in by iron gates round which we clustered. Perhaps a third of the tramps were aged men, some of them so decrepit as to make one wonder how their daily journey was accomplished; of the others, a few were boys, and the rest simply nondescript, unhappy creatures, alike only in their raggedness and the ill-fortune which had brought them here. Many of them were old acquaintances, and they greeted one another familiarly: "I ain't seen you since Ipswich, Fred. Where you bin all this time?" "Bin up as far as York, but it turned cold, so I come down again"; and so on. They passed the time away with a little joking and bickering, but with not much noise or vitality of amusement—the overflowing animalty of men "in work" was missing. The merits of this and other "Spikes" were discussed; this Spike was named as a good one, only the sleeping accommodation was bad, and they gave you cocoa instead of tea. The Spike at "A" town was very comfortable, but there were bugs there, while at "B" town there were no bugs, but they bullied you; "C" town was a "rough-house," and "D" town should be avoided at all costs. My companion, an intelligent man given to drinking, classified the Spikes of two counties; and three old bearded men stood by nodding, clasping their strangely shaped bundles, from which protruded the wire handles of their "billies."

Suddenly the iron gate was opened, and the filthy and tattered file moved forward; we were admitted one at a time by a small man strongly resembling ourselves, but just a little cleaner, fatter and less ragged. This was a "tramp major," a workhouse inmate who is given the task of supervising Casuals; and he greeted us in a friendly way, as we entered and faced a blue-coated official, who entered our names and various other particulars in a large ledger. Part of the purpose of this registration, I was told, is to prevent tramps from visiting the same Spike twice in a month—a thing which is forbidden by the law. Those of us who carried bundles here surrendered them, and we were also told to give up any money which was in our possession: I gave up threepence, for which my companion afterwards rebuked me.

"Don't they give it back?" I asked in alarm.

"Some do and some don't. But you didn't ought to have given it up. If you'd left it in your clothes they wouldn't 'a' found it."

"Suppose they didn't give it up," I said; "is it any use going to the Police?"

My companion only smiled; but he added: "I guess he'll give it yer back. He ain't a bad fellow."

We were now waiting in the inner yard, and, six at a time, we were admitted to the bathroom. Here there were two baths, discoloured, but fairly clean, and kept full of hot water by another tramp major and a uniformed porter; there was clean water for each man, also a clean towel each, and strongly smelling carbolic soap. The baths not being compulsory, many tramps refrained, and others washed only their feet and faces; my companion told me that hot baths were considered to be enervating, and that "it didn't do to get too fond of them." The room was full of men undressing, for, whether they bathed or not, each man had to remove his clothes and don the blue cotton shirts supplied for the night; we were allowed to keep our coats, hats, and boots, but all other clothes were tied in bundles and piled up in the passage. In various stages of dirt and nudity we paraded—one especially I remember, an ancient creature, known to all as "Daddie," bent double, and thin as a scarecrow, with the blue shirt flapping loosely over his shrunken thighs.

When we had washed ourselves and tied up our clothes we were given our supper, a mug of unsweetened cocoa and a huge doorstep of bread and margarine, which was to be eaten in the cells in which we slept. The doors of the cells were all along the passage, and through the gratings in the ceiling could be seen a precisely similar double row of cells above, and there was another, I believe, above that. The casuals slept two and two in the cells, which measured about 12 feet by 5 feet, by 15 feet high. Our cell was whitewashed, lightened by a tiny window, high in the wall, and apparently clean enough; but I saw with unpleasant surprise that it contained no furniture whatever—only six blankets piled upon the hot water pipe which ran through the whole row of cells.

"Don't they give you beds?" I exclaimed.

"Not here," said my companion. "There's beds in some Spikes, but not here. You has to do the best you can with blankets."

I concealed my alarm, and we sat down on the floor to eat our supper, cutting the huge hunks of bread into two thicknesses, and transferring the superfluous margarine from the one piece to the other. We had no plates, and the sugarless cocoa was abominable—my companion inveighed bitterly against "this bloody muck," and said that a man was not a man without a cup of tea; all tramps set great store by tea, or rather by the dark brown stuff which goes by that name among them. The nasty meal was finished in a few minutes, and we rolled ourselves cigarettes—for it was one of the advantages of this Spike that smoking in the cells was permitted. I had a box of matches, but my companion advised me not to waste them, and went to beg a light from another man; for, like most tramps, he was almost fanatically economical of matches.

A little before seven o'clock the cells were bolted on the outside by the porter, and we had now to be immured for twelve continuous hours. In almost pitch darkness, we laid out our blankets, and rolled our coats round our boots to serve as pillows; after which we lay down upon the wooden floor. There were sounds of talking from all the cells, and my companion remarked that some of these fellows would talk till two in the morning—they wouldn't let a man get a wink of sleep.

"Can anyone sleep on these floors" I asked.

"Oh, sure. You'll get used to it."

Alas! I failed to get used to it—the floor seemed harder than iron; whether I lay on back or side, the aching of the bones became intolerable, and a change of position gave only momentary relief. My companion talked for awhile—the talk of tramps, which revolves eternally about lost jobs, food, clothes, and tobacco; and then he fell asleep, only groaning now and again as the hard floor brought him near to waking. With short fits of sleep, shiftings to and fro, and an occasional smoke, the night was worn away; and at about seven in the morning the cell door was noisily opened. Of a sudden the aching bed became a paradise, but it was now necessary to hurry out to the bathroom, for we had only a few minutes for our toilet and breakfast. The baths were filled with water on which floated a dark scum of dirt, and in this many tramps were rinsing their faces—shaving, of course, was impossible. We retrieved our clothes, and ate a meal identical with that of the night before; and even as we finished this, the porter and the tramp majors came up the passage, shouting, "All out, there! All out!"

We trooped into the yard, a dirty, bedraggled crew, whose extravagant dinginess was not treated kindly by the harsh morning light. Standing in a ragged line, we were chosen for various duties: my companion and I were set to peeling potatoes with twenty or thirty other men, in a small shed in the yard. One or two of the older men sat with their knives in their hands, merely staring before them, and there was some bickering among the tramps and accusations of idleness by the tramp major, who watched us. One or two of the tramps stole potatoes, and would probably have done the same by the knives had it not been known that these were to be collected and counted later. After two

hours the work suddenly halted, for the doctor had arrived to inspect us, after which we were to be released.

With bared chests we filed past the doctor, a youth of perhaps twenty years, who glanced casually at us while smoking a cigarette; and one tramp, who had a rash on his skin, was set aside for further inspection. But the rash was found to be due only to under-nourishment, and the doctor (clearly an optimist), told the afflicted tramp to "eat better food." The inspection over, our bundles, also my threepence, were returned; and we were each supplied with a meal ticket of the value of sixpence—good, that is, for a "large tea and two slices," the tramp's perennial meal. Then the iron gate shut once more behind us, and we set out on our ten-mile walk to the next Spike, where the game should be begun anew.

Home-Made Money.

From these pages* Henry Clay Frick looks out at various stages of his career. His life is told in detail—how he did "chores" on his father's farm; was clerk in his uncle's emporium; salesman in a Pittsburgh store; bookkeeper in a distillery owned by the family; how he formed a company to manufacture coke from coal; met Andrew Carnegie at dinner, and before the close had entered into partnership with him; how he became chairman of Carnegie Bros. and Co.; crushed the notorious Homestead strike; quarrelled with Carnegie, resigned; and on the retirement of Carnegie one year after, returned as director of the new United Steel Corporation; how he accumulated millions; spent liberally on art and charitable organisations; and how he died full of years and honour.

This man was a shrewd and farseeing financier.

First, his initial venture in forming the Frick and Co. organisation was made on borrowed money. He financed, not only his own share, but the firm, on credit. The credit of his maternal relations and of his father was pledged up to the hilt. On security consisting of undeveloped but unmortgaged coal lands and strong conviction that the coking process was an essential factor in the fabrication of steel, he obtained $10,000 for six months at 10 per cent. from Judge Mellon's bank. This was followed by an additional loan.

But in 1873 a financial panic overwhelmed the United States. The failure of Jay Cooke and Co., financiers of the Northern Pacific Railway and, throughout the war, of the Government, was followed by unprecedented manifestations of terror. Money was unobtainable. Young Frick was owing money right and left, but as he had always paid full interest promptly, he had hitherto easily obtained renewals. But now the demand for coke dwindled with the industrial crisis which followed the financial panic. Gradually the mines were shut down.

Frick and Co. stubbornly persisted. The young salesman was indefatigable, and whatever market there was for coke he obtained. He seized the opportunity of the enforced liquidation in real estate to buy land. He was the sole purchaser in a community which had become convinced that the coke industry was dead, at least for many years. His supply of promissory notes was inexhaustible. Partial payments in cash, however, were often required, and he perceived that the expansion he craved must soon come to an end unless he could devise some method of providing for current operating costs. While credit might and did furnish materials in large part, it could not be utilised by workmen to procure the necessaries of life for themselves and their families.

How did Henry Clay Frick meet this emergency?

"To meet this requirement, young Frick *literally made his own money.*"

Soon after beginning business, following the custom of the times, he opened a store, for the convenience chiefly of the employees of the firm. Having practically no capital available for the enterprise, he bought goods from wholesale merchants in Pittsburgh and, selling for cash, had no difficulty in making payments at stated intervals. Consequently, when money became scarce in 1874, his reputation for prudence and trustworthiness was so well established that continuance of his custom upon any reasonable terms was not only welcomed but sought.

This situation gave rise to an opportunity of which he promptly availed himself by constituting his store a virtual clearing house and issuing his firm's certificates in substitution for the United States currency, which had practically disappeared from circulation. His bills were imitative of those which the Federal Government had made familiar during the Civil War, of the same size, shape, and colour. The wording was simple, to wit:—

FRICK & CO.'S MINES.
No. 1.
ONE DOLLAR.
Due Bearer in Merchandise
at our store,
BROADFORD, PA., 1874.

At the left side of the face of the bill appeared an emblematical figure of an attractive female gleaner in the fields, and in the centre a picture of lusty labourers wielding pickaxes in a mine, both admirably engraved in the style affected by the Bureau of the Treasury Department. The reverse side was a plain greenback of the light official shade.

These bills were used primarily in payment of wages; then by the workmen, at first in purchases at home, but soon elsewhere for other purposes, until presently they constituted the common currency of the entire community; with the result that business increased materially at the store, greatly to the satisfaction of the wholesalers, and Frick and Co. had the use of all of the proceeds received in legal tender from sale of their products, barring only the small portion required from time to time to extend or to expand their credits in Pittsburgh, and the mere cost of printing the good-looking bills.

Colonel Harvey tells us no more of this very interesting experiment. But is it impossible to do in 1928 what this ingenious young man carried through so successfully in 1874?

FRANCIS TAYLOR.

* ("Henry Clay Frick—The Man." By George Harvey. Published by Charles Scribner's Sons. Price, 21s. net.)

The Foreign Legion of France.

By Richard Fisher.

I.

Is there another regiment in the world about whose being the pen of fiction and fact have woven more stories than the "Légion Etrangère" or Foreign Legion of France? Yet in actual being the Foreign Legion is quite an ordinary military establishment, and the average "Légion-aire" would tell an enquirer that there is very little that spells romance in his soldiers' routine.

The actual installation of the Legions of France dates from the time of Napoleon I., but the Foreign Legion did not actually come into a compact formation until the disastrous Franco-Prussian War of 1870, when the plan was mooted for the formation of a compact regiment from the numerous foreign nationals that had assembled under the French Flag. In fact it was becoming obvious that these foreign elements were having a very unsettling effect in the ranks of the pure French line regiments.

After the war of 1870 it was decided not to disturb or disband this well-trained unit, and the entire legion was removed bodily to French Northern Africa, with headquarters at Sidi Abbas, Oran, and to a certain extent Algiers, with outposts and semi-detached units throughout the whole of the Sahara Provinces, while there is another battalion that has a headquarters near to Fez, in Morocco.

The actual peace time strength of the Foreign Legion is three battalions, each of about one thousand men, but at the present moment the force is said to be decidedly below strength. Probably there are not more than two thousand men serving under the colours.

However, during the time of war, a regiment like the French Legion swells enormously, and at one time of the late war there were more than twenty-seven battalions serving under the colours of the Légion Etrangère. Here it would be as well to explain the formation of the French Legions in comparison with the regiments of any other country. In the French Army a legion is taken "en bloc," that is to say that various battalions are never separated from their original command, but fight as a whole under the leadership of the Colonel-Commandant. In fact during war, a legion like the Foreign might have more than ten thousand men in its ranks, and would be able to supply the entire infantry for a whole army corps, thereby carrying out the theory of Napoleon as to "the honour of a regiment" being stronger when compact and not alienated by the presence of unattached battalions. Again under this system all officers are well known to the men, and there is very little chance of either lack of confidence or unsympathetic relations.

The Foreign Legion in peace time is commanded by a colonel, who has as his chief of staff a lieutenant-colonel. Each battalion is under the command of a commandant, an officer who has the equivalent rank of major in the British Army. These battalions are complete in themselves and have a fighting strength of about seven hundred men. They are again divided into three companies, each under the command of a captain or senior lieutenant. The platoons which are usually three in number are under the command of a junior lieutenant or senior N.C.O., while there is another rank unknown to the British Army, that of "aspirant," or N.C.O., who aspires to the commissioned rank. These men who are invariably French nationals are often used in the Foreign Legion to make up a deficiency of subalterns.

In most cases the officers and senior N.C.O.'s of the Foreign Legion are French, either drafted from other regiments or voluntary enlistments. However, there are a few of the legionaries who rise to a commissioned rank under what is called the "title etranger," or foreign title; this means to say that officers of this sort hold no authority outside their regiment, and are automatically junior to any French officer, in fact, their position is exactly the same as native officers in the British Indian Regiments.

In very exceptional cases legionaires have been recommended for commissions in the Regular French Army, and in this case after opting for French Nationality they are sent to Saint Cyr, where they take the course of instruction as any other French Cadet. Then if they are successful they are commissioned as "sous Lieutenants," and are drafted to any French Line Regiment. The period of enlistment into the Foreign Legion is as follows: A probationary period of six months; that is to say, that the French authorities have the right to send away unlikely recruits, but the recruit, on the other hand, has no option but to remain with the Legion if accepted. The first enlistment is for a period of five years, and this can be renewed for two more similar periods, after which, there is no re-engagement possible. However, many of the legionaires re-enlist under assumed names, and it is to be supposed that the officers of the Legion will turn the other eye in the case of the return of a good soldier.

Nearly all the recruiting of the Legion is done in Marseilles and Paris, but there is a voluntary system under which Frenchmen can also enlist, thereby avoiding conscript service. On enlistment no questions are asked, any name is sufficient, and papers of identity are not required. Even nationality is not considered, but all that is really of importance is as to whether or not the recruit can pass the doctor.

When the recruit has been pronounced medically fit he is shipped to either Algeria or Morocco, where his training begins, and after six months the authorities declare as to whether or not they will keep the applicant. In the case of rejection he is supplied with a ticket to the Consul of his country and the French make an immediate demand that he should be deported. At the end of a legitimate period of enlistment the legionaire is supplied with a ticket to any railway station in France, and there the matter ends so far as the French are concerned.

There is a fallacy that any recruit who can show a photograph of himself in the uniform of an officer of the Army or Navy of any of the great powers is given the rank of N.C.O. after his period of probation. This is quite untrue, but if the recruit can show himself to have had previous military training he may be placed in the "premiere classe" of soldiers without having to serve the customary period as a "soldat deuxieme classe." This simply means that he is allowed to pass his proficiency test without having to wait the customary two years. Simply, therefore, a business proposition whereby the French gain ready manufactured soldiers at the expense of another power.

The pay of a legionary was originally two "sous" per diem, but to-day the sum has mounted to seventy-five centimes for a soldier of "deuxieme classe" and one franc ten centimes for the "premiere classe," besides this the legionaries are entitled to the spoils of war and look upon this method as a means of augmenting their slender incomes. However, against these facts it must be remembered that a French soldier has a far-reaching issue of rations, in fact they are supplied with everything even to the extent of a litre of wine and a small packet of tobacco, which are drawn each day with the other rations.

No leave is ever granted to a "Legionaire" during his period of service, but he is allowed to move about his barrack town and immediate surroundings as he pleases when off duty. The somewhat loose moral outlook of some of the legionaires make it advisable to keep as far as possible from civilian populations.

(*To be continued.*)

Reviews.

The Innocents of Paris. By C. E. Andrews. (Appleton. 7s. 6d. net.)

Here is a young American, who loves and understands the Paris that is French and not cosmopolitan, the Paris of the Halles, of Belleville and La Villette, of the street-hawkers with their musical morning cries, of the apaches and the grisettes, of the junkshops and bookstalls. He begins by being a trifle dull. But when he has once gripped his subject, affection makes him eloquent.

Do You Know Your Bible? By George A. Birmingham. (Victor Gollancz, Ltd., 3s. 6d. net.)

A highly commendable device for introducing Christians to Holy Writ. But these Ulster parsons are always after pulling your leg.

Iron Rations. By Hesketh Pearson. (Cecil Palmer. 7s. 6d.)

Why is it that we are no longer thrilled with indignation by the theme which runs through most of these stories?—the theme of the coward, the slacker the lead-swinger, who uses the war for his own advantage not by honest profiteering and straightforward thieving, but by donning the uniform he never intends to show to the face of any enemy. There were, curiously enough, men who played this game for a long time, and yet, when they were finally forced into the trenches, distinguished themselves quite gallantly. Our author knows Mesopotamia and Persia, and in the latter part of his book, which consists of essays, he manages to describe the country with something of the gracious gift of colourfulness, not always vouchsafed even to writers who have heard and remember good tales and can tell them. In his short stories, despite the excellent material he has collected, and a rare fine scorn of his own for the base-*wallah*, Mr. Pearson fails to please us entirely. He lacks magic. There is something raw and crude in the taste his stories leave behind. Perhaps if he had laboured a little more over matters of style and finish, he would have produced a better book. Not that this is a bad one at all. But we would have liked to find it as good as Edmund Candler would have made it.

"The League of Nations will begin broadcasting its own messages through its own wireless station next week, Holland having placed at the League's disposal the Kootwijk station, Holland, which is capable of sending messages as far as the Dutch East Indies."—*British United Press.*

It may be of interest to your readers and to Lord Decies to know that during a period of domestic infelicity between my wife and myself an Income Tax inspector actually wrote to my wife's solicitors demanding a copy of the agreement that had been drawn up between us.

This agreement contained clauses in respect to our domestic differences that were of the most personal and private nature.

I must add, for the purpose of this letter, that the solicitors concerned were so unmindful of their duty to their clients as to forward a copy of the agreement to the inspector without consulting me. Only the strongest personal representations (through private friendships) made me refrain from taking that side of the matter up with the Law Society.

All the same, it meant that my most private affairs were being bandied about in a Government Department in my own residential district for any Tom, Dick, or Harry in the office to see.

Here's the joke! When the inspector saw the gravity of his own personal position in the matter (for my accountant gave him no quarter) all further correspondence ceased! But, as far as I know, he still has at least one copy of that agreement. Shame!

It so happens that I am a man well known to the public, and for obvious reasons cannot lend my signature to this letter, much as I would like to.

I enclose my name, however, and in doing so would like to state that I still have all the papers relating to this matter in my possession.

One never knows when some other inspector will rake it all up again and attempt to put one to further torture on matters now happily dead and buried.

Generally speaking there is an insufficiency of courage amongst those who are compelled to fight the arbitrary methods of this type of inspector, and so it is welcome reading to see the publicity the *Evening Standard* is giving to the whole question.

I hope Lord Decies will go forward in his further endeavours to have the powers of inspectors properly limited, for at present the situation is utterly wrong.—Letter to the *Evening Standard.*

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The Social Credit Movement.

Supporters of the Social Credit Movement contend that under present conditions the purchasing power in the hands of the community is chronically insufficient to buy the whole product of industry. This is because the money required to finance capital production, and created by the banks for that purpose, is regarded as borrowed from them, and, therefore, in order that it may be repaid, is charged into the price of consumers' goods. It is a vital fallacy to treat new money thus created by the banks as a repayable loan, without crediting the community, on the strength of whose resources the money was created, with the value of the resulting new capital resources. This has given rise to a defective system of national loan accountancy, resulting in the reduction of the community to a condition of perpetual scarcity, and bringing them face to face with the alternatives of widespread unemployment of men and machines, as at present, or of international complications arising from the struggle for foreign markets.

The Douglas Social Credit Proposals would remedy this defect by increasing the purchasing power in the hands of the community to an amount sufficient to provide effective demand for the whole product of industry. This, of course, cannot be done by the orthodox method of creating new money, prevalent during the war, which necessarily gives rise to the "vicious spiral" of increased currency, higher prices, higher wages, higher costs, still higher prices, and so on. The essentials of the scheme are the simultaneous creation of new money and the regulation of the price of consumers' goods at their real cost of production (as distinct from their apparent financial cost under the present system). The technique for effecting this is fully described in Major Douglas's books.

The adoption of this scheme would result in an unprecedented improvement in the standard of living of the population by the absorption at home of the present unsaleable output, and would, therefore, eliminate the dangerous struggle for foreign markets. Unlike other suggested remedies, these proposals do not call for financial sacrifice on the part of any section of the community, while, on the other hand, they widen the scope for individual enterprise.

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