

THE NEW AGE

INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER."

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE AND ART

No. 2275] NEW SERIES Vol. LVIII. No. 24. THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 1936. [Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper] SEVENPENCE

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

Income Tax Law.

Last week the Income Tax Committee reported after sitting for eight and a half years. The tenour of their report seems to be correctly summed up in two of the headlines appearing over the *Daily Mail's* account of it. These were

A SIMPLE CODE IS A VAIN HOPE.
PENALTIES TO BE MADE CLEARER.

In short, John Citizen is left to understand the law by learning its punishments. If he gets fogged by the law he is liable to get fogged by the law. Since the Age of Leisure is not here yet, he cannot spare the time necessary to know what his rights are, so must be content to know what his duties are. These are two in number, and are easy to understand. The first is to overstate his income in his returns; the second is to pay the sum entered on the demand note. This is an infallible path to immunity from punishment.

The Committee, like all official bodies of this sort, have used the machinery of inquiry to facilitate the work of the experts. They may not have had such an intention, but that is the effect of their findings. We have not studied them, but we will wager that whoever does so intelligently will see that they are convergent on the problem of speeding up the ascertainment of the citizen's liability, and closing up his means of escape from it. Take one point of detail: the Committee were struck by the anomaly that in some circumstances under the existing code the penalty for negligence on the part of the citizen could be less than the penalty for fraud. Delicate as is the complex of statutes and case-laws embodied in the present code—unstable as is its centre of gravity (as elusive as the bubble in the spirit-level)—which characteristic is always invoked by Authority to prevent or delay amendments to the law in favour of the citizen—the Committee do not hesitate to recommend that the penalty-scale shall be adjusted. And of

course they can safely do so, because the Money Monopoly possess all the powers of counter-balancing secondary disturbances arising from the correcting of anomalies.

Of course, the correction here is trivial: it would simply consist in making sure that the dishonest taxpayer shall always be fined more heavily than the careless one. We may be certain that it will take the form of raising the existing penalty on the dishonest, not lowering the penalty on the careless. The Revenue must make a profit, mustn't it? But in regard to other anomalies—particularly those which press upon the citizen—even a Committee of Social Creditors would probably find that the adjustment of one anomaly would create others elsewhere. In fact, this is antecedently certain, for under the present system of Fiscal Government (a delegated extension of Banking Government) the restitution of rights to any citizen is automatically counterbalanced by the deprivation of rights elsewhere. The Treasury never pays. When it chooses to listen to a tale of aggrievement, the most it does is to grant the aggrieved legal resource against their equally aggrieved neighbours.

There was once a time when the aggrieved had neighbours who were not aggrieved; and at that time the policy of compensating the first at the expense of the second was just in principle and feasible in practice. But to-day the steep graduation of tax-impositions has obliterated these distinctions. No taxpayer is left with a margin to help another. The one-time margins of the rich, which reformers attacked as evidence of the robbing of the poor, have been taken out of the reach both of rich and poor. The fruits of victory have long since been snatched from the field of class-conflict. All that the poor can visit on the rich is revenge for past wrongs. To kill a millionaire to-day would be to present the Treasury with a large share of his wealth. To kill his son the next week, and his grandson the week after,

would be virtually to make the Treasury a present of the whole of his estate. No, you may slay the rich, but the ghouls of Somerset House will rifle their corpses.

There may be occasions later on for discussing details of the Committee's recommendations. But when all has been said about them, and about taxes generally, the result is profitless. John Citizen never had a use for this Committee. His trouble is not about understanding his liability to the State, but about discharging it. Offer him a discount off his tax for not asking questions—and see what he will do! Going deeper still, the only profitable purpose of research into the tax-system is not to clarify it, but to abolish it. Such research has been finished, and its results are to be found in standard Social-Credit text-books. The present system can be scrapped completely. A large proportion of the money collected under this system need not be collected at all. The balance—that is, the money legitimately required and expended by the State in its capacity as professional shopper for things which the community can only buy collectively—this balance can be raised without collecting a penny from any individual or business enterprise. It can be deducted from the National Dividend. Every citizen, as he receives his share of the Dividend, will be paying his taxes without knowing it—or at any rate without feeling it. Week by week, or month by month, the State will appropriate the money it requires in single block sums from the Dividend credit-pool which will be irrigating the pastures of economic life. There will be no need for the surveyors, inspectors, assessor, collectors, postmen, police, bailiffs now functioning in the present vicious orbit of fiscal complications and cruelties. In Social Credit will be enacted anew the Drama of the Resurrection.

There is, in the Bible, a cryptic text which tells how Christ spent the dark three days following the Crucifixion "visiting the spirits in prisons." What the mystical import of those words may be we do not know. But we can appropriate them and apply them to the present terrestrial crisis. We can say that all men and women who have received the Social Credit faith, and can give a reason for the faith that is in them, may look upon themselves as visitants to the imprisoned spirits of stricken humanity, carrying the torch of hope to the distressed and disheartened, and awakening them to listen intently for the rumble of the rolling back of the stone which seals the tomb of their aspirations. *The whole creation groaneth, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.* Let us, then, who have become stewards of the mysteries of God, dedicate ourselves afresh to the pursuit of our high calling to reveal those mysteries and hasten the manifestation of God's bounty towards mankind. *And all eyes shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it!*

Notice.

All communications concerning THE NEW AGE should be addressed directly to the Editor:

Mr. Arthur Brenton,
20, Rectory Road,
Barnes, S.W.13.

Renewals of subscriptions and orders for literature should be sent, as usual, to 70, High Holborn.

Hargrave Questions Aberhart.

The following cables have passed between the leader of the Social Credit Party of Great Britain (The Green Shirts) and Mr. William Aberhart, the Premier of Alberta:—

- (1) *To Premier Aberhart, Edmonton.*
Undertake put out Magor put in Social Credit (stop) Do you want this done?
- (2) *To Hargrave, London.*
Cable indicates misunderstanding.
- (3) *To Premier Aberhart, Edmonton.*
Misunderstanding widespread (stop) Whole world bewildered by failure put out bum-Bailiff Magor put in Social Credit (stop) Tell world what stops you (stop) Secret diplomacy dangerous.

Provincial Debts in Canada.

Edmonton, March 17. Second reading given to Social Credit Bill. Also second reading to the Recall Bill—a Bill which would recall a member of the legislature on a two-thirds petition of the electoral list. (Ottawa Citizen, March 18)

"Premier Aberhart declares he will 'quit' before surrendering financial autonomy of province." (Headline in Ottawa Citizen, March 19.) Report says that Aberhart has declared that he has not committed himself to a definite refusal of the Loan Council Plan, but wants to know more about it. Meanwhile, he has declared that it is the Dominion's duty to pay the April 1 maturing obligations. If not Alberta will have to default because Alberta hasn't got the money. Also Dominion's duty to guarantee re-funding at lower interest of the whole of Alberta's indebtedness (\$110,000,000) on the ground that the credit of Alberta has been appropriated by the Dominion.

This is strong ground and worth elaborating. Loans to Alberta are ultimately claims on her physical resources. Debts can only be finally paid off by the delivery of the goods and services produced or implemented by the conversion of those resources. But the Dominion has appropriated to itself the Albertan people's powers of access to these, *their own*, resources. In so far as the Dominion is creditor in respect of Alberta's debts, it became creditor—that is to say it advanced loans—under circumstances and conditions which virtually prohibit repayment. The Dominion demands, *in form*, repayment in "Canadian" dollars, not "Albertan" dollars. Alberta cannot provide "Canadian" dollars without exporting to the rest of Canada converted physical resources to the value of the dollars she owes. But in order so to convert her resources she would need first to get more "Canadian" dollars, and would have to get them by borrowing them, for she would have nothing ready to export at that time. Would the Dominion lend them for that purpose? No. The excuse would be made that Alberta had no "security" to offer which could be set against the loan. And the truth behind this excuse would be that if Alberta got the loan, and by its means made goods and exported them in discharge of previous debts, trade and employment in the other provinces would decline as a consequence of these goods arriving there. Consideration of this analysis reveals a grotesque paradox. Since every Province in Canada owes "Canadian" dollars to the Dominion (a paradox within a paradox, because what is the Dominion but the sum of the Provinces?) they could only collectively discharge their debts if each of them dumped on the others a

balance of exports over imports! In other words, Canada would have to get a "favourable balance of trade" *inside Canada*. The Provinces would have to sell more to the Dominion (which is themselves) than the Dominion (which is themselves) bought from them (who are themselves).

However, the paradox is easily resolved. The ultimate creditors in respect of debts payable in Canadian dollars are the Canadian people—in the economic frame of reference, Canadian consumers. As consumers they do not want dollars, but dollars'-worth, converted resources, that is, the very form in which debts *can* be discharged by debtors without injury to creditors. These consumers' homes, with their empty larders, under-equipped kitchens, barely-furnished bedrooms, leaking roofs, and so on, constitute the market for excess exports which the debt-ridden provinces of Canada are ready and waiting to prepare and deliver in discharge of their debts.

Latins and the Cheque System.

By Edgar E. Presbury.

One of the first things which impressed me during my early days in Spain was the general suspicion aroused by cheques, and I shall never forget my first visit to a Spanish bank to cash one.

I pushed my cheque through a grille behind which a cashier was stationed, and shall always remember the look which he shot at me! I felt that I had forged the signature and ought to bolt immediately. At that moment another face peered at me from behind the grille—then another, and I wondered if I was under observation by the bank's private police. Things were looking critical when a Spanish friend walked in, slapped me on the back, and greeted the first cashier effusively. They were evidently close friends, and I hurriedly explained the situation to the newcomer. He laughed away my doubts, and introduced me to the cashier, who now beamed on me, to my great satisfaction and relief. In another minute or two I was handed a paper slip bearing a number, just as though I had bought a ticket in a raffle, and my friend informed me that it entitled me to a place in the "queue," by which he meant a line of people lounging near by. It appeared that my turn would not come for some time, and my friend suggested a coffee.

We left the bank and adjourned to a neighbouring café, on a main thoroughfare. Here we met a crowd of people who knew my friend, and I was introduced. No sooner was I seated than the inevitable "limpia botas" (shoe-black) appeared, and my shoes speedily had the shine which only Spanish shoe-blacks can produce. The shoe-black was the first of a procession, being followed by a villainous-looking individual who wished to sell me a pup (probably in both senses of the phrase); he made way for an unkempt but handsome gipsy woman, whose predictions have not yet reached fulfilment; next, a lottery-ticket seller who assured me that his numbers were always lucky; then an Armenian carpet-merchant, who wanted to unroll his goods in front of us (a desire which led to a heated argument with the waiter); a walking-stick vendor; a doleful beggar of music-hall ditties; and, lastly, an oratorical beggar, who assured me that the Deity would remember my charity on Judgment Day, as I rattled a coin into his tin mug.

In between these interruptions I had been endeavoring to understand the witty conversation of my companions, as this was language study in its most interesting form. As I caught the meaning of a certain story, which evoked more than the usual amount of laughter, I felt in a pocket for some paper on which to note it down, and in doing so I pulled out the bank's numbered slip. "What about my place in the bank queue?" I asked my friend. He assured me that there was no need to hurry back, although I found that we had been in the café for some considerable time. With true Spanish politeness he returned with me to the bank, and a few minutes later my number was called. I approached the counter, and the cashier handed me the amount of my cheque with a magnificent gesture. The ceremony was over!

I have a clear recollection of a conversation with my Spanish landlord in 1922. Señor José had visited England, and had noticed the widespread use of cheques in this country. He thought cheques were inadvisable, because "they let the Government see what you are doing." It would have been useless to attempt to convince him that the relations between banker and client were confidential, for he would have requested one to "tell that to the marines." It was in that same conversation that I made a remark to the effect that every Englishman made a correct declaration of income for taxation purposes. "There you are," declared Señor José triumphantly to his wife: "I always told you that the English are mad!" He must have known in, say, 1901, that which Douglas enunciated as a revolutionary doctrine in 1931 ("Monopoly of Credit"): "All taxation is robbery." One of his favourite sayings was: "The Government robs us, and in robbing the Government we are getting back stolen property." And yet on my next visit to England I was informed by a very learned person that "Spain is a backward country"!

As in Spain, so in France. The Frenchman knows instinctively that the cheque-system is a spy-system. After all, he probably thinks, a banker is only a servant, and it doesn't do to let servants know too much! If he has a banking account at all, he looks askance at cheques. Apparently he never did think much of the idea, and since the Stavisky scandal he has thought less. It appeared that Stavisky had all sorts of French public men on his payroll. He paid them by cheque and, of course, entered the names and corresponding amounts of "salary" on the counterfoils. Those counterfoils were whirled hither and thither in the storm of scandal which burst in France after Stavisky's death, and many a French politician must have cursed the financier's cheque-using habit! The burning question was: "Whose names are on the counterfoils?" and numerous jokes about cheques appeared in the French Press. One of the best, to my mind, was that which was published in "Gringoire" at the time: a beggar of the most dilapidated type is eagerly awaiting the bestowal of alms by a dear old lady, who is searching for a trifle in her handbag. The translation of the letterpress is as follows:—

Beggar: "You can give as much cash as you like, Madame, but cheques are not accepted; they are too compromising!"

There is nothing sacred to the French: even the banking system is not safe from their blasphemy! The striped trousers are no more of a protection than the cassock!

Notes on Technique.

By John Grimm.

I.

Recent controversial correspondence on the "cancellation" issue in this and other Social Credit journals demonstrates afresh the old truth that most disputes arise from misunderstandings as to definitions.

For example the word "Cost" is often used indiscriminately to refer to *past* expenditure and *anticipated* expenditure. In certain contexts the distinction between a cost *paid out* and a cost *provided for* is vital to an argument. Likewise with words such as "money," "credit," "purchasing-power," "charges," "depreciation," and so forth. They can all be understood ambiguously. Language is like an Exchange system in which words having a particular value in a speaker's mind have another value in the hearer's. There is a loss on the exchange: *expression* loses something during conversion into *impression*. Added to this obstacle the words we use (and have to in default of inventing them) are a legacy from the past, and come to us bearing the impress of obsolete connotations. Thus, whether social creditors debate with each other or expound to neophytes their difficulty is to overcome the obstacle of misunderstanding. How much time would not be saved in talk if only our vocabulary were as neutral as a piece of paper in an embossing machine, where the raised lettering of a speaker's meaning on the one side were automatically reproduced as the sunk lettering of his hearer's understanding on the other. "Star with star molten, soul with soul imbued" resulting in the poet's "one vision and one song."

The logical remedy would be to invent new words in which to discuss the problems of economics and finance. But that would take a long time to do; and, when done, the difficulty would arise of persuading the public to learn the new vocabulary.

The least difficult practical remedy is this: *so to frame our propositions as to dispense with the greatest number of ambiguous words.* It is then easier to formulate, so to speak, *standing orders relating to the significance of the words retained.* This entails a reversal of our present procedure. Instead of making up our minds what what words are dispensable, we should deal first with the problem of pruning the vocabulary with the view of ascertaining what propositions it is possible to establish by the use of the retained part. What proportion (or aspects) of the truth of Social Credit can be made generally communicable by the economical use of misunderstandable terms?

Let us illustrate. Take the words: "wages," "salaries," "dividends." Three different words. They can be reduced to one word, namely *Incomes*. Take the words: "costs," "charges," "depreciation" and let them be lumped together and called, simply *Charges*. The list could be extended but the above is sufficient to indicate the process. Someone may now object: "I don't agree to this compression; it would mislead people." Quite so; in some contexts it would: but the whole point is whether we can find a context where it would not. We may fail. In that case we must try something else.

Investments, purchases of consumables, and payments of rates and taxes, are all forms of consumers' expenditure. In certain contexts they can all be treated under the designation *Expenditure*.

Similarly with the designation *Price*, which covers the above three forms of expenditure. (A tax is a price just as any other charge.)

II.

Under this arbitrary choice of definition it will be seen that the *kind of proposition* to which it lends itself is one which is concerned with the mass monetary relationships between citizens outside the industrial system. It does not lend itself to propositions which are concerned with monetary relationships between citizens functioning inside that system as wage-earners, profit-takers, and so forth.

It follows from this that such terms as *Industry*, the *Government*, and even the *banks*, may be lumped together under the designation of, say, the *National Clearing House*—a sort of central pool into which citizens' *Expenditure* flows, and out of which citizens' *Income* flows.

This way of looking at the financial situation pictures it as one in which citizens deal with citizens through the medium of the *National Clearing House*, much in the same way as they would use a *Totalisator* on a racecourse. A *Totalisator* is an automatic machine which adds up receipts of stakes and makes allocations out of the total. Supposing it were owned by the racegoers, the final practical result of its doing this would be that the winning racegoers would receive the stakes put in by the losing racegoers. And so with the *National Clearing House* as above defined. It might even be clearer to define it as the *National Totalisator* in respect of certain lines of argument.

III.

Now, we will suspend this discussion of definition for a bit in order to consider the issue raised in the cancellation controversy. Can this issue be brought within the comprehension of ordinary people? Not unless exponents of the case for, or against, cancellation, are able to be comprehensible to each other. As stated to begin with, comprehension depends upon definition.

Now on the day when *Social Credit* is introduced and the *Price-Factor* made operative (in terms of the *Discount* or *Dividend* or both) there will have been a survey of *Production-Consumption* statistics covering a trial period of say three months. Now, the *Price-Factor* will reflect what happens during that short period, *not* what has happened before it. It will be arrived at by measuring how much has been added to our wealth, and how much subtracted therefrom, inside that period. The "how much" will be expressed in monetary units of the same measurement whether applied to the production side (additions) of the equation or to the consumption side (subtractions). Suppose the survey covers the quarter, October-December, and *Social Credit* begins to operate on January 1, then the amount of *Dividend* distributed will be governed by the October-December statistics.

The crucial question arises: What items will be included on the *Production* side of the equation? For, on September 1, there will be invested capital amounting to thousands of millions of pounds, and in respect of this capital certain classes of the community will have claims to receive money. How much money?—and for what? Now we propose to designate this capital *Funded Capital*. By this designation we mean *irrevocably claimable capital*—capital which represents practically the same thing as the purchase price of an *Annuity*. In fact, the holders of the capital may be designated *An-*

Elements of Social Credit.

I.

It is agreed by orthodox economists and credit reformers alike that, when you buy something to consume, the money you pay for it is cancelled—also, that it ought to be cancelled.

Suppose you buy a kettle for a shilling; you cannot use your shilling to buy another kettle. You will say: "Of course not"—and by saying "of course" you will be meaning: "I ought not to."

Why ought you not to? Because your shilling now belongs by right to the people who made the kettle, or who paid the shilling to have the kettle made. They have no right to keep the kettle and take your shilling; and you have no right to keep your shilling and take the kettle. Moreover, it is necessary, as well as just, that you pay the shilling, for these people need it to make another kettle. When they get the shilling they will use it for that purpose.

So the cancellation of your shilling means that it has passed from your possession as a consumer into theirs as producers. It has not gone out of existence: and so far as you can tell it will come back later on to you (or some other consumer) as wages paid out for making the second kettle. In that case you would have a new shilling to spend every time that the producers had a new kettle at that price to sell.

No doubt you think that this is happening now. Or, if not, you see no reason why it shouldn't be happening. You may see a reason why you, personally, might not get back in wages the shilling you spent, but if you consider yourself as representing all consumers put together, then your shilling will represent all the wages, salaries, dividends paid by the producers. Let us call these payments *consumer-earnings*. Accordingly you will see that *consumer-earnings* ought to be the same in amount as the price of *consumption-goods*. For, as you know, all *consumer-earnings* are counted as *producer-costs*, and all *producer-costs* are counted as *consumer-earnings*. Perhaps you do not accept the second part of this proposition so readily as the first; but if you remember that producers (taken all together) cannot sell their goods outright except to consumers (taken all together) you will see that all *producer-costs* have got to be counted as *consumer-earnings*. Nobody has the money to pay them finally except consumers. If you know any expert in the counting of costs (known by the name of "Accountant") he will confirm this. If questioned closely he will probably agree to the statement that every cost is a charge against consumers, and if so, he will be agreeing that all costs are counted as if they were *consumer-earnings*. For if they were not *consumer-earnings* he would have to admit that the system of counting them as such was nonsense.

Take your kettle. If the cost of one shilling were made up of six items of twopence each, what would be the use of his counting the six twopences as the price to you unless he knew that you had got possession of all six twopences.

(To be continued.)

Croydon Social Credit Group.

A debate between Major Weaver, B.Sc (local Labour candidate at the last General Election) and Mr. T. F. Evans (Secretary of the Birmingham Douglas Social Credit Group) took place at the Sanctuary Tea Rooms, Selsdon, on Tuesday, April 7, at 8 p.m. The debate originated in a challenge by the local Labour Party. Both sides brought their own supporters. Major Weaver's motion was: "That the country looks to the proposals of the Labour Party, rather than to the Douglas Social Credit Proposals, to solve the economic crisis." An audience of nearly a hundred listened to an animated debate, and many questions were addressed to both speakers, particularly to Mr. Evans. On a vote the motion was lost, forty odd voting for the Social Credit Proposals, as against nineteen for Major Weaver's motion.

(To be Continued.)

nuitants. How will these people and their claims affect the calculations of the Clearing House surveyors when they begin the survey on October 1? If they were to account the whole value of the plant and equipment belonging to the *Funded Capitalist* as an item in production costs they would arrive at a ratio so wide as to indicate the payment of an aggregate *Dividend* almost equal to the value of the property.

This would mean an enormous amount of money in circulation which could not be absorbed by the consumption market unless prices were raised by a large multiple of their previous volume. Even so, this money could not be absorbed by intermediate markets—semi-manufactures, raw materials, etc.—unless the prices of these, too, were multiplied in the same measure. In fact the only way in which it could be absorbed (as distinct from being "cancelled," i.e., confiscated) would be by being re-spent on new capital construction. The material effect of such re-spending would be the construction of a duplicate set of factories, equipment, etc., equal to that which had been the property of the annuitants accumulated over the period since, say, the beginning of the industrial revolution.

Now, bearing in mind that the *Dividend* paid out from January to March would be governed by what had happened in the preceding period of survey, October to December, the foregoing hypothesis is manifestly absurd, for how would it be possible for the nation's plant and equipment to be doubled in three months? Yet, unless this were done the issue of a *Dividend* to the amount involved would be an infringement of the *Social-Credit* principle that new credits shall be applied to *new* production, meaning that unless the total value of new production exceeded the total value of wealth consumed during October-December, no *Dividend* would be issued for January-March.

The old wealth existing before October 1 cannot figure as production in the period of survey, nor can its monetary valuation be accounted as a cost of production in that period. Figures must reflect facts, and the relevant facts in the survey-period would be that there would be a certain fraction of that wealth, and its valuation, used up on the one hand, and made good on the other. The side of the account and the making-good, *production*, for the purpose of working out the *Price-Factor* and *derivative Dividend*. The monetary valuation would be the same on each side, because the cost of the wastage would be the cost of making it good. So far, then, the existence of *Funded Capital* does not affect the *Production-Consumption* equation in the survey-period.

We may here consider industry as a *National Investment Trust* and the *National Investment Trustee* as acting for the *Annuitants*. What precisely would be the claim which he could present to the *National Surveyors* as legitimately maturing in the October-December period? The claim to a quarter's instalment of the annuities, plus a claim that the wastage involved in the use of their property be made good. Of course, in this period, such claims would be rather justifications for attempts to meet them made by industry, not requests for the Surveyors to do so. The latter would be merely investigating what was happening in order to arrive at the initial *Price-Factor*.

One thing they would see, namely that not only was industry not liquidating the *Funded Capital*, but was in trouble even about maintaining payments of the annuities.

other Party and keep on changing until my policy has been achieved." I might smile and pass on if I heard an individual brother of the Social Credit church talk like that, but I say an abrupt "No" to such a proposal for a British election policy.

Yet I sincerely add that I do not call in question the motives of the friends who urge this policy. I also add sincerely that I am enduringly glad I ever joined the Douglas Movement, and that I rejoice to feel the thrill of a pioneering new birth and new vision in all the many and varied groups, clubs, and societies that embody the Social Credit idea.

The Theatre.

"Spread It Abroad." A Revue by Herbert Farjeon, William Walker, and Others. Saville.

There is so much that is first-rate in this Revue that one is sorry it has not been pruned more ruthlessly since the first night. The show as a whole would be improved immensely if it were cut by twenty-five or thirty minutes, which, since it begins at eight twenty and ends at eleven fifteen, it could easily afford. Miss Dorothy Dickson is as beautiful as ever—so beautiful indeed that no one would believe she could be funny, and yet her "holiday snap" fiend is as crisp a piece of social satire as one could wish to see. Mr. Nelson Keys does his usual stuff superbly; wireless listeners who have heard him as an Italian barber discussing the Abyssinian war will be glad to see the magnificent display of Neapolitan gesture that accompanies the monologue. Miss Ivy St. Helier is, of course, the perfect partner for Mr. Keys, and Miss Hermione Gingold contributes, among other things, a cruel sketch of Miss Ishbel MacDonald among the tankards. For me the best thing in an entertaining evening was Mr. Bernard Lyle's inspired singing of "Dirty Shirts," a witty attack on the kind of stuff our Boiled Shirts look for in cabaret.

ANDREW BONELLA.

Test Work.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."
Sir,—“Test work,” which the unemployed were promised would cease in March, 1935, is still operative and assigned regardless of adaptability.

In 1934, aged sixty-two, I was forced to accept relief of 12s. weekly with "test work," working, although ruptured, as a stoker and general labourer at the Public Assistance premises, Maidstone.

A non-manual worker, limited to 4s. weekly for food, drinking water only, I pleaded for more relief and a lighter job in vain.

Surely the chairman of the P.A.C., the Rev. J. R. Hale (stipend nearly £2,000 p.a.) cannot realise how oppressively this "test work" operates. M. Stalin truly says, "Capitalism furnishes the chief war menace. Millions are spent for war preparations when we want bread, not bullets. Forced through inadequate relief to exist on 4s. weekly for food, here is a week's diet. I drink water only:—

Two wholemeal loaves	s. d.
1½ lb. margarine	0 7½
1 jar marmalade	0 7½
Fish and chips	0 6½
1 lb. cheese	1 6
Onions	0 7
	0 1½

4 0

Can anyone kindly suggest a better choice?

A. E. MINTON.

1900 film star, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.
30, Union Street, Maidstone.
April 5, 1936.

Fiscal Terror.

According to a report of the Ministry of Finance, published in *Patria*, the mouthpiece of the Rumanian Peasant Party in Transylvania, the total amount of inland revenue in January, 1936, shows an increase of 272 millions, as against January, 1935. These 272 millions, the paper says, are due to "the wildest fiscal terror." Tax collectors and gendarmes broke into the houses of tax payers, terrorising children and widows, to carry off the last pillow and very often the only cow that gave nourishment to seven or eight members of a hungry family. The newly appointed tax collectors sometimes went so far as to sell people's houses for small arrears.

[Extracted from the *Danubian Review*, February-March issue, 1936.]

ECONOMISTS AND CONSUMERS.

"The problem of the consumer has never troubled economists in the past, for the simple reason that it was never posed to their masters, whose lessons the economists recited so faithfully."—*La Grande Relève*, Paris.

THE INSOLVENT CONSUMER.

La Grande Relève (Paris) has a happy phrase for the consumer with money in his pocket: he is the "solvent consumer." The other fellow, he whose "shopping" can go no further than nose-flattening against a shop-window, is called "the insolvent consumer."

SACK THE MACHINE!

"Budapest, February 8: The Hungarian Ministry of Health has just published a decree prohibiting the use of mowing and reaping machinery for the hay and other harvests of 1936, in order to force agriculturists to use the services of the unemployed."—*La Grande Relève*, Paris.

MACHINES AT CHURCH!

"Cardinal Verdier, the great church builder, has just blessed the new parish church of St. Gabriel, in the newly-built part of Porte de Vincennes. As yet the sacred edifice possesses only walls, a roof, and an altar. However, as a result of renewed efforts the church will have a pulpit, sacred ornaments, and an organ—but it already possesses something which is the envy of rich parishes: the female attendant who sold candles has been replaced by an automatic machine, and, according to the coin pushed into the slot, 20 sous or 5 francs, one receives a taper or a candle. What isn't done by machinery nowadays? And what will become of the out-of-work church attendants?"—*La Grande Relève*, Paris, December, 1935.

SAUSAGES AHOY!

Le Populaire tells a Marseilles story which is true—although it comes from Marseilles* On November 4 the inhabitants of the small port of Goudes were surprised to find along the shore a large number of cases of sausages, thrown up by a recent storm. At first a wreck was feared, but on enquiry it was found that the cause was something quite different.

Two years ago a Marseilles firm received 371 cases of sausages, the consignment coming from Buenos Aires. As prices were low, it was decided to postpone the sale, but the rise did not materialise, and as there were no signs of improved trade it was decided to sell the sausages. It was then discovered by the Ministry of Health that the sausages were unfit for human consumption, and the 371 cases were thrown into the sea, doubtless in the hope that they would get back to their native country, the Argentine!—*Le Grande Relève*, Paris, December, 1935.

[*A reference to the fact that the Marseillais permits his imagination to run riot in narration.]

Forthcoming Meetings.

The following public meetings will be held at the Blewcoat Room, Caxton Street, S.W.1. :—
April 17, 7.45 p.m.—By Various Speakers. "Aspects of Social Credit."
April 24, 7.45 p.m.—By the Marquis of Tavistock. Questions and Answer night.

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