THE

NEW AGE

INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER"

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART

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CONTENTS.

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

The outstanding event of last week was the action of the New York Federal Reserve Bank in raising its rate from 3 to 3½ per cent. What were the immediate consequences? The sterling exchange fell sharply to 4.74⅜; and the Bank of England, although formally leaving its rate unchanged at 4 per cent., practically brought it to 5 per cent. by raising its charges for weekly loans from 4½ to 5½ per cent. "This unprecedented action," says the City Editor of the *Daily News*, "was taken to mean that the present intention is to raise the Bank Rate to 5 per cent. next Thursday." The depreciation on the day of six leading Government stocks amounted to nearly £27 millions. Industrial stocks too—such as British American Tobaccos, Courtaulds, Bradford Dyers, leading oil shares, and Rio Tintos—all suffered a relapse. "Values of these shares," comments the above authority, "have appreciated considerably for some time past, largely under the influence of speculation on borrowed money, and as another settlement is close at hand, there was a rush to reduce commitments, and dealers promptly marked down prices in self-defence." Needless to say, there was "confusion in the money market." Now, why should a stroke of a pen in a New York parlour have caused all this turmoil—a turmoil approaching a panic—over here? The City Editor of the *Daily Mail* explains: "That the rise in the New York rate should necessitate prompt action here arises mainly from the Bank's desire to prevent a serious setback in the American exchange value of the £." But contrast this with what we citizens of this country were told a little while ago when the exchange value of the £ was approaching parity with the dollar. Were we not unanimously assured that this was the reward of our past abstinence, our past sacrifices of all sorts, our adhesion to the principles of "sound finance," our decision to fund and repay what was owing to America—in short, that the purchase price of Parity had all been paid, and that all that remained was now for us to receive delivery of the valuable consideration which we had so hardly bought? But now we are suddenly told that there are further costs. Listen to the *Daily Mail's* City Editor again: "In other words the *cost of keeping up the value of sterling is an all-round advance in loan and discount rates*, which have already risen 1 per cent. in anticipation of an early advance of the Bank Rate." Instead of receiving a dividend we are told that we have to pay another call. One conclusion is certain, which is that the improvement in our exchange is not a matter within our control. The City Editor last mentioned explains how this is. He says: "The recent rise in the £ has been due partly to the employment of American balances in the London market, because money rates here have been much higher than in New York. If this margin of rates is not maintained the *American balances may be rushed back to New York*: that is, there may be heavy offering of sterling in exchange for dollars." It all comes to this, then, that whatever we do to raise the £ to parity, the New York Federal Reserve Board can write it down again whenever it likes by writing up its own interest rate. In the present instance, it is suggested by the Press that the step was taken without warning the Bank of England. It may be true, but we doubt it; for the effect has been to push the Bank in the very direction in which it seemed to purpose going before Sir Montagu Norman visited America—namely the raising of the Bank Rate. At that time, it will be remembered, the hint of this purpose jerked the *Spectator* out of its placidity to some effect, while behind the agitation created by that journal was the strong feeling among influential industrialists within the Federation of British Industries that they had had enough of dear credit, with its deflationary restrictions on trade prosperity, a feeling which had been explicitly manifested some time previously in one of the Federation's "Memoranda," in which the signatories stated that if industry was to be called upon for further sacrifices in the interests of the sterling exchange they would require some very clear evidence why it was necessary. Well, the call for further sacrifices is now here, and, while it is accompanied by certain evidences, we submit that their nature falls far short of meeting the F.B.I.'s demand for clarity. The "rushing" of American "balances" back to America, for instance. That does not solve a single perplexity. Rather does it serve to throw into stereoscopic distinctness the vital question: How does the productiveness of this country's *real* credit—its plant, skill, and organising ability, charged, as these factors are, with the current of a common will to work—come to be dependent

upon any other *financial* credit than its own? Who wants "American balances"? Why are they wanted? The only possible condition under which there seems to be any need for them is that Britain has already exhausted all the possibilities of expressing her *real* credit in the form of financial credit, and still needs to employ more. Is any responsible authority going to say that the two thousand odd million pounds sterling now in existence or circulating as financial credit in Great Britain expresses more than a fraction of the potential wealth seeking to burst forth from our pent-up industrial system? Then why is more not created? Why, on the contrary, are we warned of a higher Bank Rate—the recognised storm-cone of credit restriction? For what is the cost of creating credit? Paper and ink. Are we short of them? No; they are still being advertised. What is the matter then? The matter is that our fields and factories are being trampled down in this way because the Joint High Command of the Anglo-American Banking Consortium is holding its Gold Standard manœuvres. And if the citizens of this country are wise they will draw their conclusions as to what the imposition of a Gold Standard will mean—and is intended to mean—by observing the damage done to their property and their morale by these blank-cartridge tacticians and strategists. Once you let them lay down the law that this country's power to develop its own resources is to be kept in a fixed ratio to its power of securing and retaining gold and you are virtually condemning Britain to the role of a mandated financial territory of the United States of America. Make no mistake about it: *the country which now possesses, as America does, the preponderating amount of the world's gold can get possession of the rest in existence and to come.* Under the unwritten statutes of the financial super-government the possession of gold measures the power to create credit, the power to create credit is the power to lend credit, the power to lend credit is the power to invest, the power to invest is the power to control industry, the power to control industry is the power to decide who shall buy the output, and the power to decide who shall buy implies the power to decide who shall not buy. All these powers America will be able to exercise in regard to gold mining, just the same as to all other forms of enterprise. So, directly this country is prevailed on to hitch her wagon to a nugget she declines to the status of a mere driver in the pay of the nugget monopolist and may as well join with all the other countries of the Old World in a sort of Transport Workers' Union for the purpose of getting a tolerable standard of wages from the Federal Reserve Board's wagon trust. It needs no prolonged search in the newspapers of any day to discover signs of the tendencies of which we speak. We take the following from the *Post Magazine and Insurance Monitor* of February 7:—

"Financial authorities in New York are saying that if Britain wants to achieve and maintain parity between the pound and the dollar, *she will have to lend less abroad, and yield definitely and for a long period to the United States the pride of place as the chief lender of the world.*"

That is candid enough. Moreover, it is entirely logical once you have admitted that there must be a fixed ratio between any given weight of gold you possess and the given volume of credit you wish to create. Concede that, and you have assented to the proposition that, *of the total volume of credit to be created and lent by all the nations in the world in the immediate future, America shall create and lend more than one-half.* That is to say, America would have a distinct balance of control over the policy of every industrial organisation in the world. That would be the effect of the law. But will its writ run in industrial territory? It will not. Still less will it run in military territory. Credit control through Nugget Control can only be visited upon the Old World through superior military force. That is why the nations of the Old World are being invited to America to discuss Disarmament, and it is why, as we suggested last week, the discussion will be as big a farce as the Washington Pact. But to revert to America's claim to be the greatest lending Power. It is stated in the *Stock Exchange Gazette* of January 29 that the United States has increased her investments in Canada during the last ten years from 420 to 2,500 million dollars, whereas "very little British money" has gone there during the same period. Concurrently with this financial Americanising of Canada there has been growing up an anti-British sentiment. Major Douglas referred to it in his speech at THE NEW AGE dinner, and it finds expression in a warning by Dr. S. J. Manion during a session of the Canadian Parliament. The *Birmingham Post* of February 16, reports him to have said: "If a vote were taken in a certain part of Canada comprising over a third of the total population of the country, the result would be overwhelmingly in favour of secession from the British Empire and annexation to the United States." The undermining of British prestige is being carried out even in American film production. Only last week Lord Burnham "lamented the fact that the Britisher as a rule, when he appeared in the American film, was made absolutely ridiculous and always insignificant." (*The Times* report.) Then from Johannesburg *The Times* correspondent cables under the date February 6 that an American syndicate controlled by Messrs. J. P. Morgan and Co. had made an offer to the De Beers and the Premier Diamond companies for the purchase of the year's output, and that the London syndicate which had been negotiating for this business only secured it—and, thereby, its continued control of the diamond market—by raising its original offer. From diamonds to gold is not a far cry, and even with regard to the diamond market, who can doubt that, if American policy had been concerned with its acquisition, the end of the story would have been different? As it is, one by-product of London's success will be the hardening of feeling in America that Great Britain "will have to lend less abroad." Competition against America to lend in the world market must be kept within bounds—by America! In some cases the procedure is, as we have just seen, to write up the American bank rate, and cause the withdrawal of "American balances" from the money market of the offending competitor. But there are more drastic means. Rear-Admiral Bradley Fiske has been telling the Foreign Policy Association in New York that war between the United States and Japan must be regarded as a possibility because of the ever-growing competition between the two nations in the world market. According to the *Birmingham Post*, he proceeded: "If we yielded to Japan, it would mean we virtually gave up our lucrative Far Eastern trade. If we did not yield, but continued negotiations, the result might not be widely different from immediate yielding, because they *might commit us to measures which would make successful war impossible.*" If this kind of reasoning is endorsed by the United States Government one wonders what sort of "negotiations" will be carried on during the Disarmament Conference—which ostensibly aims at ultimately making "successful war impossible."

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If anyone wants a hint as to why Mr. Lansbury has brought out a new Labour weekly, we should recommend him to read the last paragraph of Mr. Brailsford's article, "The Danger from Fascism," in the *New Leader* of last week. We reproduce it here:—

At the cost even of long delays and weary compromises, at the cost even of concessions which offend our sense of equity, the Socialist transformation must be brought about without catastrophe or violence. Every hatred which we excite impedes us; every fear which we provoke retards us. Democratic methods alone are fitted to our purpose, since our central aim is to realise democracy. No mechanical victory would content us. We can succeed *only when the mind and heart of the people embrace and understand our ideal.*

This is emancipation on a long wave-length in all truth. We suggest that the *New Leader* come out in future at five-yearly intervals immediately following the published results of the Census, and that provision be made by the Government to elicit particulars of the political (or is it religious?) conviction of the community, so that Mr. Brailsford will have some numerical material from which to calculate the date of the Socialist triumph. We are far from disparaging his logic. He is disquietingly realistic, too. Yet he is far from consistent; for in his analyses he has frequently shown that the capitalist system is rapidly breaking down, whereas he now talks as if he felt that Socialism had all eternity in front of it to perfect the system which is to replace capitalism. But what is to happen if Capitalism bursts before the people are converted to Socialism? When we were young we used to spend our holidays with two uncles in Devonshire who used to work themselves into bitter altercations over the question: "Will the second coming of Jesus take place before or after the Millennium?" One was a critical student of the prophecies, and interpreted them in favour of the Millennium first: but the other had his "feelings," and when he surveyed the rate of flow of conversions and contrasted it with the high birth-rate of sinners he could not but reject the depressing logic of the situation, and he found to his satisfaction that Jesus need not retard His descent for the prior conversion of the world. We always found ourselves in sympathy with this second uncle, and in that recollection we can understand the feelings of "Uncle" Lansbury, who protests that he is not the sort of servant who proposes to depart in peace before his eyes have seen the Lord's salvation. Well, if he is careful to avoid apoplexy, he will probably see it. Only it will not be Socialism; it will be Social Credit. The reason is that Social Credit policy is ready now. Its technique, too, has been worked out to a point where any set of Government experts can finish the drawings in six days and administer the policy on the seventh. The "popular conversion" principle will come in after the event. The administration of the policy will convert the people. Some day soon a statesman in this black room of ours will trip over on the bent backs of the political match finders, and, in sprawling, will touch the switch. All over. The people wanted light. Light has been given to them. Vote? What should they vote for?—except to return a vote of thanks.

* * *

One can see clearly the cloven hoof of the democratic principle as we now know it. Why do experienced rulers "consult" the inexperienced electorate at all if it be not that, knowing their programmes will not work, they want to transfer the odium of failure on to the voter? "For success we need reasoned and intelligent consent," says Mr. Brailsford: "We must first educate the manual workers, and even then we shall not go far until we win a part of the professional and the managerial class. Nor will political power alone suffice. In the end, the unanswerable argument for the fundamental change will be the increasing reluctance of the organised workers in mine and factory to tolerate the present distribution of wealth and power." But: "When all those conditions are satisfied, we shall still avoid civil war only by a combination of great skill and unflinching resolution. A wise Socialist majority, even when it ventures to move swiftly, and even if it has to resort to emergency measures to protect itself from sabotage, will still observe Parliamentary forms in the spirit and in the letter." It would start, he suggests, with "the constitutional right to call on the obedience of magistrates and soldiers, even if some of them disobey." Then there is always the "modern weapon" of the "general strike." Yes, but earlier in the same article, Mr. Brailsford, arguing against revolutionary methods, says: "The interruption for a few weeks of the normal mechanism of credit and foreign trade would starve our island, even without a formal blockade." This consequence would not be any the less certain simply because a Socialist Government, instead of a revolutionary minority, caused the interruption. So it would seem that to the factors already required by Mr. Brailsford he must add at least one more—namely that this country must have become able to feed itself off its own land. Then, of course, the question of financing the general strike has to be considered. The banks would have to co-operate. Or is it suggested that the Socialist Government would itself create and issue credit sufficient to support passive resistance during a period of non-production—following the precedent set by Germany in the Ruhr? In either alternative there could be nothing but the most tremendous price-inflation. But perhaps the Government would regulate prices? Short of putting a military garrison in every shop we do not see how it could enforce its system. Yet, unless it had in its hands the dual control—credit issue and price regulation, its finance would defeat its ends. We arrive then at this general conclusion, that whatever one agrees is good or bad about Socialism, the most peacable and constitutional means of applying it, *in the form in which its humble adherents expect it to be applied*, sooner or later involve the adoption of a definite financial policy with, of course, the effective control of both halves of the credit system. But since *financial* credit is the expression of *real* credit, and has no existence apart from it, is it not mistaken tactics to be forced to introduce a new policy of *financial* credit just at the time when the vital moral factor in *real* credit—willing co-operation through the inducement of a general reward—has evaporated in the heat of the class struggle? Is not the argument overwhelming that if a new credit policy is so fundamental as to be the last resort of a beleaguered Socialist Government, all parties to production should together examine the credit question with the view of ascertaining whether there is not a policy that is able to inaugurate a new era of peace now just as well as to terminate an era of class war a century hence?

One-Man Finance.

MR. HOOLEY'S REMINISCENCES.

I.

We feel in the mood to invert the French proverb and say "Qui s'accuse s'excuse." The feeling has been engendered by reading a reprint of what are called Mr. Hooley's "Confessions"—originally published in the *News of the World*. This book* is worth the careful perusal of everyone who studies the New Economics. Of course, it will satisfy the love of sensationalism on the part of the general public; nevertheless as a sidelight on finance it is as illuminating to the serious student as it is otherwise entertaining. The anonymous editor's Foreword informs us that Mr. Hooley, "unlike most men of his type, has no vices. His habits are simple. He does not drink, or smoke, and possesses the domestic virtues." Almost a banker, one might say. "He loves the open air, and is a born farmer of unusual skill." We may add for our part that if the *Confessions* are Mr. Hooley's own composition, he is a born *raconteur* as well. He writes, too, in an engaging unconcern with what the reader will think of his moral character. His editor observes in the Foreword: "The world is always full of people who

* "Hooley's Confessions." By Ernest Terah Hooley. (Simpkin Marshall. 2s. 6d. net.)

want to 'get rich quick.' Hooley knew how to appeal to them." (One notices, by the way, that when a man goes to prison he leaves something behind when he comes out—the prefix of "Mr.") The trouble was, of course, that Mr. Hooley wanted to "get rich quick" as well, and it was inevitable that, since all could not be shearers, some had to be shorn. As these lines are being written from an economic viewpoint, the task of allotting to its exact position in the calendar the crime of shearing would-be shearers must be left to those meticulous experts who specialise in morals.

One striking thing is that while in three hundred pages there is not one moral indictment, among the many that Mr. Hooley cites against himself, which he troubles to rebut or even to extenuate, he does take some pains to deny the assertion that he is a Jew!

His father was a lace manufacturer, and took him into partnership with him. For nine years he stayed in that business, and then "thought the time had come to launch out for myself." He thereupon set up for himself in Nottingham with a stock-in-trade of "nothing but my own native wits." Throughout the early 'nineties he handled houses, land, breweries, and all the time was learning the business of a company promoter.

"At one time I owed a Nottingham bank no less than £700,000. True they had ample security, but my operations were even then on such a colossal scale that they grew frightened of me and asked if I could not get a London bank to stand in with them. . . . So I came to London and had an interview with the directors of Lloyds Bank, which resulted in many years of profitable business, in which millions of pounds changed hands."

References to banks are very infrequent—probably because Mr. Hooley early learned to honour his commitments to them before all else, and so had no trouble. One bank episode occurred when he was Conservative candidate for the Ilkeston Division in 1896-7. One day he was visited in his Nottingham office by the manager of a colliery and ironworks in Ilkeston with a long story of threatened disaster.

"Their bank had stopped their credit, and they hadn't enough money to pay the week's wages. It would mean putting 400 men out of employment if I would not come to the rescue. I did my usual lightning calculation.

"'This will mean another 400 votes,' I thought. 'If they were not my supporters before, they will be now.'

"I asked the manager what he had to offer by way of security. It seems that there were 20,000 tons of pig iron . . . and after a bit more talking I said to my clerk:—

"'Mr. Dobson, make this gentleman out a cheque for £40,000.'

"So my caller went away happy and I had to worry myself about getting rid of the pig iron."

The result is worth telling. He advertised the lot at 40s. a ton in a Birmingham paper, over the initials E. T. H. As he intended, everybody knew whom that meant, and "immediately a panic settled on the iron trade." Eventually one of the largest firms bought it at his price, not that they wanted it, but that "they didn't want me to start dumping 20,000 tons of iron on an already weak market." "So I got my money back, and had the additional satisfaction of keeping 400 men in work. My timely help enabled the works to keep going, and they are flourishing to this day."

Another bank episode occurred in connection with the Sapphire Corundum Company, which was one of Mr. Hooley's failures. Its downfall was precipitated by a series of attacks in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, the immediate consequence of which was that "all the Canadian directors resigned, the auditors in England declined to act further, and the *bank refused to handle any more of the money connected with the company*." One may usefully compare this attitude with that recently assumed by the Midland Bank in the "Mr. A." case, where the duty of a bank was then claimed to begin and end with the receipt and payment of deposits from and to the person or organisation authorised to handle them—and all responsibility for the integrity of the client and the origin of the money was clearly repudiated.

The methods by which Mr. Hooley made money out of company promotion were "as old as the hills"—to quote his editor once more; but it is interesting to note that they were greatly facilitated "by the Joint Stock Acts." One instance will serve as a type of all the rest of his promotions. He acquired a Canadian company called the Crown Corundum Company for £70,000, and registered it here with a capital of £1,000,000. After all expenses were paid "there remained the possibility of making £860,000 profit out of the venture—if all had gone well," he says. But, as he sapiently adds, "man proposes and God disposes"; and when, as the result of the attacks by the *Pall Mall Gazette* before referred to, it became known that the shares of the original company had been "hawked about in America at 15 cents apiece," "God's" dispositions were disconcertingly swift. The company went into liquidation, and there was a deficit of £805,845. In the meantime Mr. Hooley had to sell what shares he could at whatever price they would fetch. What he made or dropped over this venture, he forgets.

Naturally, to pursue enterprises of this kind there must be collusion on a wide scale. In many cases Mr. Hooley sought for it and offered to buy it. That method is called "bribery." In very many more cases other people brought it to him and offered to sell it. That is commonly known as "blackmail." "When I came to London in 1896, full of original ideas about making money, I set the fashion of appointing 'guinea pig' directors on the Boards of public companies." That the pigs wallowed in guineas is suggested by Mr. Hooley's reflection that "incidentally thereby I also saved many a noble family from ruin." Here is an incident:—

"When I bought the Dunlop business in 1896 I thought it would be a good idea to have some well-known people on the Board, so I got hold of an earl, now deceased, and said to him:—

"'Now look here, I'll give you £10,000 for a duke, and £5,000 apiece for a couple of ordinary peers. I don't mind who they are so long as they are fairly well known.'

"'Right you are, my boy,' he replied breezily. 'It won't take me long to find the people you want.'

"Nor did it. He brought along the late Duke of Somerset and another noble earl. That was good enough for me. The new company came out with its titled directors and was a roaring success."

Again, when he was installed in his suite of offices at the Midland Grand Hotel;

"Half the peers in the country used to line up in the corridor to beg a moment of my time. Eminent divines of the Church of England would come praying me for money to restore their cathedrals, while the politicians simply fell over each other in their endeavour to gain my ear."

Then the Press. Some £50,000 was spent on advertising the Dunlop Company's prospectus all over Great Britain. "Even the smallest of papers had it." Another form of publicity that was "eminently useful," recalls Mr. Hooley, "revolved around my spectacular life." "In those days, anything concerning me brought 10s. a line to the fortunate writer." There was the blackmailing side as well.

"There was a financial paper . . . . which printed page articles concerning my numerous companies. They never saw the light of day, for the simple reason that one of the people connected with the paper would come along to the Midland Grand and get £500 for suppressing the article." Again: "Innumerable little blackmailing papers would have calls on shares in my new companies in consideration of keeping silence about my affairs. Sometimes they would get as much as £5,000 worth of shares for nothing."

The extent to which this subvention of collusion—both voluntary and otherwise—was carried on by Mr. Hooley is indicated by the fact that when he went bankrupt no less a sum than £1,110,137 was struck out of the "claims lodged against the estate." A good deal of this represented "claims for commissions on deals which had never materialised," but the significance lies in the fact that they afford a rough measure of the "rate of flow" of pickings which went on while Mr. Hooley was a "going concern." One is left to conjecture the amount of "claims" that had been met before the bankruptcy occurred. When it is stated that from first to last £100,000,000 passed through Mr. Hooley's hands, it will be seen that the financial basis of willing co-operation was of the most generous proportions.

In a following article we must deal with Mr. Hooley's attempts to take part in international finance.

The Epoch of "The Men of Business."

By Dr. Frederick Van Eeden.

III.

ABOUT HENRY FORD.

At this juncture "letters to the Editor" are coming to hand from sensitive and vulnerable readers, asking me to give chapter and verse, and charging me with being too sensitive, as I am, and inclined to grant that everyone is right who can make the least show to be so! If people only knew how cheap I hold my own doings. How I should like to shrink away for shame when I shall be called to account. Yet those men of business who turn out dangerous products are none the less honest, deserving, and righteous men for all that. They have treated their men reasonably well, they are justly popular and have got their deserts. But that they might have done better, that their methods are only second best, and that Ford sets them right precisely in that matter, that Ford has a more masterful insight and is a more useful man than they, well, all this I am bound to uphold even in the face of my great unworthiness.

Hence it is that I have to set right Mr. Paul Pry, and assure him that he has failed to do what I brought under his notice as necessary, viz., to read and consider all that Ford has unmistakably and clearly explained in his book. On various sides people are pointing out to me the tremendous profits made by Ford's factories. "442 million dollars! clear! And a minimum wage of 6 dollars per day." "Such a flourishing business cannot be a righteous one." On such lines as these run the arguments of business men accustomed to paying out a dividend, and appraising a business according to the parasitical profits that accrue to the shareholders.

Your query, Mr. Paul Pry, you will find answered on page 253, 254, and 255 of Ford's book. (Dutch Edition W.B.). Capital which is made by the enterprise itself, which is being utilised to give the worker a chance to succeed, which increases his comfort and welfare and is going to be employed to find work for more people, and yet which at the same time lessens the costs of "service," *such a capital is never a menace to humanity, even if it should be in one hand.* It is a surplus flowing from the abundance created by labour, which surplus imposes on him into whose hands it flows the duty of again using it to the benefit of all. The owner of such a capital may hardly look upon it as a personal reward. He may not look upon such a surplus as his own, because he did not create it single-handed. It is the collective product of his whole organisation. The owner's mind may alone have stimulated and projected all the energy, guidance and order, but it did not alone execute and apply them. *Each workman was a co-worker at his creation.* No single enterprise is a thing of stability. Its life depends on many factors. It must be in possession of the means to keep it going. It must pay the very best wages to its employees, *so that every co-operator, be his task what it may, have ample means to live.* To enable it to fulfil these conditions, it must command a surplus. The really honest manufacturer uses his surplus for that purpose. It matters not who handles that surplus, nor where it is kept; what matters is the application thereof. Capital which does not continually call more and better work into being, is more useless than sand. Capital which does not continually improve the conditions of daily labour and render its payment more equitable, falls short of its most sacred duty. The most sacred duty of capital is not to make still more money, but to make a further and better use of it for the amelioration of the conditions of life. *If by means of our industrial labour we do not help on the solution of the social problem,* we neglect the most important part of our work. We do not then serve to the best of our powers.

Did you get me, Mr. Paul Pry? If so, you will know at the same time what Ford is about to do with his enormous profits. He is not going to pay dividends, nor is he going to make his shareholders happy, but he is going *to solve the social question.* No more nor less. And he is able to do it. He promises as much, and he is not a bragger, but a man of his word.

He is going to do what I have been wanting to do. But I—poor me—always found my figures on the wrong side of my deposit book. Never could I manage to leave a modest margin. Yet steadfastly have I chosen sides against class-warfare and anarchy, and clearly pointed my finger at parasitism as the root of the evil.

And now I find in Ford the helper who, owing to his honesty and enormous capacities, can do without princes, diplomats, and partisans. With a profit of 442 million dollars one can undertake something. Here Kropotkin's "Age of Plenty" is really in sight. Why do I so firmly put my trust in it? Ford's ways are free and open. He plays with his cards on the table. He shows his profit returns, and lets us have a look at his results. Everyone of his forecasts has been verified. His word has the ring of sincerity, and he says what all men of business have to acknowledge and are in a position to know. Frankly he seizes parasitical capitalism by the throat. The evil lurks in neither money nor capital, but in the parasitism which, like cancer, eats into the vitals of society, a malignant disease only to be stamped out by honest, clean labour and square, above-board dealings. In plain terms Ford brands as infamous the doings of speculators. "Take corn, for instance," says Ford, "millions of hectolitres of grain are lying in American store-houses, and people are at a loss whither to send them. A certain amount of corn is used for human consumption and as fodder, yet not all. Before America had become 'dry,' a large quantity found its way to the distilleries—a bad use for good grain. For many years, however, grain had gone thither, and when one of those two channels got choked, big supplies began to pile up immediately. It is the scarcity of money that nearly always hampers the regular distribution of supplies, but even if there were money in abundance we could not possibly use up all the foodstuffs on hand which at times accumulate in a country. But if foodstuffs become so plentiful that they cannot possibly be consumed, why not then find another profitable use for them? Why use grain solely as fodder and for the distilling of brandy? Can no other use be thought of than the fattening of cattle and the distilling of whisky? Surely there can."

So much in answer to a friend, the distiller of spirituous liquor. For twenty years and over he may have read in my pamphlets and articles what should have been done to cure social misery. Yet what could he have done, tied down as he was between shareholders and competitors? The coming plenty I fore-

told, and I pointed the way to it. But I had no 442 million dollars to show as a margin in order to back up my assertions. Ford has given the proof of the sum of my contention. He can put those doubters and incapable ones back in their places at once. Says he: "I have proven that every enterprise not giving every advantage in connexion therewith should disappear. I proved this in the turning out of automobiles and tractors. I shall prove it with railways and corporations on public service, neither to satisfy myself, nor for the sake of the money that I'll make by it. *On these principles it is quite as unavoidable to make larger profits as if gain were the main object.*

Do you understand that Mr. Paul Pry? A clean and honest enterprise without parasites is bound to yield profit, ay, a huge profit, exactly because profit-making is not the principal object. I have maintained this against the whole S.D.A.P.[1] And now along comes Ford and gives me a lift with his figures. I could not wish for anything better. I myself said it as clearly and pointedly as I could. *If of two concerns under equal conditions, the one suffers from the parasitical evil but not the other, then the latter will undoubtedly yield a bigger profit than the former.*

I advised all business people to sink all profit in the business. I have defended this principle against managers of big concerns, but they did not believe. Ford's 442 million may bring them to better thoughts. Mr. Paul Pry says that this profit-margin does not upset his calculations, for "a shop is a shop." No; Mr. Paul Pry. You are mistaken, for one shop is not another. And the signification of those profit returns may prove a far-reaching evil or a glorious boon entirely in keeping with the mind and character of the man disposing of them.

To say that I am picturing Ford as a saint of recent date and drawing a halo around him are inexactitudes, the tone of which betrays a rather snappish attitude of mind. I never spoke of Ford as of a saint. I said that he was no more than an exceedingly clever and honest business-manager. To call Ford a "philanthropist of the first order" and "an idealistic man of business par excellence" I think entirely warranted. And it is almost comical to see how his big profit margin—the proof of his capability—is adduced as showing his lower mindedness. If Ford's idealistic endeavours had ended in a formidable loss, people would have jeeringly said that he had proved his philanthropy to be impossible. But now that enormous prosperity is coming his way in consequence of his human principles, such people as Paul Pry are shouting: "Did I not tell you! he is putting a mere trifle of a milliard into his pocket all the same!"

You measure other people's cloth by your own yard, Mr. Paul Pry. That the gamblers of the Damrak[2] should suspect Ford of clever booming and money-grubbing—well, one could expect as much. Unheard of profits without obscure practices, such a thing simply does not exist for the stock jobber. Abundance flowing forth from purely Christian principles is unthinkable to him. He does not understand at all, and explains matters to his own satisfaction.

Meanwhile Ford's book is being eagerly read, and not by the prejudiced only. I am surprised that people are keeping so quiet about it. This perhaps points to a serious emotion amongst the more intelligent. Here is somebody who says that he will help to solve the social problem; and seems to be equal to it. Next time I will point out what Ford will now probably do. He occupies my thoughts without respite. Let us ask God to spare this man and to strengthen him.

[1] S.D.A.P. stands for: Social Democratic Labour Party.
[2] Damrak. Locality of the Amsterdam Stock Exchange (Wall-street.)

The Third Factor.

By C. M. Grieve.

VI.

Mr. Joseph M. Schenck, chairman of the Board of Directors of the United Artists' Corporation (which comprises Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks, Charles Chaplin, D. W. Griffiths, and Norma Talmadge), recently declared that

"United artists would welcome any British producers whose productions 'measured up' to their own standard. Unfortunately, the British producer did not look to the world for a market when he produced a picture. The British, the French, and other producers *do not try to study the taste of the American public.* We go all round the world to find what the world wants, and, as a rule, we are successful. The American picture is the predominant picture throughout the world. I have a lot of respect for a good many British producers, but they do not work enough. That is the great trouble. If they want a leading lady they go to the stage for her. That is a great mistake, for not all stage actresses are suitable for the screen. Most of our popular screen actresses have never been on the stage."

He added that he thought they had little to fear in the States from German competition, as that work was frequently marked by a "*morbidity that did not appeal to the American public.*"

Well! Only a Mencken could satisfactorily handle the humour that underlies that statement. But consider it in the light of a recent production—this wholesome American taste!

"It was inevitable," says a recent writer, "that the big film men of Los Angeles should try their hand at Dante's 'Inferno.' History, with little additions and adaptations here and there, has provided them for years with material for super-pictures, where huge multitudes and great vistas could be introduced. But even history can be exhausted, and literature, too, is being explored, not wholly with the idea of selecting episodes which portray character or tell a good story, but also with the idea of discovering scenes which give scope for the 'effects' manager. The 'Inferno' is so obviously precisely what these impressionists want, that it has been 'done' more than once before, but surely never on the same scale as by the Fox Company. The highest praise one can give to the picture is that it is frightful. The producer obviously has revelled in his task of constructing huge caverns and furnaces, and grouping in melancholy picturesqueness the legions of lost souls in the many hells. But to call it Dante's 'Inferno' is a mistake. It is really a ruthless adaptation of the 'Divina Commedia,' which finds neither didactic nor narrative reproduction here. Dante and Virgil are there, but they merely give cohesion to a series of Hollywood marvels. Moreover, it is brought inconoclastically up to date by being tagged as a moral to the story of a hard-fisted millionaire who was turned from the error of his ways by dreaming over a volume of Dante. If the picture were called instead 'The Degeneration,' or 'The Conversion of Mortimer Ludd,' it would be a first-class thriller with an apt title."

It reminds me of the British daily paper which printed a popularly-written account of Dante's life and work a year or so ago, under the caption: "The Man Who Invented Sweethearts." The best analysis of the present position that I have so far seen is contained in the following notes:—

"From across the Atlantic promises of better things are always being shouted at us through a megaphone. We have had good films, good from an absolute standard, from America; had it never produced anything more than D. W. Griffiths's 'Intolerance' and Chaplin's 'The Kid,' it would have earned our grateful appreciation. Since 1915, when European conditions first gave America her great opportunity for monopolising the film trade, the cinema has become more than a novel relaxation. It has established itself as a universal relaxation, and everywhere American films predominate. New York and Los Angeles talk so much about art in the cinema that it is rather an anomaly that in the past year our best films have come, not from the land of promise, but unobtrusively from Europe, particularly from Germany. And, oddly enough, none of the interesting pictures recently come from the States call themselves superfilms at all. I refer to 'The Marriage Circle,' 'Abraham Lincoln,' 'Sherlock, Junior,' and 'To the Ladies.' Though these four excellent pictures were quite unlike famous German pictures such as 'Destiny,' 'The Street,' 'Caligari,' and 'Warning Shadows,' and quite unlike the unique Russian piece, 'Polikushka,' *there was one quality they all had in common; all of them gave the public more than it could demand, did not merely try to compound a profitable recipe for amusement.* Each was an experimental effort. Those noisy film-producers who are always announcing 'the greatest film yet produced,' might well remark that success can be got with less bawling by giving the public a good deal that it does not expect; not only so, but such is the way to win fame. *All great dramatists have done just that.*"

The writer goes on to say that the cinema in its, on the whole, rather stationary position at the present moment might learn a great deal from the recent history of its rival, the music-hall. Both halls and movies which maintain their audiences by a wide variety of programme are alike in lacking the prestige of the legitimate theatre, for it is almost a social obligation to see a play now and then, while one goes to a picture palace or a variety show simply because—one goes! Now there was a time at the end of the war when success intoxicated the music halls; they got worse and worse, fostered more and more revues, each one more expensive and more denuded of merit than the last. Prosperity made them forget two things; first, that the public is not a homogeneous mass, and, second, that a mixed public cannot be continually given just what it knows it likes without soon ceasing to like it. The human being dreads, above all things, monotony. Bad days came; the music-halls blamed the cinema. Why is it, then, that they are again to-day flourishing, since the cinemas are still with us? Simply, I think, because there are daring and intelligence once more. There are still revues, but their continued success is carried on the shoulders of hard-working comedians such as Maisie Gay in "Charlot's Revue," and that cynical and warm-hearted pair, Billy Merson and Nellie Wallace in "The Whirl of the World." In the real variety shows, old favourites have come back with fresh, painstakingly worked material, new talent has appeared with original comments on life to offer. The public itself would never have asked for or desired a clown like Grock—a pure abstraction of humour. Nor would the Russian Ballet appear at the Coliseum, nor would negro spirituals be delighting the provinces, if music-hall managers had been content to provide only what they knew by experience would pay. It is the provision of something more which brings success.

The same writer concludes:—

"The future of the cinema—it has almost no past; everything is yet to be done—lies for the next few years between America and Germany. The Germans, one diagnoses rapidly, stress psychology unduly: it makes their films oppressive and slow-moving. The Americans over-stress action; it makes their films shallow and ephemeral. In the coming rivalry between Continental studios and those in the States, both sides should realise that to attempt to entertain the public solely with a view to making money by reduplicating the material ingredients of some previous success is certain, if not swift, suicide. It is a dangerous game to dabble in the arts; it demands courage, a touch of idealism, and it exacts sacrifice."

Elsewhere I find posited the necessity of all concerned to realise that the cinema and radio are "arts on their own," and one writer raises a crucial and absorbing issue when he remarks that "It would be rather an extraordinary thing if we were to see the acting and scenery of the stage and the dialogue separate themselves into two quite separate forms of drama—the film and the wireless play." Discussion on that must be left over until next week.

(To be continued.)

Shakespeare and the Mob.

By C. C. Polhill.

Professor George Gordon, of Oxford, has recently favoured us with two lectures. In the first he startles us by telling us that Shakespeare's women are the superiors of his men—a fact we had certainly overlooked before. In the next he explains Shakespeare's attitude to democracy, and it is with that we are concerned in the present article.

It appears that some of Shakespeare's traducers accuse him of being undemocratic—a terrible accusation in these days, though what great man that ever lived really believed in Democracy? From this charge the professor defends him. "Shakespeare was not undemocratic, although some of his critics found the democracy of Rome held up to ridicule in *Julius Cæsar* and *Coriolanus.* He was merely following his authorities, who stated that the crowds behaved stupidly, when he made his working men talk like stupid people."

Poor Shakespeare. More fatal to his reputation than all his critics must be such defenders as Prof. Gordon. Shakespeare, according to this worthy, had not enough insight to know how a crowd usually behaves, or not enough originality to say it; he must go by his authorities, whoever they may be. Very convenient people these authorities. Anything we fail to understand or to appreciate gets shuffled on to them. But it is not fair, really now, to say of anything we happen to approve: "This belongs to Shakespeare," and of anything we dislike: "Here he was merely following his authorities." By the professor's argument Shakespeare the artist is sacrificed in order that his reputation as a good democrat may be saved.

We differ from the learned professor, and openly avow that Shakespeare no more believed in Democracy than did Julius Cæsar or Napoleon or any great man. Democracy is the denial of greatness. Let Shakespeare speak for himself without the aid of such interpreters. They belong to Democracy, and really have no right to pose as the priests and interpreters of greatness. They belong to the mob; therefore, they say Shakespeare could not speak unkindly of the mob; oh no!

Yet there is a sense in which Shakespeare is democratic. Mediocre intellects, pedants, and doctrinaires cannot understand the seeming contradiction in men of genius. How can they be both democrats and aristocrats at the same time, for both they assuredly are. Ordinary men can be only one or the other. Heine was banned in Germany as a dangerous revolutionary; in Paris he was looked upon coldly by his fellow-exiles as an aristocrat.

Well, we are not going to explain the contradiction. We will leave it as a problem to be solved by Prof. Gordon and his compeers. Perhaps when they have done so they will inform us of their learned resolutions. This much we will say: That a great creative artist must in his very nature be opposed to Democracy, which if left to itself produces only anarchy, disorder, and ugliness. It is a question of instinct. He must acquiesce in the antitheses to these, hierarchy, aristocracy, order, system, beauty.

At Drury Lane "A Midsummer Night's Dream" has lately been produced, and we heard it had been a great success. As it is a thing unheard of in itself for any play of Shakespeare to make an appeal to the modern English public, we determined to go and investigate for ourselves the reason for this unwonted popularity. Then we understood. As a spectacle it was quite equal to "Chu Chin Chow" or "Hassan," or "Decameron Nights," or the most dazzling review. The staging, the scenery, the costumes, and the dresses were wonderful. Such wealth, such extravagance displayed as might have brought even an American audience to its feet. It is true the public passed over most of Shakespeare's humour in stony

silence. It was rather too robust, we imagine. The pathetic portions, on the other hand, were greeted with guffaws from the feminine section of the audience. Nor would the best of acting have had the drawing power that this had. But what of that? The production was wonderful, and there were numerous little jokes and by-plays which do not appear to be in Shakespeare's text, it is true, but are more in accord with modern taste.

No, the truth must be confessed. A complete lack of understanding separates the England of Shakespeare's time from the England of to-day. And as has been well remarked, the Englishman of Chaucer's or Shakespeare's period was quite a different creature from his modern representative. This is due not so much to cross-breeding as to the change in the prevailing atmosphere, outlook and ideals. Though there are a few at the present time who show the vigour of outlook of Elizabethan times, they are in such a minority it seems as to be almost negligible in number. The haunting melody of that song, for instance, "Take, oh, take those lips away" could not posibly be reproduced in an age like the present. Not Shelley, not Tennyson, not Swinburne could have given voice to it. Yet here it sprang quite spontaneously and naturally, apparently from an unknown poet. There is only one period it could belong to. That was as the golden age to our iron age, or age of clay.

Let us not be misunderstood. We are not criticising the way this play was produced. Producers and actors must live, and who can blame them for looking on a production from its business point of view? They are in a sense at the mercy of the public, their masters. And when the tyranny of public taste is what it is, those who are dependent on it, especially if they happen to be real artists, should have our sympathy rather than our resentment. Moreover, "The Dream" strangely lends itself to development in the matter of production. It invites spectacular representation. We are not of those who say it should be kept to the primitive staging of Shakespeare's time. There is something pregnant and prophetic in a play like this. It is as if its author left its development on the scenic side to future ages, as if he consciously or subconsciously left free scope to the ingenuity of producers, as if the play itself is a tree from which all sorts of airy shapes might blossom. Our contention is that with the majority of the playgoers it is exclusively the scenic appeal that counts, the drama is nothing except as a foil to the spectacle.

Then there is Mendelssohn's music. Most of the audience carried on their conversation while it was being played, and did not appear to notice that it was any different from the usual music hall or pantomime overtures and interludes.

In conclusion, let us remember that Shakespeare's reputation has been kept alive by the minority, by a long line of admirers from Milton to Swinburne. In nothing is the impotence of the majority to create anything more clearly seen than in this. In nothing is the power of a minority to impose its ideas on the multitude more conclusively shown. That Shakespeare has in a sense become canonised in popular estimation, though neither known nor understood, is entirely due to this apostolic succession of intellectual aristocrats.

"What needs my Shakespeare for his honoured bones?" We suppose that we should rejoice that "The Dream" was a success, whatever the inducements that made it so. But we would point out that it is an unerring instinct that makes many Bolshevists hostile to Shakespeare. Their hostility is more complimentary than a good deal of the apologetic vapourings of his would-be defenders.

"O God save me from my friends," cries William Blake, "Thou hast given me power to defend myself against my bitterest enemies."

Music.

My very able colleague, Mr. Hugh McDiarmid, has so admirably confuted the errors of "Faitcha" that little, if anything, more remains to be said. But, perhaps, as a musician, one can point with pertinence to the ghastly results of "encouraging the practice as distinct from the mere appreciation" of music, in this country, at least.

There are, I think it is safe to say, more schools, colleges, academies, and what not for the teaching of music, more students learning to play on instruments or sing (that is, "being encouraged in the practice") in England than in any two or three other European countries put together. In the course of a year the diploma list for executants of one London music-teaching institution must run into thousands of names. No barrier is set up, no attempt at a sifting made. Anyone who can pay the fees is accepted, taught after a fashion, and at the end of a certain period is scuttled through an examination, and is presented with an algebraic-like abracadabra-like formula to stick on to the tail of his or her name, which enables them to catch other feeble-minded dupes as pupils—in their quality of "accredited"—God be good to us!—teachers, and pass on the apostolic succession of charlatan incompetence and twentieth-rate performance. Where an entrance examination does exist, it is the merest farce. I have never yet heard of anyone being even too lacking in musical ability for any of the music-teaching institutions in London, and a most superficial acquaintance with some of the products and students of those establishments is sufficient to show that, short of being musically a vegetable cretin, it would be almost impossible not to pass their entrance examinations—but it might be quite easy, on the other hand, to fail, did the candidate possess real ability; for musical examinations and degrees are ingeniously contrived to show the possession of everything but talent. The unspeakable Musical Festival business upon which Mr. McDiarmid most rightly animadverts—the Competition Festivals, as they are called, and the Eistedfodd affairs are nothing more than a disguised Cup-tie: their connection with music is nil and their value a minus quantity. The remarks of Gerald Cumberland (who, like Shadwell, "rarely deviates into sense," but when he does étonné et scandalise comme des chevaux de fiacre au galop) on music in Wales and the Welsh Eistedfodd may be studied with profit. He shows that there does not exist a permanent orchestra or string quartet from one end of Wales to the other, and that the great works of music are virtually unknown there.

Let us now examine a little the results of all this monstrous activity in the practice of music in this country. (i.) Are audiences more intelligent and discriminating? (ii.) Is the standard of performance higher? (iii.) Is there any real evidence that the public taste in music has improved?

(i.) Persistent concert-going ever since one could crawl, and to the most important concerts, makes it impossible for me, at any rate, to believe this. Over and over again in a fine programme of great music some trivial piece of musical trumpery, some ear-catching pinchbeck, has been given as encore, and has been received with an applause much more hearty, much more sincere and enthusiastic than any that has greeted admirable performances of great works that have gone before. A singer can sing to a London audience Italian street-arab songs whose English counterpart is "; be found in such as "Yes! We Have No Bananas ", things that he would, if he valued his life, not dare to insult an Italian audience by singing. In a recital, which is generally, for what reason I hardly know, supposed to attract an audience of superior musical taste and intelligence, a singer has been heard to sing (these ears have heard the woman!), cheek by jowl with the ineffable Agnus Dei from the B minor Mass, a thing called "Homing." No. She was not flayed alive, nor hissed. Bouquets deluged on the horrid creature, and she was applauded and applauded again.

(ii.) It is scarcely sensible even to ask this question, so palpably worse have standards of performance become during the last ten years. More than ever are unbaked incompetents thrust into offensive notice than ever before, and more of them; and I have too often recorded my opinion of the playing of London orchestras here and elsewhere to need to repeat what every discriminating listener can hear for himself. In London we get merely public rehearsals without the interest of a rehearsal in place of performances. As far as singers and players and composers are concerned, while it is possible for some impudent incompetent to exhibit his or her artistic deformed nakedness on a platform and be sure of mild encouragement from critics who have not the courage or integrity to mete out to them the merciless condemnation they deserve, while the strangulated eunuchoid whinings of Mr. A., the "scrannel pipings" of Miss B., the fiddle-scratchings of C., the piano-poking of D., instead of being utterly ignored are given as much attention perhaps as the singing of a Battistini or a Banientos, the fiddling of a Ysaye or the playing of a Rachmaninov or a Lamond, while Messrs. Holst, Boughton, and Bliss are treated as though they had the importance of a Delius, a Bantok or a Busoni; it seems desperately exaggerated to expect or even hope for improvement. One can only say, like Mephistopheles (or was it Lucifer?) in somebody's Golden Legend, "Leave this work to Time, the Great Destroyer."

(iii.) The usual argument advanced in support of the assertion that the public taste in music has improved is a Queen's Hall Promenade Concert programme of to-day compared with one of the earliest days of that institution. The argument will not bear examination. A cursory glance over the average Prom. audience will show that they could not have been the audience of twenty-five years ago, for most of them—indeed, one can safely say the vast majority—are young people under thirty-five. There has always been a small public for music, even in London, as any examination into past records and enquiries of old concert-goers will tell one. Moreover, by what possible abuse of language can the few thousand music lovers (and entirely uncritical ones at that) who form the Prom. audiences be called the "public"? The real public taste in music some twenty years or more ago was represented by the "Honeysuckle and the Bee"; it is to-day represented by "Whispering," or some such. It would require some courage to pretend that even the former is worse than the latter—that a taste which eats and drinks in public to an execrable clatter of "music" is an improvement on one that dispensed, or was able to dispense, with this camouflage of sounds connected with absorption and deglutition of food. Moreover, the average Promenader is very rarely a regular concert-goer. Certain nights during the Promenade season might deceive one who did not know into thinking that there really exists an adequate public for orchestral music in London. The audiences at concerts of such prime interest as the Hallé orchestra's recent series of three, or that at the S.S.O. which Sir Thomas Beecham conducted the other night, would quickly disabuse him, for the Hall was not two-thirds full, and it holds, full, slightly over 2,000!

KAIKHOSRU SORABJI.

Cotton and Castor Oil.

By "Old and Crusted."

"One has often wondered whether upon the whole earth there is anything so unintelligent, so unapt to perceive how the world is really going, as an ordinary young Englishman of our upper class.

. . . . . .

"Every force in the world, evidently, except the one reconciling force, right reason! Barbarian here, Philistine there, . . . and Populace striking in!—pull devil, pull baker! Really, presented with the mastery of style of our leading journal, the sad picture, as one gazes upon it, assumes the iron and inexorable solemnity of tragic Destiny.

. . . . . .

"Knowing myself to be indeed sadly to seek . . . in 'a philosophy with coherent, interdependent, subordinate, and derivative principles,' I continually have recourse to a plain man's expedient of trying to make what few simple notions I have clearer and more intelligible to myself by means of example and illustration."

(Matthew Arnold. "Culture and Anarchy.")

Heaven forbid that we should ever come to regard the *Daily Mail* as our "leading journal"—misleading if you like—but it does penetrate into so many homes of all classes, and has been so remarkably successful in making questions of the day immediately misunderstandable to people who think in words of one syllable, that it has to be reckoned with when subjects of so-called practical politics are under consideration.

One of its latest efforts to combine zeal for the public welfare with an increase of circulation, headed "Up Against It," deals with the state of the cotton trade in Lancashire, from which we can gather that the County Palatine is "getting it in the neck" from Japan, India, China, and, above all, Italy. The latter is really doing very nicely, for "all the mills have sufficient work in hand to keep them employed on full time for the next six or eight months," whereas Oldham and other places where they spin and weave are on short time—a fact which justly perturbs that noble pillar of economic orthodoxy—Lord Emmott.

The question naturally arises—who or what is responsible for this happy state of affairs in Italy? The *Daily Mail*, with characteristic cocksuredness, promptly supplies the answer—why, Mussolini, of course!—drawing the obvious conclusion that what we want in this benighted country is a political leader who, like the Italian patriot,

"will take steps to cut down expenditure and end the industrial quarrels which are eating the heart out of our industries."

So simple!—but—I doubt whether the methods of the Fascisti would go down (I am sure the castor oil would not) in the land that produced Squire Western and John Jorrocks, not to mention Mr. Kirkwood and Mr. Jack Jones. To those who inhabit the green shires there is a familiar article known as a hunting crop, which, in the hands of an irate Englishman, becomes a most effective weapon, so if there is any budding Mussolini in Great Britain desirous of emulating the exploits of the leader of the "black shirts," let him pause in time, lest he come into painful contact with angry John and his knotted thong. It hurts.

No, this is not an occasion for heroics, but rather an opportunity for the "Stunt Editor" of the *Daily Mail* to show what he can do, and as his imagination seems to have failed him at the critical moment, I must come to his rescue. Here is a suggestion for dealing with the troubles of Lancashire.

Let the *Daily Mail* institute a "census of wants" expressed in terms of cotton goods, by requesting all its women readers and their friends to draw up lists

of the various articles they are short of; clothing, napery, and the thousand and one other things whose manufacture consumes cotton yarn, get said lists carefully classified and scheduled by competent accountants, then hand the result to the Federation of British Industries with a polite request to get a move on—and deliver the goods. If this should meet the eye of a member of that august body of industrialists, I can picture to myself the look of amused contempt spreading o'er his care-worn countenance, as, with an impatient "pshaw," he tosses the offending page into the waste-paper basket. But, after all, is the suggestion so very absurd? Is it so very ridiculous to assume that an industrial system exists, primarily, to provide the people at home with the necessaries and a few of the amenities of life, and that the exploitation of foreign markets is quite a secondary consideration? Think it over, Lord Emmott!

But the chief obstacle to the attainment of this homely ideal lies in the mentality of the manufacturers and merchants, not forgetting the financiers, who would be responsible for its realisation—and here—as the *Daily Mail* says—we are "up against it"! Now, the self-made men, the Bounderbys and Gradgrinds of Coketown are still with us—recruits from the ranks of the proletariat keep the race from dying out—but an increasing number of our captains of industry are third generation descendents of those products of "self help" and pioneers of progress; they are mostly of the sealed pattern public school type with a top-dressing of University passmen. But, alas, these well groomed young men, whilst remaining true to type as far as acquisitive propensities are concerned, have added to their mental equipment a cheap cynicism of the "get on or get out" variety, which has been well described as "Knowing the price of everything and the value of nothing." Not much to hope for from them. When we leave the industrial world to enter the realms of pure finance, the situation is still more unpromising. Most of the Chairmen and Directors of the great banks belong to that plutocracy—there is no aristocracy in England; the Wars of the Roses settled that—which is so mordantly described by Matthew Arnold as "unintelligent," and "unapt to perceive how the world is really going"; hence their almost incredible persistence in a policy which threatens to land us in another, and probably final, Armageddon.

Fortunately for this distracted epoch—to quote the great poet and critic once more,

> in each class there are born a certain number of natures with a curiosity about their best self, with a bent for seeing things as they are, for disentangling themselves from machinery, for simply concerning themselves with reason and the will of God, and doing their best to make these prevail.

In this scattered but unswerving minority, united in a common service, lies the hope of suffering humanity. These be they of whom Walt Whitman sang:

> —all labour together transmitting the same charge and succession,
> We few equals indifferent of lands, indifferent of times,
> We enclosers of all continents, all castes, allowers of all theologies,
> Compassionaters, perceivers, rapport of men,
> We walk silent among disputes and assertions, but reject not the disputers nor anything that is asserted,
> We hear the bawling and din, we are reach'd at by divisions, jealousies, recriminations, on every side,
> They close peremptorily upon us to surround us, my comrade,
> Yet we walk unheld, free, the whole earth over, journeying up and down till we make our ineffaceable mark upon time and the diverse eras,
> Till we saturate time and eras, that the men and women of races, ages to come, may prove brethren and lovers as we are.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Sir,—It will take some time, and observation as well as thought, to find out "the action we may be able to take in the event of a catastrophe of the first magnitude," whether centralised power can be met only by centralised power, by fighting to a finish, or whether a situation may yet emerge in which the hope of the British people may lie in decentralisation, Little-Englandism, or the like.

Meantime there is one line of action which, *if* we think it practicable in itself, can be taken up both by the conscientious objector and by the man who holds war to be a duty, both by the man who understands A + B and by the man who does not. And it is action. In my very small experience of propaganda work I have found that the average man is impatient of lectures on economic theory unaccompanied by any appeal for action on his own part. He doesn't want a pamphlet or a book; he says in effect, "Are you offering me a voting paper, a rifle, or what? Are you standing for Parliament, or trying to form a revolutionary organisation?" Once I let myself in for this in an acute form; in the mere attempt to explain the Social Credit proposals, I kept saying, "The Government could" do this and that; and my hearers muttered, "Ach! The *Government!*" These people would probably have preferred rifles (for home use against the "boss class"); but I have sensed the same desire for a lead to action in a quite respectable indoor meeting; and when, finally, I came upon it again among Indians discussing their own country's affairs, I concluded that it was a pretty universal characteristic of human nature. And now, for the present, at any rate, the realisation of "the immense magnitude of the forces involved, in comparison with which even nations are pawns in the game," has left me with no heart, even if I had any before reading Major Douglas's speech, to urge the study of the New Economics on people who, perhaps being hungry, want somebody to do their thinking for them and stick some instrument for their emancipation into their hands.

In respect of action, then, as distinguished from theorising, what I want to ask the readers of THE NEW AGE is this: Can we do anything for British agriculture—food production? The people of Great Britain are theoretically able to feed themselves; but they are not ready to do it, and are therefore very seriously handicapped either for fighting or for refusing to fight. Can we do anything to help and to set an example, either with our own hands or with those of the unemployed? There are several points which must be inquired into locally before any definite proposal can be made, not the least important being the psychology of the unemployed; but I should be glad to get the opinion of NEW AGE readers on the general principle first. My present idea is to help some of the unemployed (a few to begin with) to feed their own households, and let them pay dividend to those who had financed their start in goods—in agricultural produce such as everybody could use. I once suggested a somewhat similar, though not identical, plan to the present Editor of THE NEW AGE, and he asked whether it would really illustrate Major Douglas's ideas. Personally I think it *would* illustrate a certain amount; but if circumstances shift our aim from the illustrating of theory to the doing of an immediate practical service to the people of Britain, the question ceases to be relevant; for instance, it would no longer matter if our financial weakness brought upon anything we might attempt to do the reproach of ascetic medievalism; we could say: "We are neither destitutionists nor medievalists on principle; but since you financiers have cornered everything scientific and progressive, we will rather get to work with a spade, or a sickle, or any old thing within our reach, than sit down helpless to starve or see our countrymen starve."

I should have liked also to say something about "roses" in connection with Social Credit, and may yet; but this is enough for one letter; so I'll conclude by applying an agricultural metaphor to the position of the Social Credit propagandist as it appeared to me after reading the first instalment of Major Douglas's speech:

> "Ploughman, why dost thou plough
> In dusk and fog and sleet?
> What hope of a harvest now?"
> "The hope of the winter wheat.
>
> "I have toiled through a fruitless year;
> For the land was foul with stones,
> With fragments of sword and spear,
> And a litter of dead men's bones.
>
> "There's a storm coming up the sky;
> There's a keening like death on the blast;
> I burv the seed to lie
> Till the cruel days be past."
>
> The sower plods on his way
> In dusk and fog and sleet;
> For the hope of a far-off day
> He soweth the winter wheat.

H. B. S. L.

ST. PAUL'S.

Sir,—May yet another lay ignoramus venture to put in a word, one to whom St. Paul's has never been a joy.

For to me the placing of that statue of Queen Anne in front of it seems to "show by one satiric" act that both are dead, who doubts the fact?

The Greeks had an architecture, barbaric enough in essence—log uprights supporting transverse logs—but they developed it into splendour.

The Romans could build like the great men they were. How magnificent are their aqueducts. But being hopelessly inartistic instead of developing their archwork into further beauty they slapped on unnecessary pseudo-Greek pilasters and such like, and ruined all their simple grandeur.

Later, the Norman artist-builders used the Roman arch with delightful results, and there followed on that the most wonderful flowering of living beauty in stone that the world has ever seen.

I was once passing through Le Mans and stopped to look at the cathedral, of which, as a matter of fact, I had never before heard. I remember that the long light flying buttresses, taking the roof thrust from its light but towering walls, gave me the impression that it was an actual living thing, grey, indeed, with age, but every stone alive and doing its work from century to century. And truly it is *life*, happy, aspiring life that is the very essence of this architecture. The structure is alive. Life radiates from the flowering skyward finials, from the gloriously springing arches of the nave, even from the comic carvings under the miserere seats. There is life and joy and meaning everywhere.

This wonderful life in stone flamed for a generation then died down and at last went out.

Time passed, and dazzled by the glory of the Renaissance in Italy our architects bowed themselves before the Romanesque. But they failed to make it live; they could not again get together the needed band of artists working with individual freedom in all materials to a great harmonious end. So, like the Romans before them, they clapped on old, dead, borrowed ornament, often with no constructional relation whatever. Instead of the wonderful "long" kings and queens of Châtres we have on St. Paul's endlessly repeated Corinthian pilasters joined together with swags of undercut dead flowers of no possible use or beauty. In place of the almost unbelievable beauty of the stall-work at Amiens we have that hopelessly inartistic craftsman, Grinling Gibbons, actually trying to imitate in wood the fragility of leaves and flowers!

No. The inside of St. Paul's is purely mechanical, cheap, and dead, and consequently thoroughly and irredeemably ugly. As to the outside—any really able builder, with reasonable taste, could, I suppose, build a dome. Wren was not entirely devoid of taste. Under the conditions then imposed by fashion he probably did about as well as any man could have done—especially as regards some of his spires. But it would need more than one clever man; it would take hundreds of earnest free working artists to build a great and live cathedral.

Is it too much to hope that with the removal of the present terrible financial incubus, the human spirit, freed of sordid care, may eventually flower again into associated work of constructive beauty? As for St. Paul's, prop it up and be hanged.

PHILIP T. KENWAY.

Sir,—It is a mistake to answer foolish correspondents, but, having made a beginning in this case, I had better see the thing through, or until your patience is exhausted.

I do not understand Mr. Haydn Mackey's complaint. I think he ought to see a doctor. There is no doubt that he is greatly dissatisfied with me; but he does not furnish the faintest clue to his grievance. He does not appear to like my view that a building should look strong—presumably he would like them all to look weak—yet he drags in the Pyramids, the outstanding example of a building that looks strong, and thereby compels our admiration. Curiously enough, Belcher cites the Pyramids for this reason. I do not suggest that Mr. Haydn Mackey has been surreptitiously reading "Essentials in Architecture" and had not the intelligence to perceive that to mention the Pyramids was to strengthen my case. That would be unkind. I merely point to the coincidence in passing.

Towards the end of his incoherent letter Mr. Mackey straightens himself out and solemnly lays down the platitude that "some art has been produced in every 'style.'" I wonder who told him that. I presume he means every good "style." I never disputed it. I do not object to the "style" of St. Paul's. My objection is that it lacks the appearance of being strongly built. I should feel doubtful about a Gothic church or a Chinese pagoda that impressed me in the same way. But Mr. Mackey does not seem capable of understanding this. St. Paul's, for him, is "a masterpiece of human art," and therefore "precious to the cultured." He really means "to the precious."

PETER F. SOMERVILLE.

FOR WHAT ARE WE EDUCATING OUR CHILDREN?

Sir,—I have read the letter of N. F. Eiloart with interest, and fully agree that the workers do not *willingly* let their sons become labourers. They merely submit to economic pressure. If there is no difficulty in getting apprentices for the engineering industry what is the explanation of the fact that the Employers' Federation has been for months concerned about the shortage of apprentices? Why is the Federation discussing the proposal of re-introducing indentures and "making apprenticeship more attractive"? Why does the public press contain advertisements for apprentices if the supply is abundant? Anyone who has been in the industry for some years will agree that to advertise for apprentices is a new thing. Not so long ago boys had to be put on a waiting list!

In respect of the figures of wages increase I can only say that those I quoted are from an authoritative source in one of the largest engineering areas in the country, and I stand by the figures.

Whether or not we are far removed from the time when only a few skilled men will be required is a question of opinion, but the trend is all in that direction. "Surely the economic question is the one that really counts. What matters it if we are giving an education beyond the requirements?" says your correspondent. The economic question does count, but surely justice also counts? I did not attempt to make the point that we are educating beyond the requirements. What I do contend is that we are educating with a bias towards industry, and that industry as presently conducted does not fulfil the contract by giving a thorough after-training and an assured place for the use of the acquired skill, when the training is accomplished. The process is neither economic from the national standpoint nor is it just from the standpoint of the youths concerned.

In regard to the letter of "Faitcha," I concur that education to-day "is definitely directed to fit a social system," but, fortunately, not one we have yet "escaped from" although we may be emerging. I would suggest also that "the will to do things" does not need educating in the bulk of mankind. Rather we require genuine opportunities to meet the inherited urge to do things for the sheer joy of attainment.

AREMBY.

WOMAN FRANCHISE.

Sir,—Your reference in the last issue of THE NEW AGE to the Women's Suffrage Movement was much to the point. Women were given the vote just when it was becoming apparent that it had little or no value, the seat of government being elsewhere than in Parliament. Do women cling to the unrealities and snobberies of life long after men have tired of them? How have they used the "power" supposed to reside in the vote? They have obtained titles and decorations for some of their leaders, but in what single instance has woman's supreme interest, the Home, benefited? The Social Credit Movement, the one movement of our time which promises to endow and glorify the Home, to make it real and therefore ideal, has scarcely attracted their attention. They have been eager to share in the government of men, but when have they shown any love of that economic freedom whose attainment will automatically secure a real equality of the sexes, while making most government (and especially sex government) a shameful anachronism? Men and children are waiting in chains for women to rise to their real stature and to wipe away from their eyes the sentimental cobwebs and domineering snobberies that have so long obscured their vision and disgraced their sex.

R.

BERNARD SHAW AND THE NEW ECONOMICS.

Sir,—In "American Correspondence" published in THE NEW AGE a few weeks ago, a letter by Mr. G. Bernard Shaw was quoted, in which he said: "He (Douglas) imagines that credit is a substance and that it can be eaten and drunk, worn, and built into houses."

The current issue of the *Fortnightly Review* publishes a dialogue between Bernard Shaw and Archibald Henderson, in which, it is interesting to observe, the same idea finds expression. Mr. Shaw remarks: "The first thing a statesman has to learn is that there is nothing concrete and available in existence corresponding to capital and credit. You cannot eat them, drink them, wear them, build with them, or fight with them."

There is clearly a firmly established conception in Mr. Shaw's mind concerning the nature of credit, but he does not explain what he understands by "credit," or of what sort of credit he speaks, and I am not aware of any occasion upon which he has ever said so. Until he enlightens us we must solace ourselves with speculation.

He says he does not recommend the Douglas method. On what grounds we are left to imagine. We do not know whether he considers the machinery defective or whether he objects to the use of a particular kind of machinery. In any case, his objection would have to be grounded in reason.

Briefly, we are warranted in requiring from G. B. S. that intellectual justification of his position which he himself invariably demands.

K. O. G.

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