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CONTENTS.

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

The coal owners' notice to terminate the present agreement is due to expire next Friday, so that only a few days are left in which the opposing parties may find a common formula for the renewal of their conversations. Before saying anything on the matter from the domestic standpoint, let us survey very broadly the international background of the threatened crisis. First of all the Miners' International will have met in Paris by the time these lines are read. Its purpose, according to Press reports, is to prevent the importation of coal into Britain in the event of a stoppage in our coalfields. But there is no information whether the International will try to stop foreign coal being exported to overseas markets which our coal owners are serving at the present time. Probably no such attempt will be made. The fact is that, from the profit-and-loss point of view, any trouble in one nation's coal areas spells good fortune in those of the other nations. It is significant that the French National Council of Miners has decided within the last few days to call off, or at least postpone, the threatened strike in the French areas. No less significant is the reason assigned for the step; it is that the Council has received assurances from the Ministry of Public Works that certain measures which had been promised to "liquidate existing stocks" would immediately take effect. Is one of those "measures" by any chance involved in a decision to take advantage of a strike in Britain and dump French coal wherever it may be substituted for British? It looks like it. The *Observer's* Paris Correspondent, discussing the Council's action, says—

> "The bearing of this postponement of a strike on the British situation is held to be that if an interval elapses between the dates of stoppage of work in the two countries, *that country which has delayed longest will sell its stock to the other at a great profit during that interval*, and that the owners in each country will postpone as long as possible."

If that is the hope in France, apropos of exporting coal to Britain herself, it will be all the more indulged in respecting the selling of coal against Britain in other countries. In that case the task of the Miners' International will be none too easy; for, in asking its French constituents to prevent French coal coming to Britain while the strike is on, it will be asking them to renounce the very measure which would have afforded them some temporary alleviation of their own real distresses. Then, too, students will be quick to see that these negotiations between the miners of Britain and France are, in the nature of the case, negotiations on behalf of the coal owners of their respective countries. The "Capital versus Labour" aspect of the situation is nearly blurred out, and what remains is a matter of haggling between the British and French mining industries—masters and men together on opposite sides. It is just as though Mr. Hodges, for instance, were to say to the French Miners' Council: "Look here, we and our bosses in Britain have our differences and are prepared to fight them out, but I am here to tell you, *on behalf of the British coal owners* as well as of the miners, that unless you people in France bind yourselves to keep out of *our* market, we shall not fight each other." We are not criticising this attitude; on the contrary, we commend it as a very sensible one under the prevailing conditions. Nevertheless, see what it means. It means that the logic of the general economic situation tends to *rule out the class struggle*, and that, whether they like it or not, the responsible leaders of the trade union movement everywhere are being forced to recognise the fact and to modify their procedure accordingly. Unfortunately for them, their underpaid clients—the individual trade unionists—cannot keep alive on logic; they must have more wages; and if they are now told that the class struggle will not only not bring them more wages but will reduce those which they now have, they will turn against their own leaders (the Communists enthusiastically abetting), *unless those leaders can announce to them a fresh, a plausible, and a quick alternative policy*. Something of the miners' temper was revealed last Saturday, when Bishop Welldon narrowly escaped a ducking at the annual gala of the Durham Miners' Association at Durham. He was being hustled into the river, and would have gone in but for the fact that the scuffle was endangering

children on the water's edge, and that in the slight pause of indecision a motor boat came up and rescued him. His "sin" was that he had recently been preaching *peace* and *commonsense*—both good things to preach—but had not observed that his manner of preaching them left his hearers as men without hope. He neglected to show how these ethical and intellectual virtues could produce an *economic dividend*. What was the inevitable fruit of his exhortation? "*To hell with bishops and deans; we intend to get a living wage*," was an inscription on one of the banners displayed at the gala. Oh, these holy men of good intentions; the road to hell is lined with them. "*If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.*" Whether it be a priest, a politician, or a publicist of any other name, this warning should mould his attitude; not because it happens to have been written by one *James* in his *General Epistle* Anno Domini cir. 60, but because it happens to be sound Christianity and perfect economics Anno Domini cir. 1925. Logic which leaves people in destitution is illogic; peace which makes destitution harder to bear is not peace. Nietzsche said, much to the disgust of well-intentioned pacifists, that a good war hallowed a cause. Well, there is this much truth about it, that to a people with nothing to put into their stomachs a *good strike* is a spiritual appeasement of their physical hunger—it hallows their misery—it transfigures their suffering—and stands for them in the place of the divine Saviour to whom preachers vainly direct them.

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We will now look at a few facts about the coal industry in the United States. In the *Baltic-Scandinavian Trade Review* for this month there is an article entitled "Coal—the Sickest Industry in the United States," contributed by Mr. Virgil Jordan. He says that this industry affords an extreme example of what has been happening all over the world—namely, "vast over-expansion to meet war needs, followed by a collapse of demand relative to capacity and supply." But he remarks that the United States has suffered above the other countries, and gives a curious reason for it. He says it is

> "because she underwent the greatest expansion of production, and *suffered no war destruction of plant or labour forces.*"

Nietzsche was right, then, after all. A "good war" apparently is necessary to ensure industrial prosperity. Yet, strangely enough, the American coal owners have always been ready to shoot down miners at the least threat of damage to mining properties. We give it up. There must be some magic in the infliction of damage by soldiers as distinct from that inflicted by civilian rioters. The writer continues:—

> "The American coal industry is so over-expanded that less than one-third of the mines could supply the current needs. In Illinois, for instance, one of the largest coal-producing States, thoroughly unionised, it has been shown that 234 of the 338 principal mines in the State are unnecessary. The remainder (114) could supply the full demand if operated continuously."

He says that this situation is true of every coal-producing State. Then he goes on to speak of the question of marketing and pricing:—

> "The chief influence on prices since the war has been strikes and threats of strikes. Indeed, *both operators and mine unions* have encouraged *this form of price regulation*, which, now and again, has afforded an artificial stimulation to the industry."

Here we see an instance of the tendency we have just referred to—that of the suspension of hostilities between master and man and an alliance between them to exploit the consumer. In the case of a stoppage on the British coalfields accompanied by a stoppage of imports, the British consumer would have to go without coal until the contestants were ready to serve him again. Next, Mr. Jordan refers to wage agreements. Following on from the paragraph just quoted he says:—

> "Every price boost of this kind has been followed by a worse reaction. Realisation of this, together with pressure from the Federal Government, forced both operators and miners in February, 1924, to enter into a three years' agreement, the purpose of which was to apply strong discipline to the industry by maintaining the high wage levels of the war period."

That the Government itself should become more trade-unionist than the trade unions on the question of miners' wages rather takes one aback—until one hears the reason, which is the following:—

> "This was counted on *to force out of business a large part of the unnecessary mines and to drive a large number of unneeded miners into other occupations.*"

"This was counted on." By whom is not stated; but one can soon pick up the trail of the Federal Reserve serpent in it all. The moral, both for our British capitalists and workpeople, does not need much stressing. No doubt the American miners thought they had won a great "victory" when the high-wage agreement was imposed on their masters, whereas, in fact, this victory was really a factor in a larger defeat. And, no doubt, the British miners will go through the same mental process. And the tragedy of it all will be that the ensuing ruin will not be traced back to the subtle financial policy behind the wage agreement, but will be attributed to the "unreasonable attitude" of the miners, and the coal owners, and probably both together, during the many manœuvres and hagglings which are now proceeding. This doubly underlines the suggestions we made a fortnight ago. Let the owners agree to a wage rate which satisfies the Miners' Federation. Let the Miners' Federation undertake to stimulate the output of coal to the best of their power. But, having done that, let them both, as a single body, go to the Government and say that without a change in the conditions outside the control of the mining industry—that is the present laws of industrial accountancy—less coal than before will be sold because of the higher cost. The Government must take action, either to reduce the burden of these costs on the industry or to increase the money available in the hands of coal consumers to pay them. So far as foreign markets are concerned, the Government can take no action; but so far as the potential coal buyers in this country are concerned it can. The industry's demand should be either for a moratorium of a sort which would (at its best) eliminate from the coal owners' costs (and prices) all charges which were not paid out in the form of *personal remuneration to individuals*, or, at least, would enable the industry to enter on a period of selling based on *direct charges* only; or else the same benefit should be bestowed another way round, namely, by the issue of a Government Coal Credit administered so as to *promote the home consumption of coal*, that is, *a free and irrecoverable amount of new credit to be paid to the coal owners*, this credit to be apportioned in two parts, the one as extra remuneration to the administrators, shareholders and employees of the mining industry, and the other (and by far the larger—almost all of it) to be passed on as a discount to the consumer. The necessary precautions and details need not be discussed here. Once let there be a sign that either the coal owners or the miners (preferably both) are willing to take their stand on the principles involved, and we shall be more than ready to discuss ways and means in these columns *ad nauseam*. Naturally our suggestions will raise any amount of opposition. One part will come from numerous quarters, namely, from people engaged in other industries which are in quite as parlous a plight as the coal industry. There is a short answer to them; that their best interest is to push for the principle to be applied to that industry *as a precedent* to be followed immediately by similar treatment for their own interests. The other part of the opposition will come from a single quarter—it will proceed from the financial interests. Well, if it be put into words, we have answers to it; and if it be put into intrigues, we say here and now that they will avail nothing. What is the use of intriguing for the *status quo* against the New Economic solution, when every day is making it more evident that the *status quo* is untenable? People who talk agitatedly about the danger of far-fetched remedies, forget that the present situation itself is "farther-fetched" than any of the remedies. If our suggestions are ignored we can only say that the coal industry is in this dilemma—it will either give the miners what they want, and pay for it in widespread bankruptcies among the less "economic" coal pits, or it will refuse them what they want, and pay for it in social strife and industrial stagnation. It is suicide both ways. Listen to Mr. Virgil Jordan on the effect of the high-wage plot we have referred to—

> "This drastic remedy has certainly had an effect. Large numbers of mines have been shut down altogether, companies forced into bankruptcy, properties sold at a vast sacrifice, tens of thousands of miners thrown out of work. . . . The pressure upon the unionised fields has grown so great that it has appeared almost impossible to preserve the wage levels fixed in the 1924 agreement. In many cases the miners have *voluntarily accepted reductions* or entered into co-operative plans of mine operation rather than suffer total loss of employment. In this way the *miners' union is rapidly going to pieces* and *chaos has entered the labour side as well as the operators' side of the industry.*"

Is it too much to ask that our own coal owners and miners think twice before they lend themselves to be cat's-paws for a disguised deflationary policy? There are two alternatives possible to meet the case where total costs of running industry exceed the total money available as revenue for industry. The first is that adopted by the financiers in the case of the United States. It is to write off the excess costs *at the expense and, in many cases, ruin* of the proprietors. The second is our alternative. It is to *write up* the deficit by the issue of financial credit so that the total revenue will cover all costs. And since we know how this can be done without inflation of price, we can declare that its being done will involve benefits to producers and consumers alike.

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In concluding his article, Mr. Jordan deplores the "lack of comprehensive information and clear knowledge of the situation." Referring to the futility of "Inquiries" of all sorts, he quotes a remark of a Government official which is well worth a paragraph from the pen of our contributor H. McD.—"We are now," said this official,

> "**adrift on a sea of figures without a statistic in sight.**"

A flawless image of all the Blue books ever compiled. . . . As Mr. Jordan continues: "The expensive Coal Commission accumulated masses of numerals, but there is a complete absence of unequivocal data which will show the precise condition of the industry in its various parts." Yes; that is the end of all Commissions. "The only definite, clear-cut piece of knowledge we have is the amount of coal produced, *and we know that this is too much.*" Why it is too much nobody knows—but the student of the New Economics. "The over-capacity and the excess of labour force must be accurately measured before the problem is clearly enough understood to permit of applying remedies—*if any prove possible.*" Mr. Jordan is evidently not an optimist. Nor does he think very clearly here. For if the remedy for the excess is unknown, how shall it become known however accurately the excess is measured? It is not measurement, but analysis, that is called for. And almost any commonsense analysis will show you that if 100 men are making 100 articles and consuming them, and if suddenly a scientist discovers how to make a machine which will produce 200 articles with the work of ten men, then the employment of that machine would enable the 100 men to eat twice as much as before in spite of the fact that 90 of them would not be working. But Science proposes, and Finance disposes. Finance says that only the ten men shall receive an income. So the 200-article machine works at one-twentieth of its capacity because the financial demand is now only one-twentieth. That is how you get your "over-capacity" and your "excess of labour power." It is just because the "excess" labour must not eat that your plant cannot work full time. The remedy is obviously purely financial. And the financial requirement is a distribution of credit to the 100 men quite irrespective of the credit paid to the ten men through wages.

The Veil of Finance.

IV.

Let us leave the corn-growers to decide how they will dispose of their free surplus of £1,000 and take a look at the affairs of the plough-makers. We will suppose that at this point they have put up a factory, for which they have paid out £1,000 in wages and salaries, and have collected and assembled materials and made ploughs, for which they have paid £500 in wages and salaries. This totals the £1,500 that they originally borrowed. The whole of that sum, as we have just seen, has gone into the possession of the corn-growers. The plough-makers' position is that they have on the one hand *assets* (factory, material, and ploughs) which (valued at cost) amount to £1,500, and *liabilities* (the debt to the banker) which amount to the same sum. But they have no money. Unfortunately for them, the banker has reserved to himself the right (as all bankers do) to call in his loan at any time he thinks fit, and decides to do so just at this particular time. There is another meeting in his parlour, and he addresses the plough-makers in some such terms as these:—

Gentlemen: You owe me £1,500. I have allowed you sufficient time to get your factory and materials together, but now I must request you to repay the loan, or at least reduce it by a substantial amount. A debt owing to a banker is called a *floating debt*. Now, floating debts mean sinking communities. I will explain the reason some other time, as it wants a great deal of explaining to people like yourselves who have not grown up within a sound financial system. Anyhow, the debt must not float any longer. That does not mean that the debt must disappear; it means that you must turn it into a *fixed debt*. A fixed debt is a debt owing to your own kith and kin. Therefore you will see that the process of changing the nature of the debt is simply one of changing the identity of the person or persons to whom you owe it: in short, you "fix" your debt by borrowing from your neighbours and paying me, the banker, out. Happily for you, there is a way open for you to do it to the extent of £1,000. The corn-growers have got a surplus of money to that amount, and I have suggested their lending it to you. I have good grounds for knowing that they view the suggestion favourably, so the next step is with you. You must *form a company*. You must *raise capital from the public* to the amount of £1,000. To do this in proper form you must *issue shares*. I will now instruct you in the details of the operation if you will listen attentively.

In due time the company is floated. Let us suppose that it issues 1,000 ordinary shares of £1, and that the corn-growers take them up and pay for them. This enables the plough-makers to pay £1,000 to the banker in reduction of their debt to him. But it leaves them still owing him £500. We will get rid of this by supposing that the banker agrees to let the money remain on the condition that they issue 500 £1 *mortgage debentures* at 5 per cent. interest, and hand them over to him. (The interest question does not affect the issues we are dealing with, so this 5 per cent. need not be borne in mind by the reader.) These mortgage debenture shares are so called because, as

we heard the banker explain to the corn-growers, they give the holder the right to step in and take the factory and plant directly the borrowers default in paying their interest; that is to say, the borrowers mortgage their land, factory and plant—in just the same way as a private house-owner might do. On the other hand, the holders of the ordinary shares have not this right, and if anything goes wrong they have to stand aside and see the property into which they have put their money disposed of—probably at "scrap prices"—for the benefit of the holders of the superior *debenture* shares. So in the case we are imagining, the banker has become what is spoken of in these days as a *secured creditor* of the plough-making industry in contradistinction to other creditors, who are termed *unsecured*.

It will be convenient here to sum up the position at this juncture. First, as to the power of the banker. We have seen him create and issue £2,000. We have watched him encourage the corn-growers to "profiteer," because in that way the consumption of corn has been kept down. We have watched him get the plough-makers into a mess, and then get them out of it by inciting the corn-growers to invest their superprofits with them. Lastly, we have seen him get back into his possession £1,500 out of the £2,000 he originally lent. And now it is necessary to note that if he follows the procedure of the bankers of the present day he will *destroy* the £1,500, *leaving only £500 in existence on the island*. The fact that such actual cancellation of money goes on *as an invariable practice of modern banking* is the crux of the whole economic problem, and no person who does not grasp it and its significance is in a position to contribute any assistance whatever to a solution of our industrial and social troubles. As to the fact being a fact, there is no need for us to do more than refer readers to Mr. McKenna's recent speeches to the shareholders of the Midland Bank. In one of them he asserted that "every bank loan creates a deposit," and that "every repayment of a bank loan destroys a deposit" to the same amount. The word "deposit" need be no stumbling-block to the new reader—for our present purpose the word "money" may be substituted. Now, as to the significance of the fact. It comes out clearly in the present illustration. The banker on the island created "deposits" or "money" to the amount of £2,000, and the islanders had the use of it for a time. But subsequently he required and received repayment of his loan to the amount of £1,500. We will now suppose that this £1,500 has been destroyed. That means that there is now only £500 on the island—it is the amount which the corn-growers reserved for the purpose of financing their preparations for the next harvest. *There is no other money anywhere—not even in the banker's possession.*

Of course, it will be said that the banker has the power to make some more. But the practical point is that the islanders have left him to exercise this power at his own discretion; so everything depends upon whether he *will* make some more, and, if so, how much. In the circumstances which we have set out there are some sound arguments why he should not. We will leave them aside for the moment and consider the position if he does not. Let us look at the account books of the plough-making industry. They show that it has incurred costs amounting in all to £1,500. In the long run it has to get all this amount back *in money* through sales of its product. But, long run or short run, there is only £500 of money on the island; so that, even if the corn-growers got a sudden whim that they would use all their remaining money to buy ploughs, that would still leave the plough-making industry with a balance of £1,000 *irrecoverable costs*. But the corn-growers are going to use the money otherwise, and, seeing that the economic policy of the islanders involves keeping down the production of corn, the number of ploughs that will be ordered will be negligible. So one may reasonably assume that the plough-makers will be left with the bulk of their products on their hands. Being unable to earn any revenue to speak of they will default in the payment of interest on their debentures. The banker, as debenture-holder, will then intervene and seize the "security." He will then offer it in the "open market." Now, the only possible purchasers are the corn-growers. Supposing them to purchase the property. They cannot bid more than they have got, which is £500. The banker accepts the bid, takes the money, and cancels it. Now, the banker's books are clear; there is no money on the island; the plough-makers have lost their property; the corn-growers have lost £1,000, and have got a plough-making property which has cost them a further £500. But the worst is not yet. If the banker refuses to lend any more credit the plough-making property will be worth nothing at all, and the corn-growers will have lost the whole of the £1,500 which they originally collected as profit.

The difference between this grotesque sequence of events and the facts of present-day profiteering and investment under the existing financial regime is simply a difference between the numbers of the victims. Essentially, the very same principles are operating. They are not seen in their absurdity because of the complexity of the modern industrial process to which we have previously referred. They are the cause of the alternation of "booms" and "slumps." They explain why it is that while, during the war, the amount of money at the disposal of the British people only doubled, the amount of their national debt was multiplied ten times. An additional sum of £1,000 millions appeared, but an additional debt of about £7,000 millions also appeared. And this huge disparity of £6,000 millions—this money deficit—was caused, in order, first by the inflation of prices when the bankers were issuing new credits, second, by the draining of the consumer's purse by that inflation, third, by the repayment of the money to the bankers and their cancellation of it. And the flood of bankruptcies that has marked the period of the banks' "deflation policy" (i.e., the calling in of loans) proceed from the above causes just as did the plough-makers' bankruptcy on the island.

(To be continued.)

A Church Renouncing Its Faith.

At a recent meeting of the House of Laity of the Church of England it was decided that the Athanasian Creed ought to be amended, and the so-called "damnation clauses" expunged. In due course, no doubt, this decision will be ratified and carried out by the higher authorities of the Church. And, swiftly and inevitably, there will follow another attack upon the authority of this document of historic Faith. For it is clear that members of the Church do not care for Dogma and Creed. A creed is in the nature of a test; they feel that tests exclude people. "Let us be broader," they say, "and make our services 'brighter,' and then the vanishing congregations will reappear."

No mistake could be more fatal than this. Yet I ask anyone who knows the thought and temper of the Church if this is not actually what dominates it to-day. Professing Christians are becoming more and more like everyone else, and wish to become so, with an apparent belief that it will conciliate the world; whereas, even if it makes religion less frightening, it makes it less interesting; and lack of interest is what is killing it. The "broad-minded" vicar who goes to the pub., and drinks like any ordinary man, which is quite a good thing to do, unfortunately *talks*, there and elsewhere, also like any ordinary and sometimes an irresponsible man. He becomes horribly ordinary. But religion is the most extraordinary of the things of humanity and exacts the greatest responsibility. The creed of St. Athanasius, as the historic document is called, is the first to be attacked, because it makes demands upon an unusual and responsible kind of thinking. It is the most philosophical and systematic statement of the Christian cosmoconception. But the truth is that it is one of the greatest philosophical documents in existence, however astonished most broad Churchmen would be at the idea. I have heard one vicar apologise, from the pulpit, that such an antiquated and outworn creed is still in the service; another has told me that his parishioners dislike it, and mostly leave it unsaid! No preachers, it seems, exist who can expound it. It is not understood; and, not being understood, it is no wonder that the laity would rather remove it.

For, of course, they do not want to do away with it. Ostensibly they only attack the two phrases, "without doubt he will perish everlastingly," and "he cannot be saved." These phrases are applied to whoever does not believe the creed, and, it is argued, modern feelings of charity compel their omission. But no Christian who understands the creed could logically object to these expressions. If Christianity, Church, religion, or even any ethical system has any meaning whatever, there must be something to be saved from. If we were all going to be saved, anyhow, what is all this about salvation?

No, it is the "whole thing incomprehensible" which our Anglicans dislike. The damnation clauses are the most convenient end by which to drag it out to destruction. They have no use for it. For the creed, according to St. Athanasius, is no light matter. It is like that lofty truth of which an immortal Chinese philosopher wrote:—

"When the wisest men of all hear it, they do it.
"When men of less wisdom hear it, they respect it.
"When fools hear it they laugh at it.
"If they did not laugh at it, it would not be the truth."

So, when men of the very highest intelligence read this creed, whether learned or not, they have an intuition of its greatness. And the entirely ignorant, raised into critics by primary schooling, laugh at it as a "back number." But to the intelligent it is a thing which can be explained, and needs to be explained; only it, indeed, is not easy to explain.

For the first half of the creed is no less than a description of the three fundamental aspects of reality. It is an apocalyptically perfect attempt to give the final analysis of reality as it presents itself to personal, that is human, consciousness. The Absolute presents itself in its irreducible three aspects. If anyone thinks there might just as well be two, or four, he must try to produce a system of thought accordingly. But if he studies all the greatest philosophers humanity has produced, Greek, mediæval or modern, Asiatic or European, he will *invariably* find three hypostases of being in all their variety of terminology. With all their disagreement, they seem to have something in common. And that which is common to them all is summarised with stunning brevity and vividness in the Athanasian Creed. What is given here is the key to the rarest treasures of philosophy. And it is also the rhythm of all thought. Hegel himself, pioneer in the most uncharted distances of thought, saw and acknowledged that the creed had reached the poles before him. And even our Mr. H. G. Wells, certainly no systematic thinker, when he was once aroused to anger at Christian dogma, and tried to think out his own creed—even he produced a trinity of Divinity, albeit grotesquely emotional and unclear.

But how many are there who try, even half as persistently as Mr. Wells, to think out their own beliefs, to put their conclusions in order? And the religious, it is to be feared, are in this sense sometimes worse than the profaner sort—for they think it might be presumptuous, or dangerous, to think out their own theology. They are too much afraid to lose their creed ever to find it. They do not know what a creed is, that in one aspect it is the real consensus of human opinion; that which would be common to all men's thought about life and experience, if they deepened it in sincerity and raised it to clearness of expression. And as to the question of damnation, it may well be supposed that the good laity are tired of repeating "damnation clauses" which they fear must apply to themselves, for they cannot believe a farrago of words which they have no intention of trying to understand.

Not that the creators of the creed were such fools as to suppose that a man's salvation depends upon his reading and agreeing with that document. They meant that a certain attitude of mind is needed, a certain guiding sense, in relation to will and thought and feeling, if a man is to be saved from the incipient forms of crime and insanity and suicide: and that if he lifted up his mind and soul to express, in words, what that guiding sense is, it would amount to the same as the creed, in the same or corresponding terms. In fact, it is clear that everyone ought to do this; and the value of a creed is that it is easier to do it in our own original way, if it has been done for us in an universal way already. The existence of a creed is not, as the devout mistake it, to discourage original investigations of the truth. On the contrary, it is to encourage them. It is just because they will not think for themselves that Anglican Christians are about to lose one of the greatest pieces of thinking that was ever done *for* them.

It is not only the first, or metaphysical, part of the Athanasian creed, however, with which modern Anglicans quarrel. Amongst those who have directed the attack upon the damnation clauses one could find, I am very sure, some of those who have expressed doubts concerning the subject of the latter half. This is the portion of the creed which requires belief in an historical event in the life of a man who was also God. This man, if he really existed, which there is no good reason to doubt, proclaimed himself God; and all Christian churches are literally founded upon belief in that claim. But there is certainly a movement in the English Church to deny it. These, who deny the Divinity of Jesus, do not say how He came short of it, what was His sin. Nor do they affirm that all men are, potentially, as much God as He was, but only that He was as merely human as we are. It is Christhood itself which they deny. It is God incarnate in Man of which they are ashamed. They are not ignorant that Jesus must have been God, *if* any man ever was. But they deny to humanity the possibility of ever having touched Perfection.

I grant that the Incarnation is the ancient stumbling-block of the Faith. But with these apostates one need not deal gently. Far too gentle are they already, and too little honest: it would be best to goad them into a straight and determinate fight. I fear they must be fat, and specially given to sin, who wish to make this abyss between Divinity and Humanity; can they ever have been blessed with Divine consciousness for a second who have not generosity to believe that one man was once Divinely and cosmically conscious for three ecstatic years? Let them come out into the open, let them serve God with a vigorous, well-argued heresy, and not comfort the Devil with insincere service to a Church which they think is founded on illusion! Why do they whittle away words from the least popular document of the Church, disintegrate the faith by guile, which they really desire to destroy or change entirely? They will not think in order to understand, nor even be honest in their ignorance. The historic faith, which is an intellectual splendour no less than an ethical and

æsthetic inspiration, they would lay flat to the level of a *John Bull* article or of a sermon of their own, in the name of broadmindedness, toleration, or equality of minds.

Let them utter the truth of their own most earnest will; let them write their own Gospel and proclaim their own creed, say exactly why there can be no Christ, and why the creed is not true!

But they will do none of this. Stone by stone they will dismantle the Church, word by word they will renounce the faith of Christendom. Yet they will not destroy the creed. It could be supplanted only on the same terms as Pythagoras's Theorem or Leibnitz's calculus—namely, by a formula more true and comprehensive. These mathematical triumphs are preserved precisely because men are still working sincerely and steadily at the same problems. And this imperishable Creed of Truth will be lost to the English Church because men are not toiling at that high problem; for which reason the Church itself in the creed's own words, "will not be able to be saved" (*salvus esse non poterit*).

FILIOQUE.

How to Philosophize, or "Comfortless-Awful."

(1) The aim of the philosopher is to see God face to face. If a man hopes for encouragement let him avoid philosophy. Let him take to slum-work. Let him give his half-crown and rejoice in the happiness of the child who breathes fresh air for the first time, and stands amazed at the sight of a cow. No one forbids a man these bourgeois but innocent pleasures.

(2) Too often we have seen thought inhibited and cursed by the desire for assurances. Does philosophy pretend to justify God's ways Nothing so impertinent. Do we justify an eclipse? Philosophy sets out to observe and mirror God's ways; those who expect from philosophy moral support, or emotional flattery, or even pride of intelligence, are the enemies of philosophy. The ways of God are both good and evil, as anyone may see.

(3) There are some who feel more comfortable if they persuade themselves that there is no God. The universe laughs at them; true philosophers spit at them. Is philosophy to wait upon preference?

(4) Others are consoled by the belief that God exists. These are to be dealt with gently; for they keep their fellows alive to mysteries. We ask only: "It *that* a good reason for cheerfulness? Can *that* warm the world and make the future golden?" God has no passion to please mankind; we are no better for the existence of God.

(5) The advocate of the Devil says this: You cannot dodge desire. If you are never so alert you will still discover in the universe only what you wish to believe. Perhaps, if you are very quick-witted, you may chase desire from pillar to post: you may drive it far back into the recesses of the mind, but it will be always ahead of you. A man cannot psychoanalyse himself to the end; he shrinks; he stops short; he rationalizes, and will not reason. Desire stands always in the way of truth.

(6) To which we reply: I desire only the truth. I will receive pain and pleasure, good and evil, contempt and praise, with equal love. The wandering desires of the body compel us to rationalize; but desire for the truth lays hold of God and brings him down for our inspection. When truly I have no appetite for pleasure above pain, pain above pleasure, when truly I prove myself to be in nothing either ascetic or epicure, then I shall know perfectly How to Philosophize.

(7) Farewell, Kant and Hegel. Last and bitterest, farewell Plato. You have made the world easier to bear. There must be no more systems.

TH.

The Æsthetics of Horror.

By Alexander Werth.

"Do you remember," I said to my old Paris friend, "what your Taine said about Gloucester's eyes in *King Lear*? It was something to the effect that only a barbarian like Shakespeare could have desired to present such monstrous horrors on the stage. And now you, with your affection for Racine and Voltaire, you, with your refined Latin taste, wish me to accompany you to a place where we shall see the amputations of limbs without anæsthetics, the plucking out of eyes, and the flooding of a stage with blood, brains, and entrails."

"Never mind the blood and entrails," he replied. "What I want you to see is the perfection in the technique of these thrillers. In spite of their awful crudeness, you cannot but admire them as masterpieces of crescendo movements in *atmosphere*. And I want you to observe the very skilful manner in which the performance is managed, which keeps it from becoming either morbidly unpleasant or frivolously meaningless. Mark the skilful succession of poison and antidote, of tragedy and comedy, of horror and farce, of cries of fear from the ladies in the audience (and from some of the stronger sex, too), and then the roars of genuine merriment."

* * *

It is growing dark when we turn into the gloomy and narrow rue Chaptal and see the little red electric serpents circling round the words "Grand Guignol." One can hear a gentle hum of traffic from the rue Blanche and the adjoining Pigalle, but in the rue Chaptal—an ominous-sounding name, I think—everything seems deadly quiet. Some three or four taxis alone stand in front of the Grand Guignol. The theatre itself is rather well, though not perhaps perfectly, atmosphered. The hall with its *vestiaire* and bar is adorned with thoroughly creepy paintings of dismembered bodies, terrible physical agonies, mad, staring eyes . . . and blood, blood, blood—so much so that even the red triangle of the "Bass" advertisement seemed to inspire one with a sudden aversion to that admirable beverage. The main feature of the theatre itself is that it is very small. Nor could it be otherwise. A Grand Guignol performance in the Albert Hall would be quite unimpressive. A Grand Guignol show is like an occult meeting where a certain intimacy of mutual hypnotism is quite essential; and that is only possible in a small room. There are some subtle touches in the construction of the theatre. On each side of the stage there is a mysterious-looking Gothic door which never seems to open except for some very marvellous reason. The spherical ceiling, adorned with a few sombre, half-naked figures, is more like the ceiling of some Byzantine chapel than that of a Montmartre theatre. The only very incongruous thing (painfully common in theatres generally) is the hideous safety-curtain, bearing crude, old-fashioned advertisements of hair-oil and hair dyes, depicting a bearded gentleman's hideousness *before*, and his exquisite beauty *after* using them.

Before the curtain rises there can already be felt a certain nervousness in the audience. It does not consist entirely of foreigners, the Grand Guignol being a fairly favoured haunt with Frenchmen, all of whom, however, look blasé and indifferent, and seem to take the whole thing as a joke. But the English and American girls show signs of extreme nervousness, and fidget restlessly with their programmes and fancy bags, and giggle unnaturally. It is, however, only with the second item in the programme that the real fun begins. We are inside a lighthouse. Outside the storm is heard raging mightily. And there is the old man, with his son, a young sailor. The son's face is cadaverous, and he is in a terrible state of depression. His whole body trembles. His eyes are the eyes of a madman. He speaks to his father, then suddenly he rushes out into the stormy night. As he opens the door the wind and storm break into the lighthouse with a fearful roar. The son is outside the lighthouse. Suddenly there is a frightful yell. Then slowly, horribly slowly (here's an excellent *crescendo* touch), the door opens again and—the sailor returns. "Why did you shout?" the father asks. "Did I shout?" mutters the son in a deadly voice. And then, gradually, one becomes aware that the son has been bitten by a mad dog. Foaming at the mouth (I don't know how it's done, but it looks disgustingly real), and shouting wildly, "*je veux mordre, mordre, mordre*" (which is, of course, medically, absurd), the sailor leaps at his father. But the old man's hand is strong. He grips the madman by the throat and strangles him In the audience there is a deadly silence. The play has been thoroughly impressive, and the young sailor's yell outside the lighthouse, while remaining without any direct consequences, has added enormously to the atmosphere of terror.

After the interval, during which everybody cools his emotions with *esquimaux*—excellent ice-cream bricks coated with chocolate, so much more gracefully eatable than our messy ices—the audience is presented with a comedy. But only gradually, very gradually, it becomes aware that the scene is taking place—in a madhouse. Soon after, however, one begins to wonder whether the madhouse is genuine or not, for, except for a few oddities, the people seem quite sensible. Only later one discovers that it is all a put-up show, in which a husband, in order to escape from his wife, simulates madness and is sent to this pleasant sanatorium. But the madhouse theme has already crept into the symphony. Though only in the form of a burlesque, it is there; and the audience is already somewhat prepared for the more dire aspects of lunacy. And then, in the next play, it comes; and the audience, puzzled by the two preceding plays, finds its nerves already in tune with the most fearful horrors. And *Un Crime dans une Maison des Fous* is certainly horrible and hardly aesthetically justifiable, because the reaction in the onlooker is neither mental nor even emotional, but almost purely physical. Nevertheless, the play would not be so impressive if it were not for the extraordinarily skilful and economical handling of a few obviously unimportant details. The story consists in the fact that three mad hags conspire against a young convalescent woman, tie her to her bed, and pierce her eyes with a knitting needle while the nurse has negligently left them alone in the ward. The crime itself is accompanied by horrible realistic effects, such as streams of blood and terrible shrieks from the victim, which evoke genuine cries of fear among the audience. The interesting thing is not this horribly crude stuff, but the manner in which the play leads up to it. For the play opens with the nurse sitting alone in the ward and knitting a *red* jersey with the *very* instrument of the bloody crime. The scene is so nerve-racking that the mutilated victim, still streaming blood, apparently feels it to be advisable to bow to the audience, as though to prove that she has not really been murdered. And this otherwise objectionable episode comes here as a genuine relief, for whatever else may be said of Grand Guignol thrillers, they are the nearest approach to Stendhal's *illusion parfaite*—that illusion which made an excitable Yank shoot Othello as a "damned nigger murdering a white woman." The really dreadful thing is not the gallon of red ink, but the harmless red jersey, that powerful and awful instrument of atmosphere—and this illusion could not be achieved by purely crude methods. The last play is a rattling good farce, slightly Rabelaisian and brilliantly funny. After the *maison des fous* it tastes more wholesome, and one begins to feel that the horrors were a nightmare, and that all this flippancy is reality itself. As a result, the people leave the Grand Guignol in a cheerful mood and seemingly not much disturbed by the "dreadful" part of the programme. Perhaps a few nervous ones, passing along a dark passage, think of the ward in the madhouse, and hurry onward.

A Word for Tennessee.

Poor scapegoat Tennessee! The inhabitants are good, honest, ignorant people. They have been taught the doctrines of the Christian churches. These are the same doctrines that the churches teach as absolute truth to all people who are not inclined to be disputatious: there is never any question, I think, of making the heathen Liberal Churchmen. But when the inhabitants of Tennessee attempted in a mild, half-hearted manner to ensure that nothing against their faith should be put upon the school curriculum, and when a few violent agnostics raised a protest, then Tennessee was abandoned by its instructors, and hundreds of bishops, professors of theology, and free-church ministers indecently hurried to denounce them. Oh, what terror the name of science rouses in a believer's breast!

And Tennessee had actually behaved in a more than tolerant, in a positively Laodicean fashion. The chorus of episcopal indignation has concealed the facts. Tennessee had forbidden its school-teachers to teach that men were the lineal descendants of monkeys. Why should such a disputable theory be forced upon school-children, anyhow? It is the clergy who are most sure that the doctrine of evolution by natural selection is established: scientists hold other theories. In Dayton, a small town in Tennessee, a bright, young, pugnacious agnostic insisted upon teaching his children the "facts" of natural selection. How did the state of Tennessee receive the news? It let him teach. It provided him with text books.

This was rather a blow to the local agnostics. They couldn't get martyred. But they encouraged Mr. Scopes, the rebellious school-teacher, to challenge the State to dismiss him. There was the law: they would force the poor, tolerant, inactive authorities to put it in action. No one wanted to prosecute Mr. Scopes; but Mr. Scopes' friends wanted him to be prosecuted. They succeeded in their manœuvres. Hence the obloquy that has fallen upon the obscurantist and bigoted State of Tennessee.

But in truth it is the compromisers and liberalisers in the churches who have disgraced themselves, not the gentle barbarians of Dayton. It is melancholy to remember that, whenever scientists have been insolent and have represented themselves as the arbiters of the interpretation of facts, instead of the classifiers and discoverers of facts, it has been left to the irreligious to correct them. It was Nietzsche above all who stood unterrified against the philosophies of those who, because they were occupied in the analysis of matter, saw nothing but matter in the whole universe. And if the conscience of churchmen could be stirred at all it might well make them weep with shame to observe that Bernard Shaw, he, the flamboyant, blasphemous, and rationalising egotist, has been left to fight their battles for them.

If religious conviction were pure and simple in the churches, then science would be no enemy: since it is rocky and feeble, the vast majority of churchmen cannot afford to grapple with facts for fear of losing their superstitions. If I have an indisputable knowledge in myself of my own being, my own awareness, my own eternity, am I to be scared of materialist theories? I shall find confirmation of my knowledge in everything I perceive; it will be I who advance interpretations, I who point out the order and interrelation of the world. It is not in the nature of religion to wait in trembling upon the decisions of others,

and hope anxiously that they may leave it some credit for servile virtues.

The church is betrayed: because of its lack of faith it has lost its quick-wittedness. It is a mystery few people have learned that in the pragmatic aspect of Christianity, the most essentially Christian virtue is exactly this quick-wittedness that has so failed in the church. It happens, then, that the cause of whole-hearted, impulsive, creative religion is left in the hands of those who, through their stupidity and ignorance, are most likely to shame it. The people of Tennessee have religion in their blood and little in their heads. Christian apologists seem only to differ in this—their blood is impoverished.

A. P.

Readers and Writers

POETRY AND CULTURE.

Mr. Abercrombie has added another volume* to his contributions towards an analysis of English verse. It seems to me that he misses the heights of criticism through a too common oversight. Our academicals will not wake to the heroism of culture. They see before them an achieved and stable culture, and it appears to them that no other culture than this was ever possible, and none can ever succeed it. They find it necessary to take the standards of criticism for English poetry from English poetry itself; which would be well enough if they recognised that the poets have constructed those standards out of their own blood—if they saw what a man-made and heroic thing culture is. Men stamp a pattern in chaos; but there is an infinity of possible patterns. We live in one type of civilisation, one type of culture; and it is very hard work to disembarrass our minds so that we can conceive other standards than our own. Yet great criticism occurs only when a man reaches behind his own age to the *ground* of culture, and sees in what multiple ways it can develop.

Mr. Abercrombie has nothing of this freedom of mind. He is not even concerned with exploring the potentialities of our literary instrument with a view to adapting it to the new demands that our changing civilisation is making. That itself is a task for which a more powerful character is required; some individual tainted—shall we say—with the winds from the East, where so much decomposition is going on, and so much new life is to be expected. Mr. Abercrombie does not consider any such revolution, and so we must not go to his *Idea of Great Poetry* expecting to find the establishment of an aesthetic founded on a new and completely conscious ethic, a framework of a freer and up-to-date social fabric. Without this rejuvenation of the comings and goings of man, great poetry cannot be produced. And in the final analysis great poetry is epic poetry: for we must take as the type of an art —id generis cuiusque quo maius cogitari nequit.

A society of long-established habit, where compromise is the public slogan, and in which the only emotional outlet is through subjective individualism, gives us no material to feed the epic flame. Our Achilles and Hectors are nowadays controlled by the rules of the Stock Exchange; or they fight for subscribed purses. But however they function, their activities are *in vacuo*, and have no effect on the people—unless it be a lethal, financial one.

So, since he is unwilling for the sake of poetry to plunge into matters unpoetic, such as politics, ethics, and economics, Mr. Abercrombie is forced by the circumstances of his subject to restrict himself to what amounts, after all, to a historical analysis of epic verse. Within this field his work is very clear, true, and stimulating. I do not remember having been confronted before with so noble a conception of the greatness of Wordsworth—that massive genius whom we all under-rate in our weaker moments, when we are too clever, too modern, too much with the world.

Mr. Abercrombie attains an imaginative height not far below that of Wordsworth himself; and I feel that his appreciation is no less embracing than was that of Coleridge. But we must not forget Coleridge's wonderful subtlety and intuition, nor the fact that he was the *first* to appreciate the deep originality of Wordsworth's pagan mind—perhaps the most self-contained religious microcosm in the history of Europe's long spiritual anarchy.

Our author's method is not so much intuitive as conscientious—and that is said in no disparaging sense. A great deal, however, is involved in this difference, for it means that Mr. Abercrombie is distinctly Western, and more particularly English in his method of approach. It means that his vision and his terminology are more humane, domestic, Gothic; and these qualities give his conclusion a local warmth, an optimism, a parochial familiarity, which tend to make them too small for the infinite conceptions which they endeavour to convey. Coleridge on Wordsworth seems cooler, more prosaic, almost matter-of-fact; but he has that terrible sense of universality about him, as though he had come from the ends of the world to sit in contemplation of his beloved poet.

These notes, so preoccupied with Wordsworth, must give the reader a one-sided view of Mr. Abercrombie's book. But one feels that Wordsworth is a predominating influence in his poetic world. That makes him valuable to us to-day. Our generation is in a particularly morbid and febrile mood, with our æsthetic and our intellectual vitality debauched by a gnatlike nervous restlessness. By recalling us with a sustained enthusiasm to the deep and structural delights of the epic inspiration, Mr. Abercrombie is a physician to our sickness, as well as Mantuan to the great poets whom he leads through our hell.

EN SARDESIN.

*The Idea of Great Poetry. By Lascelles Abercrombie. (Secker. 5s. net.)

The Testament of Thespis.

By H. R. Barbor.

I.—GENESIS.

In the beginning was the man, and the spirit moved him and he found movement good for its own sake and also for the sake of expressing the spirits (the high spirits and the low) that were in him.

By movements he expressed the emotions which he felt. By those movements he infected his fellows with his spirit, the high spirits and the low. So the man became the actor.

Now one actor moved in a certain manner, and by imitations of chosen movements or facial expressions and what not he invented new persons from the gestures and contortions of the visages of his fellows. And his fellows looked on and laughed, saying: "Behold, he is a one!" or "No man of us all hath felt such grief as this."

They called their actors comedians or tragedians, according as they were moved to laughter or sorrow. And these were all mimes, which later were called pantomimists.

Other actors moved in other manner, for they said: "Movement is an end in itself. The sway of water is good, and the sweep of the gull and of the eagle in the air is good; the flitter of the bat, the lumbering of the oxen, and the way of a snake in the grass, all are good. I will renew all these in my own person.

"These arms made for reaching nuts, hurling stones, and embracing my mates, I will use to express the snake's way. These agile legs shall move cumbrously as the bear moves.

"And I will make besides strange movements which have no use or reason in nature, yet are more than sufficient because they are lovely I will make these in periods and rhythms because these repetitions and progressions have a beauty of their own." And he did so. Behold he is the dancer.

And to the dance was added music. And it pleased the people. In the fullness of time to the mime came the word, and the mime spoke sense and nonsense, adding these to movement in due order and with discrimination. His movements were the embodiment of the world, and his speech was a flame lighting up the meaning of his spirit, the high spirits and the low, expounding them.

Then the actor, moving and speaking, became the grand exemplar of the people, who took him to their hearts and to their hearths, sustaining him according to his needs, feeding him, clothing him in the raiment of the people, and the raiment also of those other people that he created, and loving him according to his need, and making him festive according to his inclination, for the sake of the pleasure the actor engendered within them.

For they said: "These actors are no mean men. They are us all in one. Great lads. They must be fostered."

But the will of man, especially of the artists among men, is bent on perfection, and finds no satisfaction in anything.

Wherefore the actor said: "Make us a place where we actors may congregate together. Are not two heads better than one, and are not ten actors playing together in a great place better than one amusing your miserable families in your inconvenient hovels?

"Build then such a house whither ye may all repair for your delight in times of leisure and festivity. Then we will show you such wonders as ye have not dreamed. Your pleasure shall be our work and our pleasure. And between whiles you shall sustain us with food and drink, and for our love we will look to that ourselves."

The people thought this good, so they built the great place and the actors congregated there to prepare festivities. And the place was called Theatre; the congregation of actors was called Company.

The preparation was called Rehearsal and the festivity that the company made was called Drama or Play. They pleased the people mightily.

Now there were some among the people which had no pleasure in these shows, being infertile of mind and overwhelmed with their own perfection. And these complained, saying:—

"These actors hold us up to scorn and despoil the people of dullness which is our lot in life. They make mock of us in particular, spotting our want of wit and pillorying our pomposity.

"Besides they delve not nor weave. Yet they eat much bread and wear more than one suit, and the wine they drink is a scandal throughout the land. Only last week the chief zany took the fairest daughter of our friend and fellow-dullard, Zo Bo the cheesemaker, behind the scenes. Let us make an outcry." (And they made such an outcry that the people said: "Shut up." But they did not.)

The actors therefore performed continually before the people creating each after his kind, and company by company, divers worlds of make-believe. And the belief that they made became the belief of the people.

So they changed the people according to the manner of their thought. And the spirit of the actor, the high spirits and the low, were infused into the minds of all men.

They expressed the spirit of the time and of the race. They gave joy and mirth betimes and noble rage and poignant sorrow betimes.

By their art they showed in small the process and character of the world at large.

These are the days of the making of the theatre as it has been told. First the man acting, which now is the Music Hall.

He begat the man dancing, which is the Ballet, and the man miming, which is the Pantomime.

And the mime found the word and begat Tragedy and Comedy and all that is between these twain.

Insomuch also as some were not content to speak, but added to speech music, singing their words to the sound of harps and reeds, in due season came the singing actors, makers of Opera.

All these were found in the theatre which the people made for them.

At length there arose a scribe, devoted to the traffic of words, who nevertheless loved to cultivate leisure in the house of the players. He was skilled in tale-telling, and in the decking of trite happenings with lustrous verbiage. And one day, being offended by the indignities that the actors heaped upon his mother-tongue, and starved of joy by reason of the adjectival paucity and syntactical resourcelessness of the players, the light of comprehension illuminated his mind, and he cried:

"Every man to his trade. Let the actor act only. For the dancer dances, and the musician makes music for him. But the actor maketh his own tales (poor yarns at best, and unworthy of the cunning wherewith they are portrayed).

"Let the actor act. I, the scribe, will make noble tales and droll stories, and I will beget the noble tales with constellations of splendid poetry and the droll stories I will pepper with tasty witticisms. Each to his job: the actor shall act, the scribe shall write."

So he wrote; and what he wrote that he took to the theatre, and he went round behind and saw the player chief, and showed the writing.

And the chief, pressing his hand upon his heart (for he knew he was on a good thing) said:

"This is not bad. Write more. Meanwhile I shall put this into rehearsal. But inasmuch as it must be substantially altered before it can be performed, I will lick it into shape." So he changed the title and put fifty lines into his own part. And afterwards the player chief said to the people:

"Behold I have a new entertainment, made by myself, full of plums of wisdom and delight. It is the goods." and in a quieter tone he added: "A scribe wrote it down, it was so good. I acknowledge the scribe's help; you, O people, shall sustain him also because of his help to my theatre."

Thus did the people, and were well pleased so to do, for the play was good, and the box-office was besieged as it were a city compassed by an host.

Only the scribe was discontented because the chief player had purloined his credit, claiming to have made the piece. Wherefore he said secretly to the leading lady: "This is a bit thick."

And the leading lady comforted him.

So the next play that he made gave great opportunities for this comforter to show herself before the people. Which cried for her at the end of the entertainment with one great voice that would not be stilled, even though the chief player made two speeches.

So the leading lady must go before the people, which she did, all smiles, and led on the scribe and told the people how he had written this and the other. Thereupon the people proclaimed him, calling him Playwright, which is dramatist. And he was confused and worried until the leading lady comforted him again.

Thus was made the theatre, and it became popular, and it prevailed.

"High Toryism."

By Old and Crusted.

O, goodly is our heritage!

An old song made by an aged old pate,
Of an old worshipful gentleman, who had a great estate,
That kept a brave old house at a bountiful rate,
And an old porter to relieve the poor at his gate;
Like an old courtier of the Queen's
And the Queen's old courtier.

. . . . . .

And when he dyed gave every child a thousand good pounds.

. . . . . .

But to his eldest son his house and land he assign'd,
Charging him in his will to keep the old bountifull mind,
To be good to his old tenants, and to his neighbours be kind;
But in the ensuing ditty you shall hear how he was inclin'd;
Like a young courtier of the King's
And the King's young courtier.

Like a flourishing young gallant, newly come to his land,
Who keeps a brace of painted madams at his command,

. . . . . .

With a new-fashion'd hall, built where the old one stood,

. . . . . .

With a fine marble chimney, wherein burns neither coal nor wood,
And a new smooth shovelboard, whereon no victual ne'er stood.

. . . . . .

Which makes that good house-keeping is now grown so cold,
Amongst the young courtiers of the King,
Or the King's young courtiers.

(*Old Ballad.*)

I once protested, more in anger than in sorrow, that there were only two Tories in this county stronghold of Conservatism, and that of these two, one was dead, and the other not very well. Of conscious, definite, emphatic Tories, two per constituency is probably a fair estimate of the present party strength—not very promising from the point of view of an election agent—but of vast importance as a sign that there is still a grain of sanity in the body politic; a little leaven that may eventually produce fermentation in the stodgy dough of the electorate from whose ranks our half-baked politicians emerge. Mere Conservatism, as we know it, set in under Sir Robert Peel and became the political label of successful middle-class commercialism; it can be best described as Whiggism o'ergrown with a little blue mould. In these latter days this dreary phenomenon is chiefly represented by the new plutocrat, who, starting life as a Nonconformist Liberal, becomes what is euphemistically known as a Unionist, developing rapidly into a pillar of provincial "Constitutional Clubs" and a pro forma Churchman who sits down during the recital of the Athanasian Creed.

Now that all political parties are swiftly deliquescing into a viscid mass of piffling futility—mere argilaceous matter that high finance cynically moulds at its will into vessels of honour and dishonour—the old Tory, who has long stood aloof from the sordid intrigues of office-seekers and careerists may come into his own again. The stupid heresy that High Tories are mere reactionaries, a class apart, found in one social stratum only, is bunkum. The right breed has its representatives in all classes. You will find them in the cottage, behind the counter, and in the Manor—but—most of them live amongst fields and pastures, where wise men love to dwell; for in towns there is much cleverness but very little wisdom. The great bond of union between these good folks is—no, not beer this time, but the land; a passion which makes the peasant the most dangerous of revolutionaries when his legitimate land-hunger remains unsatisfied, and the most unbending of Conservatives once he is firmly rooted in his own steading. Hence the Communists' hatred of "private property." It queers their pitch.

Moreover, a genuine Tory is your only real eclectic. He is no mere "laudator tempores acti," cranky medievalist, or dreamy Utopian, but rejoices in the possession of that innate good sense which enables him to distinguish between the merely ancient and the truly venerable. He feels in a dim sort of way that every age has contributed something to the social fabric that is worth preserving, and is deeply concerned,

"That Our House stand together and the pillars do not fall."

He stands outside the party game and often does not even trouble to vote. Why should he? The transparent bribes of slack-mouthed politicians do not appeal to him, and he has often more sympathy with an out-and-out Socialist than with a Stock Exchange Conservative—for both have a glimmering of the great truth that property implies duties as well as rights—a thing no whey-faced Whig can understand. And further, this sturdy Toryism stands for the liberty of the subject and detests all grandmotherly legislation and canting interference with our social habits.

It should not be a matter for surprise, then, if Social Credit appeals to this type of mind, especially in the rural districts where we deal in real values, where turnover is slow and price such a vital factor. The "just price made perfect" must eventually attract all slow-moving weather-beaten wrestlers with a capricious climate, and the consequent alternations of glut and scarcity; aggravated by severe financial "depressions" and "anti-cyclones."

I can picture the interchange of half-startled glances between Squire and Tenant-Farmer at some market ordinary, when the idea slowly dawns on them that they have a common foe, with a body to be kicked and a soul to be damned—that the gentleman sitting in the bank parlour across the street is not the vicegerent of Providence, but rather the unwilling representative of a very ugly tyranny.

. . . . . .

Now the old gentleman of the ballad, the hearty fox-hunting squire who loved "a cup of old sack to comfort his copper nose," is a typical Tory of the ancient breed, some of whose immediate descendants must have been amongst the men who in 1694 regarded with mistrust the financial manœuvres of Montague and Godfrey in the City (how familiar the names sound!) and whose later scions still refuse to bend the knee to the idol of "big business." It is a sound instinct. Amongst these oft-derided old "stick-in-the-muds" will probably be found that small "body of men who know what to do and how to do it," of whom Douglas speaks. At present this inarticulate latent force has "no Press." The *Morning Post* might have been expected to show some appreciation of this aspect of High Toryism, but is nearly as bad as the *Spectator* in utter incapacity to grasp its underlying principles, although the virginal purity of the latter has been slightly blown upon of late, and even the old Troglodyte murmurs occasionally that financial interests should be subordinate to industrial interests—which is something.

Probably there are many excellent people, more or less in sympathy with the sentiments expressed in this whimsical paradox, who would resent being described as "Tories"; they still prefer the musty old party designations and may fight shy of us "Economic Jacobites" who love England with a consuming passion which disdains all yeasty flummery about "Patriotism" and "Imperialism," and to whom the cacklings of the stunt Press are but as the twitterings of hedge sparrows Let them take heart of grace. They are better than they know. The original sin of conventional politics is more than outweighed by the saving grace of those permanent impulses in the blood which are part and parcel of "our goodly heritage" and may yet restore "good housekeeping" to a hungry and distracted people.

. . . . . .

There is, however, a variety of Toryism, fantastic, crotchety, full of whims and fancies, impracticable and forlorn which is known as "Old and Crusted."

Reviews.

Missionaries and Annexation in the Pacific. By K. L. P. Martin. (Oxford University Press. 6s.)

This book contains some interesting side-lights on European expansion in the Pacific during the nineteenth century, based on contemporary documents. It is to the author's credit that he realises the curious idealism of the Evangelicals in being "more ready to spend money on missions to the heathen than to make efforts to improve the material standard of life among the masses at home." The eyes of a religionist, like those of the fool, are too often in the ends of the earth. In recounting a history of so many conflicting factors, the author is wise in refraining from generalisation. One of the only conclusions he permits himself is one, well supported by evidence, that native races, even under missionary supervision, are incapable of establishing an efficient and stable government strong enough to control the Europeans in their midst. After making the islands safe for the white trader the missionaries were forced to call in the home Governments to keep them safe for the native. The idea that in this wicked world economic motives of self-interest seem to mould events more than professed motives of disinterestedness is exemplified in the history of the Pacific. Not only did native governments under missionary advice break down because of the greed and crimes of white traders, but the missionaries themselves were guilty at times of feathering their own nests. Mr. Martin emphasises, rather unfairly perhaps, the admittedly exceptional case of the Rev. Shirley Baker in Tonga; but he also recalls the evidence that in New Zealand the missionaries made large purchases of land from the natives, although they opposed the purchases by the New Zealand Company. Against this must be set much disinterested work by missionaries, and especially the investigation by Lorimer Fison into land tenure in Fiji. The assertion of the native rights in the land had a profound effect upon British policy, not only in Fiji but later in New Guinea. The author rightly devotes much space to the iniquitous labour traffic, which reminds one, if, indeed, it were necessary, that developing new lands by native labour more often means exploitation than civilisation.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

"THE ARTS IN UTOPIA."

Sir,—I am a peaceful man, and I'm afraid I have brought trouble on my head, but I promise you that the following is my last word on this subject.

Your contributor, Haydn Mackey, and his thrilled supporter, John Rimmer, seem to think that we can attain our heart's desire and free the arts through the operation of "Social Credit" without the co-operation of the "level-headed" business man. I wish I could think it possible.

The "level-headed" party in question will be, as he always has been, unconscious of the meaning of art, or from what the artist seeks to be freed; but, nevertheless, the Douglas scheme will not go through without his aid.

We are out to tell this "level-headed" one that a MAN has arisen to show us that we are rich and how we may realise the fact, and I, for one, don't dare to risk scaring him off by statements that would be taken as broad comedy in a company of competent artists.

The "evidence of intention" is obvious enough in the brutalities in question; surely what we are after in art is evidence of achievement.

Had Mr. Mackey said that he preferred the crude direct statement in the drawings of a savage, or an untutored child, to the designless flabbinesses of most of us who call ourselves artists I should have made no objection. The "level-headed" one would still have been "at sea" but in a relatively calm sea.

ARTIST.

THE CHURCHES AND RENUNCIATION.

Sir,—Whilst in general agreement with the strictures on the Churches in last week's "Notes," I think it would clear the air if you would make it plain that the indictment is against the body that has inverted all truth and good, distinguishing between it and the true Church that consists of the minds of men and women of all religions, races, and classes, who are conjoined with the Eternal through the reception in their understandings of Truth, and their response or reaction to good in the practice of love towards others.

Atheist, Mohammedan, Freethinker, Spiritualist, Christian, Jew, or Gentile, as the case may be, who strives for Truth and endeavours to live in affection, is thereby conjoined with the Divine Being, who is Love and Wisdom itself in essence.

There appears to be something more after the pattern of Christ's own warm heart in the closing paragraphs of "Notes of the Week" than we are accustomed to hear from the pulpits. Every truly religious man has to beg "to be saved from his friends," and acknowledge that the true spirit of religion blooms more profusely in the lives of people who have no time for religion, using the word in its common sense. Christ bemoaned the fact that "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not."

Swedenborg said, when his revelation was given, a New Church was begun, as the old had reached its consummation, *as it had falsified every truth and adulterated every good* (early eighteenth century).

That true Churchman, Chas. Kingsley, said religion was too often used "as an opium dose to keep the people contented, willing, beasts of burden." It was not true religion, but that far worse thing than atheism—false religion—that imposed penury and renunciation on its converts, but not on itself, as any individuals with their eyes open can see if they look at the constitution of the ecclesiastical bodies of to-day.

J. M. EWING.

THE CHINESE QUESTION.

The word's too long?
Then make a song,
And troll it out with glee.
Sing "Extraterri——
(Hey down derry)
——torialitee."

P. T. KENWAY.

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and all the fun of the fair.

Featuring the usually and very carefully concealed hands.

From a drawing of the unseen, precipitated by Haydn Mackey.

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