

THE NEW AGE

INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER"

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

If the sudden commencement of the General Strike took the public by surprise, much more did its sudden end. The immediate occasion for the rupture of negotiations was the ban on the *Daily Mail's* proposed leading article imposed by certain printing trade unionists on the staff of that journal. Not only was the Trade Union Council guiltless of authorising this sectional irregularity, but it was not even aware of it. Nor was it aware of the refusal of trade unionists in other newspaper offices to allow the publication of advertising matter prepared by the O.M.S. We refuse to believe that any responsible Government would have dared to precipitate a struggle of which it could not foresee the end, merely because of something like a "rag" on the part of a few groups of workers. But the Government's act becomes easily comprehensible when once the theory is adopted that it was in a position to foresee what has since happened. That theory we hold; and we hold it in common with observers who have better means of checking it than we.

The theory, in its least offensive presentment, is briefly this: It was decided to stage a General Strike. The "High Commands" on both sides, however, had a sort of "gentleman's agreement" to fight it according to the rules of "civilised" industrial warfare. If at any moment the opposing combatants looked like getting out of hand, it was agreed to frame a pretext for calling the fight off. So the campaign opened. The Government hired motor vehicles for carrying on public services; and the Trade Union Congress issued permits to others with the same object. The Government pleaded for a general avoidance of temper and violence; and so did the Trade Union Congress. To keep the fight sweet, clean, and gentle it was necessary to shut the mouths of newspaper editors of all brands. So although the *Daily Mail's* machine-minders acted purely by instinct in suppressing the "free speech" of that journal, they were in reality unwittingly carrying out the deliberate policy of the secret united council of the opposing enemy com-

mands—a council which, for convenience, we may call the Privy Council. We may also apply to these commands the distinguishing designations "White" (Government) and "Pink" (T.U.C.). There was no "Red" command—most of the Communists' efficient generals had been put under lock and key long before, and are there yet. The "independent" Press was muzzled, and instead there appeared a newspaper of the Whites (*The British Gazette*) and a newspaper of the Pinks (*The British Worker*). These papers, according to plan, engaged in an exhibition sparring match with sixteen-ounce gloves. At one juncture there was a suggestion of unfairness, to wit, when the Government restricted supplies of paper to *The British Worker*, but that was no doubt an artistic scheme to justify the Government's interference with supplies of paper to *The Times*, which was inconveniently giving two or three columns of real news—Parliamentary debates—daily. That was not what the Privy Council wanted; all it required was one journal to tell the strikers that the Government was weakening, and another to tell the rest of the public that the Government was winning. Now the fight proceeded smoothly for some days, but thereafter the Pink command began to lose its hold over its own army. Some of its regiments were moving forward to attack in advance of orders from above. This initiative from below produced a situation which, if it developed, could only be dealt with by the promulgation of martial law; and indeed, there are statements current to the effect that such a measure was on the point of being taken by the War Office when the strike suddenly "collapsed." Indeed, not the strike, but the Trade Union Congress it was who collapsed. The strikers were not throwing up their hands; on the contrary they were throwing away their boxing gloves. In these circumstances the Trade Union Congress sent out a S.O.S. to the Privy Council—"We've lost control: you must instantly publish the pretext for calling the fight off." In the meantime, the Privy Council had been sizing up the situation for itself, and so it was ready with an impartial mediator—Sir Herbert Samuel. This gentleman had a peace formula

(doubtless all of it neatly typed out before the strike began), and assured the Trade Union Congress that if it would surrender unconditionally he would make strong representations to the Government to do this, that, and the other (what it was does not matter)—in other words, he virtually guaranteed conditions for the "unconditional" surrender. Then quickly followed the farce of the surrender—the dramatic visit of the Pinks to Downing Street, the portentous announcement by Mr. Pugh, the "Thank God" of Mr. Baldwin, the tears of Mr. Thomas, and, to end the perfect day, the British Broadcasting Company's declaration of Blake's prevision of the advent of Samuel to the music of a Communist-Anarchist in celebration of the escape of the "Constitution."

Such an interpretation of the turmoil we have all passed through will of course appear incredible to the majority of people, but that it bears a large measure of antecedent probability our readers will without doubt agree. Being an inductive conclusion it must be checked by reference to the flood of printed fact and commentary which Fleet Street is now preparing to let loose on the country over this week-end. One test is the position of Mr. Thomas. He is a Privy Councillor. He was associated with the strike. Of this strike, the *Daily Mail*, in its suppressed leading article referred to, had said:—

"It is not an industrial dispute. It is a revolutionary movement intended to inflict suffering upon the great mass of innocent persons in the community, and thereby to put forcible constraint upon the Government. It is a movement which can only succeed by destroying government and subverting the rights and liberties of the people."

If the *Daily Mail* believes this to be true, it ought to be calling for the stripping from Mr. Thomas of his Privy Councillorship. But it will not. Nor will any other newspaper. Neither Mr. Thomas nor, for that matter, any other leader officially connected with the Pink forces, did anything which did not fall in with the plans of the Privy Council. It purposed a stalemate, and the Whites and Pinks obediently brought it off. That is why the ending of the trouble has been called by the Prime Minister a "victory for common sense"—the common sense, of course, being that of the Council, although naturally the public are imputing it to themselves. Another point. Although everybody sneered at Mr. Bevin's claim that the action of the T.U.C. in calling the strike off should not be regarded as a sign of weakness, but rather as one of strength, there is no evidence to invalidate the claim. Then there were certain features about the conduct of the strike which are incompatible with the popular idea that the T.U.C. were "all out" to win. For instance, the calling out of large bodies of men simultaneously had manifest disadvantages from a tactical point of view. It certainly gave the movement a feeling of solidarity, but feeling does not constitute efficiency. We are sure that those imprisoned Communists would have made better use of the Trade Union forces if they had had control of them. They would not have crowded thousands of fighters into a front where only a few hundred could have room to fight. In a sham fight, however, these matters are of no moment, so we will not go into them. Another significant feature of the strike was the action taken by a large number of business managements who gave their employees a fortnight's wage or salary, instructing them not to trouble to come to work, but to join some voluntary service or other, and return again when the fortnight was up for further instructions. This action was taken so promptly and extensively that it must have been prompted by the Government. Why was a fortnight chosen? The ready-made theory will be that that was the maximum period over which the

Trade Unions could issue strike pay. But this theory requires the assumption that a fortnight was an accurate estimate. Another, and more likely, theory is that the strike was planned to run for not more than a fortnight, irrespective of the question of trade union funds. Even if strike pay could have been issued for as long as six months it is pretty evident that a fortnight would still have been the utmost limit of time within which the strike could have been conducted under the conditions desired by the Privy Council. For, in addition to the fact that strike pay is insufficient to support the strikers and their families, the reaction of their combined reduction of spending power on home trade is tremendous—and cumulative. Very quickly, dismissals of men from shops and factories would follow upon the lockout and the strike, and the Trade Union Congress would be spared the trouble of calling out any more of its men. Indeed, there would arise a situation in which one could conceive of the whole membership of the N.U.R., for instance, returning to work, but having to come out again because their masters had no goods or passengers to carry. It is not to be doubted that the Privy Council had all this in mind, and planned the duration of the strike accordingly—with the proviso that it might have to intervene before the fortnight was up; which, in fact, it had to. If things had been allowed to lapse there would have been open violence which would have been met by martial law, and (ignoring any possibility of the strikers gaining a victory over the military) an ultimate smashing of the unions accompanied by the emergence of something very like a military dictatorship. Now either of these results separately is feared by the interest behind the Privy Council, i.e., the Financial Interest, and their happening together would be considered extremely dangerous. It is true enough that your soldier in the saddle has a short way with "these damned strikers," but no one can guarantee that he might not devise a method of dealing with financiers who went on strike. That is the reason why Finance desires peace and disarmament. It is also true enough that the smashing of trade unionism would be welcomed with shouts of joy by shortsighted capitalists and hard-faced politicians; but not by the Credit Monopolists. Next to the insurance companies, the trade union movement as now organised is the most perfect deflationary instrument serving the credit system. Every year it sponges up millions of pounds in contributions out of the workers' wages and invests the money in shares and bonds. All this money, eventually going back to the banks in the form of loan repayments, is destroyed. Is it likely that the bankers are going to allow the integrity of an organisation like that to be assailed, much less dissipated, by the capitalist forces with which it happens to be immediately in conflict?

For these reasons the Privy Council showed common sense in stopping the Strike. Of much more importance to it than a victory to either the Whites or the Pinks was the maintenance of the principle of Centralisation. Neither was allowed to risk winning if it involved resort to the opposite principle of decentralisation. Such an attitude was reflected in speeches made by Mr. Thomas and Mr. Ramsay MacDonald in the House of Commons. Both of these gentlemen insisted that "we must not have guerilla warfare." That is to say, there must be no decentralisation of the command of trade union forces; there must be no opportunity for local initiative, for the emergence of leaders who neither know nor care what commitments the High Command has entered into behind their backs. Mr. Baldwin, though not in the above phrase, endorsed the warning of his "enemies" in the same debate. So, when the T.U.C. last week sent out its S.O.S. "We are

losing control," it was really saying to the Privy Council—"Look out; the movement is splitting up into self-determined units." In a word, the dreaded process of Decentralisation had begun. And in two jiffs Samuel's dog's-eared peace treaty was on its way to the expectant Congress.

But why all this bother to bring about a strike and suppress it, when the terms upon which it is settled could have been granted before? Well, from the point of view of the Privy Council it was worth while to stage something of the sort if by its means the trade unionists of the country could be brought to believe that the power of the whole Labour Movement was not strong enough to defeat Capitalism. And if, in the process, Capitalism could be made to realise that the cost of defeating Labour was more expensive than conceding more wages, so much the better. For thenceforth both Capital and Labour would settle down in amity to share up the half-loaf which the banking system considers is enough for them. Again, when, on both sides, preparations for an industrial battle have been going on for nine months, it is inevitable that a certain amount of curiosity as to how the opposing fighting mechanisms will work must be engendered among the experts concerned. Moreover, post-war life has been so drab and monotonous that any sort of thrill appears a godsend. Lord Salisbury would have given us a circus. The Privy Council has given us a strike. The principle is just the same—distraction. And then, as things have turned out, it has been a lovely strike. Few are going to say that they did not enjoy it. The strikers have had to pay for their rest; but they have had a rest. And the strike-breakers have had a change of job. (Some of them have now made their first acquaintance with work.) And both of them have been flattered by the British Broadcasting Company up to the point of nearly forgetting the strike in their admiration of each other as component parts of that paragon of an Englishman who, alone of the races of the world, not only hits above the belt, but holds his own coat all the time.

As soon as the Trade Union Congress had announced their decision to call off the strike, and the Government had interpreted it as the withdrawal of a challenge to the Constitution, the next duty was to carry out the Prime Minister's continuously repeated promise during the strike period of an "honourable settlement." The following day it became known that while the workers were willing to go back to work, some of the large transport and other undertakings were not in the temper to take them back except on their own terms. And, from the tone of the *Daily Mail's* leading article of that day, it appeared as though that organ was preparing to act as the mouthpiece of these refractory concerns. However, by the next day, it had pulled out the *vox celeste* stop and was cooing "Reconciliation." Something had happened in the meantime. The explanation is that the above undertakings had been taking it for granted that their emergency staff would continue at work until they had, at their leisure, beaten the strikers down to the acceptance of punitive terms of re-engagement; but they were, in more than one direction, rudely disillusioned by socially eminent and influential voluntary workers who pointed out that now there was no question of any Constitutional issue they refused to be parties to the prolongation of the strike for private purposes, moral or commercial. After all, it is not so very long ago when the masses who lately struck and the classes who volunteered to carry on the public services were being bombarded side by side in Flanders; and it would have been a miracle if the memory of that common experience had disappeared. People, moreover, who sprang to arms in a "sympathetic war" in

defence of Belgium cannot very well desire to tread on the faces of those who downed tools in a sympathetic strike in defence of the miners—much less so when throughout the trouble the one idea on which the whole nation never wavered was that the miners' case deserved everyone's sympathy. After more than seven years the spirit of fraternity has continued to bridge social differences sufficiently to make a positive contribution to the settlement of an industrial conflict. Perhaps, not long hence, a realisation that just as all men are equal when soldiers, so are they all equal as consumers, will similarly quicken the settlement of the last conflict of all—the fundamental issue between the Credit Monopoly and Organised Industry.

Up to this juncture we have been considering the strike from a domestic point of view. There remain some comments to be made from an international angle. We have said a good deal about the American attitude in our last two issues, and the way in which Britain's freedom to settle her domestic affairs is hampered by the power of American finance. There is no need to assume any malice on the part of Wall Street or Washington towards this country. It would, in one way, be better if there were, and only that. The tragic truth is that, with all the will in the world to be friendly, the citizens of America are being driven inexorably, by the very principles of economics which both nations have been taught to obey in common, into nursing aspirations and adopting measures which Britain is bound to resist. Mr. Baldwin once said apropos of Germany that from a strictly economic point of view it would be of advantage to Britain if Germany disappeared—meaning, of course, if she disappeared as an industrial manufacturing and exporting nation. In exactly the same sense President Coolidge might so speak of this country. With this in mind, our readers will know how to qualify the criticism of the Privy Council implied in our rough inductive analysis of its recent activities. Being optimists, we must postulate a strong element of patriotism (using the word in its true application) among its active members. A hint to that effect was present in the concluding sentences of our remarks last week when we envisaged a mobilisation of British citizens in defence of Britain's financial self-determination. If so, it is evident that here was an additional reason—this time a sound reason—for not allowing the strike to get out of hand. For in such a case one of two conceivable things would have happened. One (the harder to conceive) is that the strikers overthrew the Government and gained control, which control was assumed by Communists. A Government of "Reds" holding down by force a strong body of beaten and disaffected "Whites." Not only would industry remain paralysed, but America would feel called upon to intervene to "restore order," even to the extent of a blockade and other acts of war—and there is no doubt that the "White" element in this country would welcome and invite such intervention, if one takes a line from the attitude of Lord Birkenhead and others when Mr. Asquith's Home Rule Bill became law just previous to the War. The second (and more probable) alternative is that the trade unions were completely smashed and their members whipped back to their jobs under conditions of servility. But this situation would hardly be better in the long run than the other. The main point about both is that industry would remain paralysed, and the way clear for America and other nations to fill up the gap in the world's markets left open by Britain's enforced retirement from competition. Now, by the very logic of the financial system, America is bound to desire this. Notwithstanding—New Economists will say, "because of"—her immensely expanded development, she will shortly feel an intensified

necessity to market surplus production abroad; and unless other nations reduce their own exports correspondingly there is nowhere to which she can send it. In these circumstances Wall Street and Washington are ultimately neutral as to which way an industrial civil war goes in this country: America would gain export opportunities in any case. Immediately, American finance prefers a halting and constantly harassed Capitalist Government here to a revolution. The latter would cause more inconvenience. On the other hand, it is vital to the British Government that none of Britain's foreign trade is lost—that is so long as it persists in ordering its economy on the existing financial basis. Under those circumstances such a loss would of itself carry the country very near civil war. Considering all these circumstances the policy of the Privy Council was just about the best one open to it, and such support of that policy as was consciously afforded by the Trade Union Congress cannot be imputed to it as unmitigated unrighteousness, although it was inconsistent in a body expressly constituted to make adequate wages its prime, if not its sole, concern. The real indictment lies against all our high statesmen for their persistent neglect of the possibilities of reconstruction opened up by a modification of our national credit and pricing system. It is at present poisoning all the relations of life, and there is no discord, from a war between continents for markets right down through multitudinous strata of antagonisms to wrangles over housekeeping money in mean tenements, which is not demonstrably attributable to the working of the poison—namely the abysmal gulf between the true economic cost of production and its grotesquely distorted financial price.

No gleam of enlightenment peeps out from Mr. Baldwin's new Committee. Three miners, three owners, and an independent chairman with a casting vote—and the chairman Lord Reading! How, we wonder, is independence assessed in these days? There are three interests—Capital, Labour, and Finance. If any person is to sit in judgment, he should sit over these three and not be affiliated to any of them. Such a person—and one commanding the trust of British citizens in general—is difficult to find. But not so difficult as "independence" is to define. We suggest the Archbishop of Canterbury. It is he who is most likely to represent, as the chairman of this Committee should, the interests of the despised consumer. As for Lord Reading, his appointment to a directorship in the National and Provincial Bank makes his present nomination something approaching a scandal. How long is this country going to continue tolerating the usurpation of judicial authority by disguised litigants?

The *Daily Express* has been making a leading feature of the recent rise of the Sterling exchange to parity with the Dollar. The happy ending of the strike has done it, we are told. Why the unhappy beginning of the strike had not previously depressed the Sterling exchange, we are not told. We must suppose that the exchange brokers knew all along that the ending would be happy. However, at last the £ has stood upright and can now "look the Dollar in the face." One effect of this, says the *Daily Express*, is that Britain can now buy goods in the markets of the world on as advantageous terms as can the United States. That sounds very nice. The only thing we can now aspire to is to see the Pound Sterling go above the Dollar, whereupon Britain will, one must suppose, be able to import goods more cheaply than any other country in the world. The beneficence of this new power must, of course, lie in the exercise of it. So, when Britain finds herself the dumping ground for all the world's surplus production we ought to see the *Daily Express*

come out with a double number in celebration of the event. But we fear we shall be more likely to hear it whimpering for a Tariff. We recommend the writer of the article in question to look again. Perhaps it may occur to him that the Dollar parity, far from being due to John Bull's lifting his "Sterling" face, is due to Uncle Sam's purposely lowering his "Dollar" face. He stoops to conquer. To speak of a rise in the £ is only another way of saying "a slump in the Dollar." This, in itself, constitutes a puzzle for the *Daily Express*. For while it is at least plausible that John Bull's resumption of work after a fortnight's holiday should raise his exchange, why should that exchange rise relatively to Uncle Sam's, who is working full tilt and has never stopped? We recommend the *Daily Express* expert to read some of Mr. McKenna's speeches. He will find that there are some advantages in a depreciated exchange—the chief one being that it facilitates exports. And since he is no doubt a steady upholder of the doctrine that "we live by our export trade," he will find the harmonising of all his conclusions an engrossing intellectual exercise. We wish him good luck. We would be interested to assist him, but not being blacklegs, we should require monetary remuneration at full Trade Union rates.

Since writing the above we have come across the following paragraphs in last Sunday's *Daily Mail*. The first is in its leading article:—

"The revaluation of England which began on August 4, 1914, was completed on May 14, 1925, and on the latter date the pound sterling was worth 4.86½ dollars in New York. Yesterday an even more marvellous result was accomplished, when the pound sterling actually rose above par." (Our italics.)

The other paragraph is in a report on European exchanges:—

"The recent heavy fall in the French franc tended to favour the French export trade at the expense in particular of Italy, and the fall of the lira tends to redress the balance. It tends also for the time being to favour Italian exports in comparison with British exports, British currency being now anchored to gold.

"It is believed that the fall (in the Italian lira) is actually welcomed in Italian trade circles, and it is suggested in London that the authorities in Rome were intentionally tardy in applying support."

Will the *Daily Express* and the *Daily Mail* tell Britain now which way her luck is really going?

There is an intriguing possibility about the new tendency in America to permit an inflationary movement in the Dollar. If continued it will permit British bankers, under their own laws, to follow suit. So they have still less excuse for objecting to an extension of the Coal Subsidy in the event of Lord Reading's failure to settle the dispute without it. If they then still refuse to finance the subsidy, their action will afford a new reason for a public enquiry into the mystery of their rules and practices.

In the meantime the strike has, all things considered, been a victory for the consumer; for at least it has wrung the concession of a further £3,000,000 out of the credit system. Of course, the community will have to sign an IOU—but, as the lawyers tell us, an IOU is simply an acknowledgment of debt, not a promise to pay. And, as they are saying in Paris, even if it is a promise, what does it matter if you will not be able to keep it?

Why?—Why?—

"It would surprise most people to know that only one out of every 400 persons in the British Isles possessed a rubber hot water bottle. Every home should have at least two. Why did not the rubber industry as a whole advertise the fact that every home should have a rubber hot-water bottle from the point of view of airing the bed and keeping one warm, and thus improving health?"—Sir Charles Higham: on "Collective Advertising" before the Rubber Institution.

Our Secondary Education.

By M. Michael Lewis.

It is significant that education in England to-day is supervised not by educators but by organisers. Since universal elementary education first became a panacea, it has seemed more important that it should be universal than that it should be education. A similar fate seems to be preparing for secondary education. Sixty years ago Matthew Arnold uttered his well-meaning monition: *Organise* your secondary education: to-day the Labour Party clamours: Secondary education for all.

For two generations we have been so anxious to broaden the educational ladder into a highway that we have omitted to make sure that it is educational. On every side we see efforts made to extend secondary education to all those "capable of profiting" by it—but there is beneath all this the assumption that secondary education is equivalent to advanced education, and that if you are incapable of profiting by secondary education there is nothing left for you but the elementary school.

We are not yet in the smallest degree rid of the extraordinary belief that education is a reward. The public schools are daily growing more astonished to find that they are public—in a genteel way, of course. Mr. M. L. Jacks, the headmaster of Mill Hill School, tells us with a bewildering complacency "there was no reason why a boy of any social class, provided that his parents had the means to pay his fees, or that he had the ability to win a scholarship, should not find a place in one of the public schools."* Mr. Jacks knows perfectly well that even with brains one must also have the money to pay for scholarship cram at a preparatory school, but apart from this there is the indescribably strange notion that if you have money you are thereby fitted for the same education as those who have no money but are successful in a competition. The supporters of this system will tell you that education is the breath of life; but you are only to be allowed to breathe if you can afford the fees—or win the privilege in public combat.

It evokes too much of bitterness to recollect that these same public schools were established to give the poorest that technique of scholarship which was once a definite professional training. We need only look around us to see the same process repeated on a larger scale in the new schools established once more to give opportunity of education to all. Again it is fees or scholarships. School places are strictly limited—but only if you cannot pay fees. The conditions of entry to nearly every secondary school are: you must have brains—or your father £30 a year to spare.

It is not surprising then that the Labour Party should perceive this to be another of the many preserves of the "haves," and demand in their usual way that whatever is now possessed by the few should be thrown open to the many. They urge that only some nine per cent. of the children in elementary schools annually receive scholarships to enter secondary schools, and ask: Is there any reason why the nine per cent. should not be a hundred per cent.? Education which people will pay for must be desirable, and if it is desirable why not extend it to all?

Now this demand is based upon a misconception as profound as it is characteristic of muddle-headed equalitarian doctrine. Education is viewed as something which can be distributed from a central source, "given" to individual children according to their "capacity." The teachers are not so sure of "universal" secondary education—but they too would like to see it more extended. The present mode of distribution is regarded as unfair, because it ex-

* "Times Educ. Suppt.," January 30, 1926.

cludes children of "capacity." Every year when the Grand Skim takes place in every elementary school, and eight or nine per cent. of cream is removed, the teachers complain that many children left behind are equally capable of receiving secondary education as those who have been chosen by competitive examination. They admit that many more seem of lesser "capacity"—and these they would give education, less in amount, but of the same kind. They, too, look forward to the days when nearly every child will be "capable" of profiting by secondary education.

What is this same secondary education? In curriculum there is no clear line to mark off "secondary" from "public" schools; all confess the same creed that the University is Heaven. It is a religion of faith rather than of works, for every year less than eight per cent. of all scholars in all secondary and public schools do proceed to the universities. A fact of this nature does not, however, deter the schools from their good deeds. Their aim is that each child shall pass the school-leaving examination—a name which tends to hide the fact that it is in essence a university entrance examination. The child who merely passes the test is held to have left school; the child who shows a more creditable result is regarded as having matriculated at the university.

But how many children do pass this examination? In spite of regulations which regard it as the normal end of the school course, barely fifty per cent. of secondary school children ever even sit for it, and of these about two-thirds pass, that is, some thirty per cent. of the total number eligible by age. And of these, as we have seen, hardly a third proceed to the universities. Two questions here occur to the inquirer. What has happened throughout the school course to that fifty per cent. who have been preparing for an examination which they will never even attempt? Why should another forty per cent. prepare for it if they will never proceed to the university?

The answer is clear, though disconcerting. Five hundred years ago the grammar schools prepared for the universities. The public schools are the grammar schools, and the secondary schools are the grammar schools. It is not yet fully recognised within the schoolroom that in five centuries conditions of life have changed and that education too must change. The university still stands as the supreme goal; preparation for it in varying degrees of completeness somehow constitutes preparation for the varied activities of life. Educate a boy until he is fourteen, he is fit to be a cabinet-maker; two more years of the same training make him a clerk; another five years make him a clergyman.

Change must be vital. We can already determine, with some degree of success, scholastic ability, even at so early an age as eleven. But instead of making the absence of such ability a reason for less education, we must discover, in every possible way, ability in other directions—skill in craft, aesthetic power. The schoolroom for those who need book education; for all others an education nearer in conception and spirit to the varied modes of human work. I would even take the non-scholastic child out of school entirely, to ensure true activity, unhampered by the tradition of book-learning. Looking back to the school, he might gain a culture, of books, but yet akin to his own mental life. With reasonable safeguards against too rigid a pre-determination of career, we should achieve more education for all, but allow secondary education for as few as possible.

If Thought were All of Man, the Man who gave Thought Freedom, need not fear to be a Slave But Man the Thinker mastered by his Reason Is no Free Thinker when his Thoughts use Treason.
L. S. M.

The True Inwardness of Catholic Sociology.

By N. E. Egerton Swann.

III.

Closely related to the Catholic conception of a morally standardised society, as symbolised by the concept of the Just Price, is the singularly sane and balanced doctrine of property upheld by the Church. On this matter its witness is especially continuous from the first. Nothing can be more unhistorical than the idea that the Christian movement was originally Communist, or even Socialist, and that at some date (which may be run up or down the centuries at the whim of each propagandist) it apostatised to the defence of private property. To go to the fountain-head—it is quite grotesque to represent Jesus Christ as a Communist. There is little reason indeed to suppose that He would have made it a counsel to every rich man (as He certainly did in some particular cases) to sell all that he had and give to the poor. But even if we make this extreme assumption, it would still remain true that this was an ideal held out for the voluntary acceptance of the individual. It has nothing whatever in common with the advocacy of a formal and regulated system of Communism. Such confusions result from the failure to understand that the mission of Jesus Christ was to raise the individual *will* up into the creation of His Kingdom.

The nearest approach to actual Communism was made in the original Church at Jerusalem. There the brethren unquestioningly practised the freest sharing of goods, one with another, making at any rate such an approach to actual Communism that it could be said rhetorically that "they had all things common." That there is a certain rhetorical element in the phrase becomes clear, if we duly weigh all the facts recorded, particularly the large house owned by John Mark's mother. No phrase, indeed, has more commonly, throughout history, been used in a large and vague sense than this of "having all things common." Thus Tertullian could declare, "All things are held in common among us, except our wives," at a time when notoriously nothing of the nature of Communism was in force. At any rate, whatever the precise point to which this "Communism" of the Jerusalem-Church was really carried, it was purely voluntary; it was not a system imposed on the community. Peter's words to Ananias make this clear beyond doubt. In short, "the right, title, and possession" (to quote the XXXIX Articles) of a Christian man's property have never been disputed by the Church or by orthodox teachers. Actual Communism has only been held as a social theory within the pale of Christianity by recognised heretical sects; and it has only been practised, within the orthodox tradition, by celibate communities.

Yet that is not the end of the matter. The property that was allowed and defended in the primitive tradition was property within a certain atmosphere. It was held in solution, so to say, in a spirit of sociality which was always looking far in the direction of Communism. The Christian adjustment to life, in short, is central and balanced; it displays the broad comprehensiveness of true sanity. Saints and prophets let themselves go in some particular direction on occasion, under the inspiration of the moment. But they did so within a certain tradition, and they never, in doing so, really intended to deny counterbalancing truths, which certainly the society as such never lost. Thus we cannot rightly grasp the genuine Catholic conception of property, unless we give due weight to the impassioned strain of quasi-Communist sentiment in the primitive centuries. The Fathers, with almost one voice, carry on this tradition. From the sub-

apostolic *Epistle of Barnabas*, with its "Thou shalt share all things with thy brother, and shalt not say that they are thine own" right down to Augustine and Ambrose, and indeed far later, the witness is clear. Many of these teachers had so strong a temperamental and emotional leaning towards *voluntary* Communism that in some of their utterances they seem on the brink of plunging into a full Communist philosophy. It is the more remarkable that they never precipitated themselves over the brink. Sometimes the correction is given in the immediate context of their most extreme utterances. Thus the two apparently Communist sentences of Ambrose, which serve as the chief patristic ammunition of modern Socialists, are both exordia to fervid exhortations to almsgiving, which is urged as an actual duty of *justice*. Further, Ambrose himself, like other Fathers who hold, on occasion, similar language, takes in other passages a far more favourable attitude towards property, and even riches.

By such phrases, as "by nature all things were common," the Fathers did not mean that private property was (in our sense) "contrary to nature." They merely meant that property-rights do not rest on any sanction in the ultimate nature of things, but are purely conventional. The legitimacy of such conventions was never denied. It is true that the Fathers in general treated the institution of property as relative to the Fall. But that did not indicate any wish on their part to go back on the institution; they held it to be, in the circumstances, thoroughly good and rightful. The theory may seem indeed to stamp all property as, though permissible, yet radically tainted with sin. But some both of the Fathers and the mediævals, who definitely affirm the theory, yet seem at times practically to forget it, and, in some of their statements, to treat property as good in a much more ultimate sense than this doctrine would strictly allow.

Considerable differences of emphasis are no doubt to be found both as between different periods of Church-history, and as between various individual teachers. Yet a fairly definite view of property was consistently maintained from New Testament times onward. The widest variations that can be found would fall within the formula, "Private ownership and common use," which was that finally adopted by the mediævals. Nor did this *only* limit the way in which money could rightly be *spent*—as it did by insisting on lavish almsgiving as a matter of *justice*. The use of property had to be "common," also when it was employed in production or trading. Thus the ways in which money might be *made* were regulated equally. This was provided for by the elaborate mediæval system of commercial and industrial morality, the general character of which we have already examined.

It hardly needs pointing out that property so defined and justified is a totally different thing from the "property" which is a characteristic institution of our existing society. "Defending the right of property" to-day usually means something very different from defender the broadly human right upheld by the Catholic addition. If we are to moralise (according to Catholic ideals) our property system we must in the first place secure healthier atmospheric conditions, so to say, within which all property shall be held and used. The economic atmosphere of society consists of (or is principally affected by) credit. This, then, must be controlled in the social interest, and prices (the fixing of which is so closely implicated with the credit system) justly regulated.

But further, property must itself be far more equally and generally distributed. Such a distribution of it was assumed in the whole mediæval treatment of the subject. Thus Thomas Aquinas gives us his third

reason for private property, "Because a more peaceful estate is ensured to man, if each one is contented with his own." Very convincing to a modern clerk or labourer! In Aquinas' day property, though far from universal, was still normal to the ordinary man. The school of Messrs. Belloc and Chesterton insist strongly on the necessity of securing a general diffusion of ownership of concrete things, such as land, workshops, and small-scale industrial plant. The advocates of Social Credit are, *as such*, concerned only with the perpetual distribution of *claims*. But there is no antagonism whatever between the two. The Social Credit programme would be the readiest way to promote Distributivism in the more accepted sense. Nay more, some of us hold that it would quite certainly lead to this. At any rate, anyone imbued with the spirit of the Catholic social tradition must rejoice in any extension of peasant proprietorship, of the ownership by the small man of his house and garden, of independent artisans or small self-governing workshops owning their own plant (and, it may be, working with electric power supplied under a nationally sanctioned scheme), and so on. Certainly, the great question for us to-day is, Do we really believe in property? If so, we cannot give in to Collectivism or Communism. Nor can we—one bit the more—acquiesce in property remaining, in effect, a special class privilege of a, proportionally speaking, small minority of the nation.

Art and the Unknown.

By C. M. Grievé.

I.

Comprehensibility is error: Art is beyond understanding.*

The function of art is the extension of human consciousness.

Art is therefore the most important of human activities; all others are dependent upon it.

The highest art at any time can only be appreciated by an infinitesimal minority of the people—*if by any*.†

The ideal observer of art at work would be one conscious of all human experience up to the given moment. (The ideal observer of art—as against art-at-work—is God, conscious of all that has been and *will be* achieved.) If consciousness be likened to a cleared space, art is that which extends it in any direction.

The ideal specialist as compared with the ideal observer is conscious not of the whole of human experience up to a given moment, but of its entire development in a particular direction up to then.

The ideal observer alone can appreciate the value, in relation to art as a whole, of any further achievement.

The ideal specialist can only appreciate an advance made in his particular direction. Artistic experience within the cleared space is only possible in so far as one's range is less than that of the ideal

* Cf. Edwin Muir. "The unnecessary and the inconceivable have been greater friends to man than the necessary and the reasonable. This enigmatical character of art, this ultimate impossibility of making it turn any moral mill, has been noted occasionally in the last two centuries, etc." (*Latitudes*. P. 143.) The ultimate impossibility of making it turn *any* mill is what is here affirmed.

† Cf. Denis Saurat. "The more complicated beings become, the more subdivided and subtle their desires, the smaller is the group of beings they can collaborate with, until the subtlest artists create, on the basis of the common languages, a personal means of expression which we have to learn in order to understand them." (*The Three Conventions*. P. 89.) The emphasised clause should be excised.

observer and, in any particular direction, than that of its ideal specialist.

Capacity for artistic experience increases in so far as one is making progress in any direction towards the confines of the cleared space.

Ground covered in any direction ceases to be art for those who have covered it, and, for them, lapses into education or entertainment for those who haven't.

However ponderable from other points of view, from the standpoint of art, those bogged in what has lapsed (for those who have passed any given point) into education or entertainment cease to exist. Only those who are further ahead than themselves are of consequence to those who are making artistic progress. Any relationship with others is a waste of time, of life—a betrayal of art.

To halt or turn back in order to try to help others is to abandon artistic progress, and exchange education for art. There is no altruism in art. It is every man for himself. In so far as he advances, the progress of others may be facilitated, but in so far as he is conscious of affording any such facilitation his concentration on purely artistic objectives is diminished. (Cf. *Art for Art's Sake*.)

From the point of view of the ideal observer nothing has value as art which does not add to the area of the cleared space. For him, everything coming within the cleared space automatically lapses into education or entertainment upon its inclusion.

From the point of view of the ideal specialist nothing in any given direction is of value except its furthest point.

All dicta on art are therefore to be judged in relation (a) to Omniscience of Human Experience, or (b) to the appropriate specialism or specialisms.

All that claims to be art therefore is of value *in inverse ratio* to its comprehensibility and to the extent to which it falls into any particular category. (Cf. *Fusion of the Arts*.)

Artists of any degree whatever are recognisable by their intolerance of what they have surpassed.

Art is incapable of repetition.

No artist is great (or really an artist) unless he reaches some point in the unknown outside the cleared space and then adds to the cleared space.

The total addition made to the cleared space is the measure of greatness as an artist—at the time the addition is made.

No achievement in art is permanent—as art. Great artists of the past diminish in so far as the point or frontier of their particular addition recedes from the latest confines of the cleared space.

They cease to be great artists from the point of view of the ideal observer or any ideal specialist, and acquire compensatory importance in the history of art (the highest kind of knowledge.)

They remain artists or great artists only in proportion to the appropriate ignorance (i.e., incapacity for experience) of those for whom they are so.

If great art is compatible with a big popular appeal, it can only be so in so far as it contains elements unthinkable to the public.

In direct ratio to its popularity (i.e., its comprehensibility) it is not art.

The greatest art at any given time is that which is comprehensible to the fewest persons of competence and integrity, whether as approximations (a) to the ideal observer or (b) to the requisite ideal specialist. For an artist or critic to pride himself on his knowledge of art is to boast—not of his achievements, still less of his powers—but of his tools.*

* "La mémoire et les sens ne seront que la nourriture de ton impulsion créatrice." (Rimbaud.)

A Vagabond in Denmark.

By Leopold Spero.

X.—STUBBLE AND FLINT.

In the cobbled market-place of Silkeborg there stands rows of fussy little motor-buses, so eager to go speeding all over the flat roads of Jutland that we must be off with them. Not even Michael Drewsen, who looks so benevolently upon us as we take the air after breakfast, shall detain us any longer from adventuring forth in these romantic craft, painted with the names of so many towns we long to see, and will surely be disappointed when we see them.

Where shall we go? Horsens has a name ridiculous enough to attract anybody, especially when one feels how fine it would be to go careering through the main streets shouting to the town to keep its tail up. Vejle has an antique air of soft mystery which is very alluring. Aalborg is romantic, but too far away, Randers sounds like a disease belonging to Horsens, and Skanderborg rings too archaic for your taste of the moment. There remains only Aarhus. So let us go to Aarhus.

The porter climbs up the iron ladder on the side of the bus, hopefully balancing the suitcase which is in such imminent peril of pushing him off his perch and falling atop of him, that you pray silently for his skull and for that vulnerable point of his stomach where the sharpest corner is sure to get him. But just when all appears to be lost, he tips the bag neatly and vigorously on to the roof, and shifts it into its proper place among the rest of the bucolic paraphernalia assembled there, which receives additions every now and then as some stout peasant-woman or puffing commercial traveller waddles up to take a seat in the chariot. And now it is twelve o'clock, and we must be off. Which we are, so suddenly that you are down the High Street and over the bridge, and up again through the wood, out of sight of the green and gleaming river, before you know it, shouldering your way up to the open plain, to the pine forests and the spreading heath, and the rolling low hills in the distance, towards which the straight cobbled road aspires in vain, since, after this first hill is mastered the rest is as flat as the palm of your hand. First you are in the Surrey-Hants border, with its trim evergreens and plantations and vistas soon relieved by the sight of some village or township. Then, where the cobbles give way to a good tarred surface for a short distance, and later to a macadam somewhat the worse for wear, you are in Wiltshire, with the sweeping plains around you, and the sense of distance and adventure, and of things that happened long, long ago.

Yet there is very little of the past about the houses at this first stopping place, with its red brick and tiled public house, where dusty but optimistic pear trees climb gallantly up the wall. You wait for something to happen here, for where all is so new, trifles shall be invested with historic importance. And yet again you hold your breath while a stout country bumpkin climbs up and takes his bicycle from the roof, gets it down safe to the ground when you think that he must inevitably collapse with it, and rides off furiously to the little village of Flensted that you can see peeping in and out of its trees half a mile to the north along the rickety side road. A stout lady with three chins makes earnest inquiries of the driver before she risks her krone on a ride. An old dame in a white cap nods in her corner, and a man dressed in urgent black, even to the stubble that stands out from his chin, lights the blackest cheroot you have yet seen in Denmark, and puffs its smoke through the window out against the blue sky. Familiar trees lining the road, and the sign of King George IV.

whisky, now calmly demonstrate the permeation of British influence, and Leverhulme shouts for saponaceous joy far and wide over the fields.

And so we come to our first crossroads, sheer ugliness again in all its red brick obtrusion. Here is a *Herrekvæpering og Skraedertorretning*, and a wood-yard belonging most amazingly to a man named Newton. It is all very uninteresting, and you are glad when the chariot does not wait, but pulls you out again into the wider world, and does not stop until it comes to a little general store with crockery in the windows and hardly anybody about to look after it. And now we come to the white steading of Hövenkro, just before we smile at Bien with its tiny shoe-shop set like a piece of inlay in the side of a carmine villa with a flower border in front of it and a white seat for a doll to sit on. And here, too, is the Halfway House, and a half-timbered, thatched farmhouse, washed in a pink, that sings a song of strange contentment in chorus with the yellow wheat and green barley. We take passengers here, after losing so many, a gawky boy in a sun-hat and a khaki coat, who dismounts from his bicycle and stows it away on the roof, and climbs, red-faced as a lobster, inside. Why the agricultural population of Denmark should treat its motor-omnibuses as if they were bicycle horse-boxes, when it would obviously save time and money to ride their machines themselves along the flat roads, is one of those puzzles whose solution is not clear to the foreigner. Perhaps it is a rubber solution, if one may judge by the gleaming, jagged flints that lie scattered by the roadside. At all events, there must be a certain luxury in spending even a few öre so needlessly.

All the miles we have been going, we have seen very little that was old. But now we come to a by-road which leads to Skovby, the Village of the Wood, and here, half a mile away, we see the village church, with its red shoulders and mellow old sugar-loaf steeple. In half-an-hour's journey through Sussex or Devonshire you might see a score of churches each twenty times as beautiful and as warm in outline and colour. But they have rebuilt so much in this hard, flat country of the plain, that Skovby church takes the eye and brings relief from the severe agricultural practicality of things all around, even of Nature, who is obviously the hand-maiden of the co-operative farmers' guild in this confident little country, where they get up so early in the morning. Here are houses with names that are probably just as banal and pseudo-romantic as our own Beechwood and Glencoe of the suburbs. You can read their names blazoned from the front walls, Runa and Hoibo and Nybo and Rast. They are all very new, and many of them are inhabited by people who would be out of work if they were in England, and would be unable to get a house even if they were in work, and even if they did get a house, would get it at such a rent that they would have to sublet to half-a-dozen other families and make a slum of it. But in Denmark they have not yet advanced to that high degree of philosophy which accepts unemployment and overcrowding as inevitable, and just the thing for common people, if the truth be known.

And now we must be getting near our destination, for the road improves, though I doubt if much improvement has been discovered by this stout cyclist, who has just been run over by a milkcart, and stands ruefully contemplating our sympathetic faces, a great patch of blood over his forehead, dust on his clothes, but clutching his portfolio defiantly, as if to prove how little appearances really matter to a man who has an appointment to keep. If he were a Frenchman or an Italian, not even by now would his vocabulary have been exhausted. If he were an Englishman, he would be making

quiet preparations to fight somebody, either there and then with the simplest of Nature's weapons, or later on in the county court. But, as he is a Dane, he keeps his mouth closed, and stands waiting for the more unreliable passions to cool off. The milkman watches him apprehensively, as also do those of us who feel that, at any rate, he ought to wipe the blood off his brow, even if he has to use half a pint of milk to do it. But nobody suggests any definite plan of action, least of all the victim himself, who moves his head to and fro like a very small child, contemplating the landscape with a coagulated squint. In all probability the irregularity of the proceedings has upset him so thoroughly that he does not know what he wants. And, as we cannot help him, we move off again, climbing the gentle slope until we come to a green and shady village and a tar-surfaced road, round which we see on a sudden the great conglomeration of smoky Aarhus, with its rampart of suburban skyscrapers elbowing their way into the forests, and its pleasant fjord sliding along into the hills. And so we come to the cobbled roads and streets of shops that sell crockery and electric fittings and collars and ties, and precious little else, tinkling, gleaming, under-stocked, and over-embazoned shops, that give you the impression of never having anything that anybody really wants.

And, if this is Aarhus, it is not the venerable Aarhus of books and museums, but something sadly cheap and insignificant. But now your motor-bus twists you suddenly flat up against the blank wall of a garage, gets rid of you and your affairs, and sheds you through a low archway into a narrow asphalt street, whence you emerge round a corner into sight of a great Gothic cathedral, ugly and menacing, with its high-pointing copper cap and its great, red flagged courtyard, and its towers that keep watch and ward over the harbour and the Belt.

Tales from Tchoang-tzeu.

THE ILLUSION OF SELFISHNESS.

The sacrificial priest went to visit the enclosure where the pigs for the sacrifice were kept. The priest was wearing his splendid official costume, and he made the following speech to the pigs: "Why do you die so unwillingly? Your death brings you advantages and great honour. I fatten you for three months. Before the sacrifice I myself abstain from certain foods for ten days and fast completely for three days. After the sacrifice I arrange your limbs in beautiful order on white mats on beautifully carved dressers. Are you not wrong to be so unwilling to die?"

If this man had really thought of the good of the pigs he would have wished them to live in their enclosure for the term of their natural lives, even though he could only have fed them on husks and on bran. But he was thinking of his own good, of his duties, of his salary, of the grand funeral ceremony which, after his death, would certainly be accorded to so great a public functionary. He was satisfied because all these things were for his benefit, and he thought that the pigs ought to be equally pleased, although they were to be cut off in their prime. This was an optical illusion caused by selfishness.

TAOIST PERFECTION.

The artisan Choei could draw circles freehand as perfectly as if he had used a pair of compasses. He could draw these circles without thinking about them, and in consequence they were as perfect as the products of Nature. His mind was concentrated upon one thing only without preoccupation or distraction.

A shoe is perfect when the foot does not feel it. A waist-belt is perfect when the waist is not conscious of it. A heart is perfect when, having lost the artificial notion of good and evil it quite naturally does good and abstains from evil. A mind is perfect when it is without interior perception, without any tendency towards what is exterior. Perfection is to be perfect without knowing it.

[From the French translation of Dr. Wiegner. Done into English by A. L. M.]

Dostoevsky.

How disturbing it is to hear Dostoevsky mentioned amongst the other great Russian writers, as though he were not immeasurably remote from them, in his tremendous understanding, his divine wisdom. If one must talk in terms of this everyday competitive mentality, a frivolous activity at best, one would be forced to say that besides Don Quixote, the "Brothers Karamazov" is the only achievement in the form of the novel which, by merit of its spiritual tone, is worthy to be placed on a level with Plato's "Symposium," or Dante's "Paradiso."

That seems to be a tremendous claim; but the more we think about it, the more obvious does it become. Throughout Dostoevsky's work there is the passionate effort to attain the equitable basis of that "one living idea" which Hegel says is the fundamental necessity of philosophy. It is more than that. It is also the only principle which permits that philosophy to be awakened into human conduct that shall express the divinity in Man, and make him master and responsible ruler of the world. In one of his notebooks Dostoevsky says, "The Holy Spirit is the direct understanding of beauty, the prophetic consciousness of harmony, and, therefore, the undeviating aspiration towards it." That is the seed from which the flower of his work springs.

Our immediate thought is, "With such an aim, such a dangerous leap towards the crown of wisdom, how far back must the preliminary run be before the jump; what plunging about in the horrors of chaotic Earth-substance, seeking for foothold in the densest mass?" We look, in a spirit of worship and horror, from the work to the man, trying to discover the matrix in which this sublime serenity was moulded.

We find this pitiable epileptic, a disease-exasperated being driven like a tormented demon from one to another of the gambling hells of the Continent.* At the time his first wife lay dying of consumption, we find him running off with a sybilline young queen whose cold demeanour only added to the shuddering joys to be had from her voluptuousness. But the repayment of this woman's passion all he could do was to sponge upon her, throwing even her personal jewellery into the hands of the crocheters.

His wife dead, his mistress deserted, himself drowning in a sea of debts, and victimised by a rascally publisher, who was plotting to swindle him out of his copyrights, he groped about for help. There crossed his path a young girl of twenty, eager to start out in the world as an independent wage-earner. She came to work for him; for he had been persuaded by his friends to try to dictate a novel, and by thus finishing it within a certain time, to fulfil his agreement with the rapacious publisher, and so preserve the copyrights of his former books.

The girl, who admired his work, and was impressed by his reputation, slaved hard, urging him on, and systematically their work, so that the book was finished within a month. She then consented to marry him, though he was twenty-three years her senior, was haunted by an army of epilepsies, and, in addition, was went with him to creditors. She gave up everything, and went with him to Dresden. They had been there only a week or two, when he decided to try his luck at the Casino in Hamburg. He left his girl-bride alone in the lodgings at Dresden. There she waited for him, in a fever of anxious perplexity.

Having had the usual beginners' luck, Dostoevsky returned to her with sufficient money to permit of their removal to Baden. The gambling fever took then a firmer hold upon him, and for seven weeks they had a life of nightmare. Absolute destitution alternated with periods of temporary recovery—lasting for about twenty-four hours at the most—in which they would indulge in expensive bouquets and table luxuries. All the time this terrible man's intention was to win sufficient money to take them back to Russia. He seemed, in exile, to be robbed of his soul. It is impossible to know what Russia meant to him; but it must have been the symbol of that abnormal self within him which gave him the power, transcending intellect, to find a direction and a meaning for that spiritual inebriation which is a habit of the Slav character. Tchekov pictured that character's reactionary languors: Tolstoi showed less avidity and paroxysmal cruelty; and Turgeniev portrayed its occasional complacencies, its mania for dialectics, and its nervous reluctance to translate dialectic into action.

Dostoevsky, however, was aware of all these qualities; he was these qualities; but with an intense faith—translated

* "Dostoevsky. Portrayed by His Wife." Translated and edited by S. S. Kotliansky. (Routledge, ros. 6d.)

for his purpose into a mystical Slav nationalism—he subtly gathered all these inconsequentialities into what we must paradoxically call a concrete abstraction. This unity is vivid through all his work. It is an additional character creeping into each novel, just as the overtone creeps into, and dominates, the clash and strife of the drama of a peal of bells. It was Russia, the oversoul of his people; of each yet of none; the epitome of all.

In exile, he felt this virtue leave him. He was rudderless: and for such a heavily freighted ship to be rudderless was disastrous. The poor young wife, now burdened with the sickness of pregnancy, watched with terror and dismay the erratic courses of this sombre genius to whom she had given herself. Knowing her wearisome condition he would yet fling himself on his knees and beg her to give him their last few coins, so that he might make another throw for that elusive fortune which was to send them home to health and happiness. She would yield, and he would lose again. Then there would follow an intensification of the self-abasement, until at last tears and protestations of remorse would lapse into fits of epilepsy, after which the girl would endeavour to drag him to bed, and to protect him from the accidents likely to befall people in such a condition.

There was, moreover, a streak of petty selfishness in the man. His wife records in her diary how he would become irritable with her when she cried, either out of sickness or the accumulation of the many little miseries incidental to this precarious life. She says "How impatient he is! Surely, I do not blame him when he happens to have epileptic fits or when he coughs; I do not say that it bores me, although it does make me suffer." She is hurt, too, because in the midst of their poverty, while her own few decent garments are in pawn, her husband can calmly go and buy himself a new suit. She records in her diary, of a similar incident, "I am terribly pained that the man, whom I value so highly and love so dearly, should display such carelessness and lack of consideration and understanding."

This is no singular thing. We find again and again the conduct of such people ignoring the laws of the minor humanities. Wesley's domestic affairs are notorious; and we remember his diabolical admonitions for the proper treatment of children. Then there are Milton and Shelley. We might say that the attitude of such people to the smaller, but none the less poignant, actualities of life has been standardised by Buddha and Christ. We begin to feel that the minor generousities are only the fruit of a slack, commonplace method of life, and that the day-by-day self-abnegations and denials are symptoms not of virtue, but a cowardly shrinking from purposeful self-assertion in obedience to a thinking and understanding conscience. It cannot be mere idiosyncrasy that makes the spiritual giants neglect these small things: for it is possible that such people do not twitch a muscle without being conscious of it, and that they have awareness in every gesture, whether noble or ignoble according to the standards of daily morality.

It is significant that we have not the courage to condemn the prophets for these irreconcilable trivialities. Even the monstrous incident of Elisha and the she-bears we gloss over in dismayed awe. And, it is not hero-worship which prompts us, for the hero-worshipper—usually a reformed Narcissus—is prone to disillusionment when confronted with unpleasant facts. Unless we be completely obtuse—there is such a thing as spiritual stupidity—we do not condemn. We remember that the woman who suffered at Dostoevsky's hands could say of him, in the very midst of her indignities, "Indeed, with him I am as safe as in Christ's bosom." And she could say this, too, even though tormented by the impersonal aloofness of the man. She records, a few days later, "It seems to me that he has never loved, that he has only imagined he has loved. I even think he is incapable of love; he is too much occupied with other thoughts and ideas to become strongly attached to anyone earthly."

Derided and contradicted by circumstances; lacking even heart-assurance; she yet could worship this man as a being altogether uplifted above the world in which she hitherto had spent her life. She saw her horizon receding as she struggled up towards him, and vista after vista opening with stimulating invitation to her soul. She saw him in, as we see, that kind of transparent serenity which denotes a being who breathes not our passion-whirled air, but that higher stratosphere which is the life-stuff of the sublime few. Dostoevsky was one of them; of humanity, yet above it; sensitive to a spiritual tone which we cannot hear. His inconsistencies, his contradictions, are for another judgment than ours. We do not understand: we can only take what he has to give and be exalted by it.

RICHARD CHURCH.

Art.

Ferdinand Hodler (1853-1918).

The International Society of Sculptors, Painters, and Gravers deserves the thanks of all art students for including paintings by Hodler in its recent exhibition at Burlington House.

Although every year a large number of people go to Switzerland from this country, Swiss art is practically unknown here. It repays study, however, and the giant among its modern exponents is Hodler. His teacher was Barthelmy Menn (1815-1893), the simple poetry of whose own landscapes is pleasant, though they have little more Swiss feeling than those of Diday or Calame. The early paintings of Menn's pupil show how good a grounding the latter received, and his individual strength appears in "The Student" (1874), and develops, through such paintings as the full-length of a Bernese girl (1880), "The New Rütli" (1887), and, of the same year, "Weary of Living," and "Old Man," which foreshadow the groups of old men, "Life Weary" (1892), and "Eurythmie" (1895), towards the composition "The Night" (1890), now in the Kunst Museum, Berne. Adding to the last, "The Day" (1900) and the two paintings entitled "Love" (? 1908), we have four works together representing an outstanding achievement of modern art. The relation of the figures in "The Night" and "Love" (two couples) has an originality of balance which sets these pictures apart from "The Day," a design of five figures in a semi-circle, the stylisation of gesture in which is less satisfactory than the naturalism of form in the others. "The Night" I consider Hodler's masterpiece, for, in it, deep emotional comprehension is expressed in a forceful and simple way, chiefly by means of emphatic design. If these paintings stood alone they would give Hodler a proud position; but they are supported by a variety of landscape, portrait, and other figure subjects, which strengthen it.

The landscapes, which gained in expressiveness as the artist grew older, are notable for combination of structure and atmosphere, and it is interesting to compare them with the landscapes of Cézanne, which often give the impression of an experiment just fallen short of success. Hodler had more confidence. His portraiture of men shows this too. How few modern portraits does one remember! But those of "G. Navazza" (1916), "The Author Martin" (1916), and some of the artist himself, grave themselves on the memory.

It remains to mention such historical compositions as "The Retreat of Marignano" (Zurich) and "The Departure of the Volunteers" (Jena University), which, though containing less emotional appeal, mark a stage in the development of mural decoration.

The serenity of the Swiss spirit, born of the land, the people, and their history, which informs the productions of Bieler (whose wall-paintings of harvest scenes in the Musée Jenisch at Vevey are too little known), Bille, Buri, Dallèves, Segantini, Vallet (an excellent example of whose work was shown at Burlington House), and, to a somewhat less extent, the work of the gifted Cuno Amiet, is experienced differently in the art of Hodler. The latter frankly reveals the roughness of the way to the summit. He explores the depths of the spirit, weary but never deflected from the pursuit of truth. Triumphantly he uses as his symbol the human form, and, from the infinite variety of its attitudes, its movements and its expressions, he produces a harmony which is an echo of healthy life itself. His accent is masculine but not brutal, bitter at times but not cynical. His chief faults seem to me to be an inclination towards stridency of colour and, in drawing the figure, towards starkness of accent. Also one is irritated at times by a stressing of local peculiarities of woman's coiffure in his allegorical groups.

Hodler not only stands out in modern Swiss art, but he is a European artist who may be named with the Southern Slav, Mestrovic, and the Finn, Gallén. Deeply inspired as each has been by his native land, it is the universal appeal of his deeply-felt art that, in each case, compels attention and sweeps all narrow boundaries aside. Such a sculptured group as "Two Mourning Widows" by Mestrovic and such paintings as "Lemminkäinen äiti" (mother and dead son) by Gallén and "The Night" by Hodler are not, to anyone with the smallest amount of imaginative sympathy, esoteric things. Through them human beings speak to one another.

ERNEST COLLINGS.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

The Subscription Rates for "The New Age," to any address in Great Britain or Abroad, are 30s. for 12 months; 15s. for 6 months; 7s. 6d. for 3 months.

Reviews.

Kenya. By Dr. Norman Leys. (Hogarth Press. 15s.)

A new edition of this impressive and so far unanswered book is now announced. It deals with the question of our duty to the native African whose interests we profess to protect, but whom it is the admitted intention of the white exploiters of the country to reduce to the status of "black labour." The writer shows that the Colonial Office does not love what is going on, but needs the support of public opinion here to enable it to enforce justice. This almost brings the reading of this book within the duty of every Englishman jealous of his Imperial honour.

The Other Side of the Medal. By Edward Thompson. (Hogarth Press. 5s.)

The same remark applies with quite as much force to "The Other Side of the Medal," by Edward Thompson. This little book has been casually and slightly reviewed, and its author blamed for unnecessarily raking up the old and forgotten horrors of the Indian Mutiny. Those who really read it will value it more highly. Mr. Thompson clearly shows that the story of horrors on which we have all been brought up is so one-sided as to be in many respects notably false, and that while the injustice of the accepted version is a continual exasperation to the Indian, its effect on the Anglo-Indian mind is to render our people liable to extreme and really unreasonable panics, resulting in such disasters as the Amritsar massacre. This particular affair was, he thinks, given the state of mind at present existing in the governing class, almost inevitable. Short, well written, and with ample documentary proof, this is yet another convincing book, for which thanks are due to the author.

P. T. K.

Mape. By André Maurois. Translated by Eric Sutton, with four woodcuts by Constance Grant. (The Bodley Head. 7s. 6d.)

All sorts of plump and good-natured "Brass Hats" seem to remember "that interpreter chap at G.H.Q." now that M. Maurois has immortalised their type in Colonel Bramble. And as the thing they remember best about him is that he spoke such perfect English it is quite time that he wrote us a book in English, just to see whether they are exaggerating in their new-found enthusiasm. Not that there is anything to seek in Mr. Eric Sutton's translation of this new fantasy, for it is clear and capable, and the introduction, presenting Mademoiselle Françoise to us—and we must really get an introduction to the little lady some day—gives just the right atmosphere of solemn and grave understanding which brings out the imagination of the child, like the spring sunshine brings out the flowers. Mape is the land whither a none-too-good little girl betakes herself when she becomes "fed up" with the mean restrictions of an adult world, and M. Maurois, realising how fondly genius turns back to the forgotten fairylands, gives us here the three figures of Goethe, Balzac, and Sarah Siddons, living their Mapeish lives undisturbed by the impingement of a three-dimensional, three-meal-daily existence. The book has "charm," though there is some danger that this tender and whimsical student of real people may become mannered, now that the critics are spoiling him, and the reading public is persuaded that the fellow ought to be read, in case his name should crop up at dinner. And, of course, in these days, when America loves us less and less the more we go on paying our debts and pushing the pound in the face of the dollar, while France dislikes us and our ways the more every time we take a fresh lump off what she owes us, it is good to find that one foreigner still re-Taines a certain comprehension and expresses a consequent appreciation of our particular humanity. M. Maurois is clever enough to make Mrs. Siddons, the only English figure of the three studies, the only cold one, but he at least gives her credit for trying to warm herself into life, and spend part of her time away from the English Mape, where she lived her cool and classic hours on the high places of eternal and remunerative tragedy.

The Canon. By A. C. Benson. (Heinemann. 7s. 6d.)

"The Canon" is the last complete novel of the late Master of Magdalen and is the sequel to his previous book, "The House of Menerue." We meet the same people in the same charming English countryside, which always stands as a quiet Benson background. There are no unusual surprises, or, as one character in the tale says, "no cynical grudging view of life nor despairing talk of lost spirits." It is the story of a Cornish vicar, his spiritual advances and the unusually beautiful friendship of his wife with another man. The style is so restful after many staccato compositions we wish the chapters were not so brief.

The King's Assegai. By Bertram Mitford. (Staple Publishing Co. 1s.)

Dark Corners. By F. E. Penny. (Staple Publishing Co. 1s.)

The Staple Publishing Company are issuing a series of reprinted novels by modern authors at one shilling each in an endeavour to approach the sevenpenny novel which was so popular before the war. If they keep the standard of selection as high as their preliminary list, then readers will no longer have to complain that "reading is expensive." "Dark Corners" are the places where spirits dwell. They have their fascination, whether they exist in a London spiritualist seance or at the back of a Yogi's cave in the Himalayas, and if besides these backgrounds there are capitalist villains, suggested infamies, and a totally unexpected climax, then we know it is a good yarn. This story has more in it than thrills, for we feel convinced that the author has an intimate knowledge of India. It is written in a racy style, which carries us quickly from peak to peak of adventure. Sceptics of the occult, no less than enthusiasts, should enjoy the character of the Kurumba. Magic and superstition chase us from "Dark Corners" into the second book, "The King's Assegai," but here there are no mysteries. It is a straightforward bloodcurdler, and the book all boys will search for on home book-shelves only to run it to earth in a free library. Parents may hide it from their children, but they should read it themselves, not to condemn the gruesome realities, but to revive their own fading imaginations. There is no need to search for historical facts or to believe in the old Zulu's narrative. We should allow our hair to rise at the howls and gashes, the reptiles, witches, and men-eaters; half terrified, half exultant, we should "bathe in a sea of blood" with our hero. Whatever we think afterwards it has acted upon us as a tonic.

The Education of a Young Man. By Marius Lyle. (Hogarth Press. 7s. 6d.)

This is not so much the education of a young man as a series of self-imposed psychological tests on the part of a war widow. If she discovers that his mother is insane, his brother killed his father, and he is a degenerate, how should she behave? Should she rescue him from his "rotten" family? These are some of her problems which she is not so anxious to solve as her attitude towards them. An incessant curiosity spurs her to tilt against his subnormal relations until, as a relief, she flirts vigorously with a vicar, who has an "electric effect" on her. Apparently she must know the reactions of her body as well as her mind, but we wish we were allowed to have more than a nodding acquaintance with the other characters in the book, whom she finds are "satanic," but never convinces us that they are so exciting. We are assured that the home of this family is a "dunghill," yet she manages to stay there for some three hundred pages before she decides to run off with the young man. Perhaps his real education starts after their marriage.

Pastiche.

THE GODS LAUGH.

We learn from our special correspondent on Olympus that the gods are ill with laughter. Listening in, as is their custom, to the Mortal Broadcast on Wednesday evening, they heard the announcer tell the world, and presumably the cosmos, that the great strike was ended.

Hardly had the earthly voice entered upon the last words of the announcement than the gods, including the surly Hephaestus, were rolling on the Olympian floor in most un-Olympian attitudes.

This is what caused their laughter. They are the words of a great English poet, long dead, clothed with a new significance that the B.B.C. official probably missed:—

Bring me my bow of burning gold,
Bring me my arrows of desire,
Bring me my spear. Oh, clouds unfold,
Bring me my chariot of fire.

I will not cease from mental strife,
Nor shall the sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.

We believe it.

C. H.

Notice.

ISSUES OF "THE NEW AGE" FOR MAY 6 AND MAY 13 ARE NOW AVAILABLE.

The first is a complete 12-page issue which was ready for printing at the outbreak of the strike. The second is a 4-page issue containing the text of a typed "emergency circular" posted to subscribers during the strike. Both contain important commentaries on the situation, and should not be missed. Readers who are not direct subscribers must order these issues definitely from their newsagents, as the wholesale distributors are not putting on current sale any back numbers on their own account. The 4-page issue contains a special article entitled "Through the Subsidy to the Dividend," which will be of great value as propaganda in view of the persistence of the deadlock. An extra edition has been printed, and back parcels will be supplied at 1s. for 25 post free to those who want them for distribution upon application direct to the Manager, The New Age, 70, High Holborn, W.C.1. Single copies will be at the usual price of 6d., whether ordered direct or through the trade.

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Socialist "First-Aid" for Private Enterprise! A reprint of the "Notes" in the "New Age" of April 17th. A critical examination of the I.L.P.'s "Nationalisation" policy from the "Social Credit" point of view. A useful pamphlet to distribute in Labour and other reformist circles.

The Monetary Catalyst—Need Scientific Discovery Entail Poverty? A reprint of the "Notes" in the "New Age" of June 5th. Written with the special object of attracting the attention of business, technical and scientific men.

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- Purses and Prices (½d.).
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- Socialist First Aid (1d.).
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- The Veil of Finance (6d.).

Post free 1s. the set.

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The Social Credit Movement.

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

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

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

Finance Enquiry Petition Committee

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This Committee has been formed to organise the collection of signatures to a Petition for an Enquiry into Finance.

It is not connected with any particular scheme of financial reform, and its object can therefore be consistently supported by everyone who believes that the fundamental cause of the economic deadlock is financial.

Copies of the Petition, together with leaflets and sets of instructions, are immediately available.

Write to **THE SECRETARY, Finance Enquiry Petition Committee, 324, Abbey House, Westminster, S.W.1**

Readers who are anxious to make THE NEW AGE more widely known can do so by asking their newsagents or book-stall managers if they will distribute free specimen copies to those of their customers likely to be interested. If so we shall be pleased to supply them free of charge and carriage paid. Applications should reach us at the latest by Monday mornings, so that the necessary extra copies of that week's issue may be printed. Address:—The Manager, THE NEW AGE, 70, High Holborn, London, W.C.1.

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