THE

NEW AGE

INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER"

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

The *Observer* publishes a short article from a correspondent referring to the American instalment purchase boom. Much of what he says is familiar to readers of these Notes, but he reports that Mr. Henry Ford is concerned about the development, quoting a remark of his that "the American people no longer buy; they are backed into a corner and sold." Mr. Ford is warning his countrymen that they are going to be "severely jolted back to the cash basis"—"the banking test is still to come." In the meantime it is interesting to notice that the International Typographical Union is talking about the need of a defence against the "high-pressure type of salesman," trained in "selling psychology" and the methods of stimulating "credit-desire"—all of which suggests that the "advertising man" is going to be the scapegoat when the bankers stop discounting instalment paper, and the trouble begins. Of course nobody will then be in a condition to reflect that the stimulation of "credit-desire" did nothing to produce the credit facilities, but only drew attention to the fact that they were available. The bankers will step in to avert a "crisis," but no mention will be made of their part in causing it.

* * *

Last week, speaking of M. Caillaux's recent dismissal of Mr. Robineau from the governorship of the Bank of France in favour of M. Moreau, we said: "It would be premature for us to indulge in any optimism merely on this gesture of M. Caillaux's; we must wait for developments." While we wrote, a cutting from the New York *Journal of Commerce* of May 31 was on its way to us, in which we find the statement that M. Moreau's retirement had even at that date already been suggested by English and American financial interests.

> "In the conferences which were held in London with M. Peret and the American representatives, in which Montagu Norman, of the Bank of England, participated, France gained information as to just what must be done as foreigners see it to bring about a stabilisation of her finances. It was set forth that the Bank of France must be divorced from politics, and, while it was not insisted upon, *there was an intimation that it might be as well to retire M. Robineau from the head of the Bank and place in his stead some younger man, equipped to meet new conditions.*"

That disposes of the hopeful significance of M. Caillaux's "*coup.*" Nevertheless it is not necessary for observers to go to the other extreme and assume that he will travel the whole length of the itinerary marked out for him. The emergence of an international nominee governing the Bank of France by no means assures the success of international financial policy.

* * *

In the same article an indication is given of what this policy is.

> "A bold plan of world financing, through a combination of banks of issue and the transfer of national debts to individuals, to bring about world currency stabilisation, is being whispered about in Washington. It is declared that it is in part for this purpose that Under-Secretary of the Treasury Garrard B. Winston and Governor Benjamin Strong, of the New York Federal Reserve Bank, are now in Europe. So vast in importance is the scheme that it is practically impossible to secure confirmation of the rumour that is afloat here. . . . The discussion here indicates that it is proposed to bring about a combination which would include the Federal Reserve System of the United States, the Bank of England, the Reichsbank of Germany, the Banca Italiano, and the Bank of France, with possibly some others. It is said that the Federal Reserve Board would be given the controlling power, although such a plan might meet with considerable opposition on the part of the Bank of England. European jealousies, however, might throw the balance of power to the United States."

In this is to be seen the constitution of the *Bank of Europe*, which we have several times spoken of as being in contemplation. (Readers will mark their copies of our "Chart of World Government" accordingly.)

* * *

We must emphasise the importance of one of the projects referred to, namely that of the "transfer of national debts to individuals." That is already being carried out. It takes the form of "de-nationalisation," such as we pointed out last week was happening in respect of the Belgian State railways. It

means that national Governments are no longer being trusted to collect the taxes necessary for repaying the interest and principal of their debts, but that non-elected financial commissions are intercepting the money by taking actual control of large industrial monopolies—*and fixing prices*. This is an unmistakable violation of the constituted principle "No taxation without representation." In the case of Great Britain it would ultimately mean that in respect of nearly half the total amount of the annual Budget (revenue to meet debt charges) the Government as a taxing authority would be replaced by a commission of financiers who would act as a Super-Chancellor of the Exchequer. It is one thing for the elected Government of the day to decline to apply the principle of "economy" to a specific section of Budget expenditure, but quite another for it to renounce its power to do so.

* * *

In the July issue of *The Banker* Mr. J. F. Darling writes on "Lord Milner as a Banker."

> "Lord Milner had become greatly concerned at the effects of the rapid deflation which this country was undergoing. . . .
>
> "In July, 1922, the bank rate was reduced to 3 per cent. A year later, however, it was raised again to 4 per cent.—a purely arbitrary step, . . .
>
> "Lord Milner became a severe critic of the Bank of England, which he came to regard as a serious obstacle to that 'increased activity of production resulting in a greater abundance of goods' (a reference to Lord Milner's own formula as to the one sound way of reducing prices). If it be urged that the Bank of England was only carrying out the policy adopted by the country, I am disposed to think that Lord Milner would have replied that the Bank of England, directly and indirectly, was largely responsible for this policy, and that the policy itself was wrong.
>
> "The gold standard was the last public question in which Lord Milner took an interest, and his last words on it were: 'I think they have made a great mistake.' When, after his death, I was told of this, and especially of the circumstances under which the words were uttered, they sounded to me like a voice from the Beyond.'"

In an editorial note *The Banker*, while expressing pleasure in "offering the hospitality" of its columns to Mr. Darling, remarks that

> "it is hardly necessary to say that *The Banker* as an organ of opinion is not to be regarded as committed to the standpoint of its eminent contributor."

The truth of this statement is borne out in the rest of the note, where *The Banker* hints that current interest rates may be too low, not too high, because when rates are low we *lose gold*, whereas when they are high we *attract foreign balances*. Its ideal is expressed thus: "a level (probably temporary) of high money rates, sufficient to really force prices down to world level, and thus obviate reliance on foreign balances." Whether British capitalists and workers would then be able to keep alive on the proceeds of their work is a question beneath *The Banker's* notice.

* * *

The London Telephone Directory is to be printed with three instead of two columns on each page. In a comment on this the *Spectator* says that the saving of paper will be "enormous." "Not long ago," it proceeds, "we drew attention to the suggestion made by Messrs. Austin and Lloyd in their book, 'The Secret of High Wages,' that there was an obvious opportunity for economy in the London Telephone Directory." It seems to us that Messrs. Austin and Lloyd need not have gone to America to find out that by putting paper makers out of work you can increase the wages of others still in work. The economic proposition that if some people will go without money there will be more for the rest was already carrying conviction when the mothers of these gentlemen were carrying them.

* * *

The *Observer's* Paris Correspondent writes an interesting article on the banking habits of the French people. The ordinary Frenchman carries about with him a far larger amount of cash than an Englishman would think of holding. It is rare among the middle classes, and almost unknown among the small but prosperous peasant farmers to have a banking account. The peasant distrusts banks; partly because of what he has heard of fraudulent banks, but far more "because he hates the idea that anybody—even his best friend, and even his wife, and far less a mere banker and his clerks—should know what he possesses." He hates it because he is convinced that the taxing authorities are in the secrets of all the banks, and that if he allows the banker to know what he has, he will soon be called upon to pay taxes on it. There are many of them who now no longer invest; they hoard notes. The stubbornness of the anti-bank habit extends above private individuals. Only last week the writer of the article records that the accounts department of a public body refused to accept a cheque from a business man. This man appealed to a higher authority, but was told that although several Finance Ministers had recommended the acceptance of cheques, none had yet dared to go so far as to try to enforce it. The writer concludes his article with an amusing description of the lengthy processes of paying in, and especially cashing, a cheque at a French bank, commenting that "I do finally get the money, and escape from the precincts of the bank bitterly regretting a *wasted morning*." It would almost seem as if the banks themselves went out of their way to become unpopular—as if they have other and larger fish to fry than minding the money of private individuals. In this connection there are some startling figures in existence, showing the high proportion of bank commissions, and so on that were bitten off the proceeds of the French Government's loan flotations during the war. The situation goes far to explain the difficulties which beset the French Finance Minister during the present time of crisis. He can budget for any scale of taxation of income he likes; but how impose it when the taxpayer is the only fellow who knows what he is getting? The French equivalent of a British Inspector of Taxes cannot demand the production of the citizen's pass-book. He does not possess such a thing—nor wants to, for, as we have seen, he regards a pass-book as a virtual declaration of his income. Nor, again, would things be much easier if he did possess one, for the attitude of the taxing agents themselves suggests more of a tax-payer's than of a tax-collector's psychology. A story was told in the Press not long ago of an Englishman who started business in a French town. Upon receiving the form for the return of his income he naturally entered on it relatively true figures and returned it. What was his surprise a day or so later to be waited upon by a deputation from his fellow townsmen praying him to be, as we should put it, a "sport" and not to kill the tax-dodging market by blacklegging on his taxable neighbours. Would he please drastically reduce the amount? What he did to oblige them the story does not recount—probably because he was discreetly reticent in his narration of the incident; but one is more intrigued to know how his neighbours came to hear of his proclivity for truth-telling except through the friendly warning of the official who received the income-tax return from him. All these things go to suggest how efficient must be the power of resistance in France to repressive financial policy. If only France would get the cheque habit, says the *Observer's* correspondent, "many public advantages would be gained." Quite so, but these "public advantages" turn out to be advantages always to be admired but never shared. "Certainly one should do his duty by the State," says the Frenchman; "but what is the State? *L'Etat—c'est moi.*" "If neither I nor my neighbour allows himself to be impoverished, the State must assuredly remain prosperous." An unassailable piece of theorising. Not only that—but it works. There is a lot to be said in favour of Englishmen reverting to the cash habit.

* * *

On Saturday was held the first suffragette demonstration since the outbreak of the war. The public in Hyde Park were able to renew their acquaintance with those old warriors, Mrs. Pankhurst, Mrs. Despard, and Dame Millicent Fawcett, but the celebrated Christabel was missing. She had fought for the vote not for what it was, but for what women would do with it. They did not do it; so Christabel departed. However, from fifteen platforms two resolutions were passed by acclamation, one demanding votes for women at twenty-one on the same terms as men, and the other, seats in the House of Lords for peeresses in their own right. We should, for ourselves, have added a third resolution—the exclusion of men from both Houses. It is a popular idea that women have achieved the right to elect Parliament. We would rather say that men have thrown away *their* right to do so. Parliament, which should be the husband of the financial system, is become its wife. It nags, protests, complains; but all it does is to bear legislative children to the Bank of England. It now remains for a female Cromwell to enter the Commons, and lifting from the table, delicately and with averted eyes, the Mace—that phalloid emblem of a departed virility—cry "What shall we do with this bauble?—Take it away."

* * *

At Maidstone Assizes a boy of seventeen was convicted of incest with his sister. His counsel argued that the act was partly due to overcrowding conditions; to which the Lord Chief Justice replied: "I cannot assent to the proposition that because there are difficulties about housing therefore it is an excuse to commit this appalling crime." It was Burke, we think, who once said that it was useless to legislate on the assumption that individuals could normally live at a heroic level; and only heroism can make continence flower in a bed of congestion. His Lordship had much more justly have said: "I cannot assent to the proposition that because incest is considered an appalling crime, therefore it is an excuse to permit overcrowding"? Anyhow, the sentence imposed on the boy is logical enough: he will be able to sleep in a room of his own for twelve months.

* * *

This week Suzanne Lenglen goes back to France under the shadow of public disfavour. If the public had any imagination their disfavour would be transferred to her father. Anyone who happens to have read carefully the series of articles in the *Evening News* in which M. Lenglen describes how he trained his daughter will know why. He states that he "neglected nothing" in his endeavour to perfect his daughter's play. In so saying he is confessing neglect of everything. She had to practice every conceivable stroke until that stroke executed itself. She had to go in for running, skipping, hopping, and we know not what else. "A healthy mind in a healthy body" was the principle on which he set her these tasks. And behold the result. One need not depend alone on what he writes, but on seeing the photographs of himself and his daughter in her younger days, which accompanied one of his articles. She has the look of one who is sacrificing herself rather than disturb her father's obsession with the idea of exploiting her talent. Her father it is who plays the tennis. His face tells you so. She is now a frail racquet cross-strung with nerves stretched to breaking tension. Take her out of the press and she warps. Is it any wonder that she has damned time-tables, committees, and everything associated with the accursed game—not excluding even the Queens who came to watch it?

America, Europe, and the Empire.

Last Sunday being the 150th anniversary of the American Declaration of Independence, it was to be expected that the *Observer* would come out in a rash; and Mr. Garvin gives us a vivid three columns of it. America is a "giant among nations."

> "The Republic produces 20 per cent. of the world's wheat, over 40 per cent. of all its coal, over 50 per cent. of its copper, nearly 60 per cent. of its cotton, fully 60 per cent. of its steel, and 70 per cent. of its oil."

Mr. Garvin's object in presenting these statistics is to remind us that relatively to "this vast unified society," economic Europe is an "impoverished chaos." He nowhere mentions what percentage of the civilised world's criminals America produces—probably because the figure would rather qualify the value of his claims that "religious forces of all kinds are more actively powerful in America than in any European country whatever," and that she "spends as much upon education as all the rest of the world put together." Of Fundamentalism he claims that although it may be "primitive and intolerant," "you cannot call it materialistic." Certainly we cannot. It is an immaterial concept, for it has no relation to human well-being except in the sense that its promulgation is a form of neural perspiration in its sponsors and tends to keep open the pores of their repressions.

But to return to Mr. Garvin's statistics. They prove that America is easily able to keep her population living in a high degree of luxury entirely on her own native resources. As he says elsewhere, she is a continent working internally on a free trade basis. And we may add the further fact that she is one gigantic credit area without inter-State currency complexities equivalent to the European exchanges. But Mr. Garvin assumes that American prosperity has come to stay; and on that assumption he preaches the idea of a United States of Europe, to supersede "the fetish of exaggerated nationalism and racialism." Our advice to him can be put into two words. "Steady on!" Leaving aside the all-important question of how one begins to achieve such unification of Europe, let us first make sure whether all is eternally well with this unified United States. This demands quite another kind of analysis than Mr. Garvin's. America has done four things that he never so much as mentions—

(1) Drastically restricted immigration from Europe into her territory.
(2) Stiffened her tariff against the world.
(3) Inaugurated a boom in internal buying for consumption purposes by an advance of £1,000 millions of credit to consumers.
(4) Secured control over the financial policy of nearly every European country.

Now the first two acts have tended to impoverish Europe, and Europe has no power to reverse them. The third act the countries of Europe might conceivably emulate; but the fourth puts America in a position to forbid their doing so—and she has forbidden them. European impoverishment is an outcome of American policy. Europe's "exaggerated nationalism" is not a cause of her economic stagnation, but an effect of it. In these circumstances the soundness of Mr. Garvin's assumption of continuous American prosperity partly depends upon the further assumption that European countries will continuously tolerate an external veto on their freedom to apply their own financial credit to their own productive resources. They will not. Secondly, Mr. Garvin must be aware that the rapid spread of instalment buying in America is causing consternation among American financiers. They have got to stop it. Yet they hardly dare. For one thing, not only will they be reimposing deflation with all the economic consequences we know so well over here, but they will be producing

those consequences in a society which is even now, at the height of its prosperity, at its wit's end how to deal with its vast army of violent criminals. To-day in Chicago we hear of armoured turrets stationed permanently at the main cross-roads, and interlocked by an elaborate signalling system, for the purpose of ambushing gunmen.

The only way for America to avoid internal disruption if she ends the instalment-purchase boom will be to find some new means of keeping her factories and people working. She will have to look abroad. She will want to find a people who will commence borrowing dollars at the point where the borrowings of her own consumer-population stop. And of course, she envisages lending "dollars" in the form of American goods. Which people shall she choose? We'll let Mr. Garvin supply the answer.

"The British Empire covers a quarter of the earth. With its tropical territories it is capable of becoming even more than now the world's richest storehouse of raw materials. *This island by itself has neither the money nor the men* wherewith to achieve anything like the full development of these enormous dominions."

Now we can all guess what is coming—

"We ought to encourage *American finance and personality* to take with us as big a hand as they like, and the bigger the better, in every field of commercial enterprise under the flag."

We will concede the privilege of commenting on this idea to someone to whom Mr. Garvin will pay more attention than to us—we refer to Mr. J. F. Darling. In his "Economic Unity of the Empire" (P. S. King. 1s.) he quotes a cablegram that appeared in *The Times* from its New York correspondent to the effect that typical banking opinion there asserted:

"that to maintain sterling at par England must be willing definitely to forgo her former pre-eminent position as the market for long-term foreign loans, and willing also to conduct the Bank of England's discount policy as to keep the London short-loan money market on a higher basis than New York."

On this he remarks:

"So far as 'foreign loans' are concerned—and by that term I mean what perhaps the New York bankers did not mean, and that is loans to countries outside the Empire—we need make no demur to giving place to the United States. But so far as loans to the Empire are concerned, and the Bank of England's discount policy, *this financial thraldom should be broken*. It is equally in the interests of all parts of the Empire that this should be done, and by co-operation and by combining resources it is within the power of the Empire to break it."

Mr. Darling, whose experience as a director of the Midland Bank should lend his opinion some weight, sees no difficulty in developing the Empire without dollar credits, and in fact associates such credits with "financial thraldom." Elsewhere in his pamphlet he envisages the Empire as one credit area like the United States, dispensing with gold in respect of Empire credit transactions, only using it for adjustments with countries outside.

A Heretic's Word-Book.

IV.

MONARCHY.—A system for avoiding the vulgarity of presidential elections tolerated on aesthetic grounds to preserve the National Anthem, because of the lack of sufficient musical ability to produce another.

* * *

PITY.—A philandering with suffering indulged in for the sake of voluptuousness by people who have too little suffering of their own at the expense of those who have too much.

* * *

POLITICIAN.—If the specimen spermatozoon does not shrink from sunlight, and expands in limelight, vigorously wagging its tail, the test is negative; a politician cannot be procreated.

* * *

PRAGMATISM.—Making a philosophy of muddling through.

A. N.

The Debate on the Coal Mines Bill.

By C. H. Douglas.

All readers of THE NEW AGE who are interested in the Mining dispute, and there can be very few who are not, should obtain from H.M. Stationery Office a copy of the Report of the Parliamentary Debates for Tuesday, June 29, commonly known as "Hansard."

With certain reservations, it is probable that the speech by Mr. Wheatley, in opposing the "Eight Hours" Bill, is amongst one of the most important and able speeches made in Parliament for many years. I think it is worth quoting a short extract from the official report of his remarks.

He said, "The only way in which we are going to find an outlet from our present industrial difficulties is by realising that we have in this country, in our mining villages, in our agricultural villages, in our towns and in our cities millions of people who have unsatisfied human wants, that side by side with these people we have millions of pounds worth of goods for which we cannot find a market, that if we can get rid of these goods we have again millions of people prepared to replace them with other goods. Surely it is not necessary, if we have any statesmanship left, that Britain should be compelled to starve in the midst of plenty."

If these lines should strike the eye of any rich man who wishes to do a signal service to this country, then I suggest that he should have them printed in large type and pasted on every vacant wall throughout the length of the land. There is the simple problem. A child should be able to see it. Almost any child, whose mind had not been perverted, would se it at once.

But Mr. Wheatley was followed by the member for Great Yarmouth, Sir Frank Meyer. I do not know anything about him, but his name would suggest that he is a Jew. And he proceeds, as might be expected, to pour ridicule upon Mr. Wheatley. Although no mention of what is called a subsidy was made by Mr. Wheatley, Sir Frank Meyer is very insistent that no steps to increase the purchasing power of the consumer by any financial device should receive any consideration, and in support of his attitude makes the usual, and erroneous, employment of the word "inflation." Other members, in the face of the stated and admitted fact that net Royalties amount to about 3½d. a ton and that the present loss on the production of coal is stated to be 3s. per ton, while the price is admittedly 30 or 40 per cent. too high to enable our heavy industries to capture trade, suggest that the purchasing power which is distributed to Royalty owners should be cancelled, with the direct result that trades which cater to those Royalty owners would, as one result, be still further embarrassed.

One member remarked, I think unanswerably, that "there had never been a period since the days of Waterloo that an industrial difficulty was not met by a suggestion that the way to industrial recovery was by longer hours and less wages."

I think that no one can read the whole of this Report without being struck by the complete detachment of every speaker, subsequent to Mr. Wheatley, from any grip of the physical realities of the position. There is nothing to choose between the Conservative, the Liberal, or the Labour member. Everyone of them is willing to accept a financial difficulty as an insuperable difficulty; not one of them has a single word of comment to offer on the paragraph which I have quoted above.

If there is one problem which is more urgent at this moment than any other, it is to rescue the people of this country from the downright hypnotism of figures in which they have become involved, and to bring them, by some means, an appreciation of physical facts. If Mr. Wheatley himself is possessed of that statesmanship to which he appeals, there is no better method by which he can show it than by seeking for support wherever it may be found for an attempt to hold up all public business until the issue, which he himself has posed, shall be squarely faced. He is well placed for the task and he ought to undertake it.

Mr. Vernon Hartshorn, speaking on a later day, said that Mr. Baldwin was the greatest enemy of the working classes that this last generation had produced. It is to be feared that Mr. Hartshorn understates the situation. Unless Mr. Baldwin is concealing his policy with an ability for which better employment might be found, he will go down to posterity as the greatest enemy, not merely of the British working class, but of the whole British nation, and his career may be said to have commenced with his negotiation of the Anglo-American debt settlement. Incidentally, he will have provided probably the final demonstration of the result of committing the fortunes of what is alleged to be a Tory Government, to a Whig.

"The Age of Plenty."

A NEW CREDIT REFORM JOURNAL.

The quickening of interest in financial questions is exemplified by the appearance of a little monthly journal published by Mr. H. E. D. Ludlam, of 12 Grantham Street, Coventry. It is entitled "The Age of Plenty: A Journal of the People's Commonwealth." It is priced at 2d. a copy; annual subscription 2s. 6d., post free. There is no explicit statement of editorial policy as regards the credit question, but sufficient is said in the opening article to indicate that the journal will stand for a thorough investigation of it. Thus:

"Private finance is at the root of almost all our troubles. If in producing a ton of coal we could at the same time produce the money to dispose of the coal there would be no mining problem. This journal will show how the money can be produced. It will tell you that a private financial system has got to give way to a co-operative money system."

We gather otherwise that the intention is to use this journal as a means of interesting (at any rate primarily) the Socialist and Trade Union movements in the reform of the credit system. For instance, there is a review of John Strachey's *Revolution by Reason*, in which the reviewer makes some very flattering references to Mr. Oswald Mosley—"a straight man, thoroughly in earnest, who will one day become our Prime Minister"—and comments enthusiastically upon Mosley's "Birmingham Proposals." Whatever our own opinion of these and other proposals, we have no hesitation in welcoming the new enterprise, and we hope it will be successful. We should like to see similar attempts made to arouse opinion in other groups of the community. One of these days, perhaps, an organ for Churchpeople will appear—probably evolving out of a Parish Magazine. The greater the multiplicity of presentations of the truth about finance the better, provided that overlapping is guarded against. We have never indulged the hope that THE NEW AGE would fulfil the function of an organ of popular propaganda. Only too often does a reader say to us: "That was a fine issue of yours, but I can't show it to Mr. So-and-so because of that article by Mr. Somebody-else: it would upset him." THE NEW AGE pleases and offends everybody in turn. It would not be dynamic if it did not. Even in regard to the credit question itself this holds true. For instance, to suggest the idea of making the rich richer is to offend every Socialist who hears it for the first time. So if there is to be popular propaganda at all it must be done by journals who consistently shape it to the prejudices and frailties of the particular groups whom they severally set out to attract.

Towards a New Social Synthesis.

By Maurice B. Reckitt.

III.

I have said that I believe these three radical and creative schools of thought, Distributism, the Guild Idea, and Social Credit, have vital inter-actions. I would go further and say that we must find a synthesis between them if we are to enable each idea to do its full work for us. We might consider each one separately without gaining that true outlook upon the future of property, the future of work, and the future of leisure, which can only result from a survey and an estimate of the special quality of truth which is in all three, taken in conjunction. Each constitutes a reply to some challenge that plutocracy has thrown down, however unconsciously, to social health and human values. Each is at the same time a criticism of some failure exhibited by critics of plutocracy in the past. We must not reply to private monopoly by a policy of chartered and impersonal monopoly; that is where the Distributist is right. We must not reply to an Individualist ethic with any purely individualist philosophy; that is where the Guildsman is right. We cannot reply to a dictatorship ultimately financial, save by a policy which involves a disintegration of financial power; that is where the Douglasite is right. And it seems to me far more valuable to insist in every instance upon where these ideas are right, than on where they—or the presentation of them—may seem to us deficient. Taken together each corrects the other, and deficiencies, errors, and extravagances will fall away forgotten. In our trinity of emancipation the whole is not a sum of the several parts, nor an ingenious compromise between them, but a real synthesis, in which inessentials are purged away, and separate truths are raised by fusion to a higher power.

To work out my generalisation into a social philosophy and a practical programme is probably beyond the power of any single individual, and is in any case not the object of these articles, which would require for such a purpose to be vastly extended. My wish rather is to commend the task to NEW AGE readers, and in particular to groups of such. I may seek later to make my own contribution in the form of a consideration of the future of property, of work, and of leisure, which have been the special concern of the Distributist, the Guildsman, and theDouglasite respectively. Moreover, although I have stressed these three ideas because they seem to me of unique and basic importance, I do not seek to imply that no other sources are of value for our purpose. I feel, however, that what is of value in other programmes and policies can only prove so when taken in conjunction and made harmonious with that fundamental basis which is constituted by the trinity of principle to which I have referred. Qualitative production, as insisted upon by Mr. Penty; agricultural revival as expounded most forcibly by Mr. Fordham; social and economic co-ordination as emphasised by Mr. Brailsford and the more intellectually alert of the I.L.P.; industrial psychology, especially as relating to the choice of vocation, as illuminated by the more level-headed pioneers in this interesting field—all these factors, and many others, are clearly of the first importance. But only in a society developing in conformity with the principles I have already outlined shall we be able to understand them rightly and provide for them successfully. In any other circumstances their development will be either in the strict sense "eccentric" or (more probably) futile.

APHORISMS.

Then you have heard a thing often enough, when what you have heard is passed into a principle and makes a constitution of mind and is seen in practice.

BENJAMIN WHICHCOTE (1609—1683).

The Republic of Letters.

GOOD WILL.

Good Will once meant what it should obviously mean, "There is nothing good in the world," said Kant, "except the good will." And so said the Angelical Doctor: "We do not call a man good when he has a good intellect, but only when he has a good will." Will is not aspiration. It is demand. It is steady and undiscourageable urge into being. Nothing contents it unless the whole of itself is made actual. Desire spends itself in dreams. Will can never spend itself except in realisation. It searches without end in this block universe to find some slit or gap through which it can push itself into life.

* * *

But blur the words together. Write them "good-will." By that deed we have suffocated an honourable and momentous idea. Nothing is left but an anxiety that we should avoid inconveniences. Nothing but a sentimental wish that we were all friends. A wish not to pay our debts, not to settle our problems, not to experience the abreaction of our sins, but to fall back comfortably into the old repose. Such is the meaning those forcible words have taken upon themselves. And the great storehouse of sentimental peace-wishes is the Christian Church. That is villainous. It is not the part of Christianity to tame men for the benefit of plutocrats. But in comparison with the typical "goodwill" of Christian gentlemen, even bare intellect seems a glory of effectiveness. Not that this miserable bad habit is exclusive to the Church. Ethical Societies are full of it. It swears itself broadly over the propaganda of the Rationalist Press Association. It peeps out from the columns of all our newspapers. Where can we go to escape contagion?

* * *

The man who inflicts upon us a jactitation of "goodwill" means only to creep into our confidence by a display of human weakness. He means to wheedle our support for his own cowardice. And wherever we come across it, the ultimate responsibility for the diffusion of this treachery lies with the Church. It is a profounder sin than Mr. J. M. Robertson sees. He proves conclusively enough in "The Dynamics of Religion" (Watts and Co., 7s. 6d. net) that much of the policy, the morality, the world-view of our English Church has come from a playing for economic security, or even from downright greed. He confines his argument to the economic plane. He puts down all failures and shabbinesses to this cause. But there are more reasons for cowardice and respectability than the fear of poverty. There is the fear of ostracism, the fear of instinct and impulse, the fear of the cold wind of truth. The Church has too great a fondness for assuring people that all is well with their souls if they'll take a little notice of the Church.

* * *

I have written enough against the Church now. Any journalist can find out its imperfections. Nevertheless, the Church is still guardian and preserver of the mysteries, and without it we should be bereft of knowledge. Think what would have happened if nothing had kept the Christian tradition alive. Nothing we know of art, philosophy, or science in Europe would have existed. Nothing we feel in personal relationship, no love, no joy, no comradeship, would come to birth. For Europe is Christendom. Whether we rebel against it or not, the whole of our life relates itself to that one divine event. Without the Church we should now be troglodytes, or worse. For this reason, if for no other, the Church should be sacrosanct. And this is where Mr. Robertson's book is foolish. He has no wish to correct abuses; he wishes to demolish religion altogether. He is not intent upon seeing the Church in its true, magnificent, and central position; he is intent upon proving that there is no wisdom preserved by Church at all. He takes, therefore, a number of third-rate apologetic divines and controverts their arguments or attacks their character. He considers no writers who knew what they wrote of; or, if he does, he quite misrepresents them. To treat Berkeley as though his philosophy derived from spite against his opponents is wickedly absurd.

* * *

In his preface he congratulates himself, as an "aging rationalist," on the fact that, wherever it may have failed, rationalism has at least found a footing amongst the clergy. Witness the Dean of St. Paul's. He has obviously been so terrified by rationalism that he sees no hope for the Church except in mysticism. Mysticism, as he sees it, is the last refuge of belief: there can hardly be a method of disproving what depends primarily upon intuition. It is one of the saddest things in the world to see a man completely devoid of mystical faculty attaching himself to mystical certainty. Dean Inge is the last man who should be allowed to call himself a Platonist. Who has heard the Dean discourse in myths? Who has seen him engaged in contemplation? Yet he complacently delivers lectures on "The Platonic Tradition in English Religious Thought." (Longmans. 4s. net.)

* * *

The Cambridge Platonists of whom he writes, Whichcote, More, Cudworth, and Culverwel, were men of very great talent and illumination. It would do Mr. Robertson good to read them, for he would find them incomprehensible. Almost alone of English theologians, they fully realised that the spiritual realm is *within*; and, to balance this, that religion consists in the good life. No one will gain much from Dean Inge's account of them. He gives short sketches of their lives, and a few quotations from their works. But he makes no exposition of their doctrines—for which we may be grateful. What blasphemies he might commit against them if he had allowed himself scope can be judged by his words on Plato himself. Unable to conceal for long his passion for birth control, he has the incredible impudence to suggest that Plato would have supported him. Plato, to whom self-control was one of the primary virtues! I don't know what to say about it. How a man could read a page of Plato and then defame him so is impossible to conceive.

* * *

Mr. Hugh I'Anson Fausset intends to be a philosophic critic; but his philosophising is so stuffy, so lush, and so much without vigour or light, that it very soon becomes tedious. His study of "Samuel Taylor Coleridge" (Cape, 12s. 6d.), is "highly personal." Again and again he will write, "We can imagine what Coleridge was thinking at the time," or "Doubtless the poet felt . . ." this or that, when—doubtless, nothing of the sort was happening. For a sample of his philosophical acuteness, let me quote his account of Plato:

> "Turning from a discord which troubled him, he bade the individual relate himself to a whole which transient material things could not touch, to live in the idea of a Divine harmony, of certain intelligible, changeless realities, which transcended sense perception and united in a sovereign Beauty, eternal, self-sufficient, unproduced, and indestructible. Plato made little attempt to relate this self-conceived harmony to the facts of life. His philosophy was the interpretation of a subjective mood; he was more occupied in explaining his own intuitions than in reconciling them with an objective necessity, and often, as in his famous account of the reincarnation of souls, he was merely fabulous."

To say this of the first inclusively great scientist in Greece!

ALAN PORTER.

Anthropological Economics.

By V. A. Demant, B.Litt., B.Sc.

(Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland.)

II.—WAR—AND ITS MOTIVES.

II.

It is a commonplace of anthropological science that arts and customs which have been practised by human beings for any length of time continue to be used long after the original motives for them have disappeared. Warfare is one of these. First learnt and cultivated by ruling groups on the outskirts of ancient civilisations, it continued throughout nearly the whole of the historic period as the result of rivalry among ruling aristocracies, with the desire for power and wealth as its motive. But in our own day we see a distinct change in the motive for war, the military machine being still used and preserved for purposes quite different from those which previously moved men to fight. Generally speaking, since the rapid growth of industry in the nineteenth century, wars have been less frequent than before, but far more intense and deadly when they did happen. They have ceased to be professional rivalries between rulers who could make their subjects fight for them, and have now become an affair of whole nations struggling for their economic existence. Professor Soddy, of world-wide reputation as a chemist, writes of war in these words:—

> "No doubt behind the alleged motives of national pride and honour, racial and religious antipathies, external dangers, and the sedulous fostering, in consequence, of human pugnacity and quarrelsomeness, which produce war, economic causes of much more humble and sordid nature were always at work. But to-day these are the opposite of what they once were. Our ancestors, who from before the dawn of history have periodically ravaged these shores, fought for what they could take home, whereas we fight for the outlet of our wares to sell them abroad, for markets and a place in the sun, and to get weaker nations into our debt. If you start from the dictum that it is no use being able to produce wealth if you won't coin enough money to sell it at home, foreign markets are economic necessities, but it is the opposite sort of necessity from that which used to cause war."—(*The Inversion of Science*, p. 14.)

Here is a curious historical fact: Civilised man has begun to fight from motives quite different from those which have caused wars in history, just at the same period when modern societies are labouring under a completely new and false conception of wealth, as explained in our first article, and there can be little doubt that the two things are intimately connected together. And since modern warfare is a pre-occupation which still employs the most up-to-date resources and efficient brains in communities where pacific principle and detestation of war are all but universal, the presumption is that modern war is due to this false estimate of human wealth which renders war an economic necessity. So we find that as men once fought with their neighbours for wealth, civilised nations now prepare to fight to sell wealth, i.e., to obtain claims on wealth. If we persist in accepting rules of finance as "laws" which make it impossible to give the population of each industrial country enough purchasing power to buy the total amount of wealth it could produce, we are under necessity to find foreign buyers for that part of our production which we cannot sell at home. The demand for "a favourable balance of trade," as it is called, means that each country wants to sell goods abroad, over and above those which it must export in order to pay for desired imports. This surplus must be sold in order to keep home industries going and to balance the industrial budget. An increasing proportion of national wealth is therefore sent out of each industrial country in exchange, not for wealth, but for the money claims on wealth. As more and more countries are becoming industrialised they become competitors to the older industrial nations in the mad scramble to export more than they import. It is easy to see that on a limited earth this cannot continue indefinitely. In fact, the producing power of the manufacturing and agricultural countries now in the field is so great that each of them finds that its foreign custom is gradually disappearing. People who used to buy goods now make them themselves. A foreign market can now often only be obtained by pushing or keeping out some other country who wants to sell there. The cause of economic rivalry is, therefore, a superstitious financial theory making it impossible for each national unit to buy what it produces. All honest statesmen, from the late President Wilson to the Rt. Hon. H. A. L. Fisher, admit that the Great War and all successive disputes since can be traced to economic competition. An English newspaper (*Daily Mail*, April 30, 1925) puts the matter plainly:

> "If we destroy our export trades we cut our own throat. Let it be remembered that there is sufficient capacity of manufacture (except perhaps in the cotton trade) on the Continent to supply the world, without goods from Great Britain."

It should have boldly faced the conclusion, and added, therefore, that if we *maintain* our export trades we cut somebody else's throat, because there are not enough foreign markets for everybody who wants them.

While the financial cause of these national antagonisms remains, it is idle to suppose that mankind will desist from using the practice of warfare which it learnt from other motives, in dealings which involve the "stress and strains" between modern States. There is a further reason why pacific ideas are still largely ineffective. Warfare, besides being a weapon for maintaining or increasing a country's "economic opportunities," also, when it comes, provides a colossal consumer and therefore is in itself a market. During the late war unemployment disappeared, and the whole machinery of production was increased and kept in motion. Professor David Friday, of America, rightly says:

> "If we can discover the secret of war's effect on industry, we may indulge the hope of institutionalising it and adding permanently to our national output."

The secret is, of course, that the markets which we seek in peace-time can only be supplied by war. It is purely because economists cling to a financial superstition that each national unit is prevented from being its own market, content to export only so many goods as will pay for the imports it requires, and cannot easily produce at home.

From the point of view of the Anthropologist, then, the problem of human peace, of eliminating warfare, is one which holds out definite hopes of success. The recent achievements of this science give us clear grounds for abandoning the notion that man is naturally warlike. Violent and military measures have been elaborated by peoples and States at certain definite stages in human history in response to particular kinds of social changes and organisation. And because mankind is slow to abandon old-established modes of behaviour, this military habit has maintained a hold on civilised man as a means of re-adjusting economic stresses due to obsolete financial principles. With the course of human history before him, the spectacle of wealthy nations jealously watching one another's growing war equipment, in fear lest they should be prevented from sending to distant lands the very goods which their own populations need in abundance, is one at which a visitor from Mars might well laugh in scorn.

The late war showed the last of the military aristocracies, which have ever been the main cause of war in history, using the urge of economic stress to flag a dying custom into life. The mass of people in all belligerent countries demanded nothing better than to stay at home and cultivate the arts of peace, but they were taught a theory—strange and unintelligible

to the student of human society—that it is no use producing goods unless they could sell them to someone else, and finance makes it impossible for them to be sold at home.

In spite of ideals man will fight if the only alternative is starvation. The problem of Peace is one of eliminating the strains and stresses due to an inhuman and stupid mechanism of money, for we have seen that man is not instinctively pugnacious. Many people whose range of historical vision is limited to a few centuries of the modern world regard warfare as an essential human institution and believe that its cure can only be wrought by a change in human nature. A true and more extended study over the whole range of human history by the methods of modern anthropology will expose the error of this view. Mankind has altered his natural conduct as the result of social disharmonies for many centuries, but the knowledge is now available which will remove the last and most powerful of these disharmonies, competition between States who have not learnt how to buy what they produce. Modern war, for the anthropologist, is a chronic disease of industrial civilisation with an inadequate mechanism of distribution.

Modern Youth.

II.

During the strike I carefully observed that the most volatile of the people ranged between twenty and twenty-seven years of age. It is significant that the prevalent method of burglary is possible only to the agility of young men. With unorganised violence as with organisations which openly contemplate violence, the anti-social reaction of youth is stimulated by its unavoidable inference that society's hand is against youth. Young and old are waging a guerilla war, which the old can support only because the young are divided, without objective, and in many cases, in a state only described as funk.

In fact, the most serious phenomenon of modern youth implies a shrinking from the responsibility of continuing civilisation. The effeminacy of the young men and the masculinity of the young women, whether they indicate respectively a refining and a strengthening in a few instances or not, betray in most a retreat from the natural functions and tasks of the sexes. The effeminate young men do not give the impression of sex-rapprochement, but of deficient vitality. Their skirt-like trousers, long hair, waisted garments, effeminate speech, and other outcropping symptoms which few would credit if I detailed them, signify the preference of the possessors for the more protected sphere of woman.

The young man's plight is mentioned first because the masculinity of woman seems to be the expression of both the violence and the suicide motives. Some young women still carry on the anti-industrial revolt, the determination to take care of themselves, and to abandon civilisation, after the example of the men who have already done so. What is due to one and to the other motive may be distinguished in individual cases. That young men have no prospects of marrying them and giving security to their children is a defence of violence, corresponding in women to Fascism among men. Some girls frankly and consciously wish that they had been born boys. Under the suicide motive the girls merely wish they had not been born girls, and often appear to question the value of having been born at all. With their insignificant figures, dislike for children, and lack of faith in suffering, they show a grudge against the world for bearing them bound to the animal kingdom.

By extending the age under review to include women up to thirty years, who were, of course, eighteen when the war began, the section of women instinctively hardest hit by the loss of potential husbands is included; the girls who distinguished themselves in the war as "flappers," which, defined, were youngsters who clutched at what satisfaction they could get while the menfolk were spirited away before their eyes. It is foolish for people whose morals were cast in the fourth quarter of last century to lecture these women about sex. When the chance of gaining the monopoly of a man's earning power for the sake of children is greatly diminished, first by the loss of men, and, second, by the contracting economy, virginity has no intrinsic worth—not even, as Montaigne thought it had in his day, a rarity value.

Thus the women hardest hit by the war, who are not yet middle-aged, and who are, therefore, still in contact with younger folk, as example, good or bad, can scarcely be persuaded, for appearances sake, even to stimulate chastity. At present they have no option but to take care of themselves as best they may, and, in the absence of an object for their love, to join in with the others. In the absence of something like a miracle of spiritual healing, in other words, a revival of faith in men and culture and in their own destiny, which alone could furnish alternative avenues of instinctive satisfaction, these women must constitute a grave sociological problem for another couple of decades.

The spiritual problem, that of shirking the new fashioning of an aim for life, affects the whole of youth. Only an outworking of free intelligence among the older members of society, of which, happily, there are a few signs, can save youth from defeat or violence. The moral problem follows from the spiritual, in that once values are determined moral discipline is deducible from them. The economic problem is not a problem in the same sense as the other two, since the answer, wherever free intelligence is available, is patent. It is merely a question of practical application. It may be that the spiritual problem, beyond its economic aspect, cannot even be stated until the economic solution is applied. In this country, as the young philosopher complains, there are no issues, whereas in America, where the economic question is not yet acute, everything is an issue. Once the ascertained course towards the solution of economic contraction were followed, the spiritual issues would begin to separate. Whereupon, I am confident, the prodigal abuse of vitality which young people are indulging in would rapidly diminish.

The elderly will not succeed in bullying the young into submitting again to the old taboos. If they were to succeed the result would be futile; the mere perpetuation of extreme moral reaction between the generations. In intellectual education we have nearly grown beyond the idea that what was good enough for us is good enough for our children; in emotional education, and in the movement towards self-rule in accordance with self-affirmed aims, we still betray this dog-in-the-manger attitude. Our moralists are reminiscent of the man who remained good until he was sixty-three, and repented too late. According to La Rochefoucauld, old men are so ready with good counsels to console themselves for being unable to set bad examples. The old of our time want their good counsels to be taken as commands, out of spite with themselves for never having set bad examples. One of the first steps towards making modern youth whole is that age, particularly in middle-age, should confess itself—to youth. In this campaign against youth, in which, unfortunately, the old are the aggressors, it is the old whose duty it is to sue for peace. The world is in such a state that its inheritors—the young people—are the aggrieved party. For the extent to which they have escaped from the laws and taboos of their elders let us be thankful. After that escape, anarchic as young life appears at the moment, the hope of a new world can be born. Though the world be lost, man remains.

RICHARD MONTGOMERY.

Sketches from Anton Tchekhov's Childhood.

By Alexander Tchekhov.

Translated from the Russian by S. S. Koteliansky.

Anton Tchekov—Shopkeeper.

Antosha, a pupil in the first form of the Taganrog Grammar School, has just had his dinner and has sat down to prepare his lessons for the next day. In front of him lies Küner's Latin Grammar. The lesson is a difficult one; he has to do a translation and to learn Latin words. Then he has to prepare a long lesson in Scripture. He will have to sit working for three hours. The short winter day is drawing to an end; it is almost dark outside, and in front of Antosha, on the table, is twinkling a tallow candle, which he has to readjust every now and then with a pair of snuffers.

Antosha dips his pen in the inkstand, ready to start doing his translation. But the door opens and in walks his father, Pavel Yegorovich, in a fur coat, and in high leather goloshes. His hands are grey-blue from the cold.

"I say," Pavel Yegorovich begins, "I have to go now on some business, so you, Antosha, be quick and go into the shop and keep a sharp look out there."

Tears come into Antosha's eyes, and he begins winking his eyelids.

"It's cold in the shop," he replies. "I got quite chilled on my walk from school."

"Never mind. Put on a few things, and then you won't be cold."

"I have a lot of work to do for to-morrow."

"You can learn your lessons in the shop. Be quick, and keep a sharp look out there. Quick, then! Don't waste time!"

Antosha flings the pen away in exasperation, shuts the Küner Grammar, puts on, with bitter tears, his thin school overcoat and worn-out leather goloshes, and follows his father to the shop. The shop is in the same building as the house. It is so depressing there, and so awfully cold. Andryushka and Gavryushka, the two little errand-boys, with cold hands and red noses, keep on knocking one leg against the other to warm themselves, and they stoop and shrink under the cold.

"Sit down at the desk," the father commands Antosha; and having crossed himself several times before the icon, he goes out.

Antosha, still crying, goes behind the counter, sits down on a box of Kazan soap, turned into a seat in front of the desk, and in vexation shoves the pen, for no reason at all, in the inkstand. The tip of the pen sticks in ice, the ink has got frozen. It is as cold in the shop as it is in the street, and in this cold Anton will have to sit at least three hours. He knows that his father will be gone for a long time. He pushes his hands into the sleeves of the overcoat and shrinks, just as Andryushka and Gavryushka do, from the cold. He can't even think of the Latin translation. To-morrow he will get a bad mark, and then a stern rebuke from his father for the bad mark.

I wonder if there are many readers and admirers of Tchekhov who know that in the early years of his life fate made him play the part of a boy shopkeeper in a small grocer's shop, kept by his father. And one would hardly believe that Anton, the strict and absolutely honest writer and idealist, was familiar in his childhood with all the methods of false weight and measure and with all the tricks of a little business. Anton Tchekhov was forced to go through that horrible mill, and he remembered it with bitterness all his life long. As a child he was unhappy.

In his mature years he more than once said in the intimate circle of his relations and friends:

"In my childhood I had no childhood. . . ."

The family régime was so unfortunate that Anton had no chance of running about, playing, and being happy. There was no time for it, for all his time, out of school hours, he had to spend in the shop. Apart from this, his father had placed a taboo on all this sort of thing: one was not to run about, for "you will wear out your shoes"; playing was forbidden, for "only urchins in the street play about"; to play with chums was no good and harmful, for "your chums may teach you God knows what."

"There's no sense in idling about in the yard; you'd better go into the shop, look sharp there, learn the business!" Anton was continually hearing from his father. "In the shop you can at least be a help to your father!"

And Anton had, with grief and with tears, to deny himself what is natural and even necessary for a young boy, and he had to spend his time in the shop, which was just hateful to him.

Antosha felt sympathy towards Andryushka and Gavryushka, for they used to be beaten before his eyes. From his very early childhood, owing to the beneficent influence of his mother, he could not look on with indifference when he saw animals being treated cruelly, and almost cried when he saw a driver beating his dray horse. And when he saw people being beaten, he used to tremble nervously. . . . But in his father's routine, smacks on the face, cuffs on the nape of the neck, flogging were of most ordinary occurrence, and he extensively applied those corrective measures both to his own children and to his shop-boys. Everyone trembled before him and were more afraid of him than of fire. Anton's mother always rebelled against her husband, but always received the invariable answer:

"I myself was taught like that, and you see I have turned out to be a man. One beaten man is worth two unbeaten ones. As you are teaching a fool nothing but good can come of it. He himself will be grateful to me for it afterwards. . . ."

Antosha's father said this with all sincerity, and he firmly believed in what he said.

ANTON TCHEKHOV—CHORISTER.

. . . It was pretty hard on poor Antosha, a young boy only just beginning to be formed, with an undeveloped chest, with a rather poor sense of hearing, and with a thin voice. Not a few tears were shed by him at choir practices, and he was robbed of much healthy sleep by those choir practices late at night. Anton's father, in everything that concerned church services, was strict, precise, and exacting. On great feast days, when the morning mass had to be sung, he woke his boys at two or three o'clock in the morning, and, caring nothing for the weather, he would conduct them to church. There were tender-hearted people who used to argue with him and say that it was harmful to deprive young boys of their necessary sleep, and that it was just a sin to compel them to overstrain their young chests and voices. But Pavel Yegorovich held a totally different view and would answer with great conviction:

"Why is running about in the street and shouting at the top of their voices not harmful, and singing in the church harmful? At Mount Athos the boy chanters read and sing for nights on end—yet nothing wrong happens to them. From church singing boys' chests grow stronger, that's all. I myself have sung from my early childhood, and, thank God, I am strong. To work for God is never harmful. . . ."

Antosha used to come from school after three o'clock, tired and hungry; and, after having his dinner, he would at once sit down to prepare his lessons either in the house or in the shop, into which his father would send him almost day after day "to learn the business," and chiefly to act as substitute for "the master's eye." By nine o'clock in the evening fatigue would claim its own, and Anton's tired body and spirit demanded rest. But during those evenings when choir practice took place there could be no question at all of rest. The local smiths who sung in the choir would appear. And at the same moment a messenger would come to the boys' room with the command:

"Father is calling you for choir practice!"

The choir practice used to take place in a large room, adjoining the shop. The smiths sat round the circular table on stools and on soap—and candle—boxes. On the same seats, too, we sleepy schoolboys used to accommodate ourselves.

And time is passing, passing. Anton's eyes are closing and his head is getting heavy. But he dare not leave and go to bed. And when about midnight the choir, having at last got through the practice, say good-bye and go home, Antosha has hardly strength enough to walk to his bed. He often used to fall asleep dressed as he was. The same thing happened also to us, his elder brothers. And next morning at seven o'clock we had to get up to go to school. . . .

Coming home from mass, we had tea. Then Pavel Yegorovich gathered the whole family in front of the icons and began singing hymns of praise to the Saviour or to the Mother of God, and we boys had to sing Alleluia after each verse. Towards the end of the home prayer the bells in the churches would begin ringing for late morning mass. One of the boys—by turn or by father's special command—would start off with the shop-boys to open the shop, to be "master's eye" there, and to begin business, while his brothers had to walk with their father to church—Sundays and feast days were as laborious for the Tchekhov children as any ordinary day. And Anton more than once said to his brothers:

"Lord! What an unfortunate lot we are! All our chums rest, run about, play, pay visits, but we must go to church! . . ."

Music.

The Passing of the Public Concert.

I.

I think there will not be any necessity to start off with a justification of my title, for many prominent musicians have borne witness to the fact of the decline of concerts if not explicitly, implicitly, by pleading for various extra-musical attractions and offering suggestions of aids to endurance in the way of provision of smokes and drinks and in order to entice the reluctant public into concert halls. It is diverting to observe that no musician, so far as I am aware, has been so daring as to suggest that the number of concerts be first cut down by seventy-five per cent., and what are left vastly improved in quality—naturally, for that would burn the toes of so many concert givers, and musicians are nothing if not "damned good natured men." My object is not to add my widow's mite of suggestion as to how Monsieur Waldemar may be kept a little longer in a condition of animated mortification, but how he may sanitarily be disposed of, and what may be looked for when he has been.

So far from regarding the decline of concerts as a calamity, I look upon it as a real blessing to most of the people concerned except the agents perhaps. There are so many potential unpleasantnesses connected with concert going that considerable courage is required to face them. There may be a draught blowing with a knife edge, one's neighbour may be inclined to conversational amiabilities when one is just in the mood not to talk; he may breathe heavily and grampus-like; blow his nose, cough or sneeze with the hearty aggressiveness peculiar to Britons, at the quietest and most delicate portion of the score; the masculinoid young female in front may conduct a "too marvellous" conversation in Sybil Thorndike tones with the chlorotic intense young man behind one during every interval. As far as the critics are concerned, what a blessing for them no longer to have to listen to sundry dozen recitals a week, by people who should never in their most ambitious efforts be heard beyond the limits of the Church bazaar concert. They—the critics—will then be freed to think and write about music occasionally . . . . though that perhaps might bear rather hardly on some of them. And all the indications are that this paradisiac epoch is not far off. In no other season that I can remember has it been possible to walk round the neighbourhood of our principal concert halls night after night and find them all covered with a decent and becoming silence.

But it will be argued these morbid and neurotic objections to the public concert surely are not intended to apply to the *private* concerts given by a special society for the benefit of its members, who, *prima facie*, are an audience of *élite*. In my opinion, the objections I have suggested are intensified in the party, private concert, with others added. Everybody knows everyone else, which is dreadful, and the thing is a nasty *mélange* of tea-party-at-home concert, and over all is the passionate gush and hectic insincerity of vulgar and wealthy "patrons" of music and their toadies and hangers-on, the clique-monger and *cénacles*.

Do I then suggest that the public performances of music *are* about to disappear entirely, it will be asked? No, not entirely—but that they are destined to become enormously less is my absolute conviction—those that remain will be concerts of primary interest and importance. Further, I feel no doubt but that the rapidity in improvements of recording and reproducing music by means of the gramophone during the past few years will powerfully contribute to this result. Hitherto, it has been impossible to consider the gramophone as a serious rival to public performances, but this is very decidedly ceasing to be the case, and the time does not seem more than a few years off—it is very likely much less—when gramophone reproduction will be virtually a performance. Even at the present stage, I for one would certainly not bother to turn out for the sake of *hearing* "L'après midi d'un faune" done by an indifferent orchestra and conductor, when I can sit at home and hear Stokowsky and the Philadelphia Orchestra give a marvellous performance of it on my gramophone; no, I certainly would not, to hear an *indifferent* conductor and orchestra do it; but yes, most certainly, if it were Sir Thomas Beecham and the Hallé orchestra. The really great ones have nothing to fear. As for the others, who wants them? Certainly not music—certainly not audiences. This may sound cruel, but Art, like nature, survives by a ruthless elimination of the unfit. Art, even so, is less cruel, for there is no compulsion about becoming an artist, unless one *is*, then, like Luther—"Ich kann nicht anders"—this is indeed the Brahmin mark—but about being born there is no choice ever at all. *Quae quum ita sint*, the ever-increasing numbers of students at our academies and colleges appal one—appal one because one knows that the vast majority of them are seized with the "itch to do," and as the brilliant Scotch critic Hugh McDiarmid said in THE NEW AGE some time ago, too many people are interested in their own fiddling little abilities to take any interest in better work; they have no intention of forming an audience—their only really useful function. Of real musical insight the greater part of them have none, but merely an ape-like aptitude for imitating and a spaniel-like ability in picking up a few of what one may call the parlour tricks of music.

KAIKHOSRU SORABJI.

Art.

THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

(Second Notice.)

I.

The New English Art Club did not, this spring, produce a young St. George to display triumphantly the Slade banner. Indeed, the academic excellence of the work of such older exhibitors as William Shackleton and Francis Dodd brought into sharp contrast the fogginess of thought and grubbiness of technique which characterised many of the younger artists' experimental canvases, to which much space was given.

At Burlington House, in spite of disadvantages, youth triumphs on the whole more than age, although this is not at once apparent amid the chaotic conditions of an exhibition, amusing, exasperating, or merely boring, according to point of view.

In the large gallery (No. III.) the walls are newly gilded, and such brilliance only emphasises the superficial glitter of the paintings. There are, however, two or three in this room worth study, and "The Rt. Hon. Stanley Baldwin, M.P." (No. 168), by Glyn Philpot, repays attention most. Mr. Philpot's imaginative sympathy and insight into byways of personality combine to inspire a portrait which, with no display of technique, is sincere and significant. Able as are the Orpen portraits, for example, the younger Academician triumphs because he persuades the onlooker to an unusual interest in both the painter and his subject.

There is nothing by Augustus John, whose inchoate exhibition at the New Chenil Galleries has not enhanced his reputation; but the visitor might well be grateful were the "Study of a Coloured Girl" in Piccadilly rather than at Chelsea.

Despite the pioneer work of such masters as Madox Brown and Alfred Stevens, no coherent tradition of mural decoration has yet evolved in this country, though the painting of F. Cayley Robinson has been among the more successful experiments. As a decorator of large surfaces he hesitates at times, between the claims of hieratic statement and those of intimate genre. The two small pictures, "Childhood" (No. 10) and "The Long Journey" (No. 495), are among the very best things of the latter kind that the Academy can show, and it is because, in addition to the deep feeling of their inspiration, they possess emphasis of design that they remain clearly in the memory. While there is hardly any other hint of true wall decoration in the galleries, as enrichments to domestic interiors, there may be named also "The Beach" (No. 54), by C. A. Mellon, "An Interior" (No. 124), by H. Harvey, "Sunrise in a Mist" (No. 435), by George Clausen, and "Rehearsal" (No. 546), by Vivian Forbes. The sardonic scribble, "Death and the Maiden" (No. 349), by Walter R. Sickert, might perhaps be most fittingly harboured in the smoking-room of a misogynist.

Painting, in its attitude of homage to sculpture, is represented with youthful vitality in the canvases by Ernest Procter and Dod Procter, two artists who improve year by year. The former, in "The Mischievous Boy" (No. 580), keeps to an older tradition than does his wife in "The Black Bedroom" (No. 594). Both, nevertheless, express the structure and the firmness of the human body with the same conviction.

It is lack of structure that spoils what is in many ways the best landscape, "Camden Town" (No. 288), by Algernon Newton. Its grouping, tone, and light are admirable, but its scale alone demands something which shall bind these together. The picture has no backbone, no hint, for instance, of such underlying scaffolding as lifts the landscapes by Adrian Allinson above any others seen in this summer's London Group Exhibition.

In the Water Colour Room the alert seeker may find a few drawings in that pleasant unlaboured manner which one likes to label *English*, among them, "The Old Barn" (No. 641), by C. E. Brown, "Ice, Bardale" (No. 676), by A. L. Wilson, and "The Hospital, Vire" (No. 682), by Burleigh. Beyond, among the *Black and White*, he may discover and enjoy the quiet air of "Sarras" (No. 1,004), by F. L. Griggs, and the unquiet air of "Night: the British Museum Portico" (No. 991), by C. F. Dixon.

ERNEST COLLINGS.

Drama.

The Plough and the Stars: Fortune.

Why Mr. Sean O'Casey has been blessed by the élite of literary society as worthy to be reckoned one of themselves is a mystery; or it would be a mystery if the witnesses of a work of art derived from it what the author put into it. Mr. O'Casey, judging from published interviews, chatty paragraphs, prize distribution speeches, and the other things which hall-mark an author's inconsequence, is just a dramatist, and a dramatist is a fellow who presents a continuous evening's diversion suspended only for the convenience of dry throats. The only reason possible for Mr. O'Casey's acceptance, it seems to me, is the cussed genius of earnest Irish playwriters for making their people's tragedy appear to foreigners like a farce, with the result that the Irish are annoyed and the English delighted, and both confirmed in their mutual and self misunderstanding.

Mr. O'Casey is in deadly earnest. He knows his Dublin folk, and although his vision is concentrated it is genuine. His audience, excited to rock with laughter at the burlesque *naïvetés* uttered by the characters, fail to perceive that he really is carrying out Mark Twain's threat to blow the gaff on the human race. In this play practically all the people represented are of the lower classes, bricklayer, carpenter, fitter, bar-tender, prostitute, cockney soldiers, and the like. They are neither romanticised nor halved, but drawn true both for observation and imagination. While only the lower orders appear, however, it is human society as a whole that goes through the mill. Mr. O'Casey has effected such an exposure, for those with eyes, by contrast with what a propagandist might do, that one feels inclined to regard the stage as an avenue for outwitting the censorship; not only the moral censorship, always ineffective, but the censorship of ideas, ensured in so many subterranean ways.

Mr. O'Casey's stripping of humanity is not provoked by hatred. His love for his neighbours, mean as they are and blind, got the better of him. The weakly bricklayer, who pushed himself into a captain's uniform out of vanity, was killed in the Irish Citizen Army. Nora, his namby-pamby wife, went to seek him to the barricades, where men were afraid to confess their fear. Mad as such an act was for a pregnant woman, it preserves her from damnation. The street fruit-vendor, Bessie Burgess, who lived in the same tenement-building as the young couple, was offensive to the degree of singing "Rule Britannia" from her window over a dying Irish soldier; at the looting of the shops she came home laden with costly clothes and other expensive trifles. Yet when Nora began prematurely to give birth to her child it was Bessie Burgess who forced herself through fire for the doctor, and who lived and died for her. Fluther Good, the carpenter, drunken, and susceptible to the prostitute's neat leg, who gambled in a house of death, and thought, when rounded up and told where he was to be interned, that it might not be so wicked to while away the time with cards in a Protestant church, was the man who set out after Nora to the barricades, and carried her home.

The tragedy of Ireland developed like fate. In the bricklayer's living-room the young husband's Communist cousin, a fitter, one of those young people whose vehemence and contorted Marxian vocabulary express their grudge against society for failing to educate and utilise them, ceaselessly taunted the wife's uncle, an old labourer, on his dandy green uniform and sword, so much in evidence before the fighting began. Only one or two shadows of word and gesture hinted the terror that was brewing. In the next scene, in the public-house, the outline on the window of the orator outside, whose passion now and again brought the quarrellers' ears inside to grave attention, prophesied the gloom of the final act, in which, although the men played cards on the floor while Fluther emptied his bottle of spirit rather than save it for a to-morrow that might never be, Ireland's tragedy was poured on our heads in all its intensity.

Mr. O'Casey is one to himself among living dramatists writing in English. He is both objective and sincere, and he is portraying the people he has lived with. He is neither a middle-class dilettante creating fantasies round the daughters of the rich, nor seeking self-adaptation to his own neuroses, unless his art can be described as an effort to heal his thwarted hope for the redemption of mankind. His people are real, struggling, or failing to struggle amid the actual life problems of family, politics, religion, and society. These fellows who take offence at nothing, as only members of a family do, die for one another under an equally sudden and unconscious impulse. They speak in hyperbole on every triviality, and find a dozen sides to every question; they quarrel about nationalism, Catholicism, and all manner of issues on which the middle and upper classes, especially in England, are bored; yet they are free and generous with their money and lives, although existing in a perpetual siege of poverty.

The two cockney soldiers were not so well observed as the Irishmen. But an English audience might find it too easy to criticise—or even to forget—those English soldiers under any pretext. So let it be acknowledged that they were truthfully and sympathetically drawn to type. If the Irishmen gambled their destinies away, the cockney soldiers blindly followed the course of least mental resistance in lending themselves to a machine entirely foreign to their own will. One of them told the Marxian fitter that he was a bit of a Socialist himself. Having shot a woman—who had run to the window to pull a sleep-walker away—in mistake for a sniper, one of the soldiers pleaded in his remorse: "But we couldn't take no risks, could we Bill?" This play is not, I repeat, an attack on the common people; it is an unanswerable indictment of existing human society, damning most the privileged and powerful who do not appear.

Since I saw the play it has moved to the bigger New Theatre. It is a play to be experienced. For the production, suffice that it is performed by the Irish Players, including Arthur Sinclair, J. A. O'Rourke, Sara Allgood, and Maire O'Neill.

PAUL BANKS.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

THE JEWISH QUESTION.

Has THE NEW AGE consistently maintained the level which would give it the right to be anti-Semitic (I mean in Major Douglas's philosophical sense)? Sometimes I have suspected sentimentalism, a tendency to exaggerate the difference between Christianity and Judaism to an extent that identified Christianity (and Social Credit) with a mere refusal to look at facts—with an attempt to make out that sparrows never fall to the ground at all—with a conception of Divine Love that denies Law altogether. Major Douglas, though he has sometimes given occasion for misunderstanding, is himself saved from such extravagances by the scientific spirit; but there have been things in THE NEW AGE that have had the sickly-sweet fragrance of a barrel of deliquescent pears, not quite rotten, but ready to become so. (Is this what Mr. G. M. Hervey means by "damned Buddhists"?)

All this, of course, does not touch the actual issue of controversy between Major Douglas and Mr. Abrams. Yet I cannot help thinking that we are all concluded under sin; our enemy may be called Semitism, Prussianism, Yankeeism, Calvinism, Romanism, too, if one thinks of the Inquisition; I strongly suspect it is what the East calls "Western civilisation"; (though the East is not clean of it either); and every one of these names indicates the corruption of something very great. In short, Jacob-Israel, with his dual nature, is the type of all civilised races, as Esau of the irreclaimable barbarian.

And yet—and yet, Mr. Abrams, I don't know what would become of my own race, so like the Jewish in other respects, if it had not to keep its pride within bounds, the consciousness of having borrowed its religion. Centuries ago the Scot was attracted by some natural kinship to the Hebrew Scriptures, and ever since he has brought up his children in a kind of Hebrew Christianity. They grow up and rebel; but the evidences of this upbringing, and of the racial character that made such an upbringing possible, are always visible even in the greatest rebels—at least they are visible to their countryfolk. Therefore, as we seem to be agreed that the financiers' behaviour cannot be explained by natural love of comfort and luxury, but must have some perverted moral idea behind it, is it not possible that the Jews among them may be moved by the conception of a world-wide theocracy administered by the Chosen People? I don't suppose Mr. Abrams knows the minds of these financiers; but he could probably tell us, and it would be interesting to know, how the average Jew of to-day interprets such a passage as Isaiah, Chaps. 60 and 61.

H. B. S. L.

ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT.

J. B. G.—It is, of course, a self-evident contradiction for your trade unionist friend to state as a general proposition that labour-saving inventions lead to the employment of more labour. The proposition may be true enough in regard to a particular industry, or even a particular country; but the increase in employment in that industry (or country) is at the expense of greater increases of unemployment in other industries (or countries)—the net balance being a displacement of labour. For instance, take Mr. Ford's industry; does anybody seriously contend that if every maker of motor cars had adopted Ford's policy simultaneously with Ford himself that Ford would have increased his power of em-

ployment as he has? Because the early bird catches the worm it does not follow that ten early birds will catch a worm each.

It is beside the point for your friend to assert that more people are actually employed in this country to-day than in 1914. The point is, how many of them would be in employment if anything like efficient use were made of the labour-saving inventions and devices which have been made in the meantime? Industrial engineers and organisers could dispense with millions of workers within a few months, and actually increase production without them, if given a free hand to go in for productive efficiency and productive efficiency only. (They actually did this during the war.) But they are not given a free hand; and the reason why they are not is because your friend and all his fellow members of the trade union movement are using their power to prevent them. We have never asserted that labour-saving inventions displace labour *before they are actually used!*

Under the present financial régime it stands to reason that as population increases so must employment, irrespective of whether the productive system needs the extra workers; for so long as a man's only title to an income is the performance of some work, the State has to find him work—or at any rate has to keep the dimensions of unemployment within certain limits; otherwise there would be starvation and revolution. It has been estimated that the productive capacity of this country's factories and machinery was increased by 50 per cent. during the war. So if your friend's argument were sound every man in the country ought to be employed at this moment, and industry crying out for millions more of them.

The Social Credit Movement.

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

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

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

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