THE

NEW AGE

INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER"

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

An article in the *News of the World* describes the development of France's air force. The writer remarks that whatever reductions in public expenditure are effected not a franc is to be diverted from the Air programme. France has now no fewer than 132 air squadrons of an average strength of ten machines, and to such a high pitch of efficiency are these squadrons kept that the last report to the war department stated that replacements were more than 120 per cent. per annum; this means a total effective force of nearly 3,000 war 'planes. Both in commercial and military aviation France is now leading the world, being ahead even of the United States. This is one of the reasons why General Dawes' "official receiver" has not yet taken up his quarters in Paris. The other reason is France's submarine fleet.

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The latest development in the coal situation can be dismissed in a few words. Since Mr. Cook put his signature to the words "We are prepared to enter into negotiations for a new national agreement with a view to a reduction in labour costs to meet the immediate necessities of the industry," the fight between the mineowners and Mr. Churchill on the subject of national agreements can be regarded as an exhibition bout. In fact, Mr. Churchill has described in a letter to Mr. Evan Williams how district settlements can be fitted into a national scheme. One infers that the "scheme" is something different from the "settlements," and the interpretation is presumably that whereas questions of how long a miner shall work and what wages he shall get may be arranged by local federations of miners' unions, nothing must interfere with the centralised system for collecting and handling miners' contributions, and deciding what shall be done with them. The integrity of the Miners' Federation as a deflationary institution must be preserved at all costs. Given that, and, as Lord Grey of Fallodon has remarked, it is not undesirable to give the miners the choice between a little more work and a little less pay. Certainly. That is democracy. The people "choose." To discuss matters further would be premature, for as yet nothing has happened but an agreement. It is the ratification that counts. There's room for a slip twixt Cook and the pit.

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Last week Germany was accepted as a member of the League of Nations, and as a permanent member of the Council. This is matter of no less or more importance than if Mr. J. H. Thomas joined the Baldwin Cabinet. It is much more important that Brazil has left the League, and Spain declines to attend it. Perhaps more important still is the fact that Sir Austen Chamberlain is offended by the searching nature of the questionnaire sent out in respect of the administration of the mandates applying to the Cameroons, Togoland, and the former German Colonies in East and South-West Africa and elsewhere, and has told the Mandates Commission so. This disturbs the *Spectator*, which asks "What have we to fear from a searching examination of our actions?" We do not know, but we hope the correct answer is "Nothing"; for then we can conclude that Sir Austen's protest is based on principle. The *Spectator* says: "The truth is that the League cannot too emphatically assert its authority." Sir Austen thinks it can: and we agree with him. The people of this country can remove their Government but are powerless to affect the League of Nations. Moreover, an assembly of international pacifists and bank auditors isn't an "authority," it is a "sort of war," as Lord Halsbury once said.

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The *New Civilian*, the accredited organ of the Civil Service, which, it will be remembered, made its appearance soon after the great Civil Service demonstration at the Albert Hall, contains an article on "Should the Bonus be Consolidated." The consolidation of the Bonus might mean doing away with the rises and falls in pay which now follow fluctuations in prices. The writer of the article, while allowing for the fact that a consolidated salary would be good business for the Civil Servant during a period of falling prices, professes himself not so sure of the wisdom of scrapping existing safeguards against rising

prices. He is right. Advisers who recommend consolidation are doubtless doing so in the expectation that the miners will be beaten and the workers' standard of living forced down. But that is a shaky basis for expecting a drop in the retail price-level. Apart from other considerations a reduction in industry's total wage bill would be accompanied by a contraction of industry's output of consumable goods for the home market. Smaller wages, smaller home demand, less output, higher cost per unit of output, higher price. At best it would be unsafe, so far, to reckon on anything better than an unchanged price-level. But there is a more important consideration than this: it has to do with the fact that industry is millions and millions of pounds in arrears with its income tax, its rates, and its unredeemed borrowings from the banks. The Civil Servant must make up his mind whether, suppose industry does succeed in lowering its wage bill, it will be the consumer who will inherit these savings in the form of price reduction or the credit monopolists in the form of debt repayment and credit cancellation. Does he suppose that the whole weight of officialdom would be brought to bear on the lowering of wages if the result was going to mean a higher general scale of consumption? We do not. Nor do we suspect Mr. A. Gange, the writer of the article referred to, of such credulity. In fact he closes his remarks with these words:

"Most people have a hazy notion that following the enormous increase in the nation's ability to produce goods, *we ought to be well supplied with the essentials of a good standard of living.*

"They have, perhaps, a still hazier notion that finance ought to operate as a useful distributing mechanism for our prolific production, enabling Smith to exchange his products fairly and readily with what Jones produces. But in cold economic fact they realise that somehow or other neither Smith nor Jones, be he employer or employee, is getting much out of his production, while *the banking and credit corporations are doing exceedingly well, flaunting their prosperity in imposing buildings on the best corner-sites and flourishing the big stick of deflation over European politics.*

"Many people are beginning to ask why, and a growing demand is felt that *the leak by which industrial wealth drains away to the banks must be speedily located.* Not only must retail prices be tabulated for a cost-of-living index-figure, but *the credit factor in prices must be isolated and carefully analysed.*

"Altogether, it seems that the consolidation of the bonus is much too simple a remedy for a very complex malady. *The vagaries of price fluctuation have not yet been brought under control,* and, *pending credit investigations,* the Service will be well advised to hold on to its protective machinery in the form of the cost-of-living settlement." (Our italics.)

Evidently some hard thinking is going on in Civil Service circles, and we are glad to reproduce this evidence of it. Since the general strike there have been signs of a cleavage between those Civil Service organisations who wish to be free from all commitments to co-operate in a strike policy and those who feel that they ought to remain loyal to the trade union movement. This danger should lead to a deeper investigation of the financial causes of strikes, because from it will emerge the truth that wage and salary earners have nothing to hope from attacking capitalists as such, but everything to hope from a *Capital-Labour production and price policy based on the postulate (with all its implications) that bank credit as well as legal tender is the property of the consumer as such.* The Civil Service, more than any other organised body, has the talent as well as the information necessary to turn the attention of employers and employed alike towards the New Economic alternative to class warfare.

REASON.

Reason, Man's Tool,
May get him gains—
Man, Reason's Fool,
Loses his pains.

"L. S. M."

Mussolini's Opportunity.

Press Agent: "Yes, everyone is waiting news that Mussolini has been assassinated . . . life all written ready in every newspaper office . . . been several stories, but we didn't send them out as they originated with banks."

Student: "Why? Are banks——?"

Press Agent: "Yes. When anyone brings us a story the first thing we ask him is 'Where did you get it?' If he says 'A bank,' we say 'Take it back and get it confirmed.'"

Student: "That's rather surprising. I should have thought banks were well placed for getting accurate——"

Press Agent: "Getting—yes. But what they give out is mostly what they want you to believe, or *what they hope will happen.*"

[*Authentic gossip somewhere in Fleet-street sometime in* 1925. "*Student's italics.*]

The latest attempt on Mussolini's life will be a reminder to him of the responsibilities of dictatorship. Under a visible tyranny—whether benevolent in intention or otherwise—the hand of every discontented subject is against the tyrant, whereas under an invisible tyranny like Democracy it is against his neighbour. The ultimate danger to Mussolini does not arise so much from the manner in which he assumed control of Italian affairs; it lies in the fact that having assumed control, everything that goes wrong will be imputed to him for unrighteousness.

Contrast this with our own political system, where no one assumes responsibility. A hypothetical British would-be assassin, with his knife wrapped up in a *Morning Post*, may begin to stalk Mr. Cook, but just as he comes to the first street corner somebody bumps into him with a *Daily Herald* and points him after Sir Joynson Hicks. At the next turning a man with the *Workers' Weekly* sets him glaring at Mr. Thomas. And so it goes on. The poor chap feels, "What is one knife among so many? I must get assistance." But that means revealing his intentions, which might as easily lead to their defeat as their accomplishment. How much simpler for the Italian. Is he out of work? Mussolini. Is he underpaid? Mussolini. Do prices rise? Mussolini. On Mussolini is laid the iniquities of the whole economic system.

So we come back to our opening remark about the responsibilities of his dictatorship. He must change the economic system or it will kill him. He must prove himself the king of beasts or become a scapegoat. There is no "honourable retirement" for a visible dictator who fails, for the failure itself turns his dictatorship into a crime. The only way in which Mussolini can now avoid failure as a statesman is to widen his dictatorship until it embraces the means whereby he can justify his original assumption of it. That is to say, he must control financial credit, and he must know exactly what to do with it when he does control it. On those conditions alone can he save himself.

What he is doing in that direction is not clear yet, but there was a reference in the *Banker* of August to the effect that the Italian Government had adopted a new policy in regard to the banking of public funds. The reference continued:

"By concentrating its liquid funds in the Bank of Italy the Government have secured what is, in effect, control of credit, *thereby sapping the independence of the Italian money market.* It is premature to comment upon the political implications of these changes, but *all who cherish the freedom of central banking from Governmental control will commend the cause to Signor Mussolini,* who sees the national value of an independent central bank—*perhaps.*" (Our italics.)

How the "cause" was to be commended, or with what degree of emphasis, does not appear. Of course it would be farfetched to suggest that the grievance of Mussolini's assailant had any connection with this disapproval of banking monopolists. People powerful enough to hammer the lira do not need to hurl bombs at a statesman. But the events referred to are logically and automatically connected. Once granted the supreme importance to the international money trust that Signor Mussolini shall not lay his hands on credit and perhaps start Europe on the road towards the *New Economic* freedom, there is no room for doubt that directly he began taking such action the money monopolists would and could set in motion forces whose effect would amount to a sentence of outlawry on him. Deprived of the protection of financial law he would be deprived of the protection of all law. The deprivation would manifest itself in the form of accentuated financial and industrial problems within Italy, falsely *appearing* to arise out of Fascist policy; and if Mussolini were not ready with his remedy, internal disorders would undermine his prestige and expose him to execution of the sentence at private hands. When the banker draws his lips in, the murderer whips his knife out. Nobody wills it so. It is as coincidental as anything else that has happened since the civilised world chose to have Foreign Offices and Secret Services. "I don't approve of the killing of animals, but I must have meat for dinner to-night"; that is all that the Great One has to mumble to himself—and be overheard.

That Mussolini is awake to the fact of passive instigation in high places is apparent in the short speech he made in Rome last Saturday night to the great crowd assembled before the Palazzo Chigi. Reuter's report contains the following passage:

"'I want to say a few grave words to you—words which must be interpreted literally by those for whom they are intended. We must make an end of these disorders. We must make an end of those culpable and unheard-of *acts of tolerance beyond our frontiers.* If any value is attached to the friendship of the Italian people, that friendship may be fatally compromised by episodes of this kind.' Amid the ensuing torrent of cheers cries of 'It is already compromised' were plainly heard." (Our italics.)

This is the fourth abortive attempt that has been made on Mussolini's life, and he would be an inefficient ruler if he omitted to exploit the consequent superstition among the Italians that he is divinely appointed to rule. But if he has discovered and measured the forces of financial world-government he will be careful not to use his augmented prestige to encourage reprisals on any visible Governments. The "tolerance beyond our [the Italian] frontiers" should be construed not so much as external and conscious Governmental tolerance of an individual assassin, but unconscious Governmental submission to an international financial regime which inevitably creates the conditions for "episodes of this kind." The way to "make an end of these disorders" is to suppress them in their incipient stage. That means attacking the problem not from the political or military, but from the financial end. It is not an easy task. We cannot know either whether Mussolini is able to perform it, or even whether he wishes, or ever will wish to. But it is a vitally necessary task for him. Moreover, it is the one task of which it can be said that the mere attempt to accomplish it will establish for all time the fame of the Statesman who risks making it—failure or no failure.

The task we speak of is of course the economic and social reconstruction of Italy on the basis of her citizens' Red Credit, according to the principles laid down by Major Douglas. This, of course, would necessitate familiarising her chief industrial leaders —both Capital and Labour—with the main concepts of the New Economic philosophy; but if Mussolini has grasped them he has the means to his hand of making them known throughout Italy—namely through his so-called "muzzled Press." Abstract truths are involved, and are difficult to teach, but, as a disciple of Nietzsche, Mussolini will be familiar with the aphorism—"The more abstract the truth you wish to teach, the more must you allure the senses to it." Now, by reason both of his personal gifts and an adventitious combination of external circumstances, Signor Mussolini stands at this moment in greater command of the means of sensual allurement than any other Statesman in the world. For instance, if, last Saturday night, he had so much as merely named any particular economist as having impressed him, by next Saturday Italy would have been flooded with copies of the works of that economist. But time treads down sentiment, and it is on the flood-tide that the Statesman must embark for his fortune. That fortune would mean absolution and immortality for Mussolini. Is he unmooring his boat?

The Step Pyramid.

Each of the great steps is a tumbled patchwork of yellow stones, rounded at the corners like children's sweets. Some have fallen sideways, and some balance in their places by a fraction of the surface. All are yellow with the embraces of innumerable particles of sand, and brown where the rain-storms of fifty centuries have corroded the stone. In its unity with the surrounding desert the Pyramid seems something more than a vain monument, built, as some say, by a vain king to enclose his dead body; and there comes into one's mind the memory of an old legend that it was originally an enormous observation tower built by some half-human monster of the embryonic past, up which he leapt a step at a time to watch for the unwary traveller.

The inner chamber in which the giant slept is far under ground, and entered by a series of winding passages, ever leading downwards. In the centre of the room is a huge stone, six tons in weight, and shaped like a great stopper; underneath there is a small dark chamber, large enough to hold some five or six puny plain-dwellers for the Cyclopean repast. A hidden system of ventilation keeps the air fresh; and somewhere from the interior the bleatings of goats and the baaing of sheep must have filtered up.

But one day the giant died; quietly in a corner of his dark chamber the wick floating in oil sputtered and went out, and his spirit freed itself and wandered up and down the steps as was its habit in life. And then, so they say, the pompous Pharaoh cased the tower in and made it a monument to himself, and kept an army of priests, and built a city of temples around it, in order that the ghost of the old giant might be exorcised and kept from mischief.

So powerful were the spells that the old giant-spirit could no longer climb the steps at night, and men met him far out in the desert, raging and shaking impotent fists at the usurpers. But who shall say whether it was he or another who whispered into the ears of the plain-dwellers that stone was scarce and that the casing on the Pyramid would make fine houses? That jewels lay concealed in the tomb-chamber and on the king's body, and to find them they must bring out the mummy and tear it to pieces? At all events the stones were torn from the casing, and the inner chamber cleansed from the pollution of the dead; and caravans passing from the Fayoum at night say that the old giant is still to be seen striding a step at a time up the Step Pyramid, which has now regained its original appearance.

A Vagabond in Denmark.

By Leopold Spero.

XIX.

GOLDEN VANITY.

"I don't care a fig for him."—*From Hill's Dano-Norwegian-English Dictionary.*

One man, waiting for the boat at Spodsbjerg, had a new car, such a car as you or I might buy if we were in the automobilious class, the class of people who have forgotten that they ever had legs, and in this mad age of cheap mechanical perfection need never be reminded of the fact by the dire Edwardian necessity of having to get out and push. He was a country fellow, this man, and therefore went out on this special journey encased in the stiffest and most geometrical clothes his island could provide, just as, if he had been a townsman, he would have worn nothing that did not droop and sag and lie half-open and wilt at the edges.

The jetty at Spodsbjerg is not wide enough for a car to turn in, and he had his already in position long before the little boat was more than a smudge of smoke on the level plate of the shimmering water. The young shipping clerk, pushing his monstrous howitzer painfully along the pier, since he had no desire to give her a free rein and let her leap with him halfway across the Baltic to Bornholm, paused to wipe the sweat from his brow, and looked with a quizzing eye at the black and shiny four-seater, with its new tyres grey with inexperience, and its hood pushed forward eagerly as if to sniff the breeze of unadventured leagues. There might have been no young shipping clerk, no stout commercial travellers, no placid peasantry, no gaping domestic waiting with her corded box to fare away across the salt waters to a new home with some distant Rektor or Lektor, no London vagabond on that jetty, but only the four-seater and its host, a man fit to raise any three of us poor fellow creatures from the low indigence of pedestrianism to the high level of internal combustion.

What did they do in the past, these prosperous farmers arriving at a proper man's estate, when they wished to satisfy themselves and the world that they were persons to be considered with some grave nodding of the head? Carlyle's gigmanity was indeed a fair test. When you drove your own horse and trap just to pleasure yourself, and for no need of business, you sat up aloft and surveyed the countryside with a swelling heart, for it seemed truly as if your essential importance in the scheme of things was now recognised. A gig or a pony and trap was of very little use on a farm in those days, and so now your prosperous farmer would think shame to pretend that the sturdy, rattling Ford which does his rough traction could be used with any success to impose upon his neighbours the impression of his social arrival into the true motoring class. There is no car which shows more quickly than Mr. Henry Ford's offspring the marks of daily and horny-handed contact with the world. It may be that in Detroit they pick out the kind of tinplate which has a surface most sensitive to the slings and arrows of outrageous Fortune, and without abating its ability to withstand the rougher experiences, shows them nevertheless like wrinkles upon the face of beauty. However this may be, what we know very well, in Lange Land just as much as in Uxbridge, is that you cannot palm a Ford off upon Society as anything but a purely utilitarian convenience. There is no drawing-room about it, not even a front-parlour air. It is definitely kitchen and backyard, even at its newest and most shiny first challenge to the lurking battalions of hard circumstance.

The Danish farmer has been captured by the fascination of the mechanical. Well for him that it is so, and that he has seen the light that is still dim to the eyes of agriculture in Great Britain. Nor has his stout and sturdy independence been undermined by the vindication of the co-operative argument. If he needs a steam tractor or a motor plough, or any other expensive appliance to make his farm pay better, he is not afraid to ask his neighbours if they are not of his way of thinking, and get them to share in the expense which he by himself could never sustain. It reads bald and obvious in cold print, this plain need for co-operation and fellowship in all the processes which move between the planting of the seed and the enjoyment of the harvest, between the time when the grass in these meadows first begins to sweeten and the appearance of the consequent butter and eggs and cheese upon the English breakfast-table. Municipal service and cheap electricity, with every isolated farmhouse lit and supplied with power from a local generating station; colleges and institutes within easy reach of every bumpkin, so that he cannot keep useful knowledge from penetrating his thick, round skull; a gradual and most admirable transformation of the scattered functions of agriculture into a great, centralised industry; all these circumstances have brought the Danish farmer, despite even the collapse of his best-beloved Bank, to a self-confidence and self-importance which must find vent in this ostentation of a truly upholstered four-seater. True, the dread name of Gluckstadt, which brought consternation even into the Royal Palace with its tragic downfall, dealt a shrewd blow to the conscious pride of thrift in many a neat and well-ordered rustic home. But the Whitaker Wright of Danish finance did not dig his hand deep into every stocking. To-day we name that Bank in a hushed voice, in the voice of the sick-room, when the straw is lying spread in the street outside and the butler's mouth turns down at the corners as he opens the door. But the patient may yet recover; for the doctors of his own connection are busy, and for their own sake must nurse him back into some semblance of health.

But while we have been amusing ourselves with these ponderous thoughts, the smudge on the horizon has taken shape, and growing bigger and clearer and more definitely part of the picture, resolves itself into the plump steamer for Nakskov, which rolls up heartily and stops with a grunt and a throwing of ropes and a creaking yawn as they are made fast to the staples. The farmer with the four-seater rushes up and starts his engine as if it were possible to get on board by levitation. He is already seated at the wheel long before the two great bulks of planking are laid aslant on the quay to the lower deck to prepare a road for him. And most indignantly does he chafe at having to wait while the motor-cycle precedes him, and for all sorts of people, the scatterings of the beach for all he knows, who probably have not a four-seater among the lot of them; or if they have, have still most of the instalments to pay, while his receipt lies snug in his pinewood desk at home. But gradually the rest of us are come aboard, and it is the turn of the four-seater. The farmer does something drastic with both hands, and in a moment his car has missed its chance and is half-way into the Lolland Sea. Frantically he jerks at the wheel to try to get her errant nose pointed in the right direction, straight at the innards of the ship. But the only result is angry grumbling from the bonnet. The bearded captain comes slowly down from the bridge, and with his hands in his pockets and his head on one side regards the comedy with an air of patient humour. A sailor in voluminous blue trousers and a weatherproof jersey gives advice which calls forth only a scowl. More twisting and turning of the wheel, more grunting of the engine, but no results. Until finally, with a beaten sigh, the proud motorist descends, and watches while someone who knows his business takes his place, and with a touch backs the car from its twisted discomfort on to the quay, and with another slightest play of the wrist sends her skimming like a bird up the timber planks and into her place on board true and set to the inch.

And now the spare rib of the ship is replaced, and now the ropes are cast off, and now we are away again, with a long and placid journey before us, and a wide and open sea to calm the excitement of that last crowded ten minutes, when we leaned over with our hearts in our mouths, hoping against hope that the farmer and his four-seater would drop into the pale blue water. Nothing inherently vicious in the hope, because it would have meant no more than a baptism. And it would have been fun to see him there, still at the wheel, with only his head emerging above the swell, and its stiff linen collar all sodden and chastened, and his new ready-made suit already shrinking on him until it left bare wrists and ankles undisguised, and a soul shivering at the realisation that even a four-seater can tumble into misfortune.

A Diversion

Nearly every man who has tackled the woman question, from the Christian Fathers to Weininger or Schopenhauer, has made a fool of himself. The exceptions were so already. If it is permissible to exact rank among fools, the older the man the bigger the fool and the younger the better. For there is still hope that the young man may perceive why he tackles the woman question, which is because he fears to tackle the woman. It was Nietzsche who, in his frailty, noticed that single men make the best philosophers, without noticing that the worst philosophers seem to make the best men. One of the perennial arguments employed by men, who are afraid of women, for proving the superiority of men, is the paucity of women geniuses in realms especially the sphere of men. I recollect that Sir Sidney Lee, who is as well qualified to have heard about any women geniuses there might have been as anyone I know, falling into this particular trap. Handel, Bach, Beethoven, Michael Angelo, Praxiteles, the host of geniuses in the world of art, small as it is in comparison with the multitude of fools, were all to be counted, he showed, to the male side of humanity in the sex-war.

There seems no good reason for entering into a dispute as to whether certain women in literature, music, or religion, were or were not geniuses. Better, rather than let the question degenerate to that level, not mention their names. What is amusing about this claim to superiority on the part of the male is that he attaches any importance at all to the accident that he has even sex in common with persons like Beethoven or Michael Angelo, or Nietzsche. Self-important little men, who would not recognise talent unless it walked about with a certified sandwich board, take unto themselves a good deal of credit for the works of Shakespeare, because Shakespeare probably grew a beard and had big feet. City men, when their daughters insist on the right to souls of their own, affect more pride in the fact of Napoleon's masculinity than if they had been his wife or mother.

The particular sphere of woman, several have said, is the home, and it is likely that any true woman genius would operate in the realm of domesticity, in connection with birth, marriage, or death. Bearing this in mind, one is tempted to hazard that the nearest approach to a genius of either sex living at the present time is Dr. Marie Stopes. If any woman in history ever went up like a cork on the emotions of her time, and provided, to the same degree, the philosophy on vital questions of this world that her age was waiting for, I should like to hear of her. Nobody, I am certain, ever came so near to setting women free to become geniuses or, at least, to aim at becoming geniuses. In this period of human contraction—so far as civilised peoples are concerned—Dr. Marie Stopes is the one great teacher. She is the one person who knows her own message, and who has been able to formulate the logical conduct for mankind's desertion of its destiny.

For Dr. Marie Stopes is the generalissimo of the women in the sex war; and it matters little whether the women are exterminated or not if only the men are. Something like the technique and enthusiasm of Dr. Stopes must have been known to the Kilkenny cats. It is, of course, not overlooked that the middle-classes were addressed in the work entitled "Radiant Motherhood" on the subject of how to have babies. But the middle-classes were already aware how not to have babies, and it is well known that the middle-classes cannot afford the expense of babies, which are prone, in addition, to interfere with the irresponsible habits of all except the very wealthiest parents. The achievement of Dr. Stopes need neither be exaggerated nor depreciated. She has succeeded in persuading the working-classes, now that leisure awaits the taking, and science can provide enough for all, to get off the earth. Let none question again whether any woman is a genius.

The men who gibe at women on the alleged grounds that no woman ever painted a first-class picture or composed a first-class sonnet ought to be gratified by women's reply. Societies of women artists, and classes at which young women compose verse, have sprung up all over the place. Women have certainly shown willing on the deficiencies men have pointed out at them.

The deterioration of the British people has already gone far. When Galatea stepped down from her pedestal during last century, not to love, but to make war, her revolt was a good thing up to a point. The descent of woman was necessary because man had fallen so low. But the imitation by fallen woman of the cowardice and betrayals of fallen man, woman claiming to be man, to dispense with man, is bad. One can sympathise with, one might admire, the monarch who steps down from her despot's throne to fight for her freedom. If, however, after stepping down she forgets what she came for, and simply conspires with the rabble who denied her freedom to the end that all may become irresponsible, holding nothing sacred, believing in no destiny, she had better have remained, wooden and foolish, on her throne.

These women who want to be "pals" with men, to play football with them, join in the smoke-room company, and generally do anything for man except bear a baby, are not expressing themselves. They are not winning men's love, worship, or gratitude. At the end of it men will blame them for assisting to waste their lives. The woman who can create one Don Quixote out of a man, who can make one fool into a hero, or into an heroic fool, either for a baby or for a world fit for babies would have done more that would be deemed worthy than if she had designed a dome for a new St. Peter's.

Young people are growing ashamed of being in love. They regard a state where they pretend to be "chums," both girls or both boys, as an advance on the Romeo and Juliet magnetism. It is no longer permitted to speak in hyperbole, even where imagination would make gods of us; it is the right thing "to cut all that tosh" and read "Wise Parenthood." "Sex as the end in itself."

RICHARD MONTGOMERY.

The Crisis in Mediævalism.

II.

In our own day most reform movements are founded upon the democratic idea: but our democracy is a very perverse caricature of the real equality of human souls. Modern "democratic" society is an assembly of lofty, independent aristocrats, all more or less bristling with affronted dignity. As Mr. Chesterton truly said, there are abysses of class distinction between one washerwoman and another. It is all a rigid caste system in which there are no hierarchies, but in which each aspires to be a class of one, with a separate bank account. Upon such a basis one cannot found a social order of any sort whatever; not even a plutocracy that will stand. What form and intelligibility survives in it is due to the past, and when that is absorbed it will, as Spengler predicts, crumble back into a social condition near that of Equimaux or Hottentots.

In this threatening day of world problems our mediævalism seems dilettante enough—like any pre-war social idealism. The men who know most about it are almost as isolated as any other sort of specialists: and yet it is still our most integral vision of the social question. Only if these men would unite themselves as well as their knowledge could their aspirations issue in action: and only in action could the impulse that moves them be understood. It would appear as a highly surprising and impractical suggestion to our mediævalists that they should themselves become a guild. They would immediately become conscious of abysses not of class, but of intellectual distinction. But what are they, after all, if not a definite function of society—that, namely, which carries the responsibility of making it functional? If they cannot realise it, who can?

They have overstressed the idea of function. In their study of the guilds and orders which composed, like vital organs, the body of mediæval society, they give the impression that these groups originated for the doing of certain works. It is a misleading idea. The orders of religion, of chivalry and of craftsmen did not form themselves *ad hoc* to carry out social functions. The religious did not unite to produce prayers nor illuminated manuscripts, nor the chivalrous to produce tournaments, nor even the craftsmen to produce carved oak choir-stalls. However, they evolved with their work, their origin was not in work but in life. In primary idea and conception they were associations of *men*, united not by technique nor intellectual conception—hardly even by mutual advantage, but purely in the relation of man to man. Such a co-operation is hardly conceivable in this age.

In mediæval culture there was a spirit which made assault upon life as a whole: Guilds and orders were made by men who were resolved to see life through together, whether it was possible or not, and regardless of differences and specialisations. That could all be discussed later; doubtless all else would be added. What mattered was they recognised each other as men, however various. Our present-day worship of the specialist was not invented. It is true that they excelled in many special works, but the specialism came by fate. Thus there was great sculpture, but no great sculptors; great poetry, great craft, but nearly all of it anonymous; there were great thinkers, but they thought about everything, and did not concentrate each upon one lonely furrow in the field of knowledge. As Bede Jarrett says:

> "The same professor, according to mediaeval notions, might lecture to-day on Scripture, to-morrow on theology or philosophy, and the day after on natural science. For them a university was a place where each student learnt and each professor taught, universal knowledge. Still from time to time men came to the front with some definite social message to be delivered to their own generation."

And, in general, a man's dignity, his fame and his epitaph were not credited to his specialisation, but to the quality of his manhood—his worth as a whole human being. Even a great priest was not revered as a masterly ecclesiastic or theologian so much as a good *man*. Modern appreciation of saints is largely sicklied over with a crazy notion of them as specialists in sweetness and light. It is chiefly our struggle for specialised reputations in virtue, science, and art, which is our slow death and disintegration.

In mediævalism man was a universal being (Everyman)—something more than any or all of his actions. He was, in that undifferentiated greatness, himself the basis of all those associations which developed into the one thing—Christendom. The relation of monk or knight to his order, of guildsman to his guild, of apprentice to master, was a human, voluntary but absolute relation—very much like marriage. Men did not feel themselves to be groups of different kinds of workers, so much as groups of different kinds of men, and all kinds of men were conceived as variations of one absolute type. It might happen to be true, for instance, that one man was a cobbler. But it was also truth, of a higher order, that he was of the Company of Cordwainers, and it was infallible truth that he was a man with a possible relation to all men.

This deductive conception is inherent in all mediæval thought, and if one wishes to judge its remoteness from the conceptions of our day, let him read Pope Innocent IV. upon the nature of property. Everyone, according to this mediæval writer, has an absolute right to property—to any or all property. But he distinguished between the right to property and action in accordance with that right. While the right is absolute, its exercise is perfectly subject to the legal or customary conceptions of his State. To modern minds this appears as an almost meaningless quibble—to give the whole world and immediately take it away again. Nevertheless, it was a belated attempt to save a really essential conception, without which Christendom could never have existed—to save all dignity and all potentiality for Everyman, whatever might be his immediate realisation. And what had been made possible by such a conception? Not the narrow individual rights of small holders, but the power of men to transcend their individualisms in the supra-personal life of guilds and orders. This conception, apart from its absolute truth, is the one pragmatically true basis of human society. But to us it is not only seldom even conceived, it is all too doubtful if we want it. No one apparently, not even mediævalists, can set about creating a guild in this essential and human sense. We are not sufficiently certain of our own or of each other's humanity. We only evade the question by becoming professed Christians, which is one way of asserting abstract and universal humanity, so long as we do not realise it with particular men, and we might as well become Confucians or Jains. The dilemma of Western civilisation is crucial just in this point. We do not want associations of the kind which would actually fuse the personal into the supra-personal. Life is still too comfortable, albeit palpably disintegrating. It is to be feared that it may have to become far from comfortable before the message of mediævalism will be effectively delivered.

PHILIPPE MAIRET.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

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Is the Truth Obscene?

By George Ryley Scott, F.R.A.I., F.Ph.S., F.Z.S., F.P.C.(Lond.).

The longer I walk this earth, the more I study the bilious mentality of those who have the impudence to set up as the tasters of art, the firmer becomes my conviction that, in accordance with the diseased outlook of Puritan mankind, truth is indistinguishable from obscenity.

In the two countries where Puritanism flourishes more grotesquely than anywhere else, to wit, America and England, sincerity in literary and artistic expression in this emancipated year of grace 1926 is non existent. True enough, in recent years the meshes of the uplifters' sieve have been appreciably widened. "Madame Bovary" is no longer in fear of the Vigilance Society's axe as, if the late W. T Stead is to be believed, it assuredly was some years ago; the publication of a book like "Sister Carrie" would not to-day cause trepidation in the heart of its publisher. But in England Shane Leslie's "Cantab," as sincere a piece of work as 1926 has brought to light, was on alleged pornographic grounds in its original form quickly suppressed; the Paris publishers of that remarkable work of genius, "Ulysses," as transpired when Miss Beasley narrowly escaped deportation at the hands of the London police, are prohibited from sending the work by mail to England. In America the police seize Frank Harris's "Life." "Hatrack," in the *Mercury*, sends the smut-sniffers fuming after Mencken's scalp; and on the heels of this comes the pronouncement of obscenity against the "New Masses."

Of the lot not one is denunciable on the grounds of being untrue. Each one is, for instance, a thousand times more true than any single book in the Bible. But not one is decorated with theological embroidery; not one masquerades as a moral thesis; not one proclaims the genesis of a new religion; not one announces a contribution to the science of psycho-analysis. To the contrary, there is exhibited by the writers of these true pictures of life ineffable contempt for the Puritanic smut-gatherers.

After much mental sweltering I have arrived at a definition of obscene which, I represent, covers the facts as interpreted by the mentalities responsible for its application. An obscenity is any undecorated, uneuphemized reference, verbal, literary or pictorial, to those sections of human and animal bodies the mention of which has been prohibited by transitory customs. Thus what is obscene to-day may be respectable to-morrow. What in America is lewd and disgraceful in Polynesia may cause not the raising of an eyebrow. What induces disgust in a fashionable Fifth Avenue restaurant or a Mayfair drawing-room may be part of the everyday conversation of a Chicago stockyard labourer or a Piccadilly prostitute. The English workingman could no more understand any sane person getting a thrill from hearing the words which for many weeks excited London audiences when Shaw's "Pygmalion" was first produced than could a Congo savage understand the New Yorker's gasp of surprise at seeing a nude female figure posturing in Broadway. Where to-day is the allurement of the old time leg-show? And who, in all the world, savage or ultra-civilised man, sees anything obscene in the exposed genital organs of a dog or a horse; or in the act of copulation between a rooster and a hen?

Obscenity does not exist as a natural or permanent manifestation. The concept of obscenity must be created to suit the lowest common denominator of unlearned moralistic idealism. And it can be created only by a rigorous policy of suppression. In effect the process of creating the obscene is one in which a self-constituted body of moralists and pietists in the fulness of what they are pleased to term their wisdom decree that certain references, certain forms of pictorial representation, certain words even, should be rigorously tabooed, and the very fact that they should be tabooed renders them obscene. Cloak the sexual act with an effective screen, say these trumpery moralists. Make a secret of it, and thus render it an act of shame. And ergo, any reference to it becomes an obscenity.

A handful of Comstockians in America and another handful in England have managed to consign sincerity in English literature to Hell. For any depiction of life as it really is we must go to the French, the Russian, the German realists. Here and there, true enough, an American or an Englishman, greatly daring, beards the lion of censorship in its den, but in doing it he has to be prepared to run the risk of misrepresentation as a libidinous fellow not fit for toleration by polite society; he must be ready for the banning and on occasion the actual suppression of his works; he may count himself lucky if he steers clear of imprisonment. Thus such a learned, serious and valuable work as Havelock Ellis's "Psychology of Sex" is barred the mails of England and America; immediately after publication the translation of Sudermann's great novel "Das Hohe Lied" was withdrawn; Vizetelly, the English publisher of translations of certain of Zola's works, actually went to prison; Frank Harris was driven to publish his "Oscar Wilde" privately and surreptitiously; the banning of any dramatic presentation of "Mrs. Warren's Profession" was only lifted a matter of twelve months ago; and in 1923 an order was made in a London police court for the destruction of copies of Mrs. Sanger's "Family Limitation," described as an obscene book. The list is endless.

And yet, although these serious and sincere works, most of which touch the highest degree of art, are banned, suppressed, and libelled, the libraries and bookshops of both America and England have trashy sex books by the hundred: the pish-poshy novels of Elinor Glyn and Victoria Cross; pseudo-scientific bilge of the type of "What a Father Ought to Know," "What a Woman of Forty Should Know," "Advice to the Married," and a host of rubbishy works on psycho-analysis. Coincidentally the railway bookstalls carry imposing piles of "Snappy Stories," "Confess" magazines, and other compendiums of slimy, saccharine mush. How comes it that the eagle eyes of the smut-hunters have not spotted these books and magazines in whose salaciousness lies, in truth, their sole *raison d'être*. The answer is plain. These pornographic novels proclaim loudly and persistently a moral tone. The prostitute duly reforms; the haunter of *bordellos* meets with punishment to accompanying cheers by the platitudinous Y.M.C.A. hero. Let the *fille de joie*, after confessing with spicy detail how she was betrayed by a scoundrel and driven to the streets, repent and in tearful distress become a nun or a nurse, and the Puritans and Bible-class leaders will pass the book with gusto; let her proclaim that she enjoys her job and would not change it to be unpaid housekeeper for any man living, and these same fat-faced deacons and barren-minded Bethel preachers will denounce the book as unfit for virgin eyes. All of which means: if the artist portray life as it really is, and in the process so much as refer to sex or use language such as one can hear every hour wherever British workmen congregate, or on a Sixth-avenue New York street car, then is he guilty of obscenity. But let him draw an impossible picture of spicy salacity, punctuated with mawkish platitudes and sentimental maxims, the whole pointing a moral, there is no obscenity. Thus such a tawdry affair as "Damaged Goods" was passed and praised.

Mark Twain, dogged by a relentless Puritanism, with his tongue deep thrust in cheek, turned out shoddy clowneries such as "Innocents Abroad" and

"Roughing It." Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, Thomas Hardy, with the sword of the censor dangling over their heads, failed in sincere presentation for the simple reason that every reference to the dominant relationship between the sexes was a muzzled reference, and if not exactly untrue was at least only an exposure of a partial truth. For the whole aim of censorship is to suppress the truth respecting matters actuating more powerfully than any others the lives of men and women. Behind it, for the one part is a rabble of maudlin ignoramuses, spleenish idiots, products of the kindergarten class; for the other part, a gang of theological practitioners whose incomes, derived from the promulgation of moth-eaten hocus-pocus, are dependent on the extent to which the real truth can be suppressed. These noodles, burning with that illusion-creative force, moral-hysteria, attempt, often enough with partial success, to impose on the artistic world the ideals of the unlearned, forcing not a few creative artists to commit intellectual *hara-kari*. And the bulk of the unlearned general public, being in no better mental plight, accept blindly and for the most part in a spirit of reverence, the decree of the Comstockians, hiding "Three Weeks" under a soft cushion, and retiring to the w.c. for the perusal of the pages of "Maria Monk."

If, in truth, the object of the Watch and Ward Societies is the elimination of the obscene, let me present to them the only recipe likely to be in any way successful. Let these Puritans chant the virtues of freedom. For could perfect freedom be granted, or at any rate absolute freedom of artistic expression, gone would be the conception of lewdness as applicable to everything which to-day the world in its ignorance falsely calls obscene.

On Karamazovdom.*

By Maxim Gorki.

After the production of *The Brothers Karamazov* the Moscow Art Theatre is going to stage Dostoevsky's *Devils*—a work still more sadistic and morbid. The Russian public may safely expect that Nemirovich-Danchenko (the director and producer of the M.A.T.) will some time or other produce on the stage of "the best theatre in Europe" Mirbeau's *Garden of Tortures*—why not present the scenes and the characters from that book on the stage? Surely, the sadism of the Chinese is pathologically of no less interest to specialists than Russian sadism.

I shall not dwell on the fact that only quite recently *The Devils* was regarded as a slander, and that that work was placed by many of the best men in Russia on a level with such tendencious fiction as Klynshnikov's *Glow*, Krestovsky's *Panurgian Herd*, and other such like dark spots of malicious misanthropy on the bright background of Russian literature.

Evidently Nemirovich-Danchenko knows that there is a public which will be amused to see the silly caricature of Turgenev on the thirtieth anniversary of his death, and will be pleased to have a look at such "devils of the revolution" as Piotr Verkhovensky, or at such "scoundrels in their own lives," as the Lebvadkins and the Liputins. Indeed, looking at them, it is very easy and pleasant to forget that honest, disinterested men do exist; and there is no doubt that at present there are quite a number of people who desire such forgetfulness. And now the Art Theatre is to cater for that desire—to help the drowsy conscience of the public to fall into a still sounder sleep.

But let us put aside questions of conscience; and as to malicious caricatures and slander, these will be swept away by history. Let us speak of the social benefit of producing *The Devils* on the stage.*

The question interests me: does the Russian public think that the presentation on the stage of the happenings and the characters, described in Dostoevsky's *Devils*, is needed and useful in the interests of social pedagoguics?

Unmistakably and indisputably Dostoevsky is a genius; but he is our evil genius. He, with astounding depth, felt, realised, and delighted in describing the two diseases fostered in the Russian by his monstrous history and by his hard and wretched life; the sadistic cruelty of the Nihilist disappointed in everything, and its opposite—the masochism of the man trodden down, frightened, capable of enjoying his suffering, not however without malice, flaunting it before others, as well as before himself. He was mercilessly beaten and brags of it.

The chief and most subtly realised Dostoevsky character is Fiodor Karamazov, many times, partly or wholly, repeated in all the novels of our "cruel talent."† It is unmistakably a Russian soul, formless, and motley, alone and at the same time cowardly and daring, and, above all, morbidly malicious. It is the soul of Ivan the Terrible, of Saltychikha, of the landlord setting his dogs on peasant children, of the peasant beating his pregnant wife to death; it is the soul of the townsman who raped his fiancée and immediately gave her to a crowd of hooligans for them to rape her.

It is a very perverse soul, and there is nothing in it to admire. May be that soul is seeking for some pivot, for a firm foundation which shall strengthen it, crystallise, shape it—and that is why it is rioting, destroying everythng, befouling everything. But filth, torture and blood will not heal sores; and while that mad soul is seeking to find a pivot for itself or punishment for itself—on its march to the monastery or to the galleys—what a lot of filthy poison will it not pour out into the world, what a lot of children and youths will it not poison!

No one will deny that again there are moving over Russia dark clouds, threatening storms, and whirlwinds; there are again coming difficult times, demanding a close union of minds and wills, demanding a supreme effort of all the healthy forces of our country—is to-day the time for emulating its monstrosities? Surely, these infect by inspiring disgust towards life, towards man; and who knows if the staging of *The Brothers Karamazov* did not influence the increase of suicides in Moscow?

There is also no doubt that the Russian public, having gone through too many heart-shattering dramas, is tired, disappointed, apathetic. The temperature of our attitude to reality, to the demands of life, is considerably lowered.

Among the conditions lowering it no small part has been played by the propaganda of social pessimism, and by the return to the so-called "higher demands of the spirit," which with us in Russia, without introducing anything into ethics, without improving our relations to one another, appear only as mere eloquence, distracting from living urgent work. The emergence of these eructations of the past is to be explained by the fact that Russia, unfortunately more than any other nation, has lived under the yoke of ecclesiastical and theological upbringing. That is why Gogol is only then healthy and active when his will and imagination are directed by Pushkin, the European, the man who knew the past of his country, but was not poisoned by it.

It is time to consider how this ocean of poison is going to tell on the health of the future generations; will not this savage drunkenness increase the dark cruelty of our life, the sadism of acts and words, our debility, our pitiful inattention to the life of the world, to the destiny of our country, and to one another.

And, now in the interests of our spiritual regeneration, it is, I believe, necessary to define the social-educative value of the ideas, which the Art Theatre intends to show us from the stage. Is that crippling presentation needed? I am sure it is not.

That "presentation" is an undertaking *aesthetically* dubious, and *socially* utterly harmful.

Slavishly following the Art Theatre, Nezlobin's Theatre is producing *The Idiot*. In this work, too, there is a great deal to admire, as, for instance, the agonies of the consumptive Hippolit, Prince Myshkin's epilepsy, Rogozhin's cruelty, Nastasya Filipouna's hysteria, and the other instructive pictures of all kinds of diseases of body and spirit. It must not be forgotten that on the stage the author's ideas cannot be conveyed by gestures, and that Dostoevsky's novel, rendered bare by cuts, will assume the character of one continuous nervous convulsion.

I suggest to all spiritually healthy people, to all who clearly realise the need of regenerating Russian life, that they should protest against the presentation of Dostoevsky's novels on the stage.

* This protest against turning Dostoevsky's novels into plays, and particularly against the production of *The Devils* by the Moscow Art Theatre, was published in 1913. *The Devils* (called *The Possessed* in the existing English translation), however, was produced, and a group of writers published a protest against Gorki in the *Birjevya Vedomosti* accusing him of an intention to establish a censorship by the public of the artist's freedom. In reply to that protest Gorki published his second article, entitled "More about Karamazdom."

† Mikhailovsky's description of Dostoevsky.

"This Scepter'd Isle."

By "Old and Crusted."

He said "he had been very seriously considering my whole story, so far as it related both to myself and to my country: that he looked upon us as a sort of animals, to whose share, by what accident he could not conjecture, some small pittance of reason had fallen, whereof we made no other use than by its assistance to aggravate our natural corruptions, and to acquire new ones, which nature had not given us; that we disarmed ourselves of the few abilities she had bestowed; had been very successful in multiplying our original wants, and seemed to spend our whole lives in vain endeavours to supply them by our own inventions."

—"A Yoyage to the Houyhnhnms."

It is only fit and proper that so sturdy a patriot as Dean Inge should place in the forefront of his new book* those oft-quoted lines from "Richard II.," beginning,

"This royal throne of kings, the scepter'd isle,
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,"

but instead of stopping at

". . . this dear, dear land,
Dear for her reputation through the world,

he might well have gone straight on with:

"Is now leased out, . .
Like to a tenement or pelting farm:
England, bound in with the triumphant sea,
Whose rocky shore beats back the envious siege
Of watery Neptune, is now bound in with shame,
With inky blots and rotten parchment bonds":

which is an excellent description of those debt-funding scandals and iniquitous peace treaties, whereby,

"That England, that was wont to conquer others,
Hath made a shameful conquest of itself."

It would all fit in so neatly with a further Shakespearean allusion later on in the book, when the Very Revd. author, contemplating certain American contingencies declares that,

"it is more than possible that the nations of Europe, enraged by the bloated prosperity and airs of superiority of 'the man who won by the war,' would combine to draw Shylock's teeth."

All of which goes to prove that Shakespeare being dead yet speaketh, and that the causes of our present discontents are to be sought elsewhere than in the alleged decadence of "this happy breed of men."

Now, however much one may disagree with the Dean's diagnosis of the disease affecting the body politic, he has given us a book of absorbing interest, written in vigorous, lucid, English. Take his sole reference to the woman's suffrage movement as an example of incisive invective:

"The most disgraceful case of all was the long series of felonious acts committed by a gang of women, actuated by a mixture of hysteria, hooliganism, and sexual perversity, who professed by their crimes to be demonstrating their fitness for the duties of citizenship."

After that it should not be matter for surprise when the rest of us poor fools are lumped together as "the waste-products of civilisation."

That Dr. Inge is a thorough-going Imperialist goes without saying. The chapter dealing with the Empire and its future would make a splendid Primrose League pamphlet—but it will not please the Labour Party. The standing drawback to the development of our vast domains is, he says, "the absence of any real Imperial Government," but,

"the real obstacles are the dog-in-the-manger policy of Labour in the Dominions, the unfitness of our degenerate population at home, and their reluctance to emigrate while a grateful country provides them with the means of leading a parasitic existence, battening on the rates and taxes,"

which is a sweeping indictment and distinctly unfair to the men who stood between the Dean and disaster for close upon five years. Still, what can one expect from "a chaotic democracy" like England? Consider "the great advantages of a hierarchically ordered, bureaucratic, scientific State like Germany"! Well, Germany has produced many good things, from Steinberger Cabinet Auslese to Das Buch der Lieder, that we can heartily enjoy, but her bureaucracy and Junkerdom are not amongst them. We would rather stick to that same Democracy which still manages to govern "one quarter of the habitable globe and more than one quarter of its total population," by methods which have won the admiration of foreign critics, including "George Santayana," whose words are quoted in this book at the end of the chapter, "The Soul of England":

"Never since the heroic days of Greece has the world had such a sweet, just, boyish master. It will be a black day for the human race when scientific blackguards, conspirators, churls, and fanatics manage to supplant him."

Thank you, George!

But it is in his review of the industrial situation that the Dean goes "all out." Here we have the exuberant expression of that robust individualism based on orthodox economics whose slogan is:—

"Those who will not work have no claim on the community for maintenance."

Coal, as might be expected, provides a fruitful text for the subsequent homily. We have once more the oft-repeated warning that our industrial existence—it used to be supremacy—depends on an abundant supply of cheap coal, that

"coal has become steadily dearer, chiefly perhaps because the hewers and those who carry coal no longer give such good value for their wages, but partly because the most easily accessible seams are nearly worked out,"

a statement which perilously resembles a *suppressio veri*, for it omits all reference to the new and magnificently equipped pits recently opened in the North Midlands, and fails to take into account the fact that applied science is rapidly making the use of crude coal obsolescent. Add to this an attack on the standard of living,

"'or at least the claim to such a standard' which 'has been raised to a height which it is impossible to maintain,'"

and enough has been said to indicate the reactionary nature of our author's attitude to matters economic.

But there is another side to the Dean. Every now and again he appears to be thinking aloud, and we get a glimpse of a very genuine concern for the welfare of the people he judges so harshly. One might even say that he soliloquizes, for this decanal Hamlet protests that—

"there are more things in popular psychology than are dreamed of by sound economists and impeccable officials."

There are. One being that the wage earner is beginning to make a very real distinction between "toil" and "work," and would certainly agree that—

"no investigation can be too thorough into the reasons which make even a moderate day's work, under modern conditions, disagreeable to the worker."

Also that—

"the notion that one calling is intrinsically more honourable than another . . . should be repudiated."

And who will quarrel with this?

"In proportion as our people can be taught to interest themselves in those treasures of the soul, in which one man's gain is not another man's loss, and which are increased by being shared with others, we may hope that the bitterness and narrowness of economic strife may be assuaged, and that something like a really harmonious civilisation may come in sight"

Finally, he closes this remarkable book with these brave words:—

"I have laid bare my hopes and fears for the country that I love. This much I can avow, that never, even when the stormclouds appear blackest, have I been tempted to wish that I was other than an Englishman."

Well said, Mr. Dean, well said. There are thousands of like mind with you, and not least those who hold with Edith Cavell that "Patriotism is not enough," and that England can only fulfil her great mission by closer union with all members of the great human family—and that, not in some distant future, but now, in this our day:

"Not in Utopia, subterranean Fields,
Or some secreted Island, Heaven knows where!
But in the very world, which is the world
Of all of us—the place where in the end
We find our happiness, or not at all!"

* "England." By William Ralph Inge, C.V.O., D.D. (London: Ernest Benn, Ltd. 10s. 6d. net.)

SELF-TEASING.

I half-pretend the things I know
Are dreams and are not really so.
I half-pretend the things I see
Are meant for others, not for me.
So, half-pretending, half-deceived,
I weep as if I were bereaved,
And go about the garden bright
With eyes tear-closed and call it Night.

"L. S. M."

"THE AGE OF PLENTY."

The September issue of Mr. H. E. B. Ludlam's monthly journal, *The Age of Plenty*, contains a long extract from Mr. Wheatley's speech on the Coal Mines Bill, which is well worth the space given to it. Mr. Ludlam himself writes a sound and sensible "Open Letter to the T.U.C." He has also got Major Douglas to contribute a definition of Social Credit, which we reproduce:

"Social Credit is a financial mechanism necessary to place the resources of Society at the disposal of the individual, *as such*. It is the antithesis to State Socialism, which is a mechanism designed to place the individual completely in the power of Society, *as such*."

The *Age of Plenty* is published at 12, Grantham-street, Coventry, at 2d. (Post free, 2½d.)

Life in Prison.

IV.

THE CONCERT.

The value of music as a means of appeal has long been recognised. Moody and Sankey, Torrey and Alexander, and Gipsy Smith, have all depended upon the subtle influence of music to arrest attention. Until recently music has never had its rightful place in prison. Barriers of all kinds have been raised in this connection. There have been attempts to confine musical programmes in prison within certain rigid bounds. I am glad to record that the restrictions are gradually being modified and withdrawn. I have attended nearly a dozen concerts in prison. The programmes on most occasions have certainly been the equal of the average generally offered to the public. The Prison Commissioners and the public owe a deep debt of gratitude to the hundreds vocalists, instrumentalists, and others whose freely given ices make possible the continuance of these concerts. oncert in prison is like nothing else on earth. Several ses contribute to this distinction. First there is the nendous anticipation. I thought I knew something of husiasm, but I have never seen men concentrate all their vers of anticipation upon one coming event as do these n. The significant thing about a prison concert is that is something infinitely greater than a musical entertain- nt. In a real sense it is not a concert at all, for the ncert becomes subsidiary to the bigger idea that lies behind

The subtlety of the situation is that much as the men e music the thing they anticipate is not music, but the ght of people from outside the prison walls. These con- rts are held monthly, and in the scrappy conversations which men steal from the silence system the possibilities of the next concert are eagerly discussed. The main point of interest generally centres in the constitution of the concert party, and particularly the town or district from which they come. The man hungers with an unutterable longing for a point of contact with the world to which he rightly belongs. This is an important point often overlooked by people who are inclined to think that too much attention is being devoted to the entertainment of the prisoner. It is true he is being entertained, but the more important truth is he is being educated. For this concert is no concert. It is a reunion between citizens enjoying the privileges of their citizenship and those who by their folly, stupidity, and wrong have temporarily forfeited the right to associate with their kind. It is a wonderful meeting between ordinary people who have remained ordinary, and ordinary people who have been discovered doing extraordinary things. The punishment the law imposes upon the discovered law-breaker is not loneliness, solitude, physical discomfort, for these things are minor matters. The real punishment is that the State sets up an impassable gulf between a man and his kind, and places him in circumstances that never permit him to forget that the gulf exists. The concert is the bridge that spans the gulf. Is it a matter for wonder that enthusiasm is rampant? I have seen amazement written plainly on the faces of the artists at the tumultuous applause greeting their efforts. That applause is not unreal. It is the most natural thing possible. What else should a reasonable man do but temporarily lose his senses when, after a long period of silent banishment, he is suddenly restored to his kind?

Another distinguishing feature of these concerts is the contribution they make to the building up within the man confidence that if he makes a real effort to recover he will be treated as one who, having settled the bill presented by the law, is entitled to a renewal of his credit with society. The prisoner regards every concert as an indication of Society's interest in him as one of its members. Many men who to-day are sullen and discouraged need only a definite conviction that the world desires their recovery to transform them into men who will fight with tenacity to win their way back. Brief reference must be made to the appreciation of the music by the men. Of this it is difficult to speak with certainty because of the great human interest dominating the event, but there can be no question of the capacity of the men to differentiate. The most spontaneous applause is given to songs and ballads dealing with home and kindred such as "My Ain Folk" and "The Songs My Mother Sang." I remember particularly that a negro song called "The Fat Little Fellow With His Mammy's Eyes" was quoted in the prison several months after it was heard. One impression remains dominant. It is that the men who leave prison and eventually win an honourable place in the affairs of men will owe more than they can repay to the prison concert.

HARRY J. WOODS.

Drama.

And So to Bed: Queen's.

The day chosen by Mr. J. B. Fagan from the life of Samuel Pepys to wrench the ghost of the man from the notes of the diarist and give it flesh—of which it was very fond—was a little after the closing of the diary in 1669. The whole of the action is kept within the limits of eight hours, for which consideration of his working-day no doubt Mr. Pepys, the good civil-servant, is appropriately grateful. He should double his gratitude for being brought to earth again in so good a play. In recent historical plays the central character has been dragged out of his sepulchre to be whitewashed; in saving Mr. Pepys from the saint snatchers Mr. Fagan has rendered him a great service.

A lady, who happens to be a fine singer, is addicted to going her ways by the narrowest streets without escort, and is set upon by a cut-purse outside Mr. Pepys's door. Mr. Pepys, being connected with the navy, is naturally ready to risk a little for a lady's sake, particularly if she appears to be not quite a lady. After the footpad has run away Mr. Pepys is equally a credit to the Senior Service at spinning a yarn. In a skilfully navigated conversation about music the gallant gentleman gains an invitation to her lodging in the remoteness of Gray's Inn Fields. Mrs. Pepys, the jealous observer of her husband's catholicity of taste, although she has witnessed none of this episode, is not deceived when he makes ready to go to the office on urgent business of the King, especially as he dons his best coat and takes his flageolet.

One day it will leak out that writing was the invention of lawyers. This attractive musical lady wrote Mr. Pepys her address, which he mislaid. He found the place, of course, for what one wants to remember need not be written. Mrs. Pepys also found it. But before she arrived at the singer's house the King was there, to renew acquaintance with a mistress; and Mr. Pepys, having carried the adventure to the point of prospective consummation, finds himself prematurely hiding in a wooden chest, similar to the one which has performed in all the betrayal stories in the world.

The fascination exercised by unmarried young princes over the maidens of their period is tame stuff by contrast with the conquests of King Charles, whose years must each have contained a thousand and one nights. How a father who lost his head begot a son who lost his heart to every pretty woman in the land ought to stimulate the eugenists. In this play the King saw through the box trick. Perhaps he had been in one. Making sure that Pepys was hiding in the chest, he proceeded gaily to make love to Mrs. Pepys. Those two, sitting side by side on the chest, the King's mistress in a jealous rage behind them, gave a display of rich comedy.

The cast, on paper, left nothing to be wished. Allan Jeayes played the King without derogation from that lively monarch's reputation. Mary Grey filled the singer's part both technically as an executant, and dramatically as an actress. Alfred Clark's Pelling, the "Potticary," who tempered Puritanism with good wine, was the enjoyable performance that one always expects from him in these rough characters. But Edmund Gwenn, good actor as he is, did not satisfy one with his Samuel Pepys. The character that should have been so lovable became only pitiable. It is true that his wife did not credit him with much dignity, but all men have more than their wives grant. Even at the point where Pepys is ultimately tumbled out of the chest by the King, and at the end of His Majesty's angry taunting puts in a courageous plea for honest financial dealing with the Navy, Edmund Gwenn failed to generate the spirit. Heaven knows that nobody wants a romantic hero in Pepys. But Mr. Fagan made a better man of him that Mr. Gwenn endorsed. Mrs. Pepys was beautiful. She would have made a better queen than Charles a king. The audience's eyes gleamed with the joy of anticipation whenever Miss Yvonne Arnaud entered. Every subtle facet of that jealous but loving wife was delightfully portrayed, and Miss Arnaud as Mrs. Pepys should make the play an attraction for a long time. Whether chiding Samuel or attacking the singer for purloining her husband, or gradually calming and purring under the consoling strokes of the King, Miss Arnaud rang true. Here was no caricature but a mastered character, alive in every cell. Miss Arnaud has, of course, a pronounced French accent. This, however, served only to render her articulation more admirable. In one less vigorous such careful speech would perhaps entail a halting effect, but whether the explanation be Miss Arnaud's musical comedy experience or no, there was no such danger. Her coming to the drama is a triumph.

PAUL BANKS.

Reviews.

The New Economics. By E. M. Dunn. (Published by the author at 122, Lytton-avenue, Letchworth, Herts. Price 4d—post free 4½d. Procurable also from the Credit Research Library, 70, High Holborn, W.C.1.)

This is a short, compact synopsis of the chief postulates and proposals comprised in the Social Credit theory. Practically no exposition is attempted, the policy of the author being to tabulate clearly the general principles of the New Economics, together with the suggested method of applying them. There are two appendices: one being a reproduction of Major Douglas's *Draft Scheme for the Mining Industry*, which students and speakers will no doubt find especially useful at the present time; and the other a "Chart" showing the "basis of the New Economics." The Chart tabulates short definitions of *Real* wealth, *Real* poverty, *Real* demand and *Real* credit, and places opposite to them corresponding definitions of *Financial* wealth, *Monetary* poverty, *Effective* demand, and *Financial* credit. A short commentary on this tabulation, and a reproduction of the "Just Price Formula," completes this section of the pamphlet. (The Chart can be bought separately for 1½d., post free if desired.) The care which has been taken in compiling the matter in the pamphlet deserves every praise, and the result is a unique addition to existing literature on the subject. It will prevent many a student from losing himself among the irrelevancies that are now so rapidly spreading over the field of Credit controversies.

The World of William Clissold: Books I. and II. By H. G. Wells. (Ernest Benn, Ltd. 7s. 6d.)

For exactly 100 pages this new three-decker masterpiece is so dull that only reviewers and other browbeaten persons will read it through, though everybody will pretend to have done so. Mr. Wells, so much like the rest of us when we take a long breath and say that now we are going to show 'em, falls lamentably short of his mark just because the jump was to be such a fine one. Why should he have taken all that trouble to fail where he has already succeeded so brilliantly? Is he jealous of Shaw's prefaces? If so, let him be assured that to the mind of at least one intelligent critic, Shaw's prefaces can be duller than ditchwater. Mr. Wells is pre-eminently an artist. True, he fancies himself as a scientific man; he would not be a graduate of London University if he did not. But it is as an artist, sketching his types, painting in their lineaments and expressions from the storehouse of that wonderful Puckish memory of his, that he makes us listen to his sociological sermon. When there is nothing but sermon, we yawn at him, for he is a week-day, secular person, and the cloth does not suit him. Then, at the foot of page 100, there begins a new score, twenty odd pages of solid description, the "view from a window in Provence." But this is fine, this is delicate, this is human and colourful, and we wake up and listen to the sermon now. And after it ends, and Book II., which should have been Book I., begins, we get the old Wells back again, spring of abundant speculation, illuminated with quaint and wise instances—but still overpowered by this terrific, misbegotten, incomprehensible attack of uninspired didacticism. Chuck it, Wells! Let the rest of it be a real novel.

Readable Relativity. By Clement V. Durell. (G. Bell and Sons. Price 3s. 6d.)

Mr. Durell is senior mathematical master at Winchester, but his book can be understood by people who are not necessarily mathematicians. The ten chapters cover light, velocity, clocks, algebraical relations, separation of events, the fourth dimension, mass and momentum, general relativity, and the Einstein tests.

The Language and Thought of the Child. By Jean Piaget, Professor at Neufchatel University. (Kegan Paul. Price 10s. 6d.)

The entire spontaneous conversation of two little boys taken over a month at a play school is here reproduced. Nothing new emerges from the analysis, which, however, confirms the egocentricity of the child.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

INTERPLANETARY COMMUNICATION.

Sir,—Since Structure, or at least our apprehension of it, is conditioned by the mind which apprehends, it seems very probable that P. M., in his article on Interplanetary Communication *is* dealing with facts which matter—not to "seers" alone, but to those, for instance, who puzzle over the mysterious journeyings over great distances of some creatures such as moths somehow aware of a mate. Scientists might care to consider whether these live in a space conditioned by a Group Mind, and apprehend a very different structure from that known to the centralised Individual Mind, the likely natural result of whose interplay with the non-self would appear to be the sphere.

The *great distances* may not exist for the Group Mind, and the moth's *long journeys* be a man-view only of the real facts.

I admit that "something seems wrong" somewhere (possibly more in fact than in theory), since sympathy and proximity on this earth very imperfectly correspond.

L. S. M.

Sir,—Can any of your readers explain to me why so sensible a policy as Social Credit should appeal to persons who hold idiotic beliefs about interplanetary communication, and who can enjoy two and a half columns of meaningless jargon about the earth being a veritable organism?

H. N. SMITH.

[All speculative theories are nonsense in the sense that they do not wait upon evidence. They are also useless in the sense that they afford no immediate means for solving human problems. As our late colleague, Mr. A. E. Randall, used to say, a man can neglect the "fourth dimension" with impunity, but let him once conduct his life on the theory that there is no third dimension, and he will promptly come to a violent end. Nevertheless it is drawing a wide inference from these considerations to suggest that the speculative habit of mind is valueless. For instance, the old concept "As above, so below" has received confirmation by researches into the structure of the atom, which is now said to correspond to the astronomic system. Just as the small boy once defined a hole as "nothing, with something all round it," so the current scientific definition of matter might be defined as "nothing, with specks of something going round inside it." Though this idea may as yet be incapable of practical use, no one may assert that it will not be. The transmutation of elements, for example. So also in the case of the cycle of atomic numbers: missing elements were discovered which fell symmetrically into vacant places in the hitherto incomplete cycle; and it is reasonable to say that they would not have been detected so soon if scientists had not antecedently held a speculative theory which required them to exist. It is not suggested that these two instances are entirely typical of such transcendental concepts as Jaworski's. Whereas some speculative ideas work from within the confines of verifiable human experience and explore adjacent territory, others take a flying leap right outside, sometimes beyond the horizon of the intelligible. The latter are not tethered by terminology; and people who depend upon written or spoken words for their apprehension of ideas naturally cry out to the prophets of such soaring concepts: "My God, my God; why hast thou forsaken me." Some, like Mr. Smith, whose letter appears elsewhere, use a less submissive formula. But there is this consolation. The whole concept of the prophet may remain unreleased by his exegesis, but his very attempt to translate it into language affords food for the logical, who can always make other uses of the prophet's revelation than he intended. It often happens to a teacher that by the time he has completed his attempt to teach one thing he has somehow convinced his pupils of another. And inventors are exceptionally bad advertisers. For instance, when Jaworski says: "All is living, all is conscious, and the individuality is but an appearance," he is not only saying (a) that the whole earth is one organism, but (b) that neither he nor any other individual is competent to decide that the whole earth is one organism. If each man, as he says, is only "a cerebral cell" in a "brain" called "Humanity," then the fact that a man called Jaworski delivers a philosophy about that brain must imply his belief in the supremacy of the cell over the organism. The part knows more than the whole. He thus caters with sublime impartiality for both believer and heretic.

But, to quote Mr. A. E. Randall again: "What is true on one plane is true on all the planes." We accept this speculation, and offer it as the justification of our policy of encouraging everyone competent to write the truth as he sees it on his particular plane. And our specific answer to Mr. Smith's complaint is that there is no audience before which this experiment can be more fruitfully tried than before the readers of this journal. We trust those whose eclecticism has selected and absorbed the Social Credit theorem to treat all ulterior speculations as raw materials of a synthesis and not finished articles of a creed.

In saying this we are far from attempting to discourage readers from attacking anything they dislike in these pages; for, as Nietzsche said, a good war hallows every cause.—ED.]

Finance Enquiry Petition Committee

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.

Among eminent signatories are the following :

The Rev. Lewis Donaldson, Canon of Westminster.
The Right Rev. Bishop Gore, D.D.
The Rev. P. T. R. Kirk, M.A. (Secretary, Industrial Christian Fellowship).
The Rev. R. F. Horton, D.D.
H. W. F. Alexander, B.A., B.Sc., Chairman, Society of Friends Committee on War and Social Order.
G. K. Chesterton, Esq.
H. G. Wells, Esq.
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Sir Oliver Lodge, F.R.S.
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Montague Fordham (Rural Reconstruction Association).
Arthur J. Penty, Esq.
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Copies of the Petition, together with leaflets and sets of instructions, are immediately available from

THE JOINT SECRETARIES, Finance Enquiry Petition Committee, 303, Abbey House, Westminster, S.W.1

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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