THE
NEW AGE
INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER"
A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE AND ART

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

On the first day of the New Year the first portion of the Ministry of Health's regulations restricting the use of preservatives and harmful colouring matter will come into force. The *Daily Mail*, in a leading article, welcomes this "reform in the nation's food laws," saying that it is impossible to rear a healthy nation on impure food. Quite so. But only the very poorest classes ever eat food that can reasonably be called impure; and the question is whether their purified food is going to cost them more. The writer of the article says that all the smaller shops will now have to adopt refrigerators. If so, their humble customers will have to pay for them—and out of a decreasing income. "Little and Pure" is apparently to be the new food slogan for such people. Undoubtedly there is something to be said for hygienic starvation, but it would be much more pleasant if the dilemma could be avoided. What about adding a preservative to wages? Consumer credit is not simply not harmful, but positively nourishing—and the banks can make it out of nothing.

* * *

In the *Investors' Chronicle* there is an announcement issued by the Corporation and General Securities, Ltd., in which it tells investors how much safer their money will be in the hands of Municipalities and other public authorities than in other classes of security.

> "Corporation stocks are secured directly on the rates and all the assets of the borrowing Municipality. The capital value on which rates are levied is immense without taking into account the property directly owned by the Municipalities themselves."

This is illuminating. In the case of limited liability companies which have a bad time, the shareholders cannot lose more money than they have chosen to invest, however great the liabilities of these concerns to outside creditors. But if a Municipality reaches a position equivalent to bankruptcy, all its shareholders—the ratepayers—are liable to have their private possessions raided indefinitely. No wonder, as the advertisement claims, "no British Corporation has ever defaulted nor has default ever been contemplated as possible." So the moral is, do not risk money in ordinary commercial undertakings for the sake of an extra half per cent., but go in for Corporation Stocks. "Absolute safety of capital is far more important than income" declares the advertisement. The logic of this, however, leads towards the conclusion that hoarding is preferable to investing.

> Pack up your money in your old kit-bag,
> And smile, smile, smile.

—to parody the soldiers' war song. We recommend the idea to Messrs. John Tann. "Keep your home safe by keeping a safe in your home," would make them a good slogan for a national sales campaign. The sneak thief, of course, abounds; but at least the careful hoarder would have a sporting chance of catching him—an advantage which the improvident investor does not enjoy. After all there is no difference between minding your money yourself and getting no interest, and investing your money with a third party and paying to him the interest he pays (and often does not) to you—which is roughly the kind of thing that happens to-day.

* * *

Mr. E. C. Grenfell, M.P., speaking in a recent debate in the House, warned the Government about the guaranteeing of loans. Under the Trade Facilities Act, £70 millions had been guaranteed, and another £34 millions under the Electricity Bill, while the African loans will bring the aggregate up to £120 millions. This, he pointed out, will weaken the position of the Treasury when the time comes to refund the war debts. Commenting on this speech, the *Investors' Chronicle* observes: "Mr. Grenfell's moral was that the sooner these State guarantees are stopped the better for State credit. That is obvious, but trade and Colonial development must be financed." Yes, they must. But we are

afraid that Mr. Grenfell, with his American affiliations, is not likely to look at it that way. Why, indeed, should the health of British credit be exposed to the risk of work when there are so many millions of American dollars itching for employment? Mention of the Electricity Bill recalls Lord Rothermere's brilliant proposal transmitted to the *Daily Mail* from New York early this year that Britain should be electrified by American experts and American material. What effect that would have had on Britain's debt to America was not discussed. Nevertheless, the proposal shows that American interests are more concerned to get us to increase our indebtedness than to make us reduce it. They will not formally admit it, but virtually they want to continue sending us goods free of *effective* charge. So long as we sign a note that we owe for them we can have them without actually paying for them. It sounds nonsense—until one reflects that under financial law the populations of all countries are only allowed to treat themselves to goods so long as they are treating outsiders to them. They are reduced to the necessity of keeping alive by nibbling like rats at their own exports.

* * *

The result of the Smethwick Election will give politicians of all Parties something to think about this Christmas. At the last election the Labour candidate, Mr. J. E. Davison, beat Mr. Marshall J. Pike, his Conservative opponent, by 14,491 votes to 13,238—a majority of 1,253. The declaration of the present poll is as follows:—

Mr. Oswald Mosley (Lab.)	14,491
Mr. Marshall J. Pike (Con.)	9,495
Mr. Edwin Bayliss (Lib.)	2,600

This gives a Labour majority, over the Conservative vote, of 6,582; and, over Conservative and Liberal votes together, of 3,982. Out of a total electorate of 35,862 (of which 14,630 are women) 28,172 persons cast their votes, leaving 7,690 who did not go to the poll. Mr. Bayliss forfeits his deposit of £150, having failed to poll one-eighth of the votes cast.

* * *

The enactment under which a candidate so loses his deposit was a dirty piece of legislation. Ostensibly designed to discourage "frivolous" candidatures, it operates to frighten off exponents of unaccustomed, and therefore *non*-popular (which is not necessarily the same thing as *un*-popular) doctrines. It therefore comes about in practice that only a comparatively wealthy candidate of this sort can face the risk of presenting the programme he believes in instead of the programme endorsed by his Party leaders, and backed by Party funds. Happily for Mr. Mosley he has a plump little cash-box of his own, and was therefore able to command the lung-power necessary to deafen the free and independent citizens of Smethwick into yielding him up a smashing majority for his own objective. It was not for nothing that the Press in general, during the campaign, harped continuously on the single string of Mr. Mosley's affluence, asking why he did not sell all he had and give to the poor. There are doubtless plenty of people who would like to see Mr. Mosley strip himself of the power which his fortune confers on him, and so reduce himself to the necessity of going hat in hand to Eccleston Square for the means of pursuing his political career.

* * *

The *Daily News* makes some interesting comments on the result of this election in a leading article entitled "The Cuckoo in the Nest."

"It is impossible not to wonder if these [i.e., the Labour Party's] jubilations over the return of Mr. Mosley are shared by those who in the House of Commons at the moment are sitting in front of him. It is an open secret that those who are now greeting his return to their company with almost hysterical expressions of joy have left no stone unturned to prevent his appearance. At by-election after by-election his name has been mentioned as a possible candidate, only to be hurriedly crossed off by a thoroughly perturbed Eccleston Square. Even when he was in the forefront of the Smethwick battle Mr. Snowden ventured into print with dark references to wealthy adventurers who were buying up the best seats of the party. Now at last the cuckoo has got into the nest. It cannot be long before he is in supreme possession. For this young man with his unorthodox views of currency questions and all his ugly predatory policies ripped en bloc from the I.L.P. resolutions, so distressing to the amiable and liberal-minded Mr. MacDonald, will have the enthusiastic backing of the most robust elements of the Labour Party. In that sense the Smethwick election may easily 'have made history.' It may possibly change the chart and alter the course of the whole organised Labour movement."

This diagnosis overlaps a good deal of what we have said in these columns recently. It has, moreover, a direct bearing on the conundrum—discussed at length in our Notes and in the article contributed by "Junius Brutus" last week—of what Mr. Lloyd George's policy may be apropos of Labour, and of what ex-Labour-Ministers think of doing apropos of Mr. Lloyd George. It is all very well for a triumphant Labour Party to declare in public that it will not treat with a disunited and demoralised knot of Liberals; but its Parliamentary leaders are experienced enough to know that the Party is really two Parties, so divergent potentially that there only needs to be a clear Labour majority in the House to precipitate an internal row beside which the present Liberal disunity will appear to be of no more substance than a lovers' tiff. The mere fact that the *Observer* can mention the name of Mr. Thomas as the possible next Labour Premier snatches the veil off the real situation.

* * *

But all this is on the assumption that Labour comes back with a majority at the next General Election. It may; but if it does, it will be by the consent of the permanent hidden Government of the country—the high financial interests; and its tenure of office will be determined by those interests. Some years ago when Mr. Lloyd George began to say inconvenient things about the credit question he was warned by a financial newspaper that the City had the power to break any Government. And so long as there is persistent silence among the leaders of all three Parties about this undoubted fact, one may safely assume that there is a would-be gentlemen's agreement among them to take turn and turn about at playing the game of governing according to bankers' rules. For any man or Party to try to expose the power of the financier to the electorate in the hope of winning a mandate to break it appears a hopeless proposition. It seems as though appeals to the people at elections must continue as heretofore to concern themselves with what the *Daily News* calls "predatory" programmes, for, thanks to Press education, the average elector cannot even begin to believe that any legislation can do anything for him unless it does someone else. But the case is not hopeless. It is not necessary to instruct the electorate, much less to change its mentality, during the progress of a General Election. What is necessary is that the House be converted to a non-predatory programme of betterment after the election. It is here where Mr. Mosley has a great opportunity to "make history." If he will concentrate on perfecting his study of the financial system and will take every opportunity of relating a correct analysis of that system to the problems with which the House has to come to grips—if, in a word he devotes all his speeches to *sowing distrust of bank policy* all over the House, he will be taking the shortest cut to fulfilling the promises he has made to his

own constituents and inferentially to the vast majority of the whole community. His arguments may not make a visible appeal at first; but let him choose them carefully, and events now working up will trebly underline them. Positive proposals can wait. Take care of the analysis and the remedy will take care of itself. There will come an instant when all eyes shall see it together.

* * *

In the meantime we can well afford to let pre-election combinations and permutations of Party affiliations take what course they will. We can ignore the outcome of any election—the personnel of any Cabinet. Economic scorpions are no respecters of political rosettes, and we had much better see the House of Commons as a collection of ordinary, kindly, not too intelligent human beings face to face with the responsibility of saving their country from an imminent and unparalleled catastrophe.

* * *

The prospects, as we write, suggest that a great number of poor people in London will be without coal this Christmas. Nearly a fortnight ago there was evidence that trouble of this kind might occur, when it was stated that the expected demand for coal following the return of the men to work had not materialised, and that wagons which should have been returning to the pits were still standing loaded in the sidings all over the country. The Brodsworth Colliery, near Doncaster, employing 4,000 men, had been obliged to close down owing to these causes. And now comes a report that the Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society have had to close down six of their seven depots, while other dealers all over London are without supplies sufficient to fulfil more than a small fraction of the urgent demand. The Ministry of Mines take no responsibility, and refer enquirers to the Ministry of Transport, who in turn say it is not their fault but that of the railway companies, who again swear that the coal is available but the merchants will not fetch it away—a charge which the merchants repudiate. The situation is a graphic illustration of the futility of the present system of distribution. Consumption cannot take place because the pressure of production has turned wagons into warehouses: the very implements of distribution become part of an ever-growing dump heap. One immediate explanation of the present trouble is that manufacturers are holding back orders in the expectation that prices will break. At the very least one would have thought that this would give the private consumer a look in. But on the contrary; when the big buyers refrain the small buyers cannot get supplies. This is not surprising, however, when it is remembered that under the existing financial system consumption is regarded at the best as incidental to production, and at the worst as a handicap on it. This deadlock is of the same kind, and due to the same causes, as the larger deadlock in international trade to which we have referred in a previous Note.

* * *

It is with keen sorrow that we record the sudden death of Mr. George S. Reinganum, which took place during Sunday night, December 19. There will be many readers who will recall his regular appearances at meetings of the Social Credit Movement. They will remember his slight figure, his unobtrusive manner, and that subtle, soft, whimsical shyness in his demeanour which distinguished him in every company and in all circumstances. Were the subject of discussion never so involved, he was always ready with a contribution to it; what he said was consistently relevant and enlightening, and delivered with such evenness and quietude that one received the impression of, as it were, listening to a soliloquy—to the self-communing, moreover, of a mind at rest with itself. Yet probably his greatest value lay in his activities outside. We, more than any, can speak for his unremitting energy in disseminating the economic truths for which this journal fights, and we have lost all count of the occasions when he has helped us with Press cuttings for comment—so discriminately chosen and annotated with such suggestive ideas as to reveal his profound comprehension of the cause he made his own. That Death should lay a hand on this man in the prime of his life is a tragedy. Happily, it was a kindly hand, for it reached down through his temporal sleep and withdrew him imperceptibly into eternity. The wound is for his widow. To her go out all our sympathies. In the hope that as time passes it may be a consolation to her, let us declare that in his short life her husband has done more to deserve the gratitude of future generations than the thousand and one celebrities who so proudly preside over our destinies. Not long hence, and the oppressed will harvest joy from his sowing, and their children sculpture his memory in their laughter.

Fascismo.

The future historian of post-war Italy will not lack documents; but he will need them. It is a period deeply interesting to the student whether of social problems, of political philosophy, or of psychology. The thriving industrious small-holder of Piedmont, extracting from his ancient terraces the last ounce of possible return by hand-culture, and the loving skill of long hereditary ownership, differs almost as widely from the rural peasant of Sicily as from the factory hand of Milan. But apart from knowing the country it is, of course, necessary that the student of this remarkable period should be conversant with the earlier history of Italy, and especially with its political condition preceding and during the war; and yet the startling course of events forces us to take sides in the daring experiment of this blacksmith's son who, alone among the statesmen of Europe, seemed clear-sighted enough to see, and bold enough to grapple with, the problems that arose in a country flooded by bands of demobilised soldiers deceived by lying promises, shaken out of their old grooves, without employment, and without reward.

Allowing for local differences, the same thing was happening in all the combatant countries; the old discrepancies between rich and poor glaringly exaggerated, while the ancient protective shams of difference of status had been torn to pieces in the trenches. Circumstances were new, or rather the old pre-war tendencies that had been working underground were exposed to the light of day; but it did not occur to our politicians that an altered world required altered methods of government. The blessed word "reconstruction" was tossed to and fro, but no statesmen except Mussolini and Lenin appeared to realise that a system of government which had just managed to keep things going in the old ruts was in no way adapted for contriving a new social order.

The need was, of course, less obvious and less immediate in the more stable countries such as our own. In Italy, where parliamentary democracy is not indigenous, but imported from northern lands, and never truly acclimatised, the need was overwhelming. The political chaos which succeeded the war is clearly narrated by both our authors, and, considering the diversity in their points of view, there is little discrepancy between the two accounts. Don Sturzo's book*, ably and brilliantly written, aims at giving an unbiased estimate of persons and events.

* "Italy and Fascismo." By Luigi Sturzo. Translated by Barbara Barclay Carter. (Faber and Gwyer. 15s. net.)

In the earlier part of the book the author assumes with success the rôle of the impartial critic. Take, for example, his summary of Mussolini's character and the qualities that have led to his eminence:

"Of mediocre culture and meagre political experience, Mussolini has the brilliant political qualities of the extemporiser. . . . He has passed from extreme revolutionary Socialism and gross irreligion to the most pronounced conservatism and clericalism. . . . His mind, given to excessive simplification, is bound by no formula; he can pass from theory to theory, from position to position rapidly, even inconsistently, with neither remorse nor regret. . . . He possesses constant ability to seize the moment, to profit by circumstances, to hold in check the most experienced and shrewdest men, to come out of a tight corner with ease and elegance. The fact of his having been for a long time free, both as Socialist and Fascist, to wield with impunity every kind of threat and violence, has given him a profound contempt for the politicians of the past, whether Socialists or Liberals who tolerated or flattered him."

Such a summary might almost have been written by an admirer instead of an adversary, and, indeed, the impression left on one after reading Don Sturzo's heavy indictment of Fascism is that "il duce" is a man with a genius for leadership, swift and fearless in action, intensely practical in seeing the immediate needs of the country and in adapting means to the end in view.

If we turn to Signor Villari's book†, we learn in detail the nature of these means. For the student of the art of government the chapters on Economic Progress, Labour, Education, and Fascist Legislation are full of interest. But perhaps Mussolini's most striking achievement was in reducing the financial chaos in which the country was involved when he came into power.

"He selected Alberto de Stefani, a professor at the Commercial High School in Venice, as his Finance Minister. There have been many eminent financiers in the former cabinets, but as they could never count on the whole-hearted support of the Government, their efforts at reform were rendered nugatory. Giolitti, in 1921, had secured full powers for the reduction of the bureacracy and other economies, but even he proved unable to carry out the task in the face of the opposition. Not an employee could be dismissed without risking a general strike or a revolution, or at least the loss of several votes in the Chamber; for the same reason no reduction in the pay of State employees or railway men was possible, nor could discipline be restored in the public services. No cabinet could live for a day except by a complicated form of tight-rope dancing.

"Prof. de Stefani, on the contrary, could go ahead with his reforms without any fear that they would not be carried out."

Thus encouraged and by prodigious industry and an ability amounting to genius, he achieved results that had appeared impossible, so that in the budget of 1924-25, instead of the estimated deficit of 1,353 millions, there was actually a surplus of 209 millions, for the first time in fifteen years. But in 1925 new difficulties arose owing to circumstances independent of Government action.

"In order to face these difficulties, the Prime Minister came to the conclusion that the services of a practical business man were necessary. Sig. de Stefani resigned in July last, and his place was taken by Count Volpi, formerly an important figure in the Italian business world, and a man of great experience of affairs. In order to improve the exchange he has undertaken, together with Signor Belluzzo, the Minister of National Economy, the study of the best means for reducing foreign imports by intensifying the development of hydro-electric power, the electrification of several lines of railway, and, above all, the increased production of wheat."

The avowed apologist—and it is frankly as such that Signor Villari writes—is wise to dwell on the practical achievement of Mussolini, who is reported to have said when he first came into power that what the people of Italy needed were good roads, well-managed railways, better education, and steady employment; that, in fact, liberty was not the first necessity for a nation that had been so woefully misgoverned. "Hierarchy should end in a pin-point." It is in this connection that one must understand those ironic speeches about liberty which gave so much umbrage to Liberals in the early part of his career. A timid foot-passenger waiting to cross the Place de l'Opéra in Paris, if he were assured that he was perfectly free to do so at any moment, would gladly barter that liberty for a little discipline in the shape of an authoritative policeman controlling the traffic. Even so, it seemed to Mussolini that things had come to such a pass through the greed of profiteers, the insubordination of the workers, the vacillation of their leaders, and the unending squabbles of political parties, that nothing but an armed dictatorship could restore order.

It is a terrible misfortune, not merely for the people of Italy, but for the nations of Europe who might have learnt so much from watching an unhindered attempt at reorganisation that an experiment of so much promise, and of such weighty import, has been shattered by headstrong violence. It will some day be known how the ship that set sail so bravely was wrecked, whether the mind of the pilot gave way under the strain, so that he wilfully took a wrong course, or whether he was over-ruled by a mutinous crew. At present we can only conjecture as to underlying causes, but the fact emerges only too clearly that this leader of genius has entered on a road that can end only in disaster.

These two books are complementary to one another not merely because they present opposite sides of the shield, but also because, while the one deals with practical problems of to-day, the other is concerned with principles of government and the spiritual welfare of nations. It is in Part III. that Don Sturzo, in his noble enthusiasm for peace and goodwill, will appeal powerfully to English readers. It is indeed to Anglo-Saxons on both sides of the Atlantic that these final chapters are specially addressed.

E. T.

† "The Fascist Experiment." By Luigi Villari. (Faber and Gwyer. 12s 6d. net.)

PRESS EXTRACTS.

"There has now been effected a combination between the French and German potash producers by which practically all of the effective world potash is now under one control. In establishing that control, the *output of the various potash mines in France and Germany has been limited.* Some mines have been suspended and indemnities are paid to the suspended mines out of the general returns of the potash syndicate."—Secretary Hoover, quoted in "*Manufacturers' Record*," June 24.

NEW YORK BANKERS TAKE OVER FAMOUS SAUSAGE BUSINESS—A sausage business in New York City, which was started by Adolf Gobel 35 years ago as a personal enterprise, in which he made his goods at home and peddled them in a basket on his arm, and which has come to have sales aggregating $8,000,000 a year, will pass into the hands of a group of Wall Street bankers under an agreement just reached with the heirs."—"*Christian Science Monitor*," August 20.

"England's 'Big Five' banks are extending so fast that 100 branch banks are annually built to every new church. Property owned by these banks is estimated to have value of over £50,000,000, one new branch having been opened each week by each of the five banks in the past year."—"*Wall Street Journal*," August 26.

"There is at present such a glut in the French bean and scarlet runner that they cannot even be given away! They are being burnt at Covent Garden, or where they cannot be burnt are being thrown upon the refuse dump. A representative of the *Morning Post* who visited the market was offered 60 sacks of beans, each of 40 lb., the pitiful residue of 600 sacks which one grower had thrown away for want of a market at any price. Threepence a sack was what those which could be sold were fetching; a bag of 20 cabbages brought a shilling; and 12 lb. of tomatoes 2s. 6d. There is a point at which cheapness becomes waste, and that point is reached when it does not pay to grow things."—"*Morning Post*," September 14.

A Vagabond in Denmark.

By Leopold Spero.

XXIII.

THE WORLD'S WORST.

The encyclopædias are a little bit sniffy about the appearance of Copenhagen. The excellent and illustrated Chambers's himself speaks of "its few buildings of historical interest or intrinsic beauty," and goes on to include the Church of Our Lady amongst them, with its baptismal font, designed and in part executed by Thorwaldsen.

Which brings us to a consideration of that solemn and alarming pomposity who has a Museum all to himself, filled with the most amazing examples in plaster and marble of an artistic ineptitude that is truly historic. They beam at you in Copenhagen when the name of Thorwaldsen is mentioned. But from that fatal day in 1796, when he and his gold medal went to Rome to be patted on the head by the misguided Canova, to the triumphal return twenty-three years later, which is still to be discerned in dimly sketched colours on the outside walls of the sham antique marmoreum, by the Christianborg Castle, where even the trams are hushed into silence as they tinkle by, Bertel Thorwaldsen did nothing that had not been done much better two thousand years before. They keep as many mementos of him in the little room upstairs as they do in Odense of Hans Andersen, who was worth a myriad Thorwaldsens. His conventional Italian landscapes, his laurel wreaths, his little music note-book, his purses, his orders and decorations, his Freedom of the City, even his blue-grey season ticket for the Royal Theatre, all are preserved, and perhaps better worth preservation than those lumpy warriors and frowning busts of Continental princelings and English county gentlefolk which adorn the hollow corridors.

Not for brazil nuts, walnuts, filberts, pecans or even monkey nuts was Bertel Thorwaldsen ever an artist at any period of his life. True, he took many a heavy lump of stone and made it heavier; true, they put up the marquees and got out the red carpet when he landed in state from his dismal ship, condescending to spend a year in the old home-town before returning to the sunshine and jasmine of Italy. True also that a bust of Byron by the ineffable Bertel has found a home at Cambridge, whence not even the Sex Viri will ever be able to banish it. But not for nuts, not for little apples or hard-boiled eggs could the great Thorwaldsen give life to stone. There are statues in London bad enough to have come from his hand. Not many, it is true; for there is a point at which righteous indignation degenerates into petty spite, and we have no need to exaggerate now that the man is dead. But when Bertel Thorwaldsen took up hammer and chisel and started to spoil good Carrara marble, it was a bad, a grisly, an unforgivable and altogether horrible business.

Nevertheless, they love him, these good, stolid sandwich-munching, lager-supping burghers of Copenhagen. You see them wandering about that dismal gallery on the first floor, wondering which is Mr. Alexander Bailey and which is Apollo, gaping in admiration at the long-faced, proud St. Apollinaris, who to be sure has a mineral watery look that is wonderfully life-like. And with an inarticulate pride they gaze and breathe over that most awful effort of all, the Scott bust, which is enough to make the ghostly dogs of Abbotsford howl through half the night. What a sculptor! What a museum!! What a patient people!!!

Nay, more. When you have swallowed Thorwaldsen, there is still the Glyptothek, set high and dry in the open, hard by the Tivoli Gardens, that deadly and inevitable Earl's Court which you dare not avoid for very shame, lest you break the heart of your Danish friends by saying you have not been there. Tivoli is the lodestar of rustic Scandinavia. The bright eyes of village maidens up on the Skaw, in West-Gothland and distant Dalecarlia, even on the North Cape itself, are fixed upon this garden of tawdry, railed-off romance, where acrobats swing high from the trapeze, and the bands blare in glassy restaurants, and youth shrieks and guffaws amid the threepenny distractions of a horrible Yankee Fun Village. There must be many a sad old man, many a withered and disappointed crone hidden in the fastnesses of the far-away snows whose ambition it was to see Tivoli and then die. And yet they go on living, but living always in hope. The Tivoli is their highest expression of Life with the big "L." And the charge is only sixpence to go in—and, more generously, nothing at all to get out.

But what of the Glyptothek, Copenhagen's very own Museum, now extended and enlarged and fitted with feathery palms and glassy fountains by the munificence of the late lamented Mr. Jacobsen, who brewed such excellent and ubiquitous lager that a bottle of it might be expected to come bobbing up under your raft if you were shipwrecked in the lonely wastes of the Pacific? The fact about Copenhagen's Glyptothek, Jacobsen enlagerments and all, is that if you could lift it up and drop it down in South Kensington, it would scarcely obstruct the speeding patrician motors on their adventurous way to find the secret and awe-inspiring terminations of the Cromwell Road. There are bits and pieces of this and that here and there in the Glyptothek, remnants left among the isles of Greece and the vasty plains of Assyria after the Elgins and the Layards had grown weary of the rôle of Autolycus. But to take the Glyptothek seriously, either as a Museum or even as the highest-browed expression of a brewer's propitiatory benevolence, requires all the stolidity that the stolid farmer-soul of Denmark can summon.

NOVEMBER DAY.

I thought that Love would come one day
Boldly beneath the blossom boughs,
To claim his proud own, yea or nay,
Within my heart's high house.

I was so sure that he would wear
The princely peacock's painted wing,
That in some tongue exceeding rare
My visitor would sing.

But when I stood one purple eve
Under a still and tattered tree
And heard a little robin grieve,
How could I know 'twas he!

So haunting and so sweetly soon,
How could I tell that voice was his!
Those million stars . . . that yellow moon . . .
And these strange silences. . . .

A. NEWBERRY CHOYCE.

THE SLAVE.

My love has hair of red,
A body flaming white;
I wish I had been dead
Before she saw the light.

If I had died before
She stretched her arms and smiled,
I could not have known more
Than dreams can teach a child.

But I have sold myself
To be a living slave,
Though not for sordid pelf,
From now unto my grave.

To kiss is sweet to me,
To love is more than sweet,
But still I *must* be free.
Why ever did we meet?

C. E. FUSSELL.

Views and Reviews.

METROPOLITAN CIVILISATION.

VI.

To conclude these notes on the devastation of human consciousness caused by the malignant growth of the present-day metropolis, I propose to suggest the psychological bearing of various unconscious impulses manifested by the city masses. For there are visible compulsive symptoms in which the city betrays its longing for roots through which to suck new vitality. The individual city soul, held aloof from the community soul by mountains of ice which city life cannot melt, harbours unconscious wishes for re-fusion in the community prior to re-individuation. In short, the city cannot stifle the will to be born again, though its institutions are so largely designed to stifle it.

* * *

In the mass as in the individual it is possible, through observing fantasy, dream and emotional storm, to identify the promptings which rendered conscious and pursued in conduct would restore the instinctive satisfaction that accompanies conviction of social worth. Most people have observed, to present an example, that certain day-dreams are common to the city mind. In the Strand I have repeatedly noticed my companion for the occasion pass by shop after shop filled with the *manufactured* products of the earth; reaching at length one of the colonial agencies, whose windows some seducer had dressed with a rich variety of colonial fruits, and with a background of an illuminated panorama of fields and distance, the townsman has fallen. More than once he has confided, and at least once confessed, after a little analysis, that he was caught for a moment by a spell, to dream his life afresh from adolescence. Only forcibly could he put the charm by, to allow the tension of metropolitan life, with its crowd of obligations and commitments utterly devoid of aesthetic joy, to be resumed.

* * *

Before the metropolitan abandoned himself to his despair, to drown his bad conscience for sin against the Holy Ghost in high-speed diversion, there used to be a good deal of somewhat vague talk expressive of an equally vague, because unconscious, wish—to "get back to reality." One cannot help getting back to reality in the unconscious; the trouble, the neurosis, in fact, is caused by the refusal of the conscious also to get back to reality, upon which refusal the unconscious breaks free of the conscious, and swamps it with the image of the desired reality. Now that the country-side has lost not only its folk-song, but most of its folk, the city takes the folk-song up. Everywhere some impulse commands men isolated from the folk to seize hold of every particle of genuine folk-music, vicariously to obtain through it a more simple yet more vital feeling expression. To the psychologist the fact that these folk-songs are arranged with ever-increasing complexity of orchestral decoration seems like a tragi-comedy, as a dance enacted by a city man and an agricultural labourer, both blind drunk.

* * *

The last place to look for classes in country dancing is the country. This and a host of other recreations touch something in the heart of the business-girl, who rushes with set face away from her office to undo the effect of her life occupation. It would be one-sided to condemn the newest city craze of "community-singing," whether it is newspaper organised or not. Even a newspaper may compose its own funeral card. I do not wish to support community-singing either. Community singing is the city in search of a soul. The regime of city life exacts that no one should have passions; everybody must be all-tolerant. The regimen of life exacts that one should have passions, but passions in tune with the whole being. Community-singing presents in part a thwarted love for one's fellow creatures breaking through its repressive ice, and taking a perverted but voluptuous satisfaction. Psychologically it is a demand for the mother as the binding force of the tribe.

* * *

It is not easy to imagine that the ten thousand metropolitans who stand in the Albert Hall to sing compromise their dignity by dancing on the village-green. Yet here they are with lumps in their throats crowing and crying for the sea, the earth, and the past. How accurately one can re-word—for the mother. How much is manifest in that spontaneous response to the suggestion of community-singing. It smacks both of the spiritual vacuum left by the abandonment of worship—what a censure of the church—and of the fear which runs away from the actual problems of civilisation to go and sing in the misunderstood atmosphere of mingled emotion. If the prompting felt by this enormous singing crowd "to have a good cry" were followed to such a degree that the result came to something like psychological catharsis, and in that condition the Sermon on the Mount was effectively read to the multitude, the occurrence would be worthy the description of an event.

* * *

Let us get back to reality. While the Albert Hall mob finds out whether it is crying itself awake or singing itself to sleep, let us encourage those miners who are impelled to leave a doomed industry for the land. But for Man's sake give them different encouragement from odd coppers in a collection-box, because we have not courage to pass a beggar; paying as a substitute for crossing ourselves as a charm against our possible fate. In the East End of London exist thousands of people who are ready to submit year after year to the discomfort and unusual toil of hop-picking for a pittance. If the focus of the national mind were corrected, and its astigmatism adjusted, that human rubbish heap of the East End could be converted into human wealth. But it would demand such a re-organisation of this country as we were ready to promise God only at the height of the storm.

* * *

In those villages in the Home Counties—and a little beyond—where disconsolate craftsmen have gone to live, I meet people who profess to have solved individually the metropolitan problem. In the absence of a communal solution, however, it cannot be solved individually. These craftsmen cannot work for the village-people, who cannot afford to buy their products. The tendency is largely to form a middle-class in the villages, and periodically to run up to town for an exhibition, a market, or excitement. Except one immure oneself in a religious community—which is abandoning mankind to its fate—the village craftsman cannot do without the metropolis. Social value, all the standards by which the worth of achievement is measured, are made and applied there. In England one is very unlikely to be anybody who is not somebody in London.

* * *

London does not break up naturally, or find its limits by natural checks. It does nothing to solve the metropolitan problem to build new factories just outside the London ring so that provincial costs only, owing to lower rents and wages, have to be met. That process is mainly one of increasing sub-urbanization, one degree worse than urbanisation. Although the metropolitan problem is by no means confined to England—Europe and America are involved too—England cannot afford to wait for the world before setting right her way of living. It is either the decline of the west, or its re-vitalisation by returning to the sources of life, creating new standards, and envisaging some aim worth living for.

R. M.

Individual Psychology.

By Dr. Alfred Adler.

[*Translated from an Introduction to the New Psychology; edited by Emil Saupe.*]

III.

Now individual psychology has in great part solved the problem of discovering the mistakes which at the birth of the "mode-of-living" bring about an increased inferiority-feeling. The results of the faulty start which some children get can be altered later only through a deep self-consciousness. For this the somewhat severe cases of nervous, or neglected, or badly brought-up persons are seldom fitted. Then the individual-psychological method has to step in with its special technique, which is essentially a method of unlimited encouragement. This means in the first place that all *prepossessions in favour of native talent* must be sacrificed. All great achievements appear to us as results of good teaching, unbroken courage, and early beginning of the right training. No reasons against these three factors can be admitted. And all objections reveal themselves as evasions of a cowardly inferiority-feeling, as evasions with the object of avoiding a decision as to one's own value. Or they prove to be attempts on the part of the worthless to get the appearance of some sort of importance, as in the case of the neglected who take to crime. The nervous symptoms and the mistakes of the backward represent arrangements for applying the brake, precautions and intentional hindrances, self-blockades to escape being shown up as inferior. In the course of these researches it has been especially remarkable how valuable for the whole life can be the overcoming of initial difficulties, so that we reach the apparent paradox that great achievements come perhaps regularly through courageous overcoming of hindrances; not through original talent, but rather where there is lack of "talent."

But individual-psychology has also solved the problem of finding out the chief difficulties which in the first three years of life create the increased inferiority-feeling, and with it the problematic mode-of-life which regularly causes deviations from the normal. This opens the way wide for prophylactic in the education, thus avoiding of neuroses, psychoses and neglect. This is probably why this science is appreciated by pedagogues. Also it has proved its utility as the only scientific method of gaining knowledge of people, as it enables us, from isolated volutes, recollections, dreams, phantasies, conscious and unconscious impulses, to draw conclusions as to the mode-of-living of the individual and of the mass.

For the production of an increased inferiority-feeling we have found the causes that strike deepest in three kinds of situations of early childhood. The principal damage they do consists in this, that as soon as the child realises its ego (which is plainly noticeable from the end of the first year) they impress on him all too clearly his own weakness in relation to the demands of the surrounding world. From this situation the child emerges with a perspective that endures throughout his whole life, and permanently falsifies his experience of the world. His attempts at compensation deteriorate. His uncertainty is a constant accompaniment of all his dealings. Only those traits of character are strengthened which correspond to his increased propensity for superiority, or which admit of sly evasions. Egoistic traits, a penchant for isolation, become pronounced. Attacks of pessimism, fear of new situations, a proneness to evasions, appear in every direction. Discouragement readily sets in, and often leads to breaking off what has been begun. Such children's contact with others is always defective. For praise they are mostly very eager, blame cripples them to an extraordinary degree.

As the first category of such children we name those who came into the world with inferior organs, and whose deficiencies persist as life-difficulties. An improvement of their position later does not alter their pessimistic attitude to the problems of life, because they have already found their mode-of-living, and interpret and assimilate all experiences in accordance with it. Overcoming their defects, especially those of the sense-organs, leads not seldom to fine achievements in technique, so that they may become capable artists. The management of a suitable instrument, however, gives less opportunity, makes it unnecessary to develop artistic capacities. Musicians with bad ears, painters and poets with bad eyes, are known to history in great number. Left-handedness, too, represents such a congenital inferiority. It is conceivable that the final result of this struggle for self-maintenance is dependent on many factors among which encouragement plays the greatest part.

The second large category, perhaps the largest of all, consists of spoilt children. They exist symbiotically, and this alone deprives them almost entirely of a feeling of their own value [Selbstwertgefühl (Weinmann)]. They always come to a stage in life where spoiling no longer suffices, where they are driven out of paradise. For them the sacred *function of the mother*, to give them the experience of an absolutely trustworthy person, to give them experience of their fellow-man, has never grown beyond the mother (or similar person), and so they always miss throughout life that first warmth, and can never find themselves in harmony with others. The third category, the *heartlessly-brought-up children*, have never had this experience of the fellow-man. Everywhere they have found enemies only, and they adopt the appropriate attitude: as in enemy country. There are many variations and gradations. As representative injuries, there may sometimes occur exaggerated expectations, difficult situations within the circle of brothers and sisters, the superstition of deficient talent, and so forth.

A detailed discussion of the treatment cannot be given here. As essential we emphasise: patience in training in courage and independence; avoidance of all pressure through difficult cases; avoidance of all needless display of authority; avoidance of all disparagement by scorn, scolding, and punishing. Above all, *no child should lose faith in his future.*

With all three categories of children, as soon as in later life they begin to stumble, one must go the same way, first one must win them, and then one can lead them back to the community.

SHANDEAN SENSE.

My father, my uncle Toby, and Dr. Slop, are discussing a certain celebrated sailing chariot:—

"But pray Dr. Slop," quoth my father, interrupting my uncle (tho' not without begging pardon for it at the same time), "upon what principles was this self-same chariot set a-going?" "Upon very pretty principles to be sure," replied Dr. Slop; "and I have often wondered," continued he, evading the question, "why none of our gentry, who live upon plains like this of ours (especially they whose wives are not past child-bearing), attempt nothing of the kind; for it would not only be infinitely expeditious upon sudden calls, to which the sex is subject—if the wind only served—but would be excellent good husbandry, to make use of the winds, which cost nothing and eat nothing, rather than horses, which (the devil take 'em) both cost and eat a great deal."

"For that very reason," replied my father, "because they 'cost nothing,' and because they 'eat nothing,' the scheme is bad; it is the consumption of our products as well as the manufacture of them, which gives bread to the hungry, circulates trade, brings in money, and supports the value of our lands; and tho', I own, if I was a Prince, I would generously recompense the scientifick head which brought forth such contrivances, yet I would as peremptorily suppress the use of them.—("Tristram Shandy," Book II., Chap. XIV.)

Noblesse Oblige.

By "Old and Crusted."

"In this unhappy battle was slain the Lord Viscount Falkland; a person of such prodigious parts of learning and knowledge, of that inimitable sweetness and delight in conversation, of so flowing and obliging a humanity and goodness to mankind, and of that primitive simplicity and integrity of life that if there were no other brand upon this odious and accursed civil war, than that single loss, it must be most infamous and execrable to all posterity."

Turpe mori, post te, solo non posse dolore.

(Clarendon. History of the Rebellion.)

* * *

It was the Squire's custom on Christmas Eve to visit friends and neighbours whom old age or sickness would prevent from joining the Christmas Day gathering in the great hall of the manor after morning service. The absentees would be rather more numerous than usual this year. The six months' lock-out had left its mark on the frail and aged.

His errand of mercy completed, the Squire turned off the main road from the village into the bridle path over the leys leading to the gardens through the home spinney. There was thankfulness in his heart that he had been permitted to mitigate some of the suffering, coupled with a growing resentment against the folly that caused so much misery, and made Government a byword of derision. Just as he reached the spinney gate a tall well-knit figure came swinging down the lane from the allotments. Recognising Jim Wagstaffe, the Squire waited until he came within earshot, and, holding out his hand, called, "A Merry Christmas to you, Jim." "Same to you, sir," Jim replied, and, throwing down his bundle of "sprouts," he vaulted neatly over the fence to exchange a hearty grip with the man whose son he had played and fought with as a lad, and to whom he had paid the last honours in the mud of Flanders. After due inquiries about Polly and the children, the Squire added: "And so you are back at work again, Jim?" The man's pinched and drawn face clouded over. "Aye, we're back sure enough, Squire—and in more senses nor one. We've not only gone back to work, we've gone back on the men as fought for shorter hours an' better pay. It ain't the extry half-hour as matters—that's neyther here nor there—it's the principle. A'ter years o' struggle for a bit of ease and decency we're pulled up short—as good as told we'd reached our limits—aye, an' gone beyond 'em. 'Tis no matter o' use blamin' th' leaders—belike they've bin had. There's more at the back on it than us chaps knows; may 'appen we're on the wrong track altogether; but what beats me is that men like yourself, who know us and know what minin' is should have owt good to say for such blasted folly."

"And what makes you think I'm in favour of longer hours or lower wages, Jim?" replied the Squire quietly.

"I beg your pardon, Sir, I was not thinkin' of you but of some of your neighbours. We all know you for a good landlord an' a fair man, but the rubbish that's been talked and written about us makes me wild. An' if it's new leaders we want, where should we look if not to the men we've known all our lives, whose fields we've tilled, an—an——"

"Whose hares we've snared?" broke in the Squire, slyly, seeing the lad was getting bogged.

Jim grinned and burst into a guffaw. "Aye, yon were a fair cop, an' a good faight. Well, good-night, Sir—an' thank ye kindly for the pheasant and load of wood."

. . . .

"Another glass of port, Rector?" The Squire pushed the decanter across the table, and without undue protest that ripe scholar and judge of sound wine followed his host's example. Holding his glass to the light he passed it gracefully under the shapely, rectorial nose, took a prolonged sip, and, with a gentle sigh of appreciation, said, "A wonderful wine, Sir Charles! Dow's '78?"

"Yes, and very nearly the last of it. That wily scamp, Solly Goldstein,—I beg his pardon—Lord Goldstone, had the impudence to offer me two guineas a bottle for all there was left, last time he dined here. I told him bluntly I was not in the trade, but the old fellow took it so well that it repented me, and next morning I sent him a couple of bottles, carefully decanted. Ever since there has been a stream of messengers from the castle with peaches, nectarines, grapes, and the Lord knows what—those," pointing to the dishes on the table, "represent the last consignment."

"Just like him," rejoined the Rector, laughing. "When young Almeric returned safe and sound in '18 his semitic lordship was so overjoyed that he would have filled the church with memorial windows, and actually wanted to present me with golden candlesticks—seven, I believe, was the number suggested."

The Squire winced and moved uneasily in his chair.

"I beg your pardon, Charles. I ought to have known better," said the Rector, ruefully, laying a protesting hand on his host's arm.

After a moment's silence the Squire went on: "As you know, I laid it down for—him—but the lad had had little of it; the bulk went to the boys who came here to rest and live the old life for a few days during those years. They were more than welcome to it—and he would have had it so. It pleases me to think," he added, "that Sir Eustace"—pointing to the portrait by Van Dyck, a priceless heirloom and pride of the house—looked on with grave approval and the ghost of a smile as the cavaliers of to-day toasted King and Country in a vintage worthy of the occasion. He and they had much in common. I believe, Rector, that it was something more than devotion to the House of Stuart that made country gentlemen like Falkland welcome death in the field rather than live to see the triumph of either cause. When I call to mind the frank talk of those lads in this room, and how their keen young wits seemed to detect something base underlying the popular propaganda of the day, I could imagine it was not unlike the confidences my ancestor Eustace and Lucius Cary exchanged in their bivouac on the eve of Newbury. I remember one splendid youth, a fine scholar and athlete, now a blind cripple, saying that the Grenfells had the better part, and Rupert Brooke was well out of it! You know the story of Sir Eustace?" "Only so far as it is common property," replied the Rector, "but," he added, musingly, "I have always felt that there was some secret sorrow, as of an unsolved problem, in that man's life to which the clue was missing. The grave pathetic appeal of those strange eyes is more than a mere painter's trick—at least, that is how it strikes me." "You are right," interrupted the Squire eagerly. "Searching for through an old chest in the muniment room for some deeds relating to the Abbey lands, I came across a bundle of letters from Lucius Cary, second Viscount Falkland to my forebear Eustace. You must read them. There is evidence of a very intimate friendship between the two men. They were in the Netherlands together, and Eustace entered the House shortly after Falkland was elected for Newport. Both were inspired by an innate love of liberty and reverence for tradition which made it so difficult to reconcile loyalty to the crown with dislike of absolutism. Both detested the spirit of narrow bigotry that threatened the freedom of England under Puritan tyranny. As the struggle between King and Parliament grew more bitter their

position became intolerable, and when Falkland desired to be 'out of it ere night,' and went willingly to his death at Newbury, Eustace gradually withdrew from public life, and in spite of Cromwell's efforts to save him, sealed his loyalty on the scaffold."

"The way of Wentworth and Laud," said the old churchman sadly, "yet with this difference. If those servants of the King found peace at last, if Falkland was 'out of it ere night,' I feel that his friend Eustace is still waiting—waiting for something without which his troubled spirit cannot rest. It may sound fantastic, but that is how I read you dumb appeal."

A wistful smile flickered across the Squire's rugged weather-beaten face. After a long tense look at the picture he turned to the Rector, and, in a low troubled voice, as if he were making his confession before a greater festival (perhaps he was), he began:—

"Ever since I was a child I have always felt that those eyes were asking me a question which I have never been able to answer. So deep is the impression that in every crisis of my life I have always asked myself, 'What would *he* do in my place? How would *he* judge my actions?' And, believe me or not, I have read both approval and blame in those melancholy eyes. Not a word on this subject has ever crossed my lips until this evening, and I hardly know what makes me speak now. Perhaps the '78 and our old friendship, Arthur. You, at least, will not laugh at me!"

"Not I," replied the Rector, "nor any understanding soul who has tried to read the riddle of the Mona Lisa and failed."

. . . .

"For years and years," resumed the Squire after a long pause, "I have had an uneasy feeling that we were not playing the game. We have allowed ourselves to be bemused by politicians and financiers. We have accepted a monstrous conception of society which postulates permanent economic victimisation, supposed, forsooth, to be essential to our comfort and the stability of our institutions, and, frankly, I can stand it no longer. I cannot away with the conviction that all this misery and unrest is remediable—if one only knew how!—and at last I think I *do* know. He"—pointing to Sir Eustace, was plagued by the same enigma—"Have we ever been so ready to do something for our people at home as we have abroad? Have we ever recognised every man jack as a man? We have rather thought of our country as something apart from our people; considering the people only in the lump. Now I know differently, and this knowledge is the most exacting thing in implied duty that I have learned."

. . . .

Rising to his feet and lifting his glass, he looked his ancestor in the eyes, saying—"Noblesse Oblige." —"Amen," added the Rector.

. . . .

"No more wine? Then let us go upstairs and have some music. I hear Mary at the piano." The two friends walked in silence across the stone-flagged hall and up the broad stairway to the long gallery—followed, as it seemed, by those haunting eyes.

. . . .

The log fire in the dining room flickered and died down, leaving the table with its cut-glass and silver in deep shadow. Through the half-drawn curtains of the heavy mullioned window a flood of moonlight lit up the picture of the old cavalier with unearthly radiance.—Maybe it was fancy—mere moonshine if you like—but that questioning look had vanished. Eustace was "out of it" at last. He had received his answer.

Drama.

The Fellowship of Players.

Progress has been at work a long time since William Shakespeare died, and Mr. Shaw still pushes its wheels round. A number of people, nevertheless, are curious about the sources of art, and the West-End must find time to honour the originators some time. Many of us have suspected that the adoration of Shakespeare was not only religious, but superstitious, and now there is evidence that it is a sort of dissent. In a fashion logically English, we play according to our vanities for six nights per week, and on the seventh night instead of going to church we play Shakespeare. The Fellowship of Players, with which are associated a great many actors, preserves a conscience about this dramatist, and tries to keep his memory green by producing his plays at intervals on Sunday evenings.

Its performance of "Romeo and Juliet" on December 12, 1926, was pleasurably anticipated for the sake of Jean Forbes Robertson's Juliet, and Mr. Laurence Anderson's Romeo. Jean Forbes Robertson almost has Shakespearean blood in her veins, while Laurence Anderson has been grafted on it. Alas, "Romeo and Juliet" demands thorough preparation. Both principals have been glorious successes in *Berkeley Square*, Miss Robertson particularly. As Juliet, however, although looking the maid to perfection, she was under-rehearsed and nervous. I wish the play were according to modern standards, worth giving a run, and that Jean Forbes Robertson were cast for Juliet. That would be a Juliet indeed, and as unspoiled by tradition as the producer would allow. Laurence Anderson, unfortunately, on this occasion allowed himself to be dominated over by tradition, and recited the part more than acted it. Now and again he rose to the music of it, but for long periods he was merely going through the words.

By comparison with the modern representation of life, "Romeo and Juliet" is unimaginably unreal. People die with a suddenness that coroners would not credit, whereas in realistic drama, such as the *Doctor's Dilemma*, and in some romantic drama, such as *Cyrano de Bergerac*, the artist dare not let the voices of his characters be silenced for fear that an epigram might remain unsaid. Shakespeare's superiority over the rest is his power to kill his characters in heaps without making a long job of it. He made play after play into a version of the Kilkenny Cats, secure in his ability to create more, a reflection which offers interesting possibilities on the question of immortality. With all its rustiness, obvious tricks, incredible breakdowns of communications even for its day, not to mention impossible rapidity of falling in and out of love, what a beautiful and moving work the play remains. Let us be grateful to the Fellowship of Players for joining its efforts to those of the old Vic with the object of keeping it from oblivion.

This *Romeo and Juliet* was performed under exceptional difficulties. In the refusal of Juliet to marry her father's choice, H. St. Barbe West, playing Capulet, having taken an overdose of aspirin to see the play through, broke down, and the producer, Mr. George R. Foss, threw himself into the clothes that read the part. Doing his best against hopeless odds, he seemed to provide an excuse for the worst behaviour I have witnessed on the part of a theatrical audience, who, at his exit, tried to expiate its offences by applause that Mr. Foss must have reckoned contemptible. In a big cast the best performances were given by Robert Loraine as Mercutio—even he was not at home, despite previous experience—D. A. Clarke Smith as Friar Lawrence, a character that he wisely kept very restrained, and Ethel Harper as Juliet's nurse. The last was a

magnificent display, which shared the highest honours of the evening with Robert Loraine's Mercutio. Of Jean Forbes Robertson suffice that when she appeared comfortable she was very beautiful, but that she did not awake, as Juliet ought to have done, the romantic lover that lives, if only dormant, in all of us. The handicap was too great. But unless she has an opportunity of playing her Juliet under appropriate conditions the theatre will be the poorer. If any theatre-manager or proprietor really cares for Shakespeare, he will lose a lot of money if need be to give us the Juliet that Jean Forbes Robertson is capable of. She has demonstrated all that fate allowed her to demonstrate—that she could be a lovely and adorable Juliet to remember in our old age.

Amateur Societies.

Last week, at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, selected amateur theatrical troupes competed for the South of England championship, with Mr. C. W. Darlington as judge. Performances by four societies were given, after which Mr. Darlington bravely occupied the stage alone, in the face of some hundreds of entrenched partisans, who probably had no love whatever for critics, to say why he awarded the laurels to the Welwyn Garden City troupe. He emphasised what everybody must have observed, the immense improvement during the last few years in amateur acting. He thought the improvement so great that he could apply professional standards to judge the acting, but he charitably forbore from doing so. Nobody can wish to question his judgment, but one can regret that it was necessary. The winning performance had great merit. It was the one production out of the four in which the audience entirely forgot what Mr. Darlington hoped they would forget, namely, that they were witnessing "a sporting event."

The piece acted by the victors was a one-act, unpublished, comedy by Charles Lee, entitled "Mr. Sampson." The title-role was a genial old bachelor, who lived as the next-door tenant of two Cornish unmarried sisters, whose tempers began to fray, possibly for the first time in their uneventful lives, when the honest old fellow couldn't make up his mind which he wanted to marry. In the end they drove him out and put his rose on the fire. A little sentimental, the play was well-constructed, and entirely free from padding. The characters were well imagined and clearly produced. The drudge of a housekeeping sister, who killed the lonely hours by talking to the grandfather clock, was beautifully acted, though Mr. Sampson reminded one of its prototypes, especially of Cedric Hardwicke. But the reason why I regretted the necessity—and it was a necessity—to give these players the verdict was that the play had only three characters all told, and therefore reflected in no degree the capacity of the competing society to produce any play really worth the labour. This play was subtler than the usual triangle, since it consisted only of the points A, B, and C, and the relative lines were not made, but it wasn't a play at all compared with the fortresses stormed by the other companies. I suspected that Mr. Darlington's heart was with the Play and Pageant Union, which produced Ivor Brown's burlesque farce, "Smithfield Preserve." In this piece Philip Jewitt's Mountebank Doctor was a first-class piece of acting in voice and gesture. A few more of his quality would have eased the judge's honour by uniting the judgment of his heart and his head.

The other competitors made ghastly mistakes. One act of the "Devil's Disciple," done by the Shoreditch Society, was chosen for no good reason in the world. Why on earth did they not choose something complete in itself? Had they done the "Man of Destiny," say, they would, on one condition, have wanted a lot of beating; if Nelly Dean could have made as good an effort at the Lady Upstairs as she did at Mrs. Dudgeon. John Dower's Dick Dudgeon had presence, but the Anthony Anderson, besides the minor parts, was weak, and to weaken Anderson is to misconceive the play. The Interim Theatre Guild ought to requisition the services of a good producer and teacher of elocution. Natural talent is not enough.

The amateur theatre movement is not to be discouraged. It is good for public, actors, dramatists, and the Drama. Nature does not make diamonds in a week, but she has to start the making at an instant. Besides, an amateur society warns young people that acting is hard work, and mends the ways of many a stage-struck loon without wasting his life. The amateur becomes a better critic for his efforts, so that the professional is dealt by more justly, and popularity tends to become a standard of merit.

PAUL BANKS.

Dreiser at His Best and Worst.

Theodore Dreiser, admittedly a novelist of solid talent, is to-day, I fear, overrated, just as twenty years ago he was underrated. "Sister Carrie" and "Jennie Gerhardt," both works of considerable merit, were received with something little removed from indifference. The publishers of "Carrie," taking sudden fright, withdrew the book, and Dreiser for a time turned his back on novel-writing to earn his living editing pish-poshy magazines and novelettes.

The pendulum has swung with a vengeance; to-day we find "An American Tragedy"* hailed in the States as comparable with Dostoevsky's "Crime and Punishment"; in England as one of the best novels America has ever produced. With this *volte-face* I think Mencken has had a good deal to do. While not blind to Dreiser's staring defects, for ten years Mencken has been the big drum-banger of the Dreiseran cult.

To anyone who has grasped the philosophy of Dreiser the interest of Mencken is readily understandable. Dreiser sees life as a meaningless masquerade; and although here and there are indications of an underlying if repressed sentimentalism not altogether compatible with the libidinous hedonism of strict Menckenism, superficially the likeness is sufficiently close.

Dreiser is a realist; but he is something more. He portrays life with a meticulous regard for details; but he lays bare as well, almost with Freudian zeal, the psychology of his characters. Here he goes beyond the bald realism of Zola. The realistic novel, if it ever transcends the reporter's art, falls flat. The novelist must apply to his characters, as it were, the *gestalttheorie* of latter-day German philosophy; and it is something of this that Dreiser accomplishes exceptionally well.

Reading "Sister Carrie," "Jennie Gerhardt," and "The Titan," one marvels that their author has been neglected so long. All three are every whit as good as is "An American Tragedy"; so the critics who have suddenly discovered Dreiser's talent are prohibited from explaining their belated recognition on grounds of the author's improvement. There is no improvement. To the tune of over 300,000 words the author of "An American Tragedy" stumbles, blunders, and meanders amazingly as he did in the incredibly dull "Financier," in the equally boring "Genius." The story of Clyde Griffiths' amorous adventures, his seduction of Roberta Alden, and his murder of this same Roberta by drowning, on the revelation of her impending *accouchement*, could have been told with all necessary detail in a novel of orthodox length. But withal, the story, when it can be extricated from its luxuriant verbiage, is a story well worth the telling, and with his master touch Dreiser mercilessly unfolds the tragedy culminating in the trial and execution of Griffiths. There is no sparing of a single ugly detail; nor, if the reader realises the beauty of Dreiser's portrayal, does he wish to be spared. Nothing in contemporary fiction can surpass this brilliant bit of work. But nothing so abysmally uneven as is a Dreiser novel can claim the highest literary rank. To say, as Krutch says, that "An American Tragedy" is "the greatest American novel of our generation" is unjustified and surprising in a critic of Krutch's penetration.

Dreiser, more, perhaps, than any other writer who has ever lived, has, in effect, said to the critics of two continents: "I write as and what I like, and be damned to the lot of you." One may marvel at the stubbornness of the man, yet one can only admire his dignified strength. Dreiser, in the fullness of his success, is apparently indistinguishable from the Dresier who, with thumb to nose and fingers spread-eagled, twiddled defiance at the Puritans and Comstockians who harried him from pillar to post.

Few writers can tilt at and secure fame and remain unsullied and unspoiled for any long period. If they do not succumb to the alluring offers of the bilge-filled popular magazines on the one hand, or the Sunday muck-sheets on the other, they develop evangelistic and moralistic attitudes. The late Jack London, after his initial burst of brilliance, settled down to something hardly distinguishable from hack-writing; Mrs. Wharton, after "Ethan Frome," is writing magazine stories; Chesterton and Belloc embrace theology and produce what are little better than Catholic sermons; Wells becomes a Utopianist; Shaw a mystic. But at fifty-four Dreiser is still Dreiser at his best and worst. At fifty-four he still ridicules the idea of an anthropomorphic god, still subscribes to the Menckenian theory of futility. To me the question of vital interest is, Will this Dreiseran philosophy endure to the end? Or will Dreiser succumb to mysticism or moralism? I fear a repetition of the old, old story. There are vague leanings to mysticism, indications of latent moralistic passion interspersed in the Dreiser novels. There is in addition the indisputable fact that Dreiser wrote the slushy chorus for his brother's popular song, "On the Banks of the Wabash."

GEORGE RYLEY SCOTT.

* "An American Tragedy." By Theodore Dreiser. (Constable. 10s. net.)

Reviews.

Balbus or the Future of Architecture. By Christian Barman. (To-day and To-morrow Series. Kegan Paul. 2s. 6d. net.)

The scope of this small book hardly justifies the comprehensive title, the author's definition of architecture covering only the internal plan of large drapery and multiple stores, their construction on the open floor principle, and the "zoning" method practised in the United States and exemplified in this country by the new Devonshire House, which he admires. True, he touches the subject of the internal construction of houses, but very sketchily and inconclusively. He devotes much attention to the modern tendency to build commercial establishments on the open floor principle, and attributes this change, of all things, to what he calls the "emancipation of women." This is surely the tail wagging the dog; he might almost as well attribute the design of bank buildings to the formation of the Boy Scout movement. If this change of design, whereby goods (especially those for women's consumption) are displayed in full view of the street and are immediately accessible to the prospective buyer, is due to anything at all, it is due to the efforts of industry to get rid of its products by pushing them under the nose of the public. Demand in this case has more probably followed the artificial stimulation of women's wants by the deliberate engineering of modes and fashions. He seems to have a glimmering of an idea that this is so when, referring to the feminist movement, he states (pp. 26, 27): "The first act of public violence was committed by the adherents of **feminism in 1909**, and as the stones went crashing through the windows of the Government offices in Whitehall, the newly erected windows of Mr. Gordon Selfridge became the cynosure of the more pacific among feminine eyes." The pamphlet is written in the fatuous style of newspaper letter-writers, and from page 64 to page 74 it is difficult to see what the author is driving at, in the confusion of allusions to woman as producer and consumer, decorative art, Ruskin, women as portrayed by Gautier and Zola, dress, modern industry, drapery stores, progress, excess of female over male population, and, lastly, what appears to be a reference to the economic situation:—

> "We are told that the growth of an industrial society must necessarily be limited in extent—nay, that it must even be of limited duration. It is argued with depressing force that the opening-up of markets is like everything else in the world, and can only continue as long as there are markets to open up."

What is to happen after this is not clear: it is "wrapped in a darker cloud."

Pomona, or the Future of English. By Basil de Selincourt. (Kegan Paul. 2s. 6d.)

We are not much impressed by this addition to the To-day and To-morrow Series. A book on English ought to be livelier, more just in its appreciation of the greatest language ever spoken or written since the sun of Athens sank in the western glare of the Sicilian Expedition. Mr. de Selincourt is afraid that English may suffer from a kind of elephantiasis if it becomes the "world-language," whatever that may mean. We cannot think of any period in which English was not enriched by its free and easy pilfering from less active and assimilative tongues, such as French and German. And Mr. de Selincourt must, *must* avoid dullness when writing upon the one subject which need never be dull.

Flecker's Magic. By Norman Matson. (Benn. 7s. 6d.)

Perhaps if he had not shared the desultory, wine-stirred, brain-spun chatter of the cafés of Montparnasse—perhaps if La Fontaine or Cabell or Rolland or Douglas had never existed—Mr. Norman Matson might not have given us "Flecker's Magic." Not that the story is derivative from the works of all or any of these; rather the likeness is in an intangible something of the author's mental attitude that pervades this arresting tale. Suffice it that here is, as the advertisements say, something different.

Imagine a witch—the last of the witches, in fact—in contemporary Paris; imagine a struggling American artist faced with the fairy-tale choice of one wish, any wish conceivable in the world of men, to be gained by the simple act of turning the old hag's magic ring; imagine the cataclysmic changes that might shake the world to its bowels by the granting of, say, long life or wealth or happiness to one insignificant human; then compare your flights of phantasy with Mr. Matson's.

Spike Flecker, the American, is gifted with active powers of visualisation; he, too, looks ahead. And he comes to realise that by holding in his own hands an immutable power for any one of those abstractions vaguely called "good," he would inevitably wreak the greatest evil on his fellow men. The witch yearns for him to desire of the ring happiness, for she "hates the world." The tea-time scene in the witch's attic, when she expounds her own particular brand of metaphysics and supports her arguments with delicate casuistry, is an original and effective bit of writing.

There is an invigorating novelty of attack in the telling of the tale, softened by many hints of colour and poetic beauty in verbal expression, and the love-story that threads the book is clean and pretty. It is indubitably the work of youth, and leaves the reader curious to see what Mr. Matson may give us from his pen before he stales.

Great Short Stories of the World. (Heinemann. 8s. 6d.)

To quote Messrs. Heinemann: "This volume, containing 1,088 pages, comprises 178 complete stories carefully selected from the literature ancient and modern of thirty-two different countries, and covering the whole field of literature from ancient times to the present day."

A guess at the research that must have gone to the garnering of this mixed harvest of the world's short stories can only leave the reader lost in admiration of the compilers and publishers who instigated it. A considerable number of the tales have never been told in our language before, and, without any knowledge of many of the foreign tongues involved, one imagines from the native flavour which the English rendering preserves that the work of translation has been put into extremely capable hands.

The collection is not offered as an arbitrary exemplification of the technically perfect short-story form, but as a selection of the most interesting literature of the best writers of all times in this métier. Prefacing each story, moreover, is a short and useful biography which makes the work invaluable for reference. It is an anthology for the delight of the serious, the entertainment of the casual reader; and its remarkably reasonable price and convenient form make it worthy of commendation as a volume that should be in every home.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

BANKS PROFITS?

Sir,—I think Mr. Biddulph must have had his tongue in his cheek when he wrote that part of his letter giving the percentage of the Banks' profits, for obviously they refer to the variations in the profit from a maximum in 1920, and not to the actual rate on capital. Of course he may have been genuinely mistaken. Who knows?

The Banks' *dividends* generally are about 15 per cent.: their profits may be more.

G. B.

COSTS OF DISTRIBUTION.

Sir,—A general idea of the margins (trade discounts) between cost of goods to retailer and selling prices (apart from "sales") would be useful. On books the discount varies from a sixth to a third or more of the published price. Proprietary articles sold by chemists carry a discount, I am told, of 37½ per cent. On clothes it runs to 50 per cent. and more, and as high on certain sorts of furniture. On jewellery it is possibly higher than that. On toys,

a third seems the usual, probably larger for big buyers. Artistic pottery carries a quarter or a third. In most cases there is also a wholesalers' margin; i.e., you can buy stuff say, from a wholesale house in Paternoster Row at the price you would pay for it from the actual maker. There are also generally cash discounts which range from 2½ per cent. on retailer's cost up to 5 per cent. I should like to see particulars of margins for staples, e.g., groceries (branded and not), meat, domestic cleaners, etc., tobacco, and other staples.

HILDERIC COUSENS.

MR. BIDDULPH v. THE A + B THEOREM.

Sir,—Mr. Biddulph's incapacity to grasp the above is not confined to himself, though few go so far as to use their limitation as a platform whence to hurl sarcasm at those whom they regard as "deluded." Seeing how anxious he appears to be to bring others to his peculiar viewpoint, we may be sure that he has already sent in a pungent adverse essay to the Pollak Foundation for Economic Research, Newton (Mass), in regard to what, in "profits," they term the "10 minus 1" theorem—which is, to all intents and purposes, Major Douglas's analysis expressed from another aspect.

ERNEST A. DOWSON.

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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