

THE NEW AGE

INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER"

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

A paragraph in the *News of the World* forecasts a General Election next year. This, says the writer, will involve a trimming away of a good deal of projected Government legislation, leaving a practical remainder to be put through before the Dissolution. He suggests that the measures thus to be passed will include the extension of the women's franchise, a modification of the Unemployment Insurance Acts, and the reform of the House of Lords. Of this last measure itself a good deal will be cut away, he thinks, and what will be left will be the part which deals with the certification of Money Bills. On the face of it, this forecast seems intelligent. It omits mention, however, of the contemplated transfer of British currency-note issue to the Bank of England. But perhaps this will be done by a Departmental Order during the electoral campaign; or perhaps it will be left over in the hope that a new Government may be returned which will pilot such a measure through Parliament more whole-heartedly than Mr. Baldwin's.

Our assertion that the question of the Lords' money powers was the central issue behind the reforms receives support from another quarter as well. The *English Review* publishes a short article this month entitled "The House of Lords and Money Bills," by Constance Campbell, who is described as a "young Conservative worker." The crux of the question, she declares, is the present "powerlessness of the House of Lords to amend, delay, or reject Money Bills." She makes the point that a revolutionary Government could easily destroy "capital" by taxation measures which could be correctly certified as Money Bills. "Are we prepared," she asks, "to admit this right to a future Labour majority?" Nor does she lack the courage to answer in the negative. The right of the majority to rule, she says, is all very well; but what about it when this ruling consists of exempting the majority

from taxation? She admits the soundness of the principle that he who pays the piper should call the tune—which implies that the Commons should hold the purse-strings; but she foresees a distortion of the principle in a possible situation where "he who calls the tune shall be precisely he who does not pay the piper."

"Parliament acts as a filter to strain the crude will of the electorate before it is allowed to buffet the delicate economic structure of the State; but at present it is a broken filter through which much rough and dangerous experimental matter is liable to escape."

Her conclusion is that the House of Lords must resume power over Money Bills, so as to stop up this "great hole in the Constitution"; otherwise the country will be ruined by a system of "Single Chamber rule directed by an irresponsible majority of taxpayers."

We like her spirit. She has a definite point of view; and with the strictest economy of words makes sure that everyone shall thoroughly understand it. Nor is there any boggling at its implications, for this young Joan of Arc calls on "timid Conservatives" to disregard unpopularity in the constituencies and to follow her policy, "even if it should be at the cost of office." She is a salt breeze stirring the stagnant air of political insincerity. For her, no principles, however widely held and long established, are sound if their consequences offend her sense of right and wrong. We wish there were a few million women like her, struggling to straighten out the distorted perspective which is the common inheritance of all of us.

Nevertheless, sincerity and courage are not enough. Applied only to a partial survey of all the available facts these qualities will only cause harm where they would do good. In the first place, this young lady has not realised that between the electorate and "our delicate economic structure" there are two filters. If Parliament strains the will of the electorate, there is an authority called the Treasury which strains the

will of Parliament. We recommend her to refer to the first issue of the *Banker* (January, 1926), and to read intently every word of Mr. John W. Hills's article describing "The Treasury and its Powers." We are sure that she will be completely cured of her fear of a Socialist Parliamentary Government. In his summing-up, after saying that the control of Cabinets by members of the House of Commons has "waned to vanishing point," and that these Cabinets are "financial dictators," he immediately proceeds thus: "In practice, however, their supremacy is profoundly modified."

"No student of finance would wish it otherwise, and any weakening of the authority of the Treasury should be regarded with little short of terror. Financial stability rests largely in its hands, and if the signs of the times are to be believed, its powers will increase rather than diminish." (Our italics.)

Even this does not fulfil all the assurance she may gather; for the Treasury, in its turn, exercises its power in conformity with the policy of the banking system as represented by the Bank of England with the associated joint-stock banks. If she will refer to the *Financial Times* of September 20, 1921, she will see an editorial article reproving Mr. Lloyd George, the then Prime Minister, for having hinted that the country's bad condition had been brought about by the action of the banks: and in that article she will find this sentence:—

"Does he, and do his colleagues, realise that half a dozen men at the top of the big five banks could upset the whole fabric of Government finance by refraining from renewing Treasury Bills?"

We need hardly point out to this clear-sighted lady that to upset the whole fabric of Government finance is equivalent to destroying the Government. Here she will see a third filter. Nor is the power claimed from the date of the institution of the cheque-system. We have only space to point one moral. It is an important one. Penal taxation of the rich as proposed by Socialists is not novel in principle; in fact, constitutional publicists of eminence admit that there are plenty of precedents, and that it is simply a question of degree. So that Conservatives, who look back on the steady progression of such taxes, must realise that they have been imposed with the assistance and assent of the Treasury and the Banks; in which case, whatever danger may lie in "crude" imposts by a Socialist Government will depend upon how much of this crudity will be allowed to pass through the financial filter. Reforming the Lords as a means of protection is futile; for the same financial power which can decide whether and by how much the rich shall be taxed can also dictate what reforms shall take place in the Upper House. So the ultimate question becomes this: "What are the intentions of high financial authority apropos the 'rich man'?" And if Miss Campbell will undertake a study of the credit question she will discover that the protection of *private* wealth is not necessary to the "delicate economic structure" of the State—that is to say that the banks can create all the credit necessary for preserving that structure in the form they want it, and have no more fundamental an objection to making rich men poor than have the Socialists themselves. To-day the only relevant "reform" of the House of Lords would be one which gave that Chamber the powers now exercised outside Parliament by the credit monopoly. To give it a share in "control" of the kind which the Commons now exercise over finance is like giving it a feather brush to dust out the bankers' parlours.

In the Irish Free State Constitution there was a curious provision which allowed a period of eight years during which amendments to the Constitution could be made by ordinary legislation—after which

no amendment could become law unless confirmed by a Referendum in which either a clear majority of the whole electorate, or a two-thirds majority of the number of electors who actually voted, favoured it. The eight years has nearly run out. This, by the way, affords a clue to the "Jinks" episode, which has apparently ensured that Mr. Cosgrave's Government will last well over into the permanent close season of Constitution-reforming. The *Irish Statesman* is confessedly puzzled about the original intention of this limitation, and asks:—

"Was there some sub-conscious prevision of the future coming into power of Fianna Fail, that kind of seership into futurity which has been explored by Alan Dunn in his now famous book, *An Experiment With Time*?"

Nothing quite so fourth-dimensional as that. The control of major events eight years ahead is nothing to people who control credit movements now. With access to all the relevant information, coupled with our own understanding of the laws of credit, we ourselves could set up as seers and get away with it every time.

The reason for the *Irish Statesman's* raising of this subject is that there are, in its opinion, certain provisions in the Constitution which need amendment, the "chief of these" being the method of electing the Senate

"For this purpose the Free State forms one electoral area, and the astonished and puzzled electors were given a long list of names the vast majority of which they had never heard of, and they were asked to indicate their appreciation of these in due order. On an average about one-fifth of the electors voted, except in one county where the percentage of votes was as high as eighty—

(We should like to know which county that was. Perhaps some of our readers can tell us.)

— and rumour has it that some public-spirited officials exercised on behalf of the voters the right which they were too apathetic to exercise for themselves. Must the same farce be repeated next year?"

According to the *Irish Statesman* the original idea was to select Senators by reference to their "repute" or their "special or expert knowledge" rather than party affiliations. The first Senate was satisfactorily nominated by the President of the Executive Council; but when subsequently a "real election" took place, this journal complains—"men were nominated for party reasons—men whose expert qualifications, even their own election addresses, helped us in but few cases to discover"

The function of the Senate is that of a revising or delaying body only. If it amends the Dail's Bills unacceptably the Dail has only to wait two hundred and seventy days, upon which the Bill becomes law in the form in which it was last passed by the Dail. In view of this very limited power of the Senate the *Irish Statesman* cannot see the necessity for such a vast electorate, and suggests that it is worth while considering how far Chambers of Commerce, the General Council of County Councils, the professions, Union Congress, the universities, etc., might be allowed to nominate, the election to take place at a joint sitting of the Senate and the Dail. Or, alternatively the Senate might be given an intellectual rather than a political character.

Either of these proposals is demonstrably superior to the existing method of selection. But we doubt if it is much good discussing them; for the principle embodied in both is the decentralisation of nomination, and is thus directly opposed to the principle of governmental administration decreed by the financial power at the apex of the political system. For the rest of our commentary we shall do best by

setting down an imaginary soliloquy somewhere in Threadneedle Street (where the Free State Constitution was probably moulded).

Now, we have to give these Irish people a Constitution. It must be as democratic in appearance as possible. We'll have Proportional Representation—the latest thing in popular Government. That gives them a super-representative Dail. We will add to that a popularly elected Senate. But this we will pack with our own men. We have any number of nonentities who, because they have no qualifications for governmental responsibility, can be depended upon to take our advice. Being unknown, the electors will neither like nor dislike them: they will let them pass without demur, especially since Senators have no right of veto over legislation.

Next we must consider that, acceptable as the Constitution is in its present form, the Irish people will not immediately forget that it was made in England. So we must ostensibly give them power to amend it. The Dail's authority on this matter shall be final for eight years. This can be allowed safely because at present the Dail is entirely composed of "Treaty," that is Anglophile, Irishmen, and will remain so for a considerable time. Their job being to coerce the armed anti-Treaty Irish into constitutional ways, they will have no time to alter Constitutions, nor any thought for it, seeing that their skins will not be safe from gunmen. Moreover, until Ireland is settled the Government must rely on England for military and financial support, and will obey our wish that they give the Constitution a good trial.

But in case, by some unforeseen circumstance, the disaffected Irish come in as a Constitutional Opposition to the Dail before the eight years expire, we will give the Senate the power of imposing a nine-months' delay on amendments of the Constitution. That will give us ample time to withdraw financial credits and wait for the ensuing economic chaos which will destroy the Government before the amendments can become law. The danger to the Constitution can only begin to arise when all Ireland becomes constitutional; and it will probably not actually arise until the Irish electorate entrust the party of "violence" with majority power in the Dail. This will obviously take a long time.

But it will eventually happen. When it does we must have ready a check as well as a delay to what legislation is passed in the Dail. Now, the only legislation we fear will be amendments which will really impair our power of financial control. Happily, in the nature of the case, the more radical they are the more academic they will appear to the ordinary elector. They will leave him listless. So what we must do is to supersede the automatic delay by a Referendum check. The result will be that the electors will generally ignore it; for which eventually we will provide by requiring a certain minimum number of votes to be cast or a two-thirds majority of total votes cast if less than the minimum. We can always whip up more than a third of the votes ever likely to be cast; and the beauty of it is that the more the danger to us in any amendment the smaller the actual number of votes we need trouble to mobilise against it.

Students of Social Credit can work out for themselves other possibilities of this sort of plan. Suppose that Mr. de Valera were able to persuade a majority of the Dail to reorganise Ireland's economic system on Social Credit lines, and that this decision were either to require an antecedent, or to involve a subsequent, modification of the Irish Constitution. To-day the Government would have to wait nine months, and though the bankers could stop them, they would have to dislocate the economic machine to do it. A year hence, and the Government can be stopped, while the money machine continues "business as usual." Even were every elector to take an interest in credit questions, there are numerous money-reforms, so much "simpler" and therefore so much more attractive, ready to be brought out in competition with the real remedy that insistence on it would look like pedantry. Are we not ourselves being told, *apropos* of our own propaganda, how much faster we should convert the public if we "broadened" our appeal. So we should; but as the suggested broadening would involve trimming off one integral half of the proposals we advocate, we resist the suggestion. It is not for nothing that there is this insistence upon the common people's understanding a remedy and endorsing it before it be

applied. It is the potential technicians of the new order whose opinions count. Electorates are not that.

The Banking Supplement to the *Spectator*, which we referred to last week, is efficiently planned out for its purpose of serving as a prophylactic against "unsound" ideas. As we pointed out, Mr. Frank Morris gives a new interpretation of the term "national credit," the obscure and unrelated nature of which will make readers despair of ever understanding the financial question. That is very useful to the bankers, for these people draw the conclusion that the subject is essentially beyond understanding by other than banking experts, *ergo*, that external criticism cannot be informed criticism. Then we have Mr. Arthur W. Kiddy on "The Duties and Responsibilities of Bankers." Most of what he says is familiar argument by now, and we will not discuss it. But one of his instances of "banking triumphs" deserves mention. Great Britain, he says, "stood the brunt of the strain" of financing the Allies; and was the country to "take the lead in paying its debts" after the war. These "triumphs" were achieved by reason of our banking system being "untrammelled by State control." We will allow him his point; but he omits to mention that in August, 1914, the State excused the banks from fulfilling their legal contracts with their customers to pay gold on demand, and subsidised the banks with paper currency wherewith to ride out of their obligations. On the same terms the least of us would produce "triumphs." Elsewhere he affirms that when it comes to "safety" the credit of the banking system is superior to the State's. His explanation comes to this: that whereas banks finance only "productive" ventures, the State might finance measures of social amelioration, in which case the purchasing power of the pound sterling would decrease by reason of inflation. Quite so, if one were to grant all his assumptions. But the truth can be stated much more frankly. Once a State yields up its inherent right of credit-control to the bankers and becomes merely a borrower from them, of course its "credit" is inferior to theirs in practice, and there is no use in arguing it. But in a fundamental sense the episode of 1914 places the superiority of the State's credit beyond question. Mr. Norman Crump contributes an article on "Bankers' Balance Sheets: Should Fuller Details be Given?" Since it is the fashion among the intelligentsia to criticise the bankers, it was to be expected that the bankers themselves would provide the non-intelligentsia with some criticisms, which they could use with decorum—giving out constitutional fireworks, guaranteed not to go "bang," which the very young faithful could hold in their hands on November the fifth. So they are treated to a resumé of numerous little modifications in methods of presenting accounts, which no doubt are already approved in principle and ready to be carried out as soon as the time comes for a tactical pretence of conceding something valuable to a public agitation. Mr. Crump says that it is "common knowledge that every bank has huge hidden reserves," but explains that they dare not announce their exact size because if they did "there would probably be protests from the trading community that they were being starved of money by the banks," and that "it would be impossible to convince people" that the banks were "bound" to carry these large reserves as a "simple act of prudence and justice" to their customers. Very good; we would not take his word for most things, but we accept that. Since Mr. Strachey left the *Spectator*, its readers have probably forgotten Mr. McKenna, and have relapsed into their old belief that bank loans come out of deposits. In that case they will no doubt find Mr. Crump's arguments quite credible.

The Problem of the "Borot."

By A. W. Coleman.

The Robots have been duly succeeded by the Borots, as Mr. Punch has dubbed them. According to our daily papers, the electro-mechanical servant has arrived. It is said to be capable of carrying out certain elementary duties in answer to the command of the human voice. The details of the mechanism by which certain groupings of sound waves are transformed and used to control electrical energy for the carrying out of specific items of work must be profoundly interesting to many beside electrical engineers; but for students of Social Credit the chief interest of these mechanisms lies in their economic significance.

Briefly, the non-human, semi-automatic labourer has arrived. He, or more properly it, may be rather "a poor tool" at present; its capacities are in their infancy. But it will be well to exercise a little imagination and look forward to a time when it will have out-distanced its prototype as the modern warship has out-distanced the primitive war-canoe.

But first—a glance backwards. Many people remember the days when factories contained machines each of which required the skill of one or more highly trained individuals. As the machines improved in range and precision, less skilled operators were required. The advent of the automatic machine, requiring only to be fed with raw materials and lubricants, ushered in the unskilled labourer as machinist. To-day one such individual often controls a number of complicated machines.

Now, the next stage is foreshadowed, and imagination proceeds to prophesy. Obviously, the machinist of to-day will in time be ousted by the Borot, and the fate of the machinist will in due course be the fate of other factory operatives, of numerous clerical workers, of miners, agriculturists, etc., in turn. Then will arrive the Super-Borot, one of which will supervise the work of numbers of the earlier variety; and charge-hands and foremen will duly be bowed out of industry.

If we may be allowed the large assumption that this evolution could proceed unchecked by any breakdown in the financial system, no great effort of imagination is required to picture a world, a few short centuries hence, in which all the requisites for a standard of living beyond the comprehension of this generation could be produced by some 4 or 5 per cent. of the adult population—comprising, for the most part, engineers and organisers of all grades, scientific research workers, etc.—controlling millions of Borots.

At this stage, it may be objected that large numbers of human workers will be required for the manufacture of the Borots. Not so. Manufacture, by that time, will be an anachronism. The machinofacture of new Borots will be carried out very largely by already existing Borots, just as to-day new machines are produced largely, and increasingly, by already existing machines.

Having then arrived at a stage when only about 5 per cent. of the adult population are industrially employed, the problem of all problems is: How are the products of industry to be distributed amongst the remaining 95 per cent., if the receipt of an income—wage or salary—is to be dependent upon employment within the industrial system?

It should be fairly obvious, even to the intellect of a British financier or politician, that it can only be done under one condition; namely, that the 95 per cent. shall receive incomes from some source independent of any relationship they may have with the industrial system other than that of consumers of its products. Further, it should be equally obvious

that taxation of the employed 5 per cent. cannot possibly provide the source.

In brief, the necessity for consumer-credit, in the form of free incomes to persons outside industry, is glaringly obvious, for the conditions of the future.

But the necessity for consumer-credit is only rather less obvious for the conditions of to-day. Because it is quite easy to see that the rule of "No work—no pay" cannot possibly be applied to an economic régime which is the logical outcome of present conditions, it should not be so very difficult to see that the same rule cannot be applied rigorously to the present conditions themselves.

A system which is obviously quite unsuitable to the future conditions which have been foreshadowed is only rather less unsuitable to present-day conditions, which are in the direct line of ascent. The ability to see the major absurdity of to-morrow should bespeak the ability to see the minor absurdity of to-day.

If consumer-credit is obviously necessary on a large scale for (say) the twenty-first century, it is just as necessary on a correspondingly smaller scale at the present moment; and the question at issue is not whether or no the policy of consumer-credit shall be adopted, but whether that policy can be applied before the present anachronistic system breaks down.

The Truth About Scotland.*

By C. M. Grieve.

Probably nothing will ever prevent an ostrich hiding its head in the sand—so long as the sand lasts. There are none so blind as those who will not see, and a technique for preventing this voluntary blindness has yet to be discovered. The way in which publicity is organised—and supervised—will probably ensure not only that a very small percentage of the Scottish people ever hear of Mr. Thomson's book but that most of those who do are immediately re-deceived in the most comforting manner.

The fact of the matter is that the truth about Scotland is incredible. It is infinitely easier to believe the myth that the Scot is a peculiarly religious, patriotic, well-educated, thrifty and enterprising person. Mr. Thomson's proofs to the contrary induce a species of mental dislocation. It is repugnant to our natures to allow ourselves to be convinced that the consensus of opinion on any matter is utterly wrong. The demonstration of it, therefore, assumes the aspect of a conjuring trick. Mr. Thomson will be dismissed as a clever person—too clever for most of his fellow-countrymen.

Here are the sort of preposterous facts and figures in which he deals. "It is ludicrous to pretend, as the vast majority of Scots do, that their country is at the same level of prosperity and civilisation as England, and is faced by social problems that do not differ in intensity from England's, so long as 45 per cent. of Scotsmen live more than two in a room as compared with 9.6 per cent. of Englishmen. Of the inhabitants of Wishaw and Coatbridge, 23 per cent. live in one-room houses, the corresponding figure for all England and Wales being 1.7 per cent." "3,432,385 Scottish acres are devoted to deer forests, and employ a permanent staff of 881 men." "As for the Scots, their sublime faith in their own practical clear-headedness has not failed them in this matter any more than in any other. They may be heard positively glorying in the recognition, as they term it, of harsh economic facts. 'Economic' is a word of cabalistic power among them; the sound of its

* "Caledonia: or the Future of the Scots." By G. M. Thomson. (Kegan Paul. To-day and To-morrow Series. 2s. 6d.)

magic syllables gives them the illusion of having finally disposed of a problem without enduring the tedium of having thought about it. It is nothing to them that a Royal Commission, composed mainly of landlords, has pronounced 6,000,000 acres of Scottish soil suitable for afforestation (almost a third of the total area of the country); that another Commission found that over a million and a half acres of the present deer forest area could be put to more profitable use as agricultural holdings; that the annual loss to the national revenue due to replacing even the sheep-run by the deer forest is over £500,000; and that the sheep farms of Scotland support more stock with the labour of fewer men than is known in any other country in Western Europe (this, in fact, they will probably consider a veritable economic triumph).

Turning to the industrial side, things are in an equally bad way. Concerned over the loss of trade, Glasgow Chamber of Commerce has just set up a special Committee of Inquiry, but the terms of reference are carefully drafted to exclude any consideration of fundamental issues. Anglo-Scottish relationships do not come within purview. The ineptitude of the whole thing may be gauged from the fact that the chairman expressed the opinion that a great deal might be done by means of an advertising campaign to boom Glasgow's facilities. Mr. Thomson's book is purely objective—it deals with "what is," not with "why it is" or "how it can be put right." He has nothing to say about Social Credit, therefore, but he is, of course, fully alive to the anomalies of the existing system. "Unemployment in Scotland has since the War been more persistent and on a larger scale than in any other industrial country in the world. The proportion of workless in the country has always been greater than in England—from one-third to a half as much again. And the incidence of pauperism is 40 per cent. higher than in England and Wales." Emigration for many years has been 200 times heavier than from England. A great deal is heard about the Irish invasion of Scotland. But Ireland is not the only source "from which the conquering Scot is being pushed out of his own country. Since the war a strong tide of English immigration has flowed. There are now more Englishmen living in Glasgow than there are Scots in that prostrate Scottish dependency, London. English shops and stores have trebled since 1918."

Turning to the financial aspect, this is what Mr. Thomson has to say: "Not only is Scottish industry decaying, it is steadily ceasing to be Scottish. Four out of eight banks have been affiliated to English banks on terms which, while leaving them much local freedom, will tend to make them increasingly the slaves of the needs and emergencies of the London money market. Money will be liable to sudden recall from Scotland to meet the wants of the predominant English partners. Already there have been rumours that the local knowledge of branch managers, in which so much trust used to be placed, is no longer being allowed its former liberty to meet local needs. There seems also some danger that the jealously guarded note-issuing power of the Scottish banks, which nurtured Scotland's industrial growth, will be lost as a result of these new entanglements. A century ago, when such a proposal was made, Sir Walter Scott talked darkly of claymores, and the Government dropped the idea. To-day there are no Scots, and the Scots will probably congratulate themselves on the removal of an anomaly."

The weakness of Mr. Thomson's book is its failure to realise the recent great growth and new tendencies in Scottish Nationalism. Lloyd George may set up a Committee of Inquiry into the Scottish Rural Problem. The Glasgow Chamber of

Commerce may inquire into the possibilities of more effective publicity to stave off the ruin staring them in the face. But the Scottish National Convention is on the right lines in seeking for an inquiry into Anglo-Scottish finances and in its increasing realisation that self-determination means nothing without credit-power.

"The idea is to induce our Government to outlaw war by negotiating treaties between the United States and every other nation providing for obligatory arbitration or adjudication of all disputes that may arise between them. . . . This will be a pay-as-you-go campaign. . . . A donation of 25 cents enrolls anyone as a Peace Crusader; \$1 as a Peace Seeker; \$5 as a Peace Counsellor; \$10 as a Peace Advocate; \$25 as a Peace Patron; \$100 as a Peace Patriot; \$500 or more as a Peace Founder."—Extracts from Manifesto issued by the American Arbitration Crusade, 114 East 31st Street, New York City.

"In some quarters there seems to be a growing habit of trying to make our flesh creep at what we are asked to believe are the evil machinations of high finance. The banker, we are told, is the autocrat of the world; the interests of business and of States alike must yield to his will. Speaking before the London Commercial Club, Major C. H. Douglas, whose name has long been associated with a particularly ingenuous theory of credit, has thought fit to elaborate these palpably false assertions. Bankers, he tells us, are ruling the world, and bankers are not the right people to handle the credit problem! Statements such as these, coming after the experiences of recent years, are not easy to understand. One would have thought that even the most ingenuous critics of present arrangements would have realised that whatever the regulations in detail the essential basis in principle of any sound credit system is an independent central bank. Under an effective gold standard system even the powers of a central bank to control and create credit are limited; the powers of the deposit banks are very small indeed. It is the prostitution of central banks for political purposes which has been mainly responsible for the evils of unstable currency. Yet apparently there are still people who would bring banking under the unsettling influence of political control."—*Financial News*, October 29.

"The appointment of Mr. Dwight Morrow, one of the partners of J. P. Morgan, as American Ambassador to Mexico, would appear to be an event of first importance. If it is confirmed by the Senate, Mr. Morrow may be expected to exercise great influence on the development of good financial relations between Mexico and other countries. For this reason Mexican stocks have shown a tendency to rise, both in London and New York, and we found one broker recommending the Mexican Eagle 7 per cent. Cumulative First Preference shares, which now stand at 18s. 9d."—*Daily Chronicle*, September 27.

"From the day the Federal Reserve Act was passed the *Manufacturers' Record* has taken the ground that it gave greater power than was ever before given by legislation in human history to seven men to completely control the entire financial and business interests of a great country."—*Manufacturers' Record*, September 29, 1927.

"The displacement of labor by machinery, which is such a startling feature of present-day American industry, says the U.S. Department of Labor, arouses serious interest as to what is to become of the workers thus displaced. The Department adds: 'This is a social problem of the first importance. It is also a business problem, for an unemployed worker ceases to be a consumer.'—*Commerce and Finance*, September 28, 1927.

"Two years ago Poland had to call on an American 'money doctor,' Dr. Edwin W. Kammerer, to correct her financial indigestion. Now she has engaged an American financial nurse, possibly to make certain that she follows the trained nurse's orders. The trained nurse is Mr. Charles Schuveltd Dewey, Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Treasury. The request that he should become a member of the Board of Directors of the Bank of Poland was made a few days ago when the final arrangements were in progress for the floating of a loan of \$70,000,000. . . . Doubtless the American bankers who arranged the Polish loan had a great deal to do with the selection of Mr. Dewey as a member of the Board of the Bank of Poland. With such a 'watch-dog' in Poland, American capital can be certain that it will be used worthily and returned—with interest. . . . He and his family will probably be installed in Warsaw before the end of the year."—*Paris Times*, October 22, 1927.

Senescent British Fiction.

By George Ryley Scott.

It may be because England is sick unto death; it may be the result of the "to Hell with to-morrow" spirit of the age, it may be owing to "art for art's sake" having become nothing more than a cliché dissociated from any actual meaning, or it may be that democracy has virtually destroyed individuality or the taste for it: probably it is due to a combination of the lot. I do not profess to know. But certain it is that the fiction of to-day in the main is senescent, that from a flood that swells enormously it becomes more and more difficult to rescue a dozen volumes worth the reading. In an age when the shackling of the artist is considerably less than it was in the days of Hardy, Meredith, and Moore, those novelists with achieved reputations who are still at work have plainly become maudlin; those with reputations in the making for the most part are incapable of distinguishing between smart Alecrys of the Arlen school and art; the so-called intelligentsia ape James Joyce and Gertrude Stein with disastrous results.

Thus Arnold Bennett, after his earlier brilliant work, has degenerated into a brewer of sugary liquor for the Sunday papers; Galsworthy, forever wobbling between realism and Rotaryism, has never actually succeeded in achieving anything beyond sound craftsmanship; Frances Brett Young apes Conrad and flirts with mysticism; D. H. Lawrence, after producing "Sons and Lovers," "The Rainbow," and "The Trespasser," becomes a metaphysician and a sorcerer; years ago Kipling went to pieces on the rock of patriotism. Of the younger school, Aldous Huxley and Osbert Sitwell do not seem able to decide whether they are writing essays or fiction, and their otherwise brilliant work suffers accordingly; Virginia Woolf pens impeccable prose, but gets nothing said.

France is in no better plight. With the passing of Anatole France, the literary arena presents the appearance of a desert relieved only by the figures of Marcel Proust and André Gide. True there occasionally appears, bearing a Paris imprint, a work of enormous significance, but it is usually the product of an alien writer who cannot find a publisher in his own country. Such was Lewisohn's "The Case of Mr. Crump," a truly remarkable piece of artistry. Such, too, was Gertrude Beasley's "My First Thirty Years," an autobiography that makes Casanova look sick.

There is, of course, the towering James Joyce "Ulysses," to dismiss the Joyce of to-day, and especially his interpretation in the light of the amazing confection now appearing in "Transition," as a writer who has become incomprehensible. But Joyce stands alone, inasmuch as he cannot be judged by ordinary standards. He stands to present-day fiction in the precise position of the specialist in laboratory research to the medical profession.

It is so easy, when once success comes, to fall for the big and easy money offered by the popular Press. In his power of resistance to the temptation of gold lies the test of the artist. In such circumstances few will continue to provide caviare when tripe is demanded and gloated over. E. M. Forster is as yet unspoiled; May Sinclair, though showing signs of leanings to mysticism, continues to turn out sound work. The short stories of Caradoc Evans are artistic trifles. Of the newer school David Garnett stands head and shoulders above the lot with four short novels to his credit, each a penetrating and supreme bit of artistry. The brilliant etching of "The Sailor's Return," the delicious satire of "Lady Into Fox," within their definitely circumscribed limits, have probably never been excelled.

William Gerhardt is another shining hope; so, too, are T. F. Powys and Liam O'Flaherty. But they can only be looked upon as potentialities: no one of them has achieved any really substantial work. They are in the position where a decade ago were W. J. Locke, Rose Macaulay, W. B. Maxwell, Compton Mackenzie, J. D. Beresford, H. Walpole, Oliver Onions. And where to-day are these? For the most part competing with A. S. M. Hutchinson and Michael Arlen in efforts to merchant best-selling drivel.

With all his faults, with all his propagandist passion, Wells stands out as clearly as the foremost English novelist. He has given us drivel with the worst of them, as instance the wearisome "Mr. Britling"; the flat, mushy "Marriage," the incredibly dull jejune "Christina Alberta's Father," and after these one could have sighed for a genius gone the same old way, one could heartily agree with Mencken that Wells was dead, when in quick succession come the marvellous "William Clissold" and "Meanwhile," to leave us gaping in wonder. But strike out Wells in England; Mann, Schnitz-

But strike out Wells in England; Mann, Con-
ler, Proust, Gide, Feuchtwanger, Morand in Con-
tinent Europe, and what is there to compare with
the American crop of fiction? Twenty years ago
the States cut a sorry figure when it came to a
world survey of literature of any brand. There
tables have been turned with a vengeance. The
is Sinclair Lewis. Nothing that Europe has pro-
duced since Joyce's "Ulysses" approaches the
tremendous sweep and conception of "Elmer
Gantry." It marks the apex of Lewis's rise to
power: it surpasses "Babbitt" and "Main
rowsmith" as "Babbitt" surpassed "Main
Street." Then there is James Branch Cabell. For
sheer consistency of artistic work there is probably
no writer living who can compete with Cabell.
"Jurgen" surpasses anything Wells or Bennett
ever produced, and never has its author paraded
such mush as "Christina Alberta's Father" or
"The Lion's Share"; never has he penned such
clumsy sentences as besprinkle the best work of
Lawrence. It is precisely here that Cabell's superi-
ority lies. He combines that relatively rare power
of perfect artistry with immaculate prose. He has
all the power, the skill of Dreiser with none of his
clumsiness and crudeness; he never attempts to
pass a base coin as does Lewis with the mawk-
"Mantrap," Wells with "Christina Alberta," Ben-
nett with "Buried Alive," and his hollow platitudi-
ous "success" books. He has not, like Mrs. Whar-
ton and Hergesheimer, surrendered to the "Satur-
day Evening Post," or, like Upton Sinclair and Floyd
Dell, become a flaring propagandist.

Trailing behind are others, each one of them, turning out work far in advance of current fiction. There are Sherwood Anderson, Ernest Lewisohn, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Willa Cather, John Hemingway, T. S. Stribling, W. W. Woodward, John Dos Passos, Carl Van Vechten. It has long been the custom of English reviewers, not always with justice, to sneer at American fiction as crude and amateurish: it looks as if in the very near future the discriminating reader will turn to America for any novel worth the reading.

LIKE CLOUDS THEY PASS.

Moments of joy
Blossom for me,
White, as wave-tops breaking
On a dark green sea,
White, as curl-clouds sailing
In the high blue heaven.

Fragile flowers,
Like waves they break,
Like clouds they pass—
And are gone.

F. R. ANGUS.

In Memory of Freedom:

AN ANTHOLOGY—AND A RETROSPECT.

In the sphere both of national and of international politics the concept of Freedom is at present in a state of almost entire eclipse. Not only do we observe the rise of Dictatorships from Teheran to Madrid, but the drive towards State-Capitalism or Marxian-Socialism (which, both from the Libertarian and from the Aristocratic points of view, are identical, and equally damnable) is everywhere gaining momentum. Let us, by way of relief, listen for a moment to those who believed in every freedom. Perhaps it will refresh and strengthen us in our effort to create New Values if we will retrace the footsteps of our goings and walk a little way with the idolators of Liberty. Here, then, at the outset, is an admirable statement of the normal Libertarian position:—

"Great part of that order which reigns among mankind is not the effect of government. It had its origin in the principles of society and the natural constitution of man. It existed prior to government, and would exist if the formality of government were abolished. The mutual dependence and reciprocal interest which man has upon man, and all parts of a civilised community upon one another, create that great chain of connection which holds it together. . . . In fine, society performs for itself almost everything which is ascribed to government."

Who is it that writes with such unfashionable courage and simplicity? None other than brave Tom Paine, the protagonist of two Revolutions; the Anglo-American Voltaire; the English voice of that most impressive Age of Reason—that audacious century which won for itself the name of The Enlightenment.

For in that hectic period—when the passage of economic power from an elegant but feeble, decayed, and degenerate aristocracy to an ugly and vulgar but vigorous and thriving middle-class had, shattered every tradition, broken asunder the golden chains of chivalry and custom, and loosened the grip of age-long disciplines, symbols, spooks, and superstitions upon European Man—the individual certainly found himself *free* (for what?) to an extent that was both inordinate and altogether unprecedented. The senile dynasty of the Bourbons reigned; but it did not rule. *Sancta Mater Ecclesia* (Aristocratic and Feudal Society in its spiritual and cultural aspect) found herself paralysed and stultified by the venomous slave-morality cunningly secreted in her system by the ichneumon—like Apostle Paul and his disreputable rabble of later Jews and early Christians. And once again Judaea was to triumph over the Classical ideal. Meanwhile every law was relaxed, every canon criticised, every norm of art or conduct violated without fear and without reproach. It was the age in which Rousseau denounced the State as an evil, and Jefferson proclaimed the government best which governed least. *It was the epoch of the Individual.*

From the beginning of human history, presumably, man had fretted under social restraints; and the natural exuberance of the will had seen an enemy in every law. In the words of Rousseau:

"Laws are always useful to those who own, and injurious to those who do not. . . . Laws give the weak new burdens, and the strong new powers; they irretrievably destroyed natural freedom, established in perpetuity the law of property and inequality, turned a clever usurpation into an irrevocable right, and brought the whole future race under the yoke of labour, slavery and misery. . . . All men were created free, and now they are everywhere in chains."

Here, surely, is sounded the authentic trumpet-call of "primitive Christianity" (New Style!)

It is amusing to notice how far the ideology of the upstart *Bourgeoisie*, in the century of Revolution, partook of that hunger and thirst for liberty which generates in Anarchism the simplest and most alluring of political philosophies. Adam Smith argued

that the wealth of nations depended upon the freedom of the individual" (whom he characteristically conceived as a niggardly and puritanical poopstick subsisting on a diet of oatmeal porridge!) Mirabeau père and the Physiocrats wished to let nature alone in her management of commerce and industry. And the philosopher and Patron-Saint of all the smug and smirking counterjumpers and salesmen in Christendom, that bewhiskered old bore, Herbert Spencer himself—inheriting the tea-grocer tradition of Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill ("*types of English mediocrity*," as Nietzsche candidly calls them both)—reduced the State to a vanishing-point, retaining it, however, on second thoughts, as a night-watchman for his property.

But these baffle-headed *bourgeois* enthusiasts reckoned without the logicians and theorists, who promptly proceeded to play a winning hand in the game. If liberty was good in commerce and industry (it was argued), it must be good in morals and politics.

Godwin was sure that human nature, of its own inherent virtue, would maintain sufficient order without law: let all laws be abolished, and mankind would progress in intellect and character as never before. Shelley versified these ideas when their author had ceased to believe in them, and practised the New Liberty with Godwin's daughter without consideration of the right of a philosopher to change his errors with his years. The noble and romantic Fichte—"that cold, colossal, adamantine spirit standing erect and clear, like a Cato Major among degenerate men" (T. Carlyle)—made the Individual Will the base and apex of the universe, and saw all reality as the creation of a Mind walled and moated in from things external and from other souls. And the greatest and most consistent of all the philosophical Anarchists, Max Stirner, condemned to teach in a young ladies' seminary, consoled himself by conceiving an "Egoist" (or "Leagues of Egoists") completely liberated from the despotism of the State.

"The State has never any object but to limit the individual, to tame him, to subject him to something general; it lasts only so long as the individual is not all in all. *Just straighten yourselves up, and the State will let you alone.*"

Qui potest capere, capiat. Stirner's masterpiece, "Der Einzige und sein Eigentum," should be constantly in the hands of every free-spirited Aristocrat, in whom the Will to Power is incarnate. Unlike modern so-called "Anarchists" (who are simply "superfluous" Christian-Socialists in very thin disguise), Stirner will have no truck with any sort of Communism. For (he says) Communism, by abolishing individual property, transforms all members of society into beggars.

This aspiration to absolute liberty shows an arresting universality and a strange persistency. Among the pupils of Socrates there were cynics who preferred the life of nature to the rule of law, and aimed, like Aristippus, "to be neither the slave nor the master of any man." Among the Stoics, who had no goods and many bonds, there were some who hoped for an earthly paradise wherein all goods would be shared and all bonds would be loosed. Among the primitive Christians the use of force, for any purpose at all, was self-denied: "And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need"—until treasures upon earth increased among the more thrifty of the Brethren, and their cheerful experiment in Anarchist-Communism naturally came to an end. The evangelical tradition was, however, intermittently carried on during the Middle Ages by the Lollards, Waldenses, Albigenses, and early Franciscans, and (later) by sects such as the Levellers, Shakers, and Muggletonians, or Fifth Monarchy

Men; while the Anabaptists of the Reformation, having set up a Communist Dictatorship in Münster, anticipated heaven by abolishing marriage and, in the case of the Adamites, dispensing with clothes.

In the French Revolution Marat and Babeuf proclaimed the dawn of liberty and the twilight of the State. During the rebellious 'forties Proudhon wrote that "the government of man by man in every form is slavery." The highest perfection of a society is found in the union of order and anarchy." In revolutionary Russia, Tolstoy—that most consistent of Christians—defined government as "the association of property-owners for the protection of their property from those who need it" (or want it!). Bakunin, abandoning his wealth and rank to join the Nihilists, predicted—*O sancta simplicitas!*—that education would spread so rapidly that by 1900 the State would be unnecessary. Kropotkin, prince, gentleman, and anarchist, laboured with much plausibility and skill to demonstrate how, in the neo-Christian Utopia of Communism-cum-Liberty, men and women would need to work only an hour a day: while, in England, William Morris indicated his respect for government by describing a happy Nowhere in which the Houses of Parliament were used to store manure.

In *laissez-faire* America, Emerson preached the frontiersman's self-reliance: "No law can be sacred to me but that of my own nature." Whitman conceived that Democracy might be redeemed by pederastic or "manly love" (as in ancient Greece and Rome), and thereby transmuted into Aristodemocracy: "I only am he who places over you no master, owner, better, God, beyond what waits intrinsically in yourself." And Thoreau—that great modern exemplar of the school of Antisthenes—thus summed up the whole matter:—

"I heartily accept the motto: *That government is best which governs least.* . . . Carried out it finally amounts to this, which I also believe: *That government is best which governs not at all.* And when men are prepared for it, that is the kind of government which they will have."

A critique of the Libertarian and Anarchist positions, and a discussion of their strength and weakness, will form the subject-matter of a separate paper. I will only point out, at present, that the mere possibility, not only of the larger freedom, but of timely escape from the inevitable and unprecedented slavery that looms to-day on our horizon, depends—first and foremost, absolutely and unconditionally—upon the energy and persistency of our efforts to bring into being, before it is too late, a rational system of finance. Every Libertarian, of whatever school of thought, should enlist in the army of the Credit Reformers. And the State, which began as the conquest and taxation of peaceful peasants by marauding herdsmen (and has since continued on precisely the same lines), may then become again, as it was for a moment under the Antonines, the leadership of a great nation by great men.

SAMUEL F. DARWIN FOX.

CINDER BANKS.

Dead the cinder banks by day
Lie seeming cold and ashen grey;
See them in the frosty night
Fairy lanterns glowing bright.
Follow them and you shall be
Scorched by their fell witchery,
Scorched to cinder and by day
Your flesh and bone be ashen grey,
Your bone and flesh gleam in the night
With fantastic twinklings bright,
Dooming every foot that goes
Whither your bright body glows:
So falsely fair things fairy be;
Dreaming child, walk warily.

W. R. GUTTERY.

Rural Life and Lore.

IV.—WORK AND LIVING TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO.

The big difference about life in the country was we mostly did without money. A farm labourer's wages would work out at about 10s. to 12s. a week; but he was only paid once a year. It was very rare for him to "sub" off his wages. He only wanted money for tobacco, beer, and a few odd things like that; and he would earn it in his spare time by catching rats (1d. each he'd get for them), rabbits (1½d. each), or moles (2d. each). The sport would be their recreation—like townspeople would go to the pictures. Then when harvest came round there was always £1 for each man. And so they lived round the year.

The farmers, too, didn't trouble overmuch about money. A farmer might lead in a bullock to the butcher to be slaughtered. He would leave it at the slaughter-house, and might not inquire for months what weight it turned out. One day he would call in, and the butcher would say:—

"Oh, Maister Giles you'll want the money for your bullock."
"Tis no partic'ler matter to-day, John," the farmer might say.

"No, you'd better have it now," the butcher would answer. Then he would turn to his boy; "Here, you boy, just run and see how Maister Giles's bullock turned out."

The boy would go to the slaughter house and there it would be written up on the wall. He'd come back in a minute;

"It turned thirty-four score, Maister." None of this here argument about the weight you get to-day. The score on the wall spoke true; and that's all there was to it.

A married farm labourer whose earnings came to 15s. a week, could live out in his own cottage and bring up a family of six to eight children. His cottage and bit of ground would come out at 2s. 6d. a week. Milk was found; and he could take from the farm anything he did not grow himself.

He would keep two pigs; one to pay rent and expenses, and the other for the "salter"; or he would salt one half and sell the other. Then he would buy two more young ones, which would run about 8s. each. He kept his own fowls, and made his own bread.

Every day when starting to work, his cider firkin would be filled, holding half a gallon of real good cider. He would plough in all weathers except frost, rarely coming in before four o'clock. He would come home to a good evening meal of fat pork and vegetables, some of the best on the land, fed on good potatoes, milk, and barley meal, not like to-day, fed on "sawdust and treacle." Put a bit in the pan and it would come out bigger than when he put it in. (Now you have got a job to find it.)

There were no water rates; only the spring or well. There was not one house out of twenty that was drained—an earth closet near the house was the only convenience, the cattle looking in the doorway. It was rare to hear of diphtheria or scarlet fever.

I have often wondered about diseases like foot and mouth disease, whether they had something to do with the animals' feed after these new kinds of manure came into farming. Once we tried an experiment. We cleared four acres of rough ground and divided it into four parts. One part we dressed with lime; one with dung; one with basic slag; and one with some stuff called "No. 1 Manure." We sowed grass over the lot, and when it was up we turned in a flock of sheep to graze. They went to

the parts where the lime and the dung dressings had been put, but never touched the others at all. There must be a meaning to that, I think.

Everything is done for quickness nowadays. It used to take two weeks to draw lime and dung to the field and get it ready for sowing; but a man with a driller with artificial manure can get it done in a day. But come round when all's done, to the slaughter houses, and ask how many animals could be passed as A1, without a blemish. Not very many.

But to continue about the cost of living. At the time I speak of you could go to the butcher and get a bullock's head, with all the neck, brains, and tongue, weighing anything from 30 to 40 lbs. altogether, and the price of it would be 2s. 6d. the lot. Or you could get a sheep's head, with the same extras and the liver, lights, and heart thrown in, weighing about 8 lbs. altogether, for 10d. I don't know what the prices in the country to-day would be, but here in the suburbs of London you would not get the bullock's head and extras for under 12s. 6d. or the sheep's head and extras under 5s.—five or six times as much. Less in the country, of course, but still enough to make it much more than wages have risen. I will put down a few more prices we used to pay.

In 1900 (Country).	To-day (Town).
Potatoes ... 144 lb. for 2s. 6d.	... 112 lb. for 10s. 0d.
Turnips ... 112 lb. for 1s. 0d.	... 112 lb. for 8s. 0d.
Cabbage ... largest for 1d.	... the same for 6d. to 8d.
Bread ... 4 lb. for 3½d.	... 4 lb. for 9d.
Beef (rump steak) ... 9d. per lb.	... 2s. 4d. per lb.
Pork (leg) ... 6d. per lb.	... 1s. 6d. per lb.
Rabbits ... 4d. each	... 2s. 6d. each.
Fowls (large) ... 1s. 9d. each.	... 7s. 0d. each.
Butter ... 10d. per lb.	... 2s. 8d. per lb.

So when, as I said, the farm labourer grew and reared some of these things himself it is not hard to understand how he could bring up a healthy family of children on his 15s. What is a puzzle is how he does it now on 30s.

R. R.

Drama.

Chance Acquaintance: Criterion.

According to Jill Osborne, presumably the heroine, chance acquaintance is Providence's way of compensating us for the station of life into which it has been pleased to call us. Most people, meeting Jill Osborne by chance, would get rid of her quickly, as a young lady who would have been better blessed with a leaner and therefore stricter father. Meeting Lawrie Bennett by chance, one would probably advise him to join the Y.M.C.A., and keep out of the way of Jill Osborne. Providence, however, was pleased to bring them together, and must have sighed with relief that both of them seemed so thoroughly satisfied. Although it came out later that Lawrie Bennett was a solicitor's clerk, who had, no doubt, made notes of conversations overheard by chambermaids, he was at heart just a nice, innocent boy with romantic longings. The only girls he dare have spoken to were "the obvious." Acquaintance with the sort of girl his heart sighed for ended before it began, killed by the fear of a snub. Clearly there is a public for Lawrie. Thousands of young men are looking for the girl that Lawrie wanted.

The hotel lounge in which Lawrie confessed these things to his friend Frank Liddell—that of the Excelsior, very appositely—was used by the Osborne family as a drawing-room, the place reserved by modern families for their quarrels. Jill Osborne was so fed up that she took it out of life, family, and friends indiscriminately. Although her poet-fiance did not need to work, and had taken her to a Russian

play called "Seven Coffins," as well as to all the arty places of Chelsea, Bloomsbury, and Hampstead, where people sit on floors in cellars, and doubtless discuss Joyce and Jolas, she couldn't stand the monotony of her existence. Oh Lord, she might have prayed, had the idea of prayer occurred to her, send me an adventure. The Lord, perhaps taking the wish for the prayer, sent her Lawrie Bennett to say good-afternoon, whereupon Jill, in the lounge of the Excelsior, hysterically and vulgarly sent her sloppy, arty, dyspeptic, water-drinking poet out into the night, to drown himself.

Maurice Donnay wrote that, while one should be polite to all women, it was a good rule for getting on with them to treat the innocent ones as women of the world, and women of the world as innocents. Lawrie, with the instinct of ignorance, behaved as to the manner bred. He and Jill started on their career along the hill (modern science teaches that there is no *up* and *down*) with a bucket of cocktails, on which Jill acclaimed dinner and a theatre as the zenith of originality in adventurousness. Some time towards midnight, after the stimulation of "Jaz-zing Grannies" the two reached Jill's home. She asked him inside, brought out the whisky, announced that her family were away for the week-end; and—when Lawrie began to assume that she was an obvious, upon my word, she asked him what he took her for! So Lawrie boyishly confessed both his purity and his innocence, and chivalrously accepted her statement that she was a good girl, too, whereupon she went upstairs to dress for a night club—not one of the decadent, arty, places, but a healthy night club, Toby's place.

Then the inevitable happened. Father and mother came home unexpectedly, fetched by the fiancé to witness the awful goings on of their daughter. No self-respecting young woman would stand parents kicking over the traces and minding other people's business like that, so out Jill shot, dragging Lawrie with her, for another bucket of cocktails. The two-and-tenpence Lawrie had left took him to the house of his friend, Frank Liddell, which he entered through the window, to borrow. But he had a decent fellow, easy come and easy go. But he had spent the evening with Coral, whose taste, after cocktails, was for champagne. He had picked up worse Coral, by the way, in the Tube, and might do worse than try to revive his fortunes by offering the attractive lady. Frank had no money, but he rendered the honour of hospitality with what he had, a little whisky, less port, one or two cigarettes, and, after burgling his landlady's larder, bread, butter, hard-boiled eggs—that one foreknew would be added—and a scrape of marmalade. So Jill took off her shoes, warmed her tootsies at the stove, had the gramophone started, took up the cross-word puzzle in the evening paper, and rendered thanks to the all-providing that at last she was seeing life. Miss Cathcart, the landlady, turned out the most sensible person in the play. She ordered Jill out of her house, and told the boys, if they wanted her at that hour, to go with her, and upon Jill cheekily refusing to go, telephoned for her father.

Mr. John van Druten, the author of "Chance Acquaintance," calls it a comedy of youth, and in doing so gives the producer an impossible task. Comedy is a conflict between common-sense and convention staged on the adult plane of character and wit. Farce is the application of infantile judgment in adult situations. Character is not indispensable to farce, but rapidly changing situation is. Wherever Mr. van Druten's play had action enough to support the production as farce it had life in it, and the audience enjoyed it. Where comedy it had to be, as in the first act, much of the second, and part of the last, it had not enough character to keep it going.

In the first act, in spite of Mr. Henry Kendall's clever production of the atmosphere of an hotel lounge, the characters had scarcely a line to say that could make any conflict in which they might be involved of the least intellectual importance. There are plenty of Jill Osbornes and Lawrie Bennetts, who probably make love in just such commonplace language as that employed by these two. But they possess no distinction whatever, and have no right in a play. Benita Hume and Robert Andrews could do no more than give the impression that even the author had not interest enough to give them the breath of life. When Lawrie Bennett began the play with his confession of repulsion for "the obvious" and a combined fear and longing for what he felt too good for him, it looked as though the boy was going to pass through a real strife between the instincts and customs of mankind. He was interesting. After that he became a clockwork toy. F. Owen Baxter pumped vigour into the play by accepting the three eccentricities that constituted the character of Mr. Osborne as an excuse for farce, but Helen Haye as Mrs. Osborne could make nothing at all out of the woman's poverty of mentality. Such parts are not good enough for the actors' ability. All the greater praise is due, therefore, to Una O'Connor and D. A. Clarke-Smith. The former, out of a figure good for little at first thought but a Punch malapropism, made a grotesque London landlady whose presence, while it lasted, redeemed the play. D. A. Clarke-Smith elevated the happy-go-lucky Frank Liddell to first-class comedy portraiture. Without these two the piece would have been barren.

PAUL BANKS.

Music.

Mischa Levitzki. (Queen's Hall, October 20.)
I expected I did not

As I expected I did not find this pianist nearly as startling and outstanding as his American successes, or at least the journalistic accounts thereof, would lead the uninitiated to suppose. He is very competent, musically and technically, but it is sheer extravagance to pretend to see greatness in his playing. Like so many merely good pianists, he cannot see a work as a whole, but hops from phrase to phrase—no organic pulse makes itself felt right through the music. His phrasing and rhythm are not at all distinguished, and it is a mind with no individual ideas upon the music on which it is engaged.

Arnold Bax. (Wigmore, October 20.)

The two principal works played on this occasion, the Oboe and Piano quintets, are calculated to give the worst possible opinion of this composer. They are compact of a tepid viscous glucosity, completely lacking in firmness of outline and line drawing, and over all broods that marsh miasma of foggy-headedness that used, I believe, to be called the Celtic twilight, producing a singularly repellent result. The composer fails completely to gain that essential and inner coherence which alone constitutes "form," and lack of which no ingenious and specious jerry-building with "thirds," "first and second subjects" and all the rest of the programme analyst's claptrap will conceal or substitute for—indeed, in default of it these devices are a very minor and palpable piece of artistic dishonesty, so transparent that one is astonished at anyone imagining such simple-minded enough to be impressed, let alone taken in by them. Bax's mind has no natural tropical richness—and the attempts of this essential chilly Hyperborean to force the small simple plants of his northern imagining by a sort of hot-house intensive culture into a semblance of the burgeoning vivid luxuriance of an exotic vegetation simply produces a weak and debilitated overgrowth.

with exhausted vitality consequent upon a forcing process its constitution could not stand.

Iturbi. (Aeolian, October 22.)

A much more interesting pianist than Levitzki, more vital rhythm, more resilience and more nervous force, but with the prevalent scrappiness and lack of grasp of works as a whole. Northing coheres firmly, but is episodic, centripetal, fragmentary. His dynamics are jerky and spasmodic, and singularly limited. He is Latin without the best of those Latin qualities which make Solito de Solis such "an elevating excitement of the soul," and Cortôt an unfailing enchantment. I did not find his Spanish group nearly as interesting as Rubinstein would have made them. His rhythm, although as I have already said, vital, is wooden and lacking in spring and flexibility—his rubato on the other hand become breakings of rhythm, as in the inexcusable extravagancies in that dreadful A flat major polonaise of Chopin. These impressions were all confirmed at his second recital (25th) after a bad and dull performance of the *Appassionata* and some entirely unenterprising and unexciting playing of a modern Spanish group, including a group of pieces by Infante completely worthless and without any interest seen pianistically.

Dinh Gilly. (Grotrian, November 1.)

Dink Gilly. (Grotrian, November 1.)

This great singer has commenced a series of four lectures on succeeding Tuesdays at this hall, free admission, by ticket only, on application to the hall. It is a sorry reflection upon the state of mind of our teachers and professors, their impudic self-complacency, congealed fast into the vanity of their own ignorance that they did not fill the hall to crowding point. Of those present one doubted if a giver in twenty was capable of following the lecture—after the remarks two people made showing that they had scarcely a glimmering of what M. Gilly was speaking about. Here is no singing teacher's jargon pseudo-scientific gibberish and the mumbo jumbo of humbug and mystification so beloved of the small and weak of intelligence, but a simple, clear statement of the principles underlying singing, principles very difficult to put into practice, of course, requiring long years of work—Farinelli's seven years at one page of exercises, M. Gilly's three years to learn how to sing the vowel sound *ah*—that is what learning to sing means. One looks forward with eager and joyful anticipation to the remaining lectures—on the 15th and 22nd.

KAIKHOSRU SORABJI.

Art.

Mr. Baylis Allen: Redfern Gallery.

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Mr. Baylis Allen: Redfern Gallery.

A visit to the exhibition of water-colours and drawings by Mr. A. Baylis Allen, at the Redfern Gallery, 27, Old Bond Street, is like a week-end in the country after a round of modern shows. There are dreamy landscapes, where the harsh lines of city life give way to gentle curves; sleepy fishing harbours, where the massed colours of the modern poster merge imperceptibly. There is the romance of green meadows and quiet streams: romance which has none of the fiery bluster of the Romantics—they were essentially Continental—but a wistful, English greyiness. Truthfully sentimental one might call his pictures of "England's green and pleasant land." For there is a green and pleasant land, and there is a sentimental, as well as a sensual and intellectual truth. Falsehood only creeps in when, as in "Number Twenty Pit," the sentimental response to tranquil beauty is crystallised into formula and applied to something to which it is totally alien. A pit-head may express the beauty, the cruelty, even perhaps the nullity, of mechanical achievement. But it is difficult to believe that it can evoke the wistfulness with

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which Mr. Baylis Allen has tried to endow it. There is a temptation to make the same criticism of "The Ultra-Violet Ray," a picture, not remarkable as such, of a small child evidently enjoying the treatment. But it may be that here we are ourselves sentimentalists. The ghastliness of modern medical science may be nothing more than a figment of war imagination.

Artist-Craftsmen: Central Hall, Westminster.

The title of the "Artist-Craftsman Christmas Exhibition" is misleading. There is nothing particularly "arty" about the exhibition, which is indeed a very representative display of current English handicraft. There is good workmanship in almost every medium—leather, metal, wood, textiles, pottery, etc.—and everywhere simplicity in colour and design. One wonders, indeed, whether many of the exhibits, particularly those in metal and wood, could not have been fashioned equally well and more cheaply by machine. But the reversion to home-crafts, such as raffia and papier-mâché work, that is indicated here, is welcome at a time when appreciation is so much more common than creation. Of course, if you are to revert to "home-crafts," you must first have a home. But that is another story, the telling of which can safely be left to Mr. G. K. Chesterton. . . . Apart from the striking curtain by Mr. Claude Flight and Miss Edith Lawrence, modernist tendencies are almost unrepresented. It would be interesting to see a little more of their application to craftwork. Two minor criticisms: the praiseworthy anxiety to include as many varieties of work as possible has led to overcrowding; and surely an exhibition of such popular interest should remain open for more than a week.

M. Jan Willumsen: Fine Art Society.

The exhibition of water-colours of the Balearic Islands by M. Jan Willumsen at the Fine Art Society's Galleries, 148, New Bond Street, is an inspiring advertisement of a little-known land. To confine oneself to a locality is to risk being called interpretative rather than creative. But the risk is small when the interpretation is as gay and colourful as that of M. Willumsen. The best pictures are those in which rapid and graceful movement is added to colour. Such are the "Women Alighting from Carts" and the "Dance in the Fonda." Gaiety and grace are, in fact, the strongest impressions which he gives of this life of sunshine and laughter. The subjects are all such as would stand decoration, but M. Willumsen has wisely avoided the temptation to overdo it.

At the same galleries there are exhibitions of water-colours by Claude Muncaster and etchings by P. H. Wilson Bachelor.

WILFRID HOPE.

WILFRID HOPE.

Reviews.

Reviews.

Tracks in the Snow. By Lord Charnwood. (Benn. 7s. 6d.)

We must confess, as we have already confessed *ad nauseam*, to liking good English, even in a detective yarn. This story is the sober narrative of a country clergyman forced into the smoking jacket of Sherlock Holmes, and although it runs to page after page of solid print, unbroken by a single rift of back-chat, it is neither dull nor, in its quiet way, undistinguished.

**The Fifth Pestilence, and the Tinkling Cymbal and Sound-
ing Brass.** By Alexei Remizov. Translated by Alec
Brown. (Wishart. 6s.)

Streaks of pure genius illumine this book, even through dullness here and there. But how vivid and close to life it is, how sharp and clearly cut its characters stand out, the tragicomic, nobly-sordid everyday figures of a provincial town in Russia. Remizov has the Dickensian touch which people who do not see with eyes that are open call caricature. It is no good having this quality unless you also have your own definite ideas about life in general. For without them, there would be nothing for these particular lights to shine upon. But anyway it is usually a safe bet that Wishart has something good to give us.

Daphne's in Love. By Negley Farson. (Methuen. 7s. 6d.)

Here we have Miss Chicago of 1927, involved in big business and a most ordinary plot. She is very beautiful, she loves a sleek sheikh who has already a wife, but she marries the boss at the end of a perfect day, after a false start. Daphne and her bunch are well drawn, they do even as you or I, and there you are. Mr. Farson has deliberately chosen an undistinguished theme to be played out by little people. If he likes to pursue bigger game, he may write a fine novel. But not to order.

"An Anthology of Mysticism and Mystical Philosophy." By William Kingsland. (Methuen and Co., 7s. 6d.)

The author has arranged his quotations in sections so that the reader may, with the assistance of the table of contents, refer to any aspect of mysticism on which he asks for light. A bibliography of the works quoted from is also furnished, and testifies to the extent of the mystical literature Mr. Kingsland has covered in his gleaning. Finally there is a biographical note and index so that one may turn up quotations by the name of their author. From the order of the work it is accordingly plain that its compiler is not only a mystic but a practical craftsman. The index, unfortunately, is not complete, but no doubt the editor will attend to that as the work grows. Not only are the recognised mystics such as Jacob Boehme and Blake drawn upon, but a good many undeniable if unrecognised mystics such as Huxley and Herbert Spencer. But a good many authors are missing who have more right in the anthology than many who are represented. To take instances there is no quotation or reference to Swedenborg, Nietzsche, Steiner, and many others with far more claim to mystical authority and profundity than Ralph Waldo Trine, among others. This is more in the way of hint than criticism. The reader is able already to enjoy at leisure in Mr. Kingsland's anthology what is the nearest to the truth about existence that thought has attained—and seems likely to attain. He may afterwards fill out the form by studying the works quoted from, but to the broad principles there is nothing to add. It is almost authority for mystical philosophy that every independent thinker who gives time and patience to the quest comes to the same conclusions.

The Dearly Beloved of Benjamin Cobb. By Clemence Dane. Benn. 1s. Magazine editors rarely

A moving and beautiful study. Magazine editors rarely have the good taste and decency to print short stories of this quality. Perhaps that is why Bann's are teaching them their job.

The Music Gallery Murder. By R. F. Foster. Fisher
Unwin. 7s. 6d. All the best people read

Unwin. 7s. 6d.

Thoroughly good of its kind. All the best people read thrillers secretly, and penny bloods when the libraries run short of homicide. Now they are writing thrillers themselves, to make up the deficiency. This one has a very juicy motive. But in the end, the author quite forgets to explain how the poor victim, seated one day at the organ, was stuck.

Kong. By Harold Kingsley. Fisher Unwin. 7s. 6d.
Described as a tale of love and piracy in the China seas.
... the big stiff!

So it is. We like Mr. Kong, the big stiff!

The Smiling Death. By Francis D. Carr. Can't make out how a nice, fat boy like Mr. Grierson can make our flesh creep so!

"The Philosophy of Benedetto Croce." By H. Widdowson. Cambridge, 1917. 7s. 6d.

(Macmillan, 75. 60.)

Although this discursive summary of the philosophy of Signor Croce was originally issued in 1917, it is fully worth re-publication—a fact which, by the way, since Signor Croce is still alive and working, is a grave criticism of his followers. Signor Croce is one of the few philosophers whose judgments on the separate data of their philosophic concepts have been of value. To give an example, a theory of aesthetic from this thinker merits the more consideration in that his critiques of the works of individual artists, in the plastic arts as in literature, have struck the conviction of finality. Yet Signor Croce's theory of aesthetic has been misunderstood. Students have wanted to know about him, and, besides, to dismiss him in order to be excused from thorough knowledge. One commonly hears that Croce's view of art as expression implies that the "Adventures of Sexton Blake" are as great art as "The Purloined Letter" or the "Adventures of Don Quixote," whereas Croce has carefully shown the contrary. That art is expression is conditioned by the complementary view that art is intuition. In other words the word expression is used in such a way that only an intuition can be an expression. For Croce all is mind, and in mind there are four moments: first, the knowledge which is intuition—the image maker; second, the knowledge which is conceptual—the logic maker; third, the act which

is individual—the utilitarian; and fourth, the act which is social and universal—the ethical. The object of this philosophy is not to establish rank among works of art. Any two works of art—if they are both works of art—are the product of intuition; they are expressions. One is so as much as the other qualitatively, if not quantitatively. While they may scarcely be compared with one another they have, nevertheless, relations with the universal mind which makes judgment possible. Reflection enough on these principles, broadly stated here, would save a great deal of criticism of Croce, which, if it were true, would have prevented him from being a great critic.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

"NIETZSCHE ON GOETHE."

Sir,—Knowing of the interest always taken by your paper in all matters Nietzschean, I beg to inform you that I shall give a lecture entitled as above before the English Goethe Society at 8.15 p.m. on November 22, at King's College, Strand. In English.

M. A. MUGGE.

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