

THE NEW AGE

INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER"

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

Some months ago we described the attempt of Sir Basil Blackett, the British Finance Minister in India, to pilot the Reserve Bank Bill through the Assembly at New Delhi. The story ended, it will be remembered, with the sudden adjournment of the House by the President. It now appears that the Bill was abandoned and Sir Basil Blackett came to England to discuss the situation. Recently he returned to India with the draft of a new Reserve Bank Bill designed to placate the Swarajists and other Opposition parties while still subserving the British policy of Indian currency stabilisation. But at the opening of the new session the President, Mr. V. J. Patel, refused leave for the new Bill to be introduced, on the ground that the Indian Government's proposal to do so was a violation of the propriety of the House and an abuse of privilege. The Government had attempted to introduce a new Bill while the old one of last session had not been withdrawn. He hinted that the best course would be to defer the new Bill until, by the passage of time, the old one had lapsed. This decision constitutes an interim victory for the Opposition parties, whose objection to the original Bill was that it meant placing the control of Indian finance in the hands of British bankers. So far as it goes this situation is gratifying to us. The supervision of cash-consciousness in politics is a long stride forward from class-, race-, and creed-consciousness. We only hope that at least some native politicians are sufficiently instructed in the credit system to realise why this is so and what their objective should be. Merely to resist world-centralisation of financial control is not enough. The resistance must be based on convincing economic argument, or it will be considered to arise from mere obstinacy and will therefore fail.

Mincing Lane rubber dealers are indignant at the Government's decision to ask the Committee of Civil Research to inquire into the effects of the rubber

restriction scheme. The announcement caused a slump on the following day, the price touching 1s. 3½d. per lb.—the lowest quotation since last March. According to the *Evening News*—

"Several leading dealers . . . declare that the interests of British rubber producers, of thousands of investors, and millions of British capital, are being ignored to 'kow-tow' to America."

One of them added—

"Once again news has leaked out in America in advance of the market here, and we have suffered in consequence. The Prime Minister's decision is all the more disconcerting . . . because only yesterday we in the 'Lane' were welcoming American orders for rubber, and were beginning to look for better prices."

We can sympathise with these dealers' protests, but are afraid that they will be of no avail. Checks and jolts like this are an integral part of the general economic framework, and will not be removed until their prime common cause has been eliminated. The London rubber markets will and must remain subservient to the interests of American rubber-users for so long as Wall Street imposes financial policy on Threadneedle Street. The best attitude for the dealers to adopt is to tone down references to the immediate injury to themselves and other British rubber interests, and to emphasize that *all* British interests are suffering in the same way, and for the same high-financial reason. So far as rubber is specifically brought into the discussion it can be pointed out that exports of this product to America are instruments for reducing the American debt, and that the business of the British Government is to see that the price is as much as the goods will fetch under the free operation of law of supply and demand. It is not in the least necessary that a high export price should involve a high price to British users of rubber. Readers who have studied our credit-analysis will know that under a self-determined banking system our internal prices to consumers need be no more than a fraction of our external prices. It is, of course, hopeless to expect any threatened group of business men to study the

subject. Even if they would, they are too pre-occupied in adjusting their plans to these bewildering changes in market conditions to find time for the task. Let us declare as modestly as we can that THE NEW AGE is fighting their battle for them on the only basis on which it can be won, and further that it is the only journal that is conducting any fight at all. We do not care what daily, weekly, or other organ of opinion is analysed, we challenge any dispassionate investigator to deny that the whole of their editorial labour ends in confusion of plan and direction. It is the same with the modern statesman.

Week in, week out, from morn to eve
You can hear his sonorous roar;
And Members from the Smoking Room
Steal on to the Commons Floor,
To cheer his epigrams that flash
Like sparks from a smithy door.

On Sundays he goes out of Town
And sits among his friends,
Discussing what the nation owes,
And what the banker lends;
And how much time remains before
His term of office ends.

Blustering, blundering, borrowing,
Onward through strife he goes,
Each morning sees some speech begun,
Each evening sees it close;
Something lamented, nothing done,
Has earned a night's repose.

The primary business of politics is the problem of bread, cheese and pickles. The secondary business is that of bacon, eggs and coffee—and so through a continuous progression to caviare, oysters, and champagne. The technique of this business is to enable manufacturers and traders to make a good profit out of the prices which consumers are able to pay; to make it financially worth their while making anything at all that consumers would like to buy. That can only be done by the radical alteration in credit-policy which THE NEW AGE advocates and expounds. The cause of the economic deadlock in every one of its manifestations is the neglect of the Treasury and the banks to tackle it from the credit end. It is they, and only they, who hold the key to a revival of trade. If the whole ground-floor of a building is on fire, and the brigade has only one ladder, it only confuses the firemen for groups of people to poke their heads out of upper-storey windows and shout against each other for assistance. The obvious thing to do is to apply a general remedy to the general danger and direct hose-pipes on the fire underneath—and especially so if there is seen to be no time to fetch these people down in turn from their several windows. The bearing of this parable will be seen in the spectacle of coal interests, cotton interests, steel interests, agricultural interests, and now—the latest group to smash out the window—rubber interests, all engaged in agitations relating to their several specific problems. Moreover, to revert to the question of the Press, there is no other journal than THE NEW AGE which sees and expounds the whole situation; the others split up into partisan groups, and if there be any which do not, their only contribution to the problem is to deprecate "selfishness" and exhort everybody to show "good-will." If the smouldering prisoners will only shake hands the fire will go out.

The proposer of the toast to THE NEW AGE at the Dinner last Saturday week was acute enough to recognise this differentiation. He said that not only were the comments of this journal reserved for specific events of real significance, but that these events were always discussed in their proper relation to the general situation. It was just. THE NEW AGE is the "House Organ" of business interests in general, and if they had any sagacity

they would allocate hard cash for the express purpose of extending its influence just as they now spend it on advertising their specific products. If there is one fact which all of them must perforce accept as axiomatic it is that they suffer from a collective shortage of orders at remunerative prices. Yet they behave without exception as though a redistribution of their several shortages will fill up the gap in the general demand—as though they can all get more soup by dipping their spoons in each other's soup-plates.

The history of trade policy is a history of trade devices to collect something which is not there. And it is not there for the sole reason that the controllers of credit do not put it there. Money does not reach the consumer-market at a rate equal to that at which producers must collect it if they are to remain collectively solvent. This demonstrable condition of trade corresponds to the fire in our parable. There is not going to be goodwill, peace, and prosperity while it persists. It will poison the relations between small dealers, small manufacturers, combines, and so on up to national institutions, whereupon the diplomats must enter the struggle and lift it on to the plane of military and naval competition. On the plane of international conflict the single fire-escape in the parable can be called "Export Trade." And we can also say that the achievement of the highest "favourable balance" of such trade by any one nation amounts to getting the first turn at the fire-escape. It amounts to bursting out and straddling the window-sill before the others have broken the glass.

But the process of bursting out must be preceded by certain preparations. These, in terms of commerce, are comprised in national "foreign investment" policy, "mandates," protectorates, and economic "penetration" in general—the last, entailing, sooner or later, the underpinning precaution of military intervention. Behind these policies, and delimiting their scope, lies the power of credit creation and control; and that control rests, by the mutual agreement of the world's bankers, where gold has accumulated. When Mr. McKenna, in his last speech, remarked that the world was being put on a dollar basis rather than a gold basis, he was saying in effect that the United States was planning to be the first out of the burning house of world bankruptcy. She was fashioning her bullion into a wireless installation and sending out a S O S for the fire escape. The rubber dealers in London complain not only of the British Government's interference about their price policy, but even more emphatically about the leakage of information in New York before they themselves were aware of the Government's intentions. They say that the American interests cleared a cool million pounds at the expense of Britain overnight. Exactly. And so long as they ignore the first causes of these things they must put up with the prospect of their perpetual recurrence. Postulate that the supreme initiative in financial policy must be allowed to Wall Street—and these evils follow of Threadneedle Street—and these evils follow automatically. So long as Mr. Benjamin Strong can give orders to Mr. Montagu Norman, American rubber-buyers will be able to fleece British rubber-sellers. As we have previously said, we do not expect of the rubber dealers that they shall take on themselves the task of putting these things right. But at least they can draw the obvious moral, and throw the weight of their influence behind the growing demand for an investigation into British credit policy and its reactions on British trade.

There are, happily, some indications that the Strong-Norman compact to let Uncle Sam have first

go at the soup-tureen is not working out according to plan. The first is contained in the announcement that Britain is showing signs this year of a revival in foreign trade. If true (for our instinct is to distrust these statements without collateral evidence) it means, in the last analysis, that John Bull has got his spoon into Uncle Sam's soup-plate somewhere or other. The second is to be seen in a report from the *Daily News'* New York correspondent that the unemployment problem is beginning to reassert itself in America. He says that the highest figure mentioned is 5,000,000, while the most conservative estimate is 2,500,000. Mr. Stuart Chase, the head of the Labour Bureau, puts the number at 4,000,000.

"Bread lines are also being formed again in New York and all the joss houses are overflowing. The Salvation Army reports having to turn men away nightly. The theory of high wages is also menaced. During January 22 wage decreases were put into effect. The cotton industry in New England has extended the hours and cut wages 10 per cent. . . . The biggest [coal] mine in Illinois closed this week. . . . There are 1,000,000 miners out of work. . . . The building trade . . . fell off last year by over 12 per cent."

Notice that this is all happening in spite of the instalment-selling policy which is in full swing there. (Or are the banking authorities at last beginning to nervously press the plank against the swinging-boats?) Among comments which this correspondent quotes on the situation is the following from the *Journal of Commerce*—

"The conditions will doubtless shake severely the complacency of some of those who have refused to face the fact of declining business and industrial activity, with the concomitant increase in numbers out of work."

Another authority describes the mining and textile trades as "wallowing in the mud of disorganisation and depression." The correspondent adds on his own behalf—

"Perhaps the most sinister fact in connection with unemployment is that almost daily some new process is invented or installed, designed to employ less labour, thus throwing men out of work."

Thirdly, there is an event in another category. It is reported in the *Evening News*—

"Managua, Nicaragua, Thursday (last Thursday). Mr. Harold Patterson, the British Chargé d'Affairs here, who recently received a letter from the British Vice-Consul at Matagalpa asking for additional protection for the coffee plantations in that district against a feared raid by the forces of General Sandino, the Nicaraguan Liberal leader, has now been informed that Sandino's troops have captured the coffee plantation of Mr. Potter, the Vice-Consul. "Mr. Patterson has conferred with Mr. Eberhardt, the U.S. Minister, regarding the steps to be taken to protect British lives and property in that rich coffee-growing district.—*Reuter.*"

Let us draw in the background of this episode. Some months ago when America landed her marines to protect the Nicaraguan Government against General Sandino, the British Admiralty sent two cruisers there. While there the officers of those vessels entertained General Sandino, drank with him, and made a fuss of him. What was said between them nobody knows. As to why they went there no official details were given: the only explanation was a general reference to the advisability of "watching" the interests of British nationals. But there is no difficulty in seeing what it was all about. Britain is backing this "Liberal" "rebel." It therefore suits Britain's book for him to capture British property, because that act provides Britain with the right, under international "law" or custom, of military penetration. It provides her with a legal *locus standi* which she lacked before. We have therefore no doubt at all that what General Sandino has done was done according to plan. It may or may not be that the General

feeds his soldiers on coffee, or that a coffee-plantation affords them concealment from America's aerial bombmen. Not being familiar with the local topography we are unable to decide whether it was pure military necessity that forced the General to select a *British-owned* plantation in preference to one belonging to the nationals of the enemy, or at least of "neutral" countries. But however it may be the outcome is mighty convenient to Britain's naval strategists, and we suspect that Mr. Patterson had a struggle to conceal a smile when he went to consult the American Minister about the danger in which British lives and property stood from the acts of a military ally. Whether, having established in principle the right of intervention, the British Government decides to act on that right, is a matter depending on what steps America is likely to take to oppose it. And that, in part, must depend on what developments occur in America's domestic economy. The wolves' custom of eating their dead and wounded rules also in international competition; and over it reigns Diplomacy—a god who eats those who cannot help themselves.

It is a comforting thought that the door of economic emancipation is fastened by a combination lock, because there is the ever-present possibility that a mere purposeless fiddling about with the dial may bring the magic letters into line. This analogy would be more nearly exact if you were to suppose a lock in which every wrong alignment of the letters caused an electric shock to the "fiddlers"; for then their pains would discover clues where their brains could not. This seems to be the way in which the world is blundering out of its tragic difficulties. The odds against its blundering *right* would be of astronomical dimensions were it not that the effective combination is known here and there on the earth, and will become more and more widely known so long as THE NEW AGE is enabled to recite its weekly spelling—S-o-c-i-a-l C-r-e-d-i-t.

The shocks which America is sustaining—those which Britain and other countries have sustained—have been faithfully forecasted and described by THE NEW AGE, in some cases years beforehand. Shut off from access to special information, it has yet been able to prophesy correctly by direct inferences from its knowledge of credit and costing principles. Alone among the myriad newspapers of the world we spoke of another war when everyone was getting ready to enjoy the millennium. We voiced the warning of an Anglo-American conflict when every English-speaking statesman alive, even if he ever considered the idea, declared it "unthinkable." It was before the last war ended when Mr. Orage, the then editor of THE NEW AGE, writing during trade conditions when people only had to do something or make something and they would find Treasury notes stuffed into their busy hands, begged and implored all who could hear him to hang on to their money as they had never hung on to anything before. It was no allusive exhortation: if we remember rightly, he used the word "implore," and the whole of his context reflected the paramount emphasis of this term. Let every private individual, and, more important still, every administrator of business policy, stop a second and calculate what trouble he would have saved himself if only he had followed this advice. Let them think of the hundreds of millions of pounds which their enterprises—the huge costs of foundations of their enterprises—which now earn building up new "earning assets" which now earn them nothing. But no. Their ears were filled with syren promises that a war-depleted world was waiting to fill itself up with their products—promises deliberately inspired by credit controllers to cheat them into self-deflation and to put them back where

they belonged—into the queues of humble suppliants for exiguous bank overdrafts. Some at least of Mr. Orage's readers did regard his warning, and turned plant and stock into money instead of money into plant and stock. The result was that when the banker-tipsters' odds-on favourite fell in the 1920 handicap, these NEW AGE non-punters went home from the course in first-class carriages. There were other people who escaped through the accident of not being able to "get on" about the horse. One of them daily praises God for trade unions and direct action. He had passed plans for a new factory, but there was a dispute and a strike, and the erection was delayed until after the slump set in, whereupon he cancelled the arrangement. Then, to turn to another kind of instance, we know of one large firm which has for some year or two past regulated its export quota by reference to certain principles revealed in Major Douglas's credit analysis. Its problem used to be to calculate where, when, and in what quantity to send its product to various foreign centres, so that they should arrive in advance of the local demand and yet fill it with the least margin of error. The new method of ensuring this time and quantity adjustment, we are told, works out "beautifully."

We adduce these facts because they should inspire confidence in the scientific foundation of the Social Credit proposals. If we have been able to tell people beforehand that if they turn one of the brass rings of the lock-dial in such and such a way they will get a shock, we are all the more entitled to respect when we profess to tell them how to turn all the rings. But no; we are called "currency fanatics." So we have to stand aside and watch them turn a row of rings all together. *Credit Expansion*. That hurts them, and therefore they turn the same row in the opposite direction. *Credit Restriction*. That hurts more. Then they try turning single rings one way—*High Wages Policy, Mass Advertising, Mergers, Instalment Selling, Worker-shareholding, Free Trade* and so on; and when that fails they turn one or other of them the opposite way in search of antitheses. But the "key" ring of the lot they never touch. . . . *Credit Accountancy*. The final solution of the economic problem is contained in the correct principle of costing. This is the stop which will link up all the manuals of the organ and enable one pair of hands and feet to flood the cathedral of commerce with the harmony of universal prosperity.

The Defect in the Costing System.

The following table will probably help to illustrate how the deadlock in our present economic system is reached. We take three periods of time and assume that each represents a complete cycle of bank credit during which the production and consumption relating to each cycle is completed, i.e., the money is repaid to the bank. The periods are shown under the letters A, B and C.

	A	B	C	Totals
(a) Credit borrowed (and repaid) ...	£1	£4	£16	£21
(b) Quantity of total production (say tons) ...	1	4	16	21 tons
(c) Credit paid to consumers for services ...	£1	£4	£16	£21
(d) Quantity of production sold for consumption ...	1	2	4	7 tons
(e) Collective cost of production consumed ...	£1	£2	£4	£7
(f) Collective price of production consumed ...	£1	£4	£16	£21
(g) Purchasing power of consumers' incomes, i.e. the ratio of collective price to collective cost of consumed production (e÷f) ...	100%	50%	25%	
(h) Quantity of production not consumed, i.e. Fixed Capital (b-d) ...	0	2	12	14 tons
(j) Collective cost of unconsumed production, i.e. future capital charges ...	0	£2	£12	£14

It is here assumed that in each period the whole cost of total production is paid directly to consumers. Hence the respective totals of the lines a and c, are the same at £21, thus being in accord with the orthodox contention that all the charges that make up the price of a consumable article represent money payments that have gone at some time or another into the pocket of some consumer or other. The statement is true enough, but the customary inference is false. The snag lies in the italicised reservation. It does not follow that because the costs of all production have gone at various times into consumers' pockets they can necessarily pay now for the unconsumed production brought forward from those times.

If you look at lines e, f and g you will see why. The money going into consumers' pockets in each period was equal in amount to total production costs, but the purchasing power of that money varied from period to period between 100 per cent. and 25 per cent. While the amount of consumers' money increased, the proportion of total production bought by that money decreased. The final result is seen in lines h and j, where there now exist fourteen tons of capital, together with £14 of capital charges, nominally due to be accounted into prices in a further period D, not shown in the table.

But at the close of period C. the consumers have no money. All the credits have gone back to the bank and been extinguished. No money exists either inside or outside industry. A glance at the table shows how the missing £14 has disappeared. It represents money which consumers returned to the bank (industry being only the agent through which it was returned) before they had been able to consume everything that the money had brought into existence.

Now, in current industrial accountancy this £14 is treated as a recoverable cost, usually under the designation "overhead charge," or "capital charge," and is included in prices. Take any price to-day and analyse it. Suppose it to be a suite of furniture priced at £21, divided into the following rough categories:—

A. Tree felling (March, 1925)	£1
B. Cutting and storing wood (March, 1926)	£4
C. Construction and distribution, etc. (June, 1926)	£16
Total	£21

But whether the consumer can pay that price is another matter. For instance, if the general principle of costing and pricing during each of the above three periods are assumed to have corresponded with those shown in our table, the price to the consumer should be itemised as follows:—

A. £1, at 100 p.c.	£1
B. £4, at 50 p.c.	£2
C. £16, at 25 p.c.	£4
Total	£7

The principle here is that every item of cost in a retail price should be discounted to represent its purchasing power at the time it was originally paid out. The sum of these purchasing-power figures will be the effective price of the article, by which we mean the price at which current consumer income can buy it. There is no necessity in practice to go into all this detailed revision of historical theoretical money costs to arrive at current practicable selling prices: there is a simple and comprehensive method of getting the same result by a single discounting percentage applied equally to the final cost of every article marketed for consumption.

Observe that this necessity to discount financial costs does not arise from our having assumed consumers to have paid all their money in the purchase of

only part of the production in the periods B and C. It arises just the same if you assume them to have been charged less than their incomes, and to have invested the rest. In both cases they part with all their money, but all they get is the consumable part of the production. It will be objected that in the second case they do get something as well as consumable goods, namely, the ownership of what Mr. McKenna would call "earning assets." But since it is they themselves who will have to provide the expected earnings, they are no better off collectively with their "assets" than without them. What they appear to gain as consumers they lose as capitalists. If you take line "e" of the table and suppose them to have paid only £7 for consumables (i.e., cost price) and invested the other £14 in the "capital," they could only debit themselves with the £14, while in the meantime the bank would have destroyed the money. They ought really to debit the bank with the sum they invest.

This obvious way out is a clue to the method by which modern industry may, without loss, discount its nominal costs to arrive at effective prices. The amount of the difference between the two constitutes a valid claim on the banking system; and the reason is because the practical necessity for scaling down costs at all is a consequence of the banks' custom of cancelling credits prematurely. When this truth is realised, the banking system will be seen as a debtor to the British public for the sum by which their combined personal incomes fall short, at any given time, of the accumulated cost of industry's capital.

A Motion Picture.

The title of this note is not meant to mislead; imagine yourself in the National Gallery contemplating the natures, emotions, and lives of the framed figurants, when, gently, quietly, one of them breathes, smiles, steps from its frame, and glides across the room with gesture and expression so in harmony that the miracle convinces. Imagine the gasp of delight that you would suppress for fear of breaking the charm, as one by one other characters took living shape, performed the dance that added poetry to portraiture, and once more withdrew to the immobility of the frame. Remember how those suggestions of gaiety, of sadness, of interest, of tiredness, of humour, mingled in the portrait, became in the living figure, dominant in turns, and beyond what was manifest, there remained throughout a flash of awareness in the expression of the figures of the combined grotesqueness and sublimity of all existence. Then you will have an impression of the art of Miss Angna Enters.

For any person, man or woman, to occupy a stage alone for a whole performance savours of a *tour de force*, or, in English, a display of power rather than an expression of beauty. Miss Ruth Draper holds the stage by her command over character, by her mastery of speech and gesture alone. How much more outrageously does Miss Angna Enters, in her series of matinées at the St. Martin's Theatre, on her first visit to Europe, invite the thunderbolts of the theatrical gods. If the hidden pianist be excluded, Miss Enters depends on movement, gesture, and costume alone, the whole of these being her own command and in no degree is it merely the power. The means by which she stimulates the imagination of her audiences are simple and so delicate that the memory of them seems scarcely of this world. Whether it is a ridiculous thing, like "The Queen of Heaven," or a sublime thing like "1927—New York," she commands all senses and all minds. Here in "The Queen of Heaven" her gestures sweep the skies and of the depths; there, in "1927—New York," a world of understanding passes in the flicker of an eyelid.

Whatever she does, while she is present all loud and vain things hold their tongue.

She has nought in common with character-study experts or impersonators. She is truly a dancer. Her opening waltz, with its lightning responses to her imaginary partner, the beauty and passion of its movement, the fleeting moods manifest in the features, and the suppleness and flexibility of her figure, brought her audience to exaltation. "Promenade" simply showed a lady of quality taking the air and keeping an appointment. Until this promenade was it credible that the witness could be enthralled by the mere spectacle of a woman walking across a stage? But every subtle change of temper from joyful anticipation to boredom was expressed in a manner to delight and be understood. She revealed all the tiresomeness, consolation, hope, and despair, that crowd the interval between the moment at which the event is due and the moment later at which it occurs. In the "Dance of Death," without music, the whirling draperies with their ebbing-tide-like swish, black with just a border of white, produce a mood of overpowering sombreness; a complete sensation of the imminence of death, of, indeed, the experience of near-death. Pathetically, in her dance of adolescence, Miss Enters lays bare the soul-torment of the child driven between the duty of pursuing her accomplishment and the overmastering longing for the presence of her lover—with just sufficient comedy to keep the pathos objective and unsentimental.

Amid such tenderness and magnificence, such evidence of observation converted by thought into technique, criticism can come only because it is a duty. In only one of them Miss Enters appeared to fail. In "A Merry Widow" the music was not rich enough. Her art draws deeply from the communication of delicate nuances of many mingled emotions. Dare one say she dances the undertones of her music; and who could play excerpts from the "Merry Widow" with any undertones? Part of Miss Enters' fascination derives from her ability to create a group of persons on the stage in her audiences' imagination. One fears that she may be liable to exploit this power beyond its artistic limit, notwithstanding that in the final Beethoven "Contra Danse" it was exploited to a perfection that more than merited the enthusiasm it created. In nearly all Miss Enters' work the gestures seem less to resemble means than result. They originate in the spirit, and it would be tragic for there to be the slightest suspicion of a trick. Here is beautiful work that must be kept pure. PAUL BANKS.

[Miss Enters appears twice this week—on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons.—P.B.]

"People sometimes say that international finance can make or unmake States, can bring on or prevent war. Fortunately, there is no truth in that dictum. Looking back to July, 1914, I know of no group of bankers in any one of the countries soon to be involved that was not earnestly opposing the very thought of war. But their efforts were powerless against the tides of misunderstanding and passion that finally swept the world almost to destruction. If affairs could have been ordered so that the statesmen who were responsible in part, together with conditions for bringing on the great conflict could also have had dumped on their shoulders the task of rebuilding the world history might have been different. . . . It is the bankers upon whom falls the thankless task of cleaning up the mess. There is not a banker in the civilised world whose interest is not, and has not always been, tied up closely with the cause of peace. Taken as a whole, the bankers paid an enormously disproportionate share of the losses of the war. Some of them made money as the reward of special services, but even this was heavily taxed. And this is not all. In the work of regeneration bankers were consulted only after the politicians, who had brought the Peace Treaty.—Mr. Lamont, banker, at the dinner of the Academy of Political Science in New York.

The Ghost of Twopence.

A man who sets out to find a Kingfisher is doomed to disappointment. This rare bird can only be found by not looking for it; you may be lost in thought by the edge of a river; you may be rubbing your neck where a midge has bitten you, or you may be wondering if there is stuffed veal for dinner, when a glitter of plumage takes your breath away, and romance beckons with an invisible finger for you to follow. I think it is the same with—dare I write the word? The sepulchral voice of Nietzsche says no. The voice of St. Augustine says, "Only as I define it." The voice of St. Paul, stretched to the tautness of the eighth octave C on an overstrung Collard and Moore, says "No." Richard Burton, who wallowed in Christian piety, would not allow me. Landor, who could never understand why the world was always wrong and only himself right, striving with nobody, yet fighting all his life, throwing his dinner through the window—I don't think he would allow me to write the word that I am simply itching to set down.

Happiness (there, I've said it) is like the lightning that, for a second, cuts through the gloom, and enables one to see real faces as against the stacks of masks in the huge Clarkson's Emporium patronised by the world; but no human being can time the lightning. Liver, environment, weather, fortune, these can be borne by the old veteran of stoicism, who gives you his friendly hand; and then your good fairy springs a surprise on you as a reward for enduring vocal futility, mechanical nonsense, and the nausea induced by the spirit of unrest in London typified by labourers in the streets digging holes and filling them up again. It is time, says the spirit of comedy, that a meeting was held in Trafalgar Square under the auspices of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to the Earth. "Bah!" says the lamb of disinterested interest, "you would only get three people to attend. Don't you remember the navy who threatened to hit you on the head with his spade?—That should teach you not to joke when you suggested that they should give the earth a ride round on a motor lorry before shovelling it back again. Dear, precious earth! only to lie undisturbed for a few days, and the magic of nature spreads a green carpet to remind the eyes of instinct that has almost been lost. And you choice pioneers, who turn families out of old cottages in order to build a cinema, what shall the earth spirit say to you? Desirable freehold land suitable for a picture palace is the metallic announcement. Greed and avarice by the long-delayed bargains send up milk-thistles, flocks, and marsh-mallow, and—in case of need for some modern Nebuchadnezzar—grass. I have seen the yellow coltsfoot in Chelsea until the earth was clamped in with flats—and this puts me in the same daft category as the paper-seller in "Riverside Nights" who remembered hearing larks singing in Hammersmith Broadway.

The atmosphere at our meeting showed signs of clearing; little pictures were evoked over the glasses; the conversation was brilliant but disconnected, no even suburban house appearance did it have; why dogs fight, a profound psychological study; the bearing or dependence of culture on some horse sense ideas of social credit; whether dreams were of any value, and then to a little theatre of rebellion against legs, lessees, and howling success that only existed on paper.

And then Peter said "I must introduce you to two ladies." Here again, the dark and humid atmosphere that had been building prison walls for the spirit, began to clear. Connie admitted that she had

known in her life-time seven real human beings. Bessie wanted to be loved for herself alone—this, perhaps, the very kernel of romance when Time has sharpened his swords on the human face. Peter would tell the fortune of Connie by looking on her hand—but, clever rascal that he was, he was looking at her hand through her dreams—a previous confidence to Peter which she had forgotten.

Then the door opened, and in walked an inspector and a policeman, and for some freakish reason, a scene from "The Government Inspector" flitted through my mind, and the little dynamo inside me, registering in the one word "fudge," began to whirl and boom as we were told that by Act of Parliament that we could not buy cigarettes.

Peter, raconteur, diver into the deep sea of memory, told, with a wealth of description, how, for his assistance to an old woman loaded with parcels, she had given him twopence. Connie commenced to laugh from her toes upwards. Ripples, quivers, twitches, rocking to and fro, curves in her beautiful face, wondrous light in her eyes—all about this very prosaic twopence. And just at that moment the lightning, through adolorous atmosphere, lit up the world. In a trice, eighteen volumes of Nietzsche were kicked into the sea; Jeremy Taylor, Thomas à Kempis, and Schopenhauer followed quickly; there was a fluttering of leaves like the noise of a rising flock of pigeons, as twopence put paid to metaphysical knots which your writer passes on to you to untie. Twopence had caused a miracle—Twopence, even in the abstract, for Peter had spent it years ago.

On the bedrock of reality, Lichtenberg, in treating serious things trivially, says that biting the nails is an instinctive desire for self-improvement. He is your true optimist. The world process of alchemy, that brought four chemical compounds together, and one of them had set the others dancing—but Connie more so. She declared with sincere gratitude that it was the best laugh she had had for weeks. Now that a pair of scissors can be bought for sixpence we bid good-bye to the nibbling, gnawing, and snipping exercise with the teeth, and welcome the magician who carries his learning so lightly that he can ease a burden in a woman's mind with her parcels did not know that one day he would lift a burden—for a little while—off the mind of a young woman. I am not prepared to say what is going to happen to the world when it realises that the Bank of England cannot imprison the sun, nor money regulate the weather; one day or night there will be a flash of lightning illuminating completely the superstitions connected with finance in the dark ages of the present, and we shall commence to laugh from the toes upwards.

There is something that bids me to think so in Connie's laughter about twopence.

WILLIAM REPTON.

VISION.

He stretches forth his sensitive wise fingers,
 Aware when Beauty comes in bravest guise;
 The hurt of things misshapen knows, he lingers
 Less long upon the thing that ugly lies.
 Mark how he lifts his head among the corn!
 The wind and he are friends so many years.
 Our bright eye-witnessed gold must suffer scorn
 Beside the greater shining that he hears.
 Born blind? . . . Forbear to pity one who knows
 The most-hid honeysuckle in the lane,
 The velvet and the essence of a rose
 Whose red for him no darkest night has slain.
 But rather envy vision that life long
 Sees each sweet singer one with his sweet song.

A. NEWBERRY CHOYCE.

Denis Saurat.

By Neil Montgomery.

II.

It is Saurat who has resurrected and reorientated the ancient conception of the Microcosm and the Macrocosm "As in God, so in man." As the universe with all its separate beings is the expression of One Personality, so every personality is a universe containing many separate beings, which are the expressions of desires of diverse intensities. As men live in the universe and rule it, being those portions of it which have attained the greatest intensity and self-consciousness, so in the universe we call a man (if he be a fruitful and growing universe) certain portions of his desire reach a clarity and intensity much beyond his own, and come to live a transient but imperative life in the soil of his mind. These are the "Ideas": Saurat has devoted many pages to an exact and subtle analysis of their nature, and to the general psychology of genius, which is the faculty for receiving the "Ideas."

But throwing all this work aside, Saurat has entered the lists of modern literary criticism as a free lance. Wholly admirable as he is, however, in interpreting a writer congenial to himself, his philippics against his contemporaries make but sorry reading. The truth is that his "freedom" and "impartiality" are but the thinnest of masks. I do not mean that he allows his prejudices to run away with him. This would be to accuse him of extreme naiveté—a thing unthinkable in a Frenchman. But the matter is much more serious than this. Prejudice, which arises from instinct, is rarely without its creative aspect. But even Saurat's "prejudices" seem to be deliberate, and dictated by his intellect. He always seems to be serving some conscious purpose at all costs, and this perhaps explains why his satire is apt to have the strained, ponderous, elephantine quality, which we associate with the desire to punish someone, "for the public good." One is reminded of the witticisms of a judge.

Thus, having decided which "cause" he will favour, Saurat attacks its "enemies" with the unscrupulousness and fervour of a zealous advocate, but (and this is his worst fault) he attacks after the manner of a Jesuit, being perfectly aware, but careless, of his injustice. Albeit there is always a certain knight-errantry in his attitude, and he is always to be found on the side of little-known writers, and against those who are strong in popularity amongst the intelligentsia. This knight-errantry is the only excuse I can find for his censure. In a laudatory article he gravely warns this group of writers against the harmful tradition of Sir Walter Scott, and praises Buchan for having put Dostoevsky in his place. Buchan!!

Especially does Saurat seem to fear any English writer of note who might conceivably stir the French to emulation. Consequently, when Shaw sprang his "St. Joan" on the world, Saurat, in whom the Frenchman had formerly been attracted by Shaw's wit, and the Miltonic strain by Shaw's Puritan morality, was now moved to a kind of fury against the author of "St. Joan" as a possible menace to French literature. Saurat's criticisms of Shaw, however, are on the whole merited, although less by "St. Joan" than by his previous work. But so much may not be said of his aspersions of Conrad (Saurat's latest bogey). Note how stern a critic he is, when Conrad is his subject, and compare this standard with his leniency towards the manifold imperfections of Victor Hugo. Saurat condemns in one sentence and with the utmost dogmatism "Nostromo" and "The Arrow of Gold," two of Conrad's most exquisitely coloured and beautifully executed romances. But in spite of this weakness Saurat remains a figure of great significance for his age.

It will therefore, perhaps, be all to the good if he remains comparatively unknown. For, as he himself has shown, the influence of a thinker who becomes famous in his own day, is apt to be diminished by his very notoriety.

It is fortunate that he has enshrined the essence of his thought in poetry. It was inevitable that when Saurat came to write poetry he should choose the epic form, and that his epic should be metaphysical in nature, and, broadly speaking, Miltonic in conception, although the production of a modern epic is so surprising as to argue courage in its author, almost amounting to foolhardiness. Yet Saurat's epic "L'Actuel" has justified his valour, and here the emotions so rigidly (and rightly) excluded from the "principia Metaphysica," find a liberal though measured scope, and thus Saurat occasionally reaches the heights of poetry.

We now see the bald statements of the "Principia" coming to life as gracious and moving poems. Thus the dry principle "Pleasure and pain spring simultaneously from all creation, which is expression, which is division," spreads its wings and becomes:—

"Souffrance, Souffrance, Souffrance,
 O sœur jumelle du plaisir!
 Nous te recevons avec espérance.
 Et nous attendons une délivrance
 Quand nous commençons à souffrir.
 Tu es la mère des créations nouvelles,
 Tu es l'essence du désir illimité;
 Nos voluptés ne peuvent jamais être belles,
 Peut-être que de ta beauté.
 O douleur, lorsque le désir,
 Satisfait, voudrait se mourir,
 Sainte douleur, tu nous rappelles,
 Sainte douleur aux mains cruelles,
 Que notre existence éternelle
 Tout entière jamais ne pourra s'accomplir.
 O Souffrance, de notre vie,
 Tu es la plus fidèle amie;
 Tu nous accompagnes toujours
 Mais, ô Souffrance téméraire,
 N'oublies-tu pas parfois, durant ta course altière
 Que tu es la Sœur de l'amour?
 O pourquoi donc nous viens-tu seul
 Douleur, ô douleur,
 N'entends-tu donc jamais le râle
 De nos pauvres cœurs?
 Souffrance, Souffrance, Souffrance
 O fille et mère du désir,
 Nous te recevons avec espérance
 Nous t'appellerons notre délivrance
 Et nous t'inviterons à nos réjouissances
 Mais viens toujours avec ton frère, le plaisir."

The most dramatic canto of the epic is the one entitled "Osiris." The fall of the Egyptian god, ensnared and destroyed by the evil sprung from his creation, recalls Milton's magnificent drama of the Fall of Man. This canto reaches its climax in the impassioned appeal of Isis to Brahma:—

"O mon maître, Osiris, Osiris!
 T'enveloppera-t-il de son pouvoir magique,
 Le Grand Typhon qui rôde aux carrefours d'Afrique?
 Aux deserts inconnus, que les dieux n'ont pas faits,
 Et te brisera-t-il comme un monde parfait?
 Ecoute-moi, Brama, toi qui te sais toi-même,
 Dont l'être est jeune encore, et la force suprême:
 Le monstrueux serpent, l'être mystérieux
 Qui au centre du Monde habite aux profonds lieux
 Qui échappent toujours aux étreintes divines,
 Typhon, le connais-tu, sais-tu son origine?
 Au centre de la vie, réside-t-il la mort?
 Comme en un fruit mauvais, est le ver qui le mord?
 Aide-nous, ô Brama! ou les dieux tous ensemble
 Au gouffre primitif sur qui l'univers tremble
 —Aide-nous, ô Brama—seront précipités,
 Car le Ver gigantesque à la divinité
 A porté son attaque, et notre loi succombe.
 Aide-nous, ô Brama, car, si le Maître tombe
 Aide-nous, ô Brama, car, si le Maître tombe
 Quelque grand que tu sois, tu périras avec nous.
 Osiris va tomber, ô Brama, aide-nous!"

The canto devoted to Christ I find somewhat disappointing. Perhaps Saurat has been hampered by a

praiseworthy diffidence, but I cannot resist the mis-giving that here again he is more interested in Christ's "philosophy" than in His logic Deed. Consequently, one is apt to remember this canto mainly as a more or less inconclusive wrangle between Christ and the Evil One, though in fact this does injustice to the poem. Saurat wishes to bring out the superficial contrast and fundamental similarity between Christ's battle with Evil and that of Osiris, but he remains too close to "Paradise Regained." Moreover, this subject has been more profoundly and more tragically handled by Dostoevsky, through the lips of Ivan Karamazov.

Coming down to modern times, however, Saurat recovers himself, and "Alma" contains some noble love-poems, of which I will only quote one:—

"Création! cri de l'amant par les nuits claires,
Ame de femme répandue par l'univers
Incrée, très subtile et féconde matière;
L'appel de l'homme vibre et bondit à travers
Les lents songes épars de l'âme féminine;
Et la femme s'éveille, et se rassemble, et sent,
Et l'ordre impérieux d'amour obéissants
Des désirs inconnus soulever sa poitrine!"

The psychology of love has not been bettered by Meredith, and the greater half of Proust is contained in the verse beginning

"Honte et désespoir du désir réalisé."

And l'Actuel ends with a panegyric on "The Perfect Being"—God, the Absolute. In this canto Saurat gathers in his wide-flung net, and the Absolute of XIXth century philosophy is brought to life by infusing into it the life-blood of the "Ideas" which were the "gods" of primitive "superstition." We thus attain a conception of a God Who grows but is not incomplete; Who is perfect without being static. With the "New Economist" we may say, "God is a flow and not a store."

"Etre Parfait qui planes au-dessus du monde,
Tellement au-delà des portées de nos ondes
Que tu es à nos sens comme si tu n'es pas
Toi seul qui es, toi qui étais, toi qui seras!"

La grande abstraction qui mène notre monde
Et l'Infaillible plan que suivent nos désirs
N'est que ta volonté, permanente et féconde,
Eclairant le passé, et faisant l'avenir.

Et si tu peux tomber dans le sommeil ultime
Et ne t'en réveiller, qu'aux cycles accomplis,
Que sommes-nous, en toi éveillés et petits
Que ton rêve passant dans ton dormir sublime?"

Art.

It is some years since M. le Corbusier made himself the protagonist of a new architecture in "L'Esprit Nouveau." But a walk down any London street would provide sufficient evidence of the way in which practice (in England, at any rate) lags behind precept. We have buildings in every style—early English, Elizabethan, Moorish, Renaissance. But there is nothing to which we can point as representing English style. It is true that any one coming by accident on Summit House in Red Lion Square, or looking at Adelaide House from the other side of London Bridge, will get a glimpse of a new and cleaner civilisation. But these two buildings are so encompassed by petty sentimentalism that they seem incongruous. The first principle of architecture, as M. le Corbusier says*, is plan: and plan is an algebrisation which leaves no room for false sentiment. Yet the architect of to-day (though the fault is more often in the client than in him) is either sentimental or stupidly traditional.

* "Towards a New Architecture," by Le Corbusier (Rodker, 25s.).

The work which should be his own, the plan, he lifts whole from some past age; and he is so pre-occupied with the "style" of ornament that he has no time to think of the style of architecture. He gives his windows thick embrasures which hinder light because that was the practice of the Middle Ages, and puts in pillars which support nothing because "they are so classical"; when he should be designing a building which would allow free play to light and air.

M. le Corbusier would be the last to deny that there is much to be learnt from the work of the past. Indeed, he devotes much time and thought to an examination of that work. But it is the work as architecture that matters: the plan, and the way in which that plan works to a given end, not the detail of cornice or coping. To find any evidence of a plan in modern times, we must turn from the architect, so-called, and look to the engineer. The motor-car and the train have both developed from a slavish imitation of the old carriage form to a form more consistent with their purpose. The aeroplane illustrates another side of the same principle. The first experimenters tried to make a mechanical bird; and they failed. Wright tried to make a machine which would fly; and he succeeded. All three, aeroplane, motor-car, and train, were designed first for use, and secondly for use with safety. They had thus an initial advantage; for it was not possible to play with details of style while human lives were at stake. Remembering such artistic atrocities as the two-decker London omnibus, one hesitates to say that the motor-car and the railway train achieved beauty because they aimed at utility. Yet they have achieved a beauty which belongs to this and to no other age. That beauty is dynamic, whereas the beauty of architecture must be static. But architecture must take equal account of the needs of the age before it can achieve anything more than associational prettiness. Industrial architecture has already done so. An airship hangar and a grain elevator, both designed first for use, are beautiful things. So has furniture; at any rate in England, where comfort is always the first requisite. It is only in domestic architecture that the traditions of the past are allowed to outweigh the needs of the present. Since the war thousands of houses have been built in England. Often they have been built on a definite plan, and with an ideal of social service which deserved better expression. But they have all been of an individualistic villa type, suited perhaps to the country, where the village is still the unit of the life, but incongruous in a modern industrial town. As a result of this villa civilisation, the distance between the place of work and the place of rest is steadily increasing, and will soon make life unmanageable. The place of rest has ceased to bear any visible relation to the life of work. Men work all day in factories where long vistas give a sense of spacious freedom; and then go home to rooms in which they literally could not swing a cat round. Machinery has solved the problem of mass-production. A new architecture, learning from the machine, will solve the problem of mass-habitation. Instead of innumerable villas alike in plan and differing in detail, it will provide communal houses alike in detail and varied in general effect. The plans of M. Tony Garnier, and of M. le Corbusier himself, give some idea of the relief it would bring to the monotony of modern life.

M. le Corbusier's thesis cannot be thoroughly understood without the illustrations which express his ideas more accurately than words. Some of these illustrations are unfortunately chosen. He shows, as an illustration of the beauty following on utility, an Italian triplane of ungainly design which crashed the first time it flew, and has never flown

† cf. "The Building of 12,000 Houses" (Benn, 25s.).

since. In one of his own designs the whole weight of a conventional roof falls on an unprotected window. And he ignores Dutch architecture, which would have provided the most convincing illustrations of his thesis. But he has produced more than enough evidence to show that France is still "mère des arts, des armes, et des lois."

WILFRID HOPE.

Drama.

Macbeth: Court.

Simply to plead anachronism against Mr. H. K. Ayliff's modernisation of "Macbeth" would be foolishness. He and Sir Barry Jackson are alive to what they are risking in that line, and defend themselves by reminding the academic playgoer that Shakespeare's plays were well sprinkled with anachronisms in the process of writing. A genuine experiment is being attempted; of trying, by means of production in a familiar form, to communicate the dramatic spirit of Shakespeare to playgoers who cannot or will not tolerate what has no immediate meaning for them. Perhaps the critic best able to give a helpful account of the experiment would be one unfamiliar with "Macbeth," in whose mind the play would not be embedded in historical and literary associations or dramatic conventions.

Far more was done in the effort to modernise than merely dressing the actors in up-to-date army and civilian costumes. An attempt was made to render didactic verse intimate and conversational by breaking it up into sentences in such a manner that, instead of speeches being recited, they could be imagined as thought. The introduction of Scots accent was a becoming innovation, since a Scots accent requires such gymnastic display from the facial muscles that it becomes the most articulate accent in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. A speeding up of the battle-scenes towards the end of the play made the assault far less ludicrous than in most performances of "Macbeth," in which talking seems so much more the business in hand than fighting. In some respects, however, the production was less modernised than it could have been, and these were respects in which modernisation was necessary. In the somnambulist scene it was a surprise to meet Lady Macbeth carrying a candle, since only an electric torch could be appropriate. Although witches are out of date, either as such or as a dramatic trick for enabling the character to betray his most secret wishes, fortune-tellers are modern enough. It should have been possible, since Lady Macbeth's doctor could become a Harley Street physician, to turn the witches into modern Bond Street psychic sensitives, or whatever they are called, or, if not those who advertise Royal Patronage, at least those who frequent the Royal Witches in clothes picked up at the Caledonian Road market. What gives most trouble to the witness in a state of mind to submit to the experiment, however, is not the modernisations, but the effects that defy modernisation; not the stage expressions that are up-to-the-minute, but the ideas, which are archaic. Between the whistling of shells, velvet-corded officers, cigarettes, and evening-gowns—the temptation to call Macbeth's lady his "bit of fluff" was irresistible—and on the other hand witches' cauldrons, thanes, the arrival of generals and princes on the battlefield as though opposing G.H.Q.'s were less than five minutes' walk apart, and leisurely discussion of murder with the dagger lying about, there is an unbridgeable gulf. When Macbeth discoursed with his wife outside the king's bedroom after the murder, it was as much as

one could do not to cry hush for fear the police should arrive before the end of the speech. It was those unmodernisables that turned the play at times from a tragedy of conscience versus ambition into a comic melodrama which caused one to speculate as to what a piece by Noel Coward would look like in Elizabethan—or even Roman—dress. Mr. Ayliff's production of the banquet was clever, but there is probably a greater public for the romantic simplicity of the old English table as conventionally set in Shakespeare than for dinner à la Frascati however imaginatively done. It is sometimes a treat to get out of one's age.

Modernisation can certainly claim some achievements. Present-day costume enables the audience to distinguish at once who is who and to get into the swing of the play very quickly. By no means a minor point is that the absence of beards prevents the actors from muffling their voices in them, though some of the actors managed to muffle them somehow. A few of the scenes were both intimate and of full dramatic intensity, notably the murder of Macduff's wife and child, the somnambulism of Lady Macbeth, and the meeting of Malcolm and Macduff in England. Some of the actors had not yet bridged the gulf between the period of the ideas and of the setting. Only Laurence Olivier as Malcolm seemed to have mastered the medium, and his speaking of the lines at his meeting with Macduff was a model for the experiment. From him the speeches were conversational and sincere—and still poetry. As the gentlewoman attendant on Lady Macbeth Eileen Beldon also found the manner, delighting the theatre with her simple but beautiful delivery of the gentlewoman's very few words. Frank Pettin-gell was favoured by the gods. His Porter was undoubtedly clever, but it must be acknowledged without disparagement that the porter, like the grave-digger in "Hamlet," is of all time, both as regards his inside and his outside.

Listeners: Wyndham's.

Here also is something of an experiment, not in the matter of production but in the more important matter of the play. Mr. Reginald Berkeley, author of "Listeners," has taken on the task of driving a team of mettlesome horses while riding one of them. Mounted on anti-war propaganda, he has attempted to drive mystery, thriller, intrigue, and love, a job he was possibly moved to try by dislike for the production plays in which the minor puppets are tied to their chairs for whipping by the major puppet. Unfortunately the team is too much for the driver, and at least one of the horses gets lost altogether, which matters in the theatre if not in the army. What happened to the love-affair between young Heseltine and Miss Carter, the most momentous issue raised for the "love" public, will probably never be known. Perhaps, however, this was part of the design to shock the multitude, by means of a highbrow thriller, into appreciating the commentary on real-politik. This is an object to be encouraged, and Captain Berkeley has something worth bothering us about. To bring a sincere and truthful voice on the stage without violating it as a stage is one of the probable missions, whether purists like it or not, of the future. But Captain Berkeley, from insufficient command over dramatic technique, has not succeeded yet. He no doubt abominates war; no doubt he chafes in soul at the prospect of civilian tinguishable from agent-provocateurs; no doubt his soldier's heart turns over at the prospect of poison or women and children under a shower of super-civilisation; he may even feel like bombing the Council of the League of Nations for the bargaining trickery that settles in secret what is debated, with display of heroic principle, in public. But as yet his atmosphere

is too strongly reminiscent of William le Queux; by surfeit of stimulation he either makes thought drunk—or indifferent. The artifices employed in his drama undermine the reality of his politics. His episodes suggest inferences which he probably does not intend.

Dr. Weissmann and Colonel Reineker, plotting war involving Russia, Germany, France, and Italy, over the Polish frontier, with the British Empire out of it, having kidnapped Lord Marlowe in a manner to throw the blame on a Polish Princess, could surely have disposed of him entirely with complete safety. That was what the incinerator in Dr. Chang's house was for. How, notwithstanding such explanation as was given, they were to get him off their hands without showing them—or how they kidnapped him—was a mystery left unsolved. Nor was it clear why Dr. Chang had his munitions laboratory for cultivating bacilli in Geneva, when the Government employing him could surely have had a factory in its own territory with at least as great assurance of secrecy. Some of the humour inserted into the play, as, for example, the servant's effort to give cooking instructions over the telephone in sergeant-major-French, was alien to this play, and not good enough for any play.

What is of more vital importance if the play really is meant to induce thought is the distribution of virtue and villainy. The League of Nations as a peace-maker may be like history according to Ford. Its members may be pompous but unintelligent Belgians, astute but villainous Jews, ex-prince agents of the imperialist Soviet, man-eating princesses from Poland who know not what they do, and English Cabinet Ministers who take princesses of the land where the trouble is to the carnival with a prospect of bed. It should be said in fairness to Lord Marlowe, however, that although he got kidnapped he did not lose his virtue. That is the hurdle at which the team comes to grief. None of the English lost their virtue. Even Miss Carter kept her virtue, although she was the wife of the arch-spy. Belief in the earnestness of anti-war propaganda is entirely impossible when gumption and uprightness, denied to the League of Nations, are bestowed in overflowing measure on an alliance between an English lawyer and an American journalist. Only boys need to be on the hero's side. Finally, in the last scene, among the deadly cultures of Dr. Chang's laboratory, where the author presumably wished to make the deepest impression, he is crudely melodramatic and incredible. An author with so much dramatic power and so much to say will write more, however, and better.

The performance includes some acting of the highest quality. Leon M. Lion's Sir Richard Norton, the English diplomat with all the brains, while it has a big helping of the fat, was a delight to watch. The smoothness of technique with which he gets from where he was to where he is required, the characteristic turns of mood, and subtle inflections of voice, created a part that Nature requires nearly sixty years to make. Other good performances were given by Paul Gill as the servant and Frederick Culley as Weissmann, and a fine, robust, and natural American journalist was played by Percy Parsons. Maisie Darrell, as Miss Carter, proved herself a talented actress in a performance that overcame the artificiality and crudity of the part as left by the dramatist, especially in the revelation of her marriage to Reineker. As the police-inspector, good as he was, that fine actor as Princess Merllinski, did not seem comfortable. Only for a few minutes—with the interviewer in Weissmann's office—did she seem to be perfectly at home; only then was the royal blood of Poland manifest.

PAUL BANKS.

Reviews.

The Feet of the Young Men. By the "Janitor." (Duckworth. 8s. 6d.)

Like Lucifer and the Angel Gabriel, Mr. Oswald Mosley has his faults. Nevertheless, it is a fact that some say "good old Mosley," though others express themselves differently. Then why begin with such a caddish tirade against the chosen of Smethwick? This knowing chiel could have been just as effective without copying the tactics of the lousy gossip-mongers of the weekly illustrateds, who pile up their fulsome, rubbishy flattery upon dressed-up nonentities, but reserve for the Mosleys (before whose wealth and social position, if they were not Reds, they would prostrate themselves in true journalistic abasement) all manner of dirty little barks and bites, knowing there is no risk of a libel action. The Mosleys are not heaven-born. They are just decent people, trying to make the best of their picturesque inappropriateness. Why not leave it at that? However, this does not mean that "Janitor's" book is a bad one. It has many excellent points, being bright and obviously based upon vivid understanding and personal knowledge of its figurants. It is written without political bias, for the Forty Thieves are trounced, the Y.M.C.A. Tories fittingly encouraged, and the sincerity of Earl de la Warr and Hugh Dalton duly chalked up. And the candid chapter dealing with the women M.P.'s is very sound. Perhaps Mabel Russell and Ellen Wilkinson will take note of what is said about them. They can both do with the lesson. If this chronicle took a couple of months to scribble, the author may compliment himself that it can be read in an evening—with prime enjoyment.

Golden Rain. By Owen Rutter. (Fisher Unwin. 7s. 6d.)

There is something very direct and workmanlike about this tale of a Malay chieftain and his queen, who stood for the rights of their people and the privileges of a paternal princehood against the unwanted ameliorations of a patrician Imperialism. And there is always something very tragic in the sincerity with which British colonial administrators wipe out the independence of native civilisations in the name of good order, security, rubber, education, camphor, and democracy. Major Rutter has now written three first-rate stories of the Malaya, and he is definitely the man to please your quiet reader who is interested in the romance of strange and far-away lands, but does not want it pushed down his throat. "Chandu" and "Sepia" were both good books because they were the harvest of intelligence and sound experience and solid craftsmanship. They are books which do not grip the reader violently, or shake him out of his repose. But they take him quietly by the arm and lead him up the garden. He can enjoy his pipe the while, and think the hours not badly spent over such entertainment.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

THE PURITANS AGAIN.

Sir,—Mr. Hilderich Cousins will no doubt agree that the answers he offers to his series of questions do not exhaust them. May I, as briefly as possible, amplify some of them a little. Granted readily that Italy was a political and social inferno at the time of the Renaissance, Italy was even more a social and political inferno prior to the Renaissance. It was indeed, afterwards, in consequence of Italy's internal troubles that the Renaissance was possible. Mr. Cousins may not think good enough for the future—nor do I—the sort of pseudo-democracy which Cosimo de Medici introduced into Florence, but without it Europe would probably have been incalculably the poorer. The political achievement I had in mind, however, was not so much the temporary peace within Italy which facilitated the Italian Renaissance. I used the term Renaissance broadly, though not so broadly as some historians. I had in mind the fact that the spreading tendency then born enlarged the world by replacing the limit of the Mediterranean by the five oceans, and set the pot of present world-politics going. That Italy was a social and political inferno is a relative statement. For my purpose I naturally did not find it necessary to contemplate a comparison between the social and political inferno of Northern Europe before, during, and after the Reformation, as is, indeed, Puritan America at present. For my purpose I naturally did not find it necessary to contemplate a comparison between the social and political inferno of Germany as compared with that of Italy at the time of the awakening. I was dealing with the consequences of one of the awakenings, and of the subsequent dominance of one of them. I dealt with states of mind which, while born before that time, certainly fought afterwards for the control of the European psyche.

Whether the Reformation and the Renaissance had any essential connection does not, therefore, matter. Yet for

me it is too much of a coincidence that the pre-Reformation heresies should culminate just then without spiritual influence derived from, or shared with, the Renaissance. At all events, the modern historian seems to find the Renaissance a good starting point for the Reformation. Erasmus, connected with the Renaissance through his education at Deventer, and with the Reformation both through his views and his debate with Luther, gives historians question as to which "movement"—I dislike the word but use it in haste for want of a better—he belongs. Somebody even remarked that "Erasmus laid the egg that Luther hatched."

In answering the question whether Luther was typical of the Reformation, once more it is a question of type of mind. In spite of the disagreements of Luther's followers with him and with one another, it remains that the dominant characteristic of the European temperament became fear of the devil rather than love of God. This brings us to the question regarding Europe as an entity. All that I can say is that I was writing in the light of men I consider great, even prophets, who prayed that Europe might become an entity. In view of her present relationship with America I regard them as true prophets.

Although Puritanism was in the narrow sense an English affair, it was introduced into England by returning emigrants from Frankfurt and Geneva, and the term has come to imply nowadays a certain psychological attitude to life rather than Elizabethan sects. I readily acknowledge that this psychological Puritanism refuses to embrace entirely the Quakers, whose peculiar component of aristocracy adds something to Puritanism that merits a psychological study of its own.

Mr. Cousins' last paragraph regarding fear contains, of course, some good common-sense. I think he is aware, however, that a characteristic of Puritanism is a fear without foundation in reality, and rubs alongside the belief that tyranny is the only form of good government, whether it be in Heaven, hell, or on earth; by fathers, neighbours, or the chapel; or even by a public opinion which nobody has reasoned out. There would be no comfort, in our tuberculosis ridden civilisation, if we were terrified of every person who coughed, or sneezed, or breathed in our immediate neighbourhood. There is no more wisdom according to my reckoning in the fear that Satan may be lurking in every joy of life.

So far as the concern of the Puritan for the common man is concerned, it is a fairly general observation that the common man the Puritan is mainly concerned for is himself—again certain aristocratic exceptions being allowed. Prohibition in America was instituted, so it was alleged, for the greater health and well-being of the common man. I doubt whether Mr. Cousins believes that the American Puritans said so in full self-knowledge.

R. M.

"GO TO THE ANT."

Sir,—Will you allow me a word on the cheap and nasty versions of an outworn Nietzscheanism inflicted upon your readers with damnable reiteration by Mr. Darwin Fox. The staleness of these diatribes is evidenced even by their phraseology—the word "botched," for example, having a strange fascination for the Nietzschean epigoni, so that in their diatribes upon Christianity it invariably recurs. That "Christianity had from its very inception a low type of humanity in view" is a statement that ought not to go unchallenged in THE NEW AGE, even though it be advanced only by Mr. Darwin Fox. As he, with an article at his disposal confines himself to assertion, I, with only the limits of a letter at mine, will content myself with contradiction. When civilisation was dying of lust, cruelty, and cynicism, the early Church redeemed and rebuilt society not only by precept, but by examples of clean living, pity, and tenderness, and a sublime confidence in the purpose of God for His creation. On the foundations of their faith, their witness of collective living, which we have come to call brotherhood, and that heroic acceptance of death which administered to the crumbling Empire its ultimate snub, every sane achievement of Europe has been—and will be based. Christians in later days have fouled their own standards in countless ways, and still deserve rebuke and even contempt from their critics. But they scarcely deserve Mr. Darwin Fox.

MAURICE B. RECKITT.

CRUEL LIES OR CRUEL SPORTS?

Sir,—You have not been fair to me. If you had not omitted the first paragraph and more of my letter it would have been quite obvious to all that you had no ground to accuse me of unwarrantable irrelevance and what not. My letter had nothing to do with the "Cruel Sports" argument. It was

simply a caution to townsmen to beware of the country leg-puller, and the instance you printed was only one of several mentioned. I may add that if the common bunkum as to fox-hunting existing to destroy foxes is not cant I don't know what is.

PHILIP KENWAY.

The omitted paragraph was as follows:—

"May I suggest that THE NEW AGE should be a little cautious in its excursions into the country, as there are here so many wicked people who delight in pulling a townsman's leg, whether it be in connection with the diet of badgers, the aerial connubialities of salmon, or less savoury subjects. Your two fox-hunting experts, for instance, seem to have been having quite a good time, etc., etc."

"IRRELEVANCE."

Sir,—Can you tell me what is the present-day signification of the word "irrelevant"? I do not ask for the dictionary meaning, but for the sense in which it is now used by the up-to-date writers in THE NEW AGE, with whom it is rather a favourite.

Would it be correct to say that an "irrelevant argument" is one which draws attention to an aspect of the question under discussion which one is not at the moment ready or willing to deal with?

HAROLD W. H. HELBY.

[An irrelevant argument is one which bears the same relation to the point at issue as the flowers that bloom in the spring.—Ed.]

THE TWO STANDARDS.

"Believe me, the secret of extracting the greatest profit and enjoyment from existence is this: Live dangerously! Build your cities on Vesuvius! Launch your ships on uncharted seas! Live at war with your equals and with yourselves! Be robbers and conquerors, ye enlightened ones, so long as ye cannot be rulers and possessors!"—F. Nietzsche, "The Joyful Wisdom."

If you would be a groundling, keep
The maxim: LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP!
But if a hero, Nietzsche's Book
Advises: LEAP BEFORE YOU LOOK!
SAMUEL F. DARWIN FOX.

REQUIEM.

When Winter comes again,
Shedding the leaves,
When bird-songs are silent
Under the eaves
And my steps softly fall
Over the snow—
You will not know.

When the earth mourns again,
Grieves at your death,
When mellow Autumn
Breathes her last breath,
And Winter stalks abroad,
Ice in his hair—
You will not care.
EDNA HYLDA MORGAN.

INTERPRETER.

To-day we stood, Interpreter and I,
By a low pool with lilies on its breast,
A velvet calm that lay beneath the sky;
And round about the rim, tall willows pressed
Like little slim princesses come to mark
Their own fair-mirrored loveliness once more
Before the stealthy dragon of the dark
Came creeping on them from the farther shore.
O magic we two witnessed when the sun
Went into his red castle! O wide hush
At end of day when murmurings were done
Of farm, and field, and blackthorn bough and bush!
One late small singer spilled a liquid note
From out his sleepy heart upon the meads,
And Night came by and launched her golden boat
Of the reflected moon among the reeds.

And turning to Interpreter I knew
That saw the wonder in her tranquil face,
And Beauty's hands can tear the heart in two . . .
And why men kneel who find some holy face.
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