THE
NEW AGE

INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER."

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE AND ART

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

The explosion on H.M.S. Devonshire, following closely, as it does, upon a series of other naval mishaps, has evoked plenty of comment in the Press—all of it purposeless. The immediate cause of each will be investigated by technicians, who may or may not be able to reach definite conclusions about it. But there is no mystery about the common cause behind the immediate causes. It is that the navy has entered upon a period of full-dress rehearsals of warfare. In normal times the principle governing the conditions of naval exercises may be summed up in the phrase, reasonable safety for men, machines, and material. Half-charges are used in gunnery practice, dummy torpedoes are employed, manœuvres are conducted with a fair amount of sea-room, turbines are driven within their capacity, and so on. That is to say that what we may call the "real credit" of the navy, its reserves of mechanical power, and of human initiative, skill and courage, are not fully drawn upon. The naval authorities are content with *indications* rather than *demonstrations*, of what their instrument is capable of doing. But when war seems imminent this policy changes. War is no respecter of comparative indices, but of absolute performances. Hence there is a general mobilisation of mental and mechanical reserves, and risks of finding any of these inadequate are deliberately incurred. In Nietzsche's phrase, the navy is ordered to "live dangerously." Only quite recently there was an impressive spectacle for those privileged to see it—a gun and torpedo attack on a large battleship under full war conditions, the only concession to "safety" in this case being that there was no crew on the ship—it was navigated by wireless. So the public may as well prepare itself to hear of more mishaps, and to assume the recurrence of many which they will not hear of.

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While this is going on the public is being diverted by a peace-comedy in which Mr. MacDonald and President Hoover are reciting disarmament sentiments to each other in blank verse. They are going to suspend cruiser-building, and the pacifist Press is directing everybody to feel very pleased about it. But the suspension of work on naval construction is no more an assurance of military peace than a suspension of work on capital construction would be one of economic peace. If not a single new factory or piece of machinery were to be constructed in the world the reserve capacity of those already existing is large enough to afford ample scope for nations to steal marches on each other in their struggle to occupy each other's markets—the issue swaying from side to side according to the speeds with which the several reserves were brought into action by the combatants. From this point of view it is not an unreasonable hypothesis that the Admiralty are suspending further construction because they want to try out what they have bought before buying any more of it.

* * *

Another conceivable hypothesis depends on a factor unknown to the public but known by military authorities, that factor being the rate at which international tensions are nearing breaking-point. If the prospect of war is near, and if, as seems likely, the duration of that war will be short, there is no sense in planning construction-programmes which take a long time to complete. Perfection in the handling of arms is what it required, rather than the multiplication of them. Wellington's artillerymen could exhibit as smart-looking leather harness as any other nation's when on parade in peace time; but that was pure showmanship. When they were fighting in Spain they scrapped the leather and used rope, which, when broken, could be re-knotted in an instant. In war nothing goes according to plan; and therefore the art of conducting a war is that of planning for sudden changes of plan; hence the most efficient preparations for an imminent war are those directed to the stimulation of powers of quick improvisation in every conceivable direction. Under such a test it is obvious that both men and material, hitherto efficient, should here and there show themselves inefficient. That the price of discovering the

strain-limits is human lives is a risk which must necessarily be incurred.

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It is curious to reflect that this process of ascertaining the strength of anything by trying to break it is being carried out in the sphere of high-finance. There is the same cold-blooded disregard of human risks, but without that excuse of compulsion which naval authorities can reasonably plead. There is fundamentally no difference between the shattering of the turret on H.M.S. Devonshire, and the collapse of the cotton industry. In the one case there are sixteen dead sailors; in the other 500,000 locked-out cotton-operatives. The bankers' attempt to force the cotton industry to compete under a load of inflated capitalisation to earn revenue which they have long since withdrawn from circulation and cancelled is exactly equivalent to an order to sailors to put a double-charge into a weakened gun. The bankers' policy of allowing inflationary consequences to follow upon the expansion of credit which they were obliged to permit during the war had the effect of falsifying the calibre-index of the cotton industry, and indeed of British industries in general. People concerned with the administration of those industries were deceived into thinking that because their assets were valued on, so to speak, a 16-inch scale, they would fire off 16-inch export-shells. They did not realise that their guns were 8-inchers encased in wood painted to look like steel. Let us hope that they are realising it now. If they have been looking they will have seen; for the "reconstructions" of industries which have been and are still going on are really equivalent to the stripping away of the wood round the steel. The moral of this parallel is that the bankers are in the same position as would be an armament firm convicted of delivering defective material to the navy. It is their fault, and theirs alone, that business people confused book-costs with effective assets—that they adventured their personal solvency and their employees' livelihood on a make-believe weapon. It is no answer to point out that the inflation of costs was immediately the work of speculators. Granted that this was so, the reply is that the inflation could have been corrected or compensated for by a general reciprocal adjustment of Price at the retail-end of the industrial system by the methods described by Major Douglas ten years ago. It was a simple matter for the banking interests to have made the industrial system knave-proof against cunning speculators, and fool-proof against credulous investors. As it was, they not only permitted the speculation, but actually encouraged it, because it facilitated their policy of withdrawing credit from the purses of consumers. As concerns the naval mishaps of which we have been speaking, there will be the most rigorous investigations, in which not merely the immediate but the extreme, ultimate causes will be dragged into light. When are we going to have an equivalent inquiry into the much graver explosions and sinkings of the guns and boats of the industrial system?

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The Metropolitan Water Board's failure to provide adequate water supplies received a good deal of attention in the Press last week. One newspaper pointed out that the water-engineers in other parts of the Empire had overcome much worse climatic conditions than had been experienced here. But there are practically no references to the financial aspect of the situation, and the consequence is that blame is laid, by implication, on the technician and not on the financial policy which hampers his initiative. "Arthurian," in the *Sunday Referee*, spends most of his weekly article of last Sunday on what he calls the "irredeemable" capitalisation of the Board, running now, he says, up to very nearly £60,000,000. This locked-up capital, as he correctly declares, cannot of itself provide London with a pint more water. His remedy is on his usual lines: he demands the issue of an interest-free, Government-guaranteed credit to the amount of about one half the present value of the property. His idea is that the, say, £30,000,000 should be used to buy up existing Water-Board stock. There would thus be a fund in the hands of those who sold the stock which they could subscribe to new issues for the purpose of developing the Board's resources. It is always difficult to discuss ideas like this fruitfully in a short space because their feasibility depends upon so many factors outside the scope of the plan put forward. For instance, who are the holders of the existing stock? Upon the answer to this question depends what would probably happen when the Board paid them £30,000,000 and bought their holdings. If they were (as probably they are) for the most part bankers, insurance companies and other investment-trusts there would be no guarantee that they would re-invest the money in the Board's subsequent construction-loan. The only way of making sure of this would be to hand them the new stock for the old. If you owe a man £2, and you borrow £1 from the bank, and you pay the man back £1, and you get him to lend it to you again, you still owe him £2. And if you spend the £1 on further work, you now owe a total sum of £3. And if the £1 you owe the bank is guaranteed by the Government, you have raised a new loan on the security of the taxpayer which must make good your default in repayment. So, even assuming that the Water Board's stock were wholly held by private investors, all willing to re-invest, the scheme seems unnecessarily cumbersome. Why not let it have its interest-free construction-loan from the bank and leave the existing stock undisturbed? But from our point of view it is immaterial which way it is done: the result will be the same, namely, the introduction of extra credit into circulation. In the absence of a national pricing-policy that extra credit (or its equivalent) will have disappeared out of circulation by the time that the Water Board has completed its construction programme. Consumers of water will then have to be charged with the cost of the new assets in addition to that of the old, but will have no money available to meet the new costs. "Arthurian" does allow that his scheme is dependent for its success on other things than the loan-finance immediately connected with it, but goes astray about what those other things are. For him they are comprised in one general desideratum that all other productive enterprises should be expanding their resources simultaneously by the same method. But for the reason we have given this would hinder rather than help the objective. Even allowing everything for the saving of interest, the result would be a huge addition to the amount of capital to be recovered in retail prices by all these concerns collectively, but no equivalent money in the hands of the people collectively.

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Reverting to the subject of the Water Board's letter to a correspondent concerning the incidence of assessment revisions on their rates of charges (dealt with in last week's issue) another correspondent suggests that while we were on the subject we might have noticed the wider and more scandalous incidence of assessments on income-tax charges. Arbitrary increases in assessments have been going on all over the country, and every conceivable kind of property has been scaled up in valuation. The result has been automatically to increase the drain of income tax from the community without any alterations in the rate in the £. Our correspondent estimates roughly that in this way the community is being bled

in actual levies of money to an extent that represents a tax of 8s. in the £ measured against the original assessments. To illustrate the sort of thing going on we can take the case quoted last week where a small dwelling-house assessed at £29 has recently been put up to £42. Our correspondent, like millions of others, bought his house to live in. It cost him, let us say, £600, and is now worth (according to the assessors) £900. Not wishing, not even being able, to let his house or sell it, this fifty per cent. rise in his assessment has no relation at all to his income; it does nothing to help him to get a larger income. Yet his tax charge, at the statutory rate of 4s. in the £, goes up from £5 16s. 0d. to £8 8s. 0d., the latter figure representing nearly 6s. in the £ on his former assessment.

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Of course to all such complaints the Government have a plausible answer. They can say: "We have to raise a certain aggregate amount every year, and must get it out of somebody: and if we treat you all alike does it matter much in what form or manner we collect the money?" The answer to the question is: Yes it does matter a great deal. Parliament has a right to know what is the *effective* taxation which it is asked to sanction, and to know it by having the clearest possible statements put before it, and not by searching for and calculating from a lot of elusive factors outside the regular Finance Bills. Members of Parliament are slipshod enough as it is without being driven to the point of absolute inertia by deliberate complications and concealments. But of course the main answer is, and always must be, to challenge the Government's assumption that the aggregate amount of taxes it is obliged to raise, need be raised. It is the legitimacy of the purposes to which the proceeds of taxation are applied that demands prime attention.

* * *

Lord Beaverbrook's Empire campaign is not being allowed to dawdle. He has lately been a guest of the *Morning Post* (as a letter writer) and, we think, the *Daily News*; and he acted as host to Mr. Amery in the last issue of the *Sunday Express*. The *Morning Post* does not quite know how to take him. Its leading article of July 25, which comments on his letter in the same issue, is written almost apologetically. It defends itself against Lord Beaverbrook's charge describing the Conservative Party as speaking "with the voice of a child dreading the fire" in relation to food-taxes by pleading that he cannot blame the Conservative Party for "the caution imposed on them by bitter experience." It questions whether the Empire is yet able to feed itself, and doubts whether the scheme can be adopted until it is able to; and then it questions whether the Empire will begin to prepare for feeding itself "without any assurance of the Beaverbrook Plan." Its final opinion about it all is the question: "Is Lord Beaverbrook too soon or too late?"

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We suppose that the *Morning Post's* phrase, "bitter experience," has reference to the fate that befel Mr. Joseph Chamberlain's tariff proposals in 1906. But we have always maintained that the electorate's mandate at that election was not against Protection but against Chinese Labour. In addition the whole of Nonconformity was furious about the Government's having "put the Church on the rates" under Mr. Balfour's Education Act. Moreover, the Conservatives had already enjoyed their second consecutive lease of office when they brought forward their fiscal proposals, and they were due to go out whatever they proposed. In our judgment an electorate of workers will put work and wages before prices—in fact, it is remarkable how little attention, relatively, is bestowed on the *price* aspect of the economic question. But whether we are right or wrong on this speculative point there is nothing in the history of the controversy to suggest that the popular vote would turn down Protection on a straight issue. If the Free Traders exploited their old slogans about the "large loaf and little loaf" and the "stomach-tax," the Protectionists could reply that even granting that the cost of food were to rise, wages would rise under the Cost-of-Living-Index provisions—which, of course, were not in existence before the war. One of the Protectionists' most telling challenges in the old days was this: "What's the good of a cheap loaf if you can't earn the money to buy it?" This appealed to people who were without work or whose hold on their jobs was precarious; but it did not impress the others who *were* earning, and expected to continue to earn, the price of a loaf. To-day the Protectionists can give an unconditional guarantee that the higher prices go up the higher wages will go up. The secondary consequences need not be discussed at this point: we are now dealing simply with the comparative vote-pulling merits of the two opposed programmes; and from this angle we conclude that the Protectionists would have at least as good a chance of winning as the Free Traders.

* * *

The fire they have to dread is not defeat on a straight issue, but a defeat on a complicated issue. Practically the whole strength of the credit-monopoly would be behind the Free Trade Party. So, directly it appeared in the least possible that the Protectionists might win on the straight issue, a diversion would be created by the Mansion-House bankers and backed by illimitable financial resources. And naturally the Wall Street financiers would co-operate, for it would be worth some millions of dollars to prevent England from erecting a tariff against American manufacturers. The sterling exchange would probably be hammered by the American Federal Reserve Board with the connivance of the "non-British majority" of Bank-of-England directors (which the *National Review* is agitating about in this month's issue). Thereupon the phenomenon would be presented to the country as an automatic consequence of the protectionists' proposals—"frightening capital away" and phrases like that.

* * *

If Lord Beaverbrook and those interests behind him in addition to their plan for co-ordinating the resources of the Empire, had discovered the right method of co-ordinating the credit of the Empire, they would know how to safeguard their objective against financial interference by means both of public propaganda and of private measures of direct counter-action. But they have not. The sign that they have not is that they regard the erection of a tariff-ring round the Empire as an essential prerequisite to their plans. The grounds upon which they require a tariff round the Empire are the very grounds upon which constituent parts of the Empire maintain their own several tariffs, *which Lord Beaverbrook is inviting them to abandon!* If he can demonstrate that Australia, for instance, can prosper as a Free Trade country in a protected Empire, his demonstration must necessarily prove also that a Free Trade Empire can prosper in a protected world. (For the world is obviously surrounded by an impassable tariff of space, even supposing that there were other planets with inhabitants who had exports to dump.)

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The *Daily News* fastens avidly on the case of Australia, pointing out that her manufacturers will

not expose themselves to external competition even for the sake of Australian agriculture, let alone Empire unity. Lord Beaverbrook has a partial answer. It is that if the Empire shuts out foreign goods the work of filling up the gap inside can be amicably shared round between British and Dominion manufacturers. But shutting goods out of the Empire means also shutting goods in; and the question is where the balance will lie and what will be its dimensions even supposing it turns out to be a "favourable" one. Again, assuming a large amount of trade to be rationed, where is the genius who will discover a scheme of participation that will satisfy all the parties? We would not mind betting that Australia herself could take on the whole lot when it came to be actually assessed. Politicians whose visions of Empire production are limited to such a puny programme as that of its making for itself no more than it now imports, are hardly worth bothering with. In the condition of world industry to-day anyone whose concept of expanded production is of an order of magnitude less than an all-round fifty per cent. increase shows himself ignorant of the problem set by the general expansion of productivity during the war, and by the size of the sales-problem created by its inflated capitalisation.

* * *

All production must ultimately be sold in the form of retail articles if the costs of production are to be recovered. Directly the rate of expansion of productive capacity outstrips the rate at which private consumers are absorbing the products a process is begun which inevitably means loss to the producers. Either the capacity is used or not used. If used there is a glut of goods which must be given away or destroyed; if not used there is a glut of plant depreciating through disuse. Thus to-day people are burning wheat in Canada and cabbages at Evesham. And yesterday Vickers' plant was knocked down in value and their shareholders deprived of most of their original investments.

* * *

The one test of increased prosperity is the increase in the personal consumption of individuals. Nobody will deny that the assets of the Empire are easily able to increase output. The problem is not production and consumption, but pricing and selling. It is not a physical problem. It is not even a psychological problem, for producers want to make and sell, and consumers want to buy and pay. Therefore a scheme for uniting and reconstructing the Empire should provide for overcoming its initial obstacle, that is, its finance. Begin with a sound credit-policy, and the question of whether to erect a tariff round the Empire or to demolish tariffs within it can be left to settle itself. And it will do so very quickly, for it will be found that the best protection against imports is to accept them. Of course their acceptance must be accompanied by measures taken in the accepting country to distribute the imports (or their equivalent) among the population without lessening their previous consumption of their own production. This is where the reformed credit-policy comes into the picture. It will be administered on the common-sense principle that if the foreigner is kind enough to present material wealth gratis to a country, the banks of that country may safely create and issue new credit gratis to the people of that country so that they can consume the foreign and home production simultaneously. The so-called law by which imports cause unemployment is merely the consequence of the bankers' principle of restricting consumption. They declare in effect that you must not consume more than you make, and that if you consume something that the foreigner makes you must cease making something equivalent to it. Until such a senseless idea is challenged and reversed no tariffs in the world will abate the evil consequences. So we advise the leaders of the "Beaverbrook Party," as the *Daily News* calls it, to go slow on their scheme until they have built the correct financial foundations to carry it.

* * *

Lord Passfield has assured Parliament that the dismissal of Lord Lloyd does not reflect any intention to interfere with the continuity of British foreign policy. Exactly. Lord Lloyd's job was to make Egypt safe financially and strategically for the resurrection of some democratic form of native administration. He has now done it. So his masters have withdrawn him for promotion to a better job. It is an old trick practised in business houses for the manager to have an official handy whom he will "sack" in the presence of an offended client to assuage his anger and keep his custom. When the customer departs, the manager winks the disgraced official back into his job, and things go on as before. If anybody wants to test this interpretation of the event let him watch and see what Lord Lloyd is set to do next. In the meantime let him enjoy the spectacle of our Egyptian "clients"—the Nationalists—exulting in their "victory."

* * *

We think that we could sustain the thesis that Barmecidal practices are healthily deflected suicidal tendencies. If a man with an empty stomach tightens his belt, he must needs remind himself that he is getting thinner; but if instead he goes through the motions of eating a meal he can persuade himself that he is getting fatter. This Couéoptimism—or, to be English, this co-optimism—has already begun to appear inside the Miners' Federation. At the Blackpool Conference last week Mr. Herbert Smith, the Head Waiter, announced to the assembled beanfeasters that nothing had come up from the Kitchen, but that there was oh such a delightful new lady *chef* down there. She was never too busy to have a chat about the *menu*. Would they please rise in their seats and lift knives and forks to the lady's health!

"The difference between Sir Arthur Steel Maitland, the former Minister of Labour, and Miss Bondfield, the present Minister, is the difference between rain and sunshine. I have told Sir Arthur Steel Maitland to his face that he not only has a steel head but a steel heart."

Again, said Mr. Smith, look at the accessibility of the hotel manager himself.

"We were trying for five months before the Tory Government went out to get an interview with it, and then we only saw a 'trammer' [a day labourer in the pits]; and he said, 'I will tell the Prime Minister.' We met the present Prime Minister less than forty-eight hours after he was there."

Mr. Arthur Horner, of South Wales, interjected something about balancing his fork better if there were something on the end of it; but he was promptly squashed by Mr. Smith who charged him [as a Communist] with having done all he could to keep the new manager and *chef* out of their jobs. And to all malcontents the admonition was addressed by various leaders on the Miners' Executive: "Do nothing to embarrass the Labour Government—they're *our chaps*." (*Evening News* report.)

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So there you are. "Our chaps" are going to make out all sorts of brainy Bills of Fare. Mr. MacDonald will choose the right one. Miss Bondfield will prepare the food most willingly if Mr. Snowden will let her have the money for it. But the hotel happens to be mortgaged to debenture-holders, and Mr. Snowden must get the Bill of Fare approved by their Trustee, the Bank of England, before he can say: "Go ahead." So the management have a difficult job; and it is quite reasonable that they should ask not to be embarrassed—to which we may ourselves add the comment that it will not make any difference if they are.

Dreiser on Russia.

Theodore Dreiser* visited Russia at the invitation of the Soviet Government and surveyed the working of the Communist State. He sailed from New York, October 19, 1927. He spent altogether eleven weeks in Russia, leaving Moscow and Leningrad after a time to travel into such far inland cities and outlying regions as Perm, Novo-Sibirsk, Novgorod, Kiev, Kharkov, Stalin, Rostov, Tiflis, Baku, Batoum, and "all the region bordering on the Black Sea between Batoum and Odessa."

Yes, Theodore Dreiser has "done Russia" in eleven weeks. But that is nothing. Mr. H. G. Wells did it in a week or two! And, of course, Mr. Wells also wrote a book about his impressions of the Communist State.

Dreiser can write, and Wells can write, but neither the one nor the other can think clearly and logically. The book on Soviet Russia has yet to be written.

It really is not enough that because a person is a well-known novelist his or her opinions of "All the Russias" should be thought to be particularly worth hearing. However, if this notion is to hold good, I for one would like a change from the observations of the High Intellectuals; I should like to read Ethel M. Dell's "The Way of a Soviet Eagle," and Edgar Wallace's "Red Bilj the Bolshie." Oh, and I should love to read "My Raid on Russia," by Jix!

Dreiser's book is important because Dreiser is a good—that is, interesting—observer. It is important because people will be impressed by what Dreiser may have to say, whether it be about Soviet Russia or "Should Young Girls Use Lip-stick?" That is the difficulty. These modern writers have all become symposiarchs. A mere observer is a mere observer. He is not in a position to make correct observations upon his observations, because he has no special or exact knowledge of any one art, craft, or science, except the art of observation. A scout brings in information to the Intelligence Dept. at G.H.Q. Dreiser is a scout who is able to make a most interesting reconnaissance report. In many ways he is a "boy scout" enjoying the Communist Jamboree—and an American boy scout at that. I bring in his citizenship (are the Americans more than a "crowd citizenship"?) because, like all Americans—like all birthright democrats, republicans and winners—he submits his reconnaissance report, not quietly to his superior officer at G.H.Q., but by megaphone to the General Hodge-podge Quagmire of Public Opinion. He really believes that if a whole mass of people are told about something they will (a) know about it, and (b) know, by crowd-inspiration, what to do about it. In this Dreiser is very like our own Mr. Wells, who has never been more than the "Atlantic Edition" of himself.

"I was and remain profoundly impressed by the fact that here is one Government that, as a Government, is actually awake to and enthused by the possibilities of the human mind as a creative instrument that, freed from dogma and slavery of every kind, is likely to lead man away from ignorance and misery to knowledge and happiness and with this thought or possibility in mind is almost dramatically concerned with the work of so freeing and educating that mind."

Is that long-winded rigmarole a quotation from Wells's "Russia in the Shadows," or from Dreiser's "Eleven Weeks' Look at Russia"? It is from pp. 11—12 of the book under review; and it shows just that slick hesitancy, that glib vagueness that rightly infuriated Alan Upward. It "says a whole mouthful."

From that quotation about profoundly impressed, awake and enthused, possibilities, human mind, creative instrument, freed from dogma, almost (but not quite) dramatically, so freeing, and so on . . . you might think that Dreiser was as pleased as Punch with "the working of the Communist State"? But, oh dear no! By no means. He is almost dramatically excited about the thought on the possibilities and quite profoundly impressed, but—would you believe it possible?—in the Bolshaya Moskanskaya hotel in Moscow, "the largest and most expensive" hotel in Russia, something went wrong with Mr. Dreiser's private bath! Yes, as he tells us, "the stopper is too small and the shower leaks hot or cold water continuously, due to an obviously worn leather washer in connection with its lever."

And what did this Government, so awake and so enthused by the possibilities of the human mind as a creative instrument, do about Mr. Dreiser's bath stopper and leaky washer? As he says, two little things were needed that any handyman in America with a pair of pliers or a Stillson wrench could have put right in next to no time. Even in England, although he does not mention it, we might manage the job with a pair of pliers, although I doubt if we should know what to do with a Stillson wrench. Mr. Dreiser rang for the floor servant, and, not knowing any Russian, indicated by sign-language what was needed. Eight U.S.S.R. Communist-plumbers arrive, hold a committee meeting in his bathroom, and, true to type, after having a look at the defective stopper and washer, go off again. No doubt they had to go back for their communal bag of tools.

Mr. Dreiser is angry. The days slip by, and he wants to know why *one* plumber cannot come and do the job. That was soon explained. "In Russia," he was told, "no one branch of union workers may infringe upon the duties of any other branch." Three men come at last, and it takes them from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. to see to these trifling repairs.

"But why three men?" asks Mr. Dreiser. The question, however, was "never straightened out." Finally, another American "volunteered the information that such group visits were merely an expression of the Russian collectivist temperament." And before Dreiser had left Russia he had reached the conclusion that this was one of the truest and the most illuminating things to be learned about "the Russian system and the national temperament behind it."

It never dawned upon Theodore Dreiser that the Soviet Government has created the Work State, and that, as he actually writes on page 11, "they feel that the amount of work assigned to each should be not more than is necessary to provide all with the privileges and comforts"—such as stoppers, washers, pliers, and Stillson wrenches?—"of a very highly developed state—a state economically" (!) "artistically, intellectually and socially agreeable and perhaps beautiful; also that after that the individual may do with the rest of his time as he chooses."

Dreiser does not know that the squad of Eight Plumber-Robots, followed by the Fatigue Party of Three, were doing "the work assigned to each," and that this idiotic work-sharing is the logical outcome of the first idiotic principles of the Work State as preached by Saint Paul, Lenin, G. B. Shaw, and a host of others.

But do not imagine that Dreiser is in any way complaining. "Should one," he asks, "because of all this, criticise? I think not. I am sure not. It may be that in ten or fifteen years more, or, say, twenty-five or thirty, at the most . . . there will have appeared a newer, more restless, more seeking temperament, one that will be as sensitive to all the niceties of western material life as any westerner anywhere."

All the niceties, eh? Isn't that—'cute?

S. R.

* "Dreiser Looks at Russia." By Theodore Dreiser. (Constable and Co., 5s. net.)

Verse.

By Andrew Bonella.

Mr. Hugh Kingsmill's recent book on Matthew Arnold, which is worth reading, showed how the poet degenerated into the critic. Mr. Lindsay's (1) little book paints a similar picture: the creative genius of a man "thewed like a Beethoven" being wasted on half-inspired, half-lunatic prophecy. Mr. Kingsmill prefaced his thesis with a general description of the constricting tendencies of the age, and a particular analysis of the family influences which were too strong for Arnold to break through them, and so become his own man: and I fancy that Mr. Lindsay would have done better to lay more stress on the tremendous break with the Age of Reason which Blake's genius involved. We must not, of course, take this parallel too seriously. Arnold remained, in relation to his capabilities, a failure; his best works were expressions of frustration and regret: while Blake had at least the success of John the Baptist; his crying in the wilderness did make straight the paths of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats and Shelley.

This is only a question of emphasis: the main lines of Mr. Lindsay's analysis are sound enough, while the writing is vigorous and sometimes almost beautiful. The soul of Blake has a peculiar value in the dissecting rooms of criticism. Here was a man who should plainly have been one of the world's great creators, yet who, in fact, has given us very little finished work, beyond the little lyrics whose popularity among the kind of people that Mr. Lindsay and I join in loathing makes us wonder whether they are a pure expression of his genius. We go to buy the finished product, and instead we are offered a good view of the wheels going round—disappointing, but very interesting.

I am glad that Mr. Lindsay mentions Blake's notes on Reynold's discourses, which struck me, when I first read Blake, as being terribly illuminating: the combination of their fine hatred of what Blake felt to be ignoble success, with their personal ungenerosity, showed the tortured soul of a man born into an age that would have none of him, and who knew that he was wasting his genius in hate and envy. A nation's art does not flourish when she is in subjection, for what should be artistic energy is drained off into the channels of intrigue and rhetoric: so with the individual.

I am not sorry that Mr. Lindsay's book has not left me much space for the rest of the batch. First we have Mr. David Gow, the appearance of whose poems (2) in their present form (as a selection from a much larger number) is due chiefly to the importunities of friends, some of whom are people of considerable distinction in literature. It remains to be seen, says the modest author, whether readers will adopt the same flattering estimate. This seems to be an indirect threat to the reviewer; but I, in the tradition of THE NEW AGE, snap my fingers at Mr. Gow's distinguished and importunate friends, and say that the book is like my parents, the Reverend and Mrs. Andrew Bonella, of Peebles, poor but honest.

Next we have Mr. Rupert Croft-Cooke (3), whose publishers tell us that he is a very young man. Mr. Croft-Cooke has already had considerable success, allowing for his tender years, with the editors of various magazines; he can therefore afford to laugh at anything I say. But I must protest, as an admirer of Mr. Humbert Wolfe's lampoons, against this:

> For Mr. Humbert Wolfe.
> (Somewhat in his own manner.)
> There lies this broken stone beneath
> A laureate of love and loathing,
> Through smiling lines he showed his teeth,
> A Wolfe he was, and in sheep's clothing.

I cannot recognise Mr. Wolfe's manner.

Mr. Kosor's poems (4) are translated by himself from the Serbo-Croatian; very likely they are good in the original, but if so they have dropped a lot in translation.

For further titles see the footnote.

(1) "William Blake." By Jack Lindsay. Second edition. (Franfrolico Press. 3s. 6d.)

(2) "Four Miles from any Town." By David Gow. (Cecil Palmer. 3s. 6d.)

(3) "Some Poems." By Rupert Croft-Cooke. (The Galleon Press. 7s. 6d.)

(4) "White Flames." By Josip Kosor. (Daniel. 3s. 6d.) "A Pot Pourri of Verse." By Leonard Ley. (Privately Printed. 3s. 6d.) "Poems." By Mary E. Hay. (Fowler Wright. 3s. 6d.) "Cobwebs." By Ethel Dean. 2s.) "Wreckage and Other Poems." By W. Laurence Restall. (Fowler Wright. 2s.)

Lord Melchett on Reparations.

"The Young Plan represents a further step in the progress towards reason. It always seems to me a pity that it should take so long for proposals which are full of common sense to find acceptance. I well remember being associated with my friend Mr. Theunis when I was a member of Mr. Lloyd George's administration, and discussing with him a scheme which I had drawn up with the help of Sir Laming Worthington-Evans, and the basis of which was the same as the Young Plan, namely, the conversion of the Reparations obligation from the political to the commercial sphere. I much regret that this suggestion was not accepted at the time by the Reparations Commission.

"The Young Plan takes a further and important step towards the solution of this difficult question. But the conversion of the reparation debt to a commercial obligation is still a conversion on paper, and it is not yet clear if it is a conversion that will ever be realised. My reason for saying that the conversion is only on paper is that the final expression of the conversion must be in terms of goods and services.

"A debt of this magnitude cannot be paid in gold. It must be paid in the international movement of goods and services which really expresses the economic activities of the world. There is no other way in which an international debt of this magnitude can be paid. The sources of these economic transactions are separate decisions by innumerable business organisations, sole traders, partnership traders, public companies, State organisations, and so on. What guarantee is there that the resultant effect of these innumerable transactions of innumerable people will finally ensure results which as respects Germany and the rest of the world will exactly coincide with the proposals of the Young Plan? It is obvious that there is and can be no guarantee of any such agreement between these activities and the result aimed at by the experts.

We must never forget that the amount of reparations to be paid has no direct connection with any prior commercial operation. The Young Plan, therefore, represents an expression of the views of the experts, consolidating in a series of figures an estimated balance of trade between Germany and the rest of the world, for which there is no natural and original economic cause. Reparations, therefore, represent no natural counter flow of goods and services to an original flow. They still represent, moreover, even in their now thrice modified form, sums of unexampled magnitude. There are examples of the receipt of sums of such magnitude by one country, as, for instance, in the annual income of Great Britain from her overseas investments, but history has no precedent of a non-commercial payment by any one country of sums approaching those forecast under the Young Plan.

"And these payments are to extend over a period, the end of which most of us will never see. But perhaps in those circumstances we need not bother about the end of the period. It may even be that countries will refuse in the future to accept reparations. In certain circumstances it may still be more profitable to forego your debt from a foreign country rather than to face loss of capital and the consequent unemployment which may follow in your own country through the receipt of large quantities of foreign goods coming in payment of Reparations. It was, indeed, unfortunate that the whole discussion of Reparations had been begun on a non-commercial basis. The fact that in Reparations there is only receipt, and no exchange of goods has been the crux of the problem."

Views and Reviews.

ENTELECHY IN BIOLOGY.

By Philippe Mairet.

The formation of the skeleton of the sea-urchin proceeds in what Professor Driesch* calls, with scientific modesty, "a very strange and peculiar manner." It begins when the baby sea-urchin is a tiny hollow sphere which biologists call a "gastrula," filled with a gelatinous fluid, and through its transparent skin we can already discern, together with other rudimentary organs, the first sketch of the skeleton—soft, branching, and thread-like. Then—

> "About thirty of the mesenchyme cells are occupied with the formation of skeleton substance on each side of the larva. They wander through the interior space of the gastrula in such a manner that they always come to the right places where a part of the skeleton is to be formed. They form it by a process of secretion quite unknown in detail; one of them forms one part and one another, but what they form altogether is one whole."

You can see them in the Professor's diagram, swimming freely around the embryo skeleton, or perching upon its branches like a little flock of birds. These microscopic master-masons, each but a single cell, co-operate in a work of architecture as refined as a Gothic vault. It is even more impressive than the team-work of a gang of bees building a honeycomb. What can it be that co-ordinates their efforts?

In this operation, as in many other phenomena of organic life, Professor Driesch claims that a principle must be at work which is entirely absent from those processes which we describe as mechanical or physical in the physicist's sense. This, which he holds to be the essential principle of the organism, he calls by the Aristotelian word "entelechy." Entelechy is that which differentiates the organic from the inorganic. It is here defined as an "intensive manifoldness" realising itself in an "extensive manifoldness," while retaining, of course, the unity which is its essence. In an organism the whole is present in every part, and every part in the whole. Although this statement needs much qualification to be rightly understood, the more we study the facts the more clearly does it appear to be the distinctive and dominant truth of organic life.

Every organism, it is well known, begins as a single cell, and this single cell, since it is capable of producing the complete adult specimen, may be called *omnipotential* in that relation. When it is still very young—a blastula of only four or eight cells—any lesser number of them, such as three or five, can together grow into a perfect organism if the others are removed or incapacitated. This ability of each cell to accept a change of function allows us to describe the cells of an organism as *equipotential*, and their equipotentiality is often to a high degree maintained even in late stages of growth and differentiation. Indeed we have reason to regard it as a quality always more or less present, however much it may be inhibited by the necessities of the case. The differentiation of the cells is normally governed by the needs of the organism as a whole, which may therefore be described as a *harmonious-equipotential* system of parts. These are rather complicated concepts, but we must excuse them on the ground that they do enable Driesch to convey the meaning he gives to "entelechy."

It is true that this concept of entelechy is so *full* of meaning that a precise apprehension of it is not easy. But it is no "*asylum ignorantiae*," no mere attempt to account for a thing without explaining it. It is simply a larger conception to which we are driven by the facts of biological experiment. Entelechies are entities whose behaviour can be observed and even to a certain extent manipulated. Driesch's claim for the recognition of entelechy is sustained to a convincing conclusion, first by description of the phenomena, and then by an exhaustive examination of all the other hypotheses that have been used to account for embryogenesis, growth, heredity and restitution.

Previous hypotheses of this nature have made no really fundamental development upon the theory of the "homunculus" by which Tristram Shandy's father explained human embryogeny. The "homunculus" was a submicroscopic human being pre-existing in the ovum. The problem of development was thus accounted for as no more than a progressive increase in size. Nineteenth-century scientists knew too much about the facts to entertain quite so naïve a notion, but they continued to assume that the chick was present in the egg, not exactly in miniature but as a fixed system of parts, with certain fixed potentialities of unfoldment. Weismann postulated a system of relations of surfaces, controlling the whole process of cell-division. Another theory was that the organism develops from the progressive breakdown of a very highly complex chemical compound present in the germ. Such theories have been naturally adopted because they are easily thinkable generalisations, but we cannot really think them out in detail; and Driesch has now definitively proved that none of them can possibly be made to agree with the facts. Upon the chemical hypothesis, for instance, how do we explain the new claw that the crab grows in place of the one that it has lost? By supposing, no doubt, that at the broken base of the lost limb a portion of the crab's substance is *again* raised to the requisite point of chemical complexity, so that it can repeat its embryogeny from the stage at which claws begin. That is very pretty, but it is not chemistry. Even if something of the sort happens, it must be controlled by the entelechy after all.

Entelechy is present throughout the organism, shaping, regulating, and healing. It does not, however, explain all the phenomena manifested in the life of organisms. It resides in the protoplasm, not in the cells as such or their nuclei. It is most potent in the early stages of development, for in the later stages it gives rise to subsidiary entelechies, and the complex organism is a system of them. There is, for example, an entelechy of the nervous system, another of the alimentary system, and so forth, and their perfect inherence in the regulative unity of the whole may be impaired by adverse conditions. So far as we can see, entelechy does not contravene the laws of physics, such as the conservation of energy. It is a natural agent, distinct from the mechanical forces, but with certain powers over them, such as the power of changing their direction or transforming them into potential. Entelechy is superposed, as it were, upon the mechanical and chemical forces, and is able to use them without changing their nature.

Acceptance of Driesch's "entelechy" implies, of course, the acceptance of the Vitalist position in science, but I suspect that few of those who have only heard of Vitalism realise what portentous changes would follow from its triumph. It would begin to make possible—what is entirely impossible upon the present implicit assumptions of academic science—i.e., a *synthesis* of the sciences.

This is already indicated by the word Driesch uses to characterise entelechy, that it is "psychoid." The word itself is a merely temporary instrument, but it is a startling thought that as soon

* "The Science and Philosophy of the Organism," by Hans Driesch, Ph.D. 2nd Edition in One Vol. A. and C. Black, Ltd., 20s.)

as the biologist begins to have concepts of life entities, we can see that they are the same entities as are studied by the psychologist. The "entelechy" of the one is the "unconscious" of the other, though we may not yet be able to see exactly *how* it is so. But realisation of this unity of their subject would revolutionise both sciences. In medical science it would assure the future of such efforts as those of Dr. Crookshank to base the science of healing upon vital instead of upon "necrological" data.† But it would go much further. Entelechies may not be limited to masses of adjacent cell-tissue, as they are in the science of the organism in itself. By reason of its psychoid nature, a separate organism may belong to a larger entelechy, as a bee to the swarm. Human society is also in this sense a system of entelechies which must be discoverable by psychological method, when once that method is biologically based. These may, of course, be only my own inferences, but I believe that a vitalist sociology, which must have incalculably beneficial consequences, is implied in the new conception of which Driesch is one of the most distinguished exponents.

Driesch's own excursions into psychology seem to have been limited to "psychical research," which I personally believe to have been an unfruitful method of approach. But his impressive volume is a record of brilliant experiment and powerful reasoning. The road by which he takes us is not all easy going, but the heights that it surmounts command some magnificent views of the philosophy of nature.

Drama.

Tess of the D'Urbervilles: Duke of York's.

This stage version of "Tess of the D'Urbervilles" is understood to be Hardy's own work. For me it raises again all the problems of translation from novel to drama form. On each occasion on which I have seen a dramatised novel the feeling that the translation is next to impossible has been strengthened, in spite of hope that it might be weakened. Drama—the liberties taken by the romantics notwithstanding—is confined of its nature to narrow limits of time because it is much nearer to architecture in spirit than to music. In the same sense as architecture, it is visible as a whole. Its characters are poised in eternal relationship, apparently unchanging as the strains and stresses of a building as long as it endures. It is, in short, a crystallisation. A novel is extended in time, which existed before it began, and will continue after it finishes; which is, of course, not one's consciousness in regard to drama. Conversation in the novel occurs only in conjunction with a basis of character extension and analysis. It is not that the stage-setting, costume, moustachios, gait, and gesture, or drama are shorthand for the novelists' description; this line of comparison would be superficial. The methods of novelist and dramatist are entirely different. The novelist may spend a chapter describing a motive or a mood; he may permit a character to think aloud, for a whole book if need be, to illuminate one remark. All that the novelist extends for his readers' delight is in drama unmanifest, which is to say, between the lines; so that the imagination of the reader bearing on the novel aims at building up character, whereas bearing on the drama it tries to analyse character. Character in a novel is filled out by the reader's own imagination, and as a result it is never fixed; in the drama it is, while elastic to some extent, nevertheless, definite. Probably the objection which many persons have to reading a play before seeing it is due to their translating it into novel form as they read; extension being more easily remembered than concentration, as mnemonic systems indicate. The reverse process is probably never completely achieved.

This general statement is applicable in all its particulars to "Tess of the D'Urbervilles." The very form of it, a "foreshow" four acts, and an "after-scene," indicate that the process from novel to drama was a condensation without intermediate vaporisation. The impression given by the first four scenes is of the series of incidents in time, illustrated rather than dramatised; and character—with the possible exception of Tess herself—is still to build up at the end. Characters are brought in to illustrate one scene, and then disappear, leaving Tess, Alec D'Urberville, and Angel Clare, as the three strands of continuity. Several parts of the play would surely have been left out for others to be developed, but for the governing force of the novel, the long scene between the old labourer and his wife at Wellbridge Manor, after Tess's marriage to Angel Clare, being one example, and the scene between Angel Clare and his brother being another. Because characters give themselves intense pain by conduct the motive for which has to be perceived by reference to one's memory of conventional morality, the stage-version must impress those who have not read the novel rather as melodrama than as tragedy; the difference, of course, being that melodrama presents conflict between conventional virtue and vice, whereas tragedy presents conflict between virtue and a universe which treats virtue with indifference. Alec D'Urberville approaches the melodrama villain, and Tess the victim of villainy rather than of fate. This does not apply to the last act and the after-scene, which are moving, illuminated, tragedy. Tess's murder of Alec for his having said that Clare would not come back, after Clare had departed for the second time, is dramatic lightning. Even in the after-scene, however, Clare is not raised to the status of a victim of that universal sadism which withholds enlightenment until too late, and which is the tragic conception in Hardy's work; Clare remains to some degree the conventional prig that he became by his manner of leaving Tess on learning of her previous seduction by D'Urberville.

The lack of fixation of character in novel-form influenced some of the acting. John Durbeyfield was a type of yokel, not a character; he depended on the recurring eccentricity of calling on his ancestors while under liquor precisely as figures of conventional plays used to depend on a wooden leg, a crooked back, or a red nose. The antiquary and the parson brother of Clare were also old-fashioned stage dummies. With the exception of the labourer's wife, by Drusilla Wills, the country-folk were not well acted; though praise is due to Barbara Gott for her fine performance as Tess's mother. The style was characterised rather by city quick-wittedness than by country humour or philosophy, but this actress rendered the rather stilted lines more flexible and full of meaning than did anyone else in the play. As Angel Clare Lawrence Anderson gave a smooth and good performance, as did Martin Lewis as D'Urberville. Tess was played by Gertrude Bugler, who was brought to town specially from her farm because she had been chosen by Hardy as the ideal Tess when the play was given in Dorchester. Her work is obviously amateur, not even trained amateur. In the earlier scenes her speech was merely recitation, and very stiff as recitation. Let it be admitted, however, that in the final scenes she rose to the occasion by sheer force of sincerity, and gave a deeply moving performaince of Tess in her pitiable plight. All the same I should like to see, say, Kathleen O'Regan as Tess, dialect notwithstanding. Indeed, Mrs. Bugler had too little dialect.

The Father: Everyman.

In spite of my article on Strindberg last week, comment on "The Father" on the occasion of this revival is necessary. Regarded as a play on the general theme of the struggle for dominion between the sexes, it may, of course, be unjust to some women; as it would be unjust to suppose that all men could be so jealous of their title to paternity as Adolph. After feminist romanticism, however, "The Father" bears the stamp of clean truthfulness, confession, and observation. It is, without doubt, the play on marriage that so many dramatists have lately tried unsuccessfully to write; and not so one-sided as at first appears. When Adolph invoked not only his own will against Laura, but custom and the law, the emancipated women in the audience smiled as though Strindberg was being consciously humorous. In essence the theme is true. As a study of individual character the work is creative magic. Every motive is clear; every reference or allusion is worked in, to echo dramatically at the right moment. One may not care who begot one's children provided they be healthy and intelligent, but one must still be moved by the dramatic and tragic crescendo that follows the sowing of doubt in Adolph's mind. As materialist and scientist who, demanding some certainty, had transferred his hope of individual immortality from beyond the skies to his child, he was just the man to be overcome by the doubt. "The Father" was a pioneer work in which character was brought up-to-date; true to the modern world and not merely true for the conventional or traditional theatre. In it characters have minds as well as passions, and are complex, distinguished by a unity in their complexity, and not by some trivial eccentricity. "The Father" is, however, a great play still, as worthy to-day as when first produced of contemplation by the grown-up consciousness.

As is the rule at the Everyman Theatre, every part is competently acted, since the actors are men capable of studying character in the light of the actor's craft, and the plays performed contain characters worthy the study. Mary Grew's Laura was on the reserved side, but was an excellent and well-spoken piece of acting bringing out finely Laura's cold and contemptuous pride in the absolute superiority over Adolph which proceeded from her lack of scruples once she had decided on her goal. As Adolph Malcolm Morley rightly played for the intimate theatre. In the last act, however, he tended to become plaintive rather than tragic, through not exploiting enough variety of pitch and tone in his speaking. Adolph lost the battle because men, in the war between the sexes, are hindered by scruples, honour, and other things that in all war have finally to be thrown away. Mr. Morley gave the impression that he lost the battle from weakness. Louise Hampton interpreted the old nurse with more sympathy than was shown to this character by Haidee Wright in her memorable study of unconscious cruelty in the previous production. Miss Wright played the nurse as Strindberg intended her to be seen; Miss Hampton as the nurse would see herself. Both were fine performances. A first-class miniature was also contributed by Judy Hallatt as the child.

PAUL BANKS.

† Vide his admirable essays "Migraine" and "Diagnosis" in Kegan Paul's "Psyche Miniature" series, price 2s. 6d.

"Having thus manned his Ministry with a crew of safely 'gradualist' persuasion, chosen from the Right and the Right Centre of his party, Mr. MacDonald has elected to face one risk—the prospect of disaffection on the part of his Left Wing. He has spared Cheltenham and the City from alarm. The price is failure to evoke enthusiasm on the Clyde. Mr. Wheatley, *a formidable exponent of uncomfortable doctrine*, is dropped."—The Economist, June 15.

The Pedagogue in the Pillory.

"The Melchett-T.U.C. report estimates that, were the school-leaving age raised to fifteen, about 500,000 juveniles would be withdrawn from the labour market, and this might mean the absorption into industry of 200,000 adults."
Extract from *The Schoolmaster*, April 25, 1929.

Since these are the days of progressive education we will examine the root-impulse of the movement. What is the reason for this interest in education? Why raise the leaving-age of a child to fifteen? Is it pure humanitarianism? Or is it of some subtler metal? Let us see.

Progressive education—as we know it to be—had its roots in the Nineteenth Century, even perhaps in the latter end of the Eighteenth Century, before even Dalcroze, or Dotoressa Montessori, Charlotte Mason, or Rudolf Steiner were even thought of. This will be a sad blow to the Parkhursts, the Winchs and Goulds in the movement. But the fact remains. And it is so.

In the Nineteenth Century, God was in His heaven and the world obeyed His voice. Father was in his home and wife and children obeyed *his* voice. And all educational energy was directed towards the production of a type, for the sole reason that a type was an economic necessity. Business was not a combine governed by a directorate. It was a family possession ruled by Father. And son was trained to be like father—in order to succeed to his father's affairs. Daughter was trained to be like mother, that she too could be a wife to such another man as father. It was "education for type," and for a type that was necessary to the well-being of the economic machine of the Nineteenth Century. As for those who worked in the new factories, it did not matter very much whether they could read or write. Had they the intelligence to obey orders, that was their full obligation. No more was asked of them. No more received. (See *Brunel's Tower*, by Eden Phillpotts.)

Then God was attacked. . . .

Man began to state publicly the doubts that had been with him since Adam. The wisdom of God was called in question, and even the divinity of Christ denied. Some dared to call him bastard. . . . A quiver ran through Nineteenth Century England, but England remained.

And because God was discredited, father fell from the seat of the mighty, for if God the Father of All was not Father of All, who then could father be, after all? He was no longer infallible authority. Perhaps he, too, was bastard? A salient stronghold was shaking. How long before it fell? The people began to breath more deeply, and the business world seemed to offer an escape from the home.

Folk poured in from field and cottage hearth, to feed the factory and the slum. The Nineteenth Century was frantically building its factories—its main work—and had no time for architecture or "uplift." Machines replaced handskill, and machine replaced machine, and *accidents to life and plant made further education of the workers necessary*. Instructions had to be printed and posted to protect the worker from the machine and the machine from the worker. And as men now worked in crowds, difficulties in organisation increased and the written word became the general medium between employer and employee. The written word was an economic necessity for time was money. So further education for the worker became necessary. He was required now to read simple instructions, write intelligently, and add up correctly. Moreover, labels had to be stuck on the right way up, and this meant education for the label-sticker. And gradually a new outlook upon education comes creeping in. A more tolerant form of education upon a broader basis. Man should learn a little of his fellow men, especially of his pay-master who allows his service. The first educational pro-

gressive waves come rippling along as an economic necessity—to the factory owner. "Freedom" is becoming the catchword, but one must be free from *something*. Free from what?

And so the age goes forward. Factories increase and multiply, and now father and mother, and Bill and Alf, and Gert and May all work in the same factory, pass the same time-keeper, draw pay at the same pay office. *All equal to father now.* ("*God's in His heaven. All's right with the world.*")

The machine, striding the countryside, demanded life and energy, demanded the very soul of man. As he flung his day-worn body upon his meagre bed, the stamping of the machine boomed through his night-mind, and he arose unrested and nerve strained. Accidents happened, and the folk, machine-weary, spirit-groaning, murmured.

It was the first revolt against the machine. Man was not a slave. Would not be so. Not to a whirl of cogs and piston rods and flapping belts.

Too late, however. Machine-slavery is necessary to this present economic state. It is its root-impulse. And when the murmuring of the crowd reached the ears of the owners, they knew that something had to be done. The men had to be placated, for they must serve the machine, and the machine must grow. How could, and how can all this be done and none suspect?

Why by Education!

Progressive Education. Better schools for the workers' children, that they can find better posts. The Play-way for the kiddies to escape the horrid grind of work our fathers had, when they went to school. Lectures for the adolescents, and clubs for adults.

A wider view of Education. Humanitarian basis. Mark the "progress." "Education" has a new significance. It means no longer school and school children. It means *everybody and their recreation*. In fact, progressive education has stolen even the recreation time of the machine-slave, and bound him further to his machine.

The cry for Nursery Schools, Open-air Schools, Camp Schools, leaves us unmoved. The demand for more and better equipment and money for school journeys and educational visits moves us not one jot.

The child who begins his life in a Nursery School, and graduates through the whole educational organisation is still faced with the same economic life as is his "less fortunate" brother whose education is limited to a rural school, with two rooms, two teachers, and seventy children. If progressive education will alter the economic conditions that govern the individual we would say no word. But it does not. It cannot. It throws the child to the lions as it did of old. The reform is at the wrong end. This is apparent when one mingles with the factory hands as they leave their work or gather to their recreation. Take what group you like from Luton or Birmingham, Hinckley or King's Langley, Gloucester or Stoke. There is a sameness about these human units that kills their humanity. The youths and men are loose-limbed and raucous, the girls and women, ill-shaped, flat-chested, and strident voiced. Here and there a factory Venus strikes the contrast. Here and there an Apollo shows rebellious life. They laugh, they are always laughing, a high-pitched, metallic tearing sound—without mirth. They laugh a laugh that is not laughter. *They laugh because they are afraid of silence.* Silence would strike terror into them, show them as they are—machine-slaves with no hope of freedom. So they rush to the Factory Tennis Club, the Factory Library and Rest Room, the Factory Swimming Bath or Debating Club. They gather a-winter-nights to hear Andrew Gurglesplut deliver himself of his own verse, and they get "uplift." Uplift—with the factory grinning at the encircling humans in its belly!

Tragic though it may be to our optimists, we are reduced to this. Progress in Education is neither progress nor Education. It is a widening of the circle that enslaves man to the factory. It is a circle after all. And until the economic conditions are altered, no matter how "progressive" education may become, it leads to the factory door and the clocking-in machine.

Educational reformers are cogs in the wheel, and are enslaved as much as the workers, with one vital difference. The machine minder *feels* he is being cheated, and so he is (and everyone else with him), but he has not yet discovered at which point. The reformer is so uplifted that he has become morally blind. Education is ruled by the needs of the factory—the economic necessity—teachers and children are ruled by numbers; by the numbers printed on paper money in relation to the numbers printed on price-tickets in the shop windows. Education is ruled by limitation of purchasing power.

BEN. QUEENBOROUGH.

Reviews.

Soviet Union Year Book, 1929. (George Allen and Unwin. 7s. 6d.)

In the fifth year of publication the Soviet Union Year Book has grown to over six hundred pages of authentic information about the U.S.S.R., and an index. It is a book to be consulted as a reference book by business men who trade with Russia; but it is even more valuable to the student of social affairs as a record of the progress of a great social experiment. For the student it is a book to be read through. It is a plain record, without literary decoration, but between the lines there is drama. Take the following quotation from the page on women workers:—

"The principle of equal pay for equal work is incorporated in the code of Labour Laws, and it is also a fundamental demand of the trade unions; but the old traditions of cheap female labour and the prejudices against woman's work in general have by no means been completely overcome. . . . Women's wages in 1923 were on the average below those of men. . . . When enterprises cut down staffs women workers are often the first to suffer. . . ."

This occurs in a country where equality of the sexes has been more logically tried than anywhere else, and where a man who lives with a woman without certificate thereby endows her with the rights of a wife, although these are only equal to those of the husband. The laws relating to inheritance are of great interest. Property may be inherited only by direct descendants, children, grandchildren, etc., and by the partner in marriage. Under testament the heirs may be deprived of their share, which then goes to the State. An heir under eighteen may not be so deprived, however; nor are any of the provisions of a will valid which award to such heirs of minor age less than three-fourths of what they would receive were there no will. Bequests may also be made for the benefit of indigent persons wholly dependent on the deceased for at least a year prior to death, and to societies and trade unions.

The Year Book contains chapters on the political organisation of the U.S.S.R., Foreign relations, trade, concessions, Labour, and a very informative chapter on the State Credit System, from which it can be seen to how great an extent credit in Russia has been socialised, although its emission is still largely to producers only. Where capital development was so backward this may have been for some time necessary. By the time the emission of producer credit proves insufficient for the distribution of available consumer product, Russia may well have become the first social credit area.

A. N.

Twenty-one Years of Scouting. The Official History of the Boy Scout Movement from its Inception. By E. K. Wade. (Pearson's. 7s. 6d.)

After his return to Britain from his defence of Mafeking, General Baden-Powell became perturbed about the future of his country. The patriotism that had made England what it was had degenerated into a narrow sectional outlook . . . it was all very worrying. As he thought that the decline might be due to faulty education he set to work to devise a better system of training. During the siege he had mobilised the youth of Mafeking as a sort of cadet-corps of orderlies, and had been impressed with their good work. He also found that a technical military manual that he had

written, "Aids to Scouting," was being used as a basis for boyish games and exercises. He then hit upon the idea of using a modified Scout training as a method of social education. In August, 1907, a camp was organised at Brownsea Island, Dorset, for a group of boys of mixed social class. Here the idea proved so successful that it was decided to apply it on a national basis, and in January, 1908, appeared a little booklet, Part I. of "Scouting for Boys." The response exceeded his expectations. Boys all over the country announced that they were "Scouts," and set out on the open trail. B. P. found himself the Chief of an indefinite number of boys, with a sprinkling of adult leaders. For a time things were unorganised. As the Movement developed a network of Commissioners and Associations was spread over the land. An Advisory Council was also appointed, consisting of denominational leaders in addition to the usual naval and military notabilities. Mr. Geoffrey Elwes, experienced in Church boys' work, attended a Scout Camp to investigate the new movement. He was impressed firstly by the high standard of willingness in the camp, and secondly by "the absence of almost all religious forms and ceremonies." The notion of a casual relationship between these two phenomena does not seem to have occurred to him. Not long afterwards the regrettable absence of religious forms was remedied by the simple plan of "expecting" every Scout to "belong to some religious denomination," but whether the high standard within the Movement survived this improvement is not discussed. So far the Movement had been a little uncertain of its attitude as regards peace and war. The Scouts were "friends of all the world," but no objection was raised when they were presented with a field gun at the Crystal Palace Rally of 1909. When war broke out in 1914, all talk about the world-wide brotherhood was dropped, and the Scouts devoted themselves to winning the war. They guarded lines and bridges, watched around the coast, harvested flax, acted as orderlies, and gave their quota to Britain's "Roll of Honour." Then came peace, and the Scouts adapted themselves to the task of bringing about universal brotherhood. As the Scout Movement grew, it subdivided. A number of girls had enrolled as "Boy" Scouts, to the sad perplexity of Headquarters; these were swept into the Girl Guide Movement, an organisation which is almost as free from male influence as a nunnery. In 1914 the Wolf Cubs were started for the benefit of the younger boys. Young adults were not catered for till later, when the Rovers were formed in 1918. The Sea Scouts, another grouping within the Movement, have now again thrown off a group of "Deep Sea Scouts." The Scout organisation is still hampered by its association with the churches, by its crude assumptions regarding social and financial questions, and by its refusal to tolerate co-educational training. Yet with all its faults, it is very effective as a means of amateur education. It gives the youth of the nation health by its camping and hiking and intelligence by its system of training.

I. O. E.

Twelve O'Clock.

"Shakespeare strikes twelve every time."—Emerson.

EXTRACTS FROM "THE NEW AGE."

Edited by Sagittarius.

"If every nation could get all the orders it needed no nation would want to impede any other in its deliveries of the goods ordered."—*Notes of the Week.*

* * *

"Political power is only a reflection of economic power, and economic power is controlled by the monopolists of financial power."—*Notes of the Week.*

* * *

"The triumph of engineering has largely eliminated the opportunity for men to exercise their distinctive faculties in the field of economic activity."—*Notes of the Week.*

* * *

"America is a land where speakers discover the unusual experience of tiring sooner than their audiences."—Maurice B. Reckitt.

* * *

"Not lack of income corrupts, but lack of occupation."—Paul Banks.

* * *

"The Price Regulation proposals of Major Douglas are the missing last piece of the economic puzzle."—*Notes of the Week.*

* * *

"In growing up we gain knowledge often only to lose truth."—Neil Montgomery.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

VACCINATION.

Sir,—I hope that John Grimm's article will not lead the way to a discussion of vaccination in THE NEW AGE. It is a very difficult discussion, and a very considerable study of the subject is needed before it is even possible to understand the actual meaning of the numerical data, quite apart from drawing inferences from them.

I am not friendly to "sera," but when I gave a good deal of time to the subject of vaccination some 20 years ago, I certainly became convinced that it was the anti-vaccinationists who were the least hampered by facts, and who tripped most often in their arguments.

It is a remarkable thing that whereas now a pockmarked face is rare, the opposite was the case before Jenner's day, and this, I should think, ought to be enough for anyone who is not in a position to consider the whole matter, including possibilities, such as, say, change in the type of the disease—as with so many other diseases—and so on.

M.B., OXON.

John Grimm replies: The pockmark was not the result of small-pox, but of the patient's scratching of the pustules. Thus the face, being uncovered, was more accessible to finger-nails, and showed marks when other parts of the body did not. I can quote an authentic case where a young man recovered with a pockmarked nose—the rest of his face being unmarked. The reason was attributed to his having scratched his nose. I agree that a good deal is said on either side that would not be suitable for the correspondence columns of this journal. But all the same the layman has a problem of his own—what to *do* about vaccination while the experts are still at loggerheads.

"THE EYE-WITNESS."

Sir,—This journal did exist and was antecedent to "The New Witness." It was edited by the late Mr. Cecil Chesterton for a time. He was sued for libel in connection with the Marconi revelations. I was a reader of the journal from its first issue, and if my memory serves me correctly it was first owned and edited by Mr. Hilaire Belloc.

JOSEPH O'NEILL.

[Mr. Cecil Chesterton lost the case, but the damages awarded against him were so small, having regard to the gravity of the allegations, that the moral honours of the affair were popularly credited to him.—ED.]

"SWEARING SHE WOULD NE'ER CONSENT."

Sir,—Thank you for your courtesy in inserting my note on the "Don Juan" quotation. The response, culled from Dr. Johnson, has a Sir Richard Steele flavour of acknowledgment of being caught out.

I have THE NEW AGE from my brother—hence the unconscionable delay in spotting the slip—on condition that it is returned to him on demand. This has been going on for seven or eight years, and sometimes I am inclined to question the convenience of this otherwise admirable compact. But I read every word in THE NEW AGE with appreciation, although occasionally—as a Scotsman is said to joke—"with deeficulty." Your intentional "howlers" will, I hope, be treated with the tolerance they deserve.

AGNES CLARKE.

Personal.

Will W. M. N., last heard of at Tientsin, N. China, communicate to the office of "The New Age" if he still sees it. A friend of his wishes to write him.

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The Social Credit Movement.

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

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

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