

# THE NEW AGE

INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER."

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE AND ART

No. 2164] NEW SERIES Vol. LIV. No. 18. THURSDAY, MARCH 1, 1934. [Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper.] SEVENPENCE

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## NOTES OF THE WEEK.

### Rating Assessments.

With reference to our comments under this head last week we propose to add some further observations bearing more on the external than the internal significance of assessment-changes taking place in particular localities.

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Take a hypothetical rating area, and, using token figures, let us say that the rateable value of all property in it is £1,000 and that the total of rates required to meet expenditure is £500 in a given period. That gives a rate of 10s. in the pound.

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If the expenditure remains constant, the total rates extracted from the ratepayers remains constant irrespective of any alteration in the assessments. If the property were assessed at double, namely, £2,000, the rate would be 5s. in the pound. If at half, the rate would be 20s. in the pound. In either case the ratepayers would pay the same sum, namely, £500.

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The raising or lowering of the assessments obviously cannot of itself cause an increase or decrease in local expenditure. Just as obviously it cannot increase or decrease the ability of the ratepayers to meet local expenditure.

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Therefore, from the point of view of the Local Authorities, it is immaterial whether they collect the £500 on a high or low assessment-basis and through a correspondingly low or high poundage-rate; for they would collect it all the same (assuming, of course, that the ratepayers had got it). They could afford to proceed in the spirit of what may be called "narrow municipalism," or, if you like, "municipal self-sufficiency."

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But in practice the Local Authorities cannot pursue this policy. The reason is: external *force majeure* of Statute and circumstance. They can be forced to incur expenditure whether they like it or not on the one hand, and, on the other, they are powerless to prevent ratepayers from leaving the area, or from suffering a reduction in their financial resources while in the area.

Now, as already said, the altering of assessments can't meet this difficulty directly, that is, inside the area. But it can indirectly. It is a question of advertisement, and it works out in the following way. The public at large have got into the habit of mind which makes *poundage-rates* the criterion of cheapness or dearth and the symptom of prudence or extravagance in municipal administration. "How much in the pound?" enquires the prospective immigrant into a municipal area. "Only so much in the pound," bawls the poster in the tube station, stuck there by a building company or society, or an estate agent, or the municipal authority itself. And so, in the case of our hypothetical area, it makes a lot of difference to the municipality, considered as a competitor against others, whether it raises assessments to £2,000 and shouts from the top pinnacle of the Town Hall: "Only 5s. in the pound," or whether it lowers them to £500, and allows its rivals to advertise the fact that its rates are 20s. in the pound.

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Again, and apart from this external advertising, the raising of assessments helps to disguise the effect of increased expenditure within the area. Supposing, in the illustration taken, that the Government forces the Local Authorities to spend £300 extra, e.g., on slum-clearance, etc. Well, on the £1,000 assessment-basis this would put the poundage-rate up from 10s. to 16s. But if, coincidentally, the assessment-basis were made £2,000 the poundage-rate would go down to 8s. And every local ratepayer, misled by the unit-form of this impost into disregarding its collective substance and incidence (and taking them *en bloc*, that is what they do do) would meekly acquiesce in the transaction, whereas a rate-demand at 16s. in the pound would have kicked him wide awake.

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From this point of view it is permissible to say, as some aggrieved ratepayers do, that increased assessments encourage local extravagance. For the disguise of the falling poundage-rate is equally effective whether Local Authorities spend voluntarily or under compulsion. But though this is true in theory it is of relatively little weight in practice. The question *Cui bono?* is the test. And when looked at in this way it will be seen that as against the hypothetical contingency that by

raising assessments the Local Authorities may get more money out of the citizens, there is the actual fact that the Chancellor of the Exchequer immediately does so. With tax at 5s. in the pound, the people in our hypothetical area would have to pay £250 extra as the direct result of the raising of the assessment from £1,000 to £2,000. A fat lot of temptation that would leave for the Local Authorities to become extravagant in their own expenditure! They would be forced to do the opposite and go in for retrenchment.

It will now be realised that the high-assessment policy is an Exchequer ramp, which is to say, a bankers' ramp. It is not a far-fetched theory that the scaling up of assessments all over this country during the last few years was initiated in stealthy preparation for the launching of the slum-clearance frame-up to which many municipalities are to-day being subjected. The ratepayers' resources are being tapped at one end through heavier property-taxes, and at the same time are being burdened at the other end with the cost of new borrowing. They are faced with new charges for local debt-service after having been fleeced of the money with which they could have met them.

Readers will do well to reflect on this because in the near future the public will be invited by the Press to rejoice at the "healthy state of our national finance," without a word about the unhealthy state (prospective if not actual) of our municipal finance. Anybody can make tax-revenue look healthy by such transfusions of rates as we have described. Of course these are not the sole explanation of the Budget surplus now in prospect (for, as Mr. McKenna pointed out recently, there is £300 millions more money about, reflecting bankers' issues of new loan-credit on housing and other accounts, and this has enabled a large number of people to pay up arrears of taxes and current taxes which they would not otherwise have been able to do), but for certain kinds of propaganda Social-Credit speakers will find it useful to point out how "national" solvency can be achieved at the cost of municipal insolvency, and to remind local ratepayers, councillors and officials alike that the grievances, anomalies and controversies arising within their respective areas have their main origin outside. Reference might be made to "narrow municipalism" and the "interdependence of municipalities" as corresponding to "narrow nationalism" and the "interdependence of nations." The meaning of the first is the meaning of the second; and this meaning, in the last analysis, is that local and national governments are being forced to seek solvency at each other's expense. Their "interdependence" is like that of ten men struggling in the sea for one life-belt. Each depends on kicking the other nine out of the way.

#### "Economic Fascism."

The honour of launching a new epithet at the Social-Credit proposals has fallen to one Solomon Brigg, the author of an article in the *Australian Labour Daily* of December 30 last. The article has a splash head-line: "Economic Fascism Shows Its Head." The "Fascism" seems to lie generally in the following subject of indictment:

"But what concerned such confirmed Socialists as Cole and Dalton was the rejection by Douglas of every element of social control of industry, eliminating even the slightest participation by the workers in the control of industry, and leaving labour still as a menial commodity for barter in the market-place."

The reference is to the Labour Party Committee's Report on the Douglas Analysis some years ago, which Mr. Brigg adduces us evidence of its unsoundness. He alludes also to the provision in the Scheme for Scotland where workers are required to accept employment in the same trades as they followed at the previous census. He calls this "economic Fascist conscription," and laughs at it incidentally as absurdly impracticable. The worker, he says, is asked to "shackle himself" into a

condition of "economic barbarism," "surrendering every advance made during the last two centuries." Every advance!—good heavens, where's the list of them? He does not ignore the fact that the Scheme contains a provision for a National Dividend, but dismisses it with the remark that the receipt of the dividend would be "problematical"—depending on the "Douglas credit mechanism" being able to "operate without inflation in competition with the private banking institutions."

Mr. Brigg has got himself into a tangle. He expressly points out in one part of his article that labour is to be held in subjection by the threat of the withdrawal of the National Dividend. (He quotes the provision in the scheme imposing this penalty on members of Trade Unions which violate wage agreements.) Very well. But since payments cannot be stopped that are not being made Mr. Brigg is logically obliged to assume the payment of the national dividend in order to prove "subjection." If the dividend is "problematical," so is the subjection; and if there isn't going to be a dividend at all there won't be any subjection at all. In short, so-called "Economic Fascism" will be symptomatic of the efficient working of the Social Credit mechanism. And postulating that it is working out according to plan, the question arises whether the consequences to the population, viewed comprehensively, will bear the remotest resemblance to those which are associated with the names of Mussolini and Hitler.

The picture of our hypothetical friend John Smith "shackled" by a dividend is more appropriate for a humorous cartoonist to deal with than for a commentator on serious political issues. If John wants to get rid of the shackles there is nothing to stop him; and there will be plenty of people only too willing to massage his numbed fingers, unlock them, and remove the purse of money which is anchoring him to "economic barbarism." The officials of his trade union would gladly assist to restore him his economic freedom by relieving him of his purchasing power. And, speaking of trade unions, the passages cited by Mr. Brigg from the "Scheme for Scotland" show that these institutions are to be left to function; and under more advantageous conditions seeing that every member would now have his dividend, which, if he thought it paid him to do so, he could donate to the purposes of his union. But that is just where the snag comes in for the union directorates and the Labour caucus which represents them. When the members get their dividend they will get what is virtually the same thing (as they will see it) as their unions were supposed to get for them, namely, an advance in wages. And when they compare this "advance" with the "advances made during the last two centuries" they will doubtless come to the conclusion that the getting of the former is well worth the surrender of the latter; and that since their higher incomes have been secured without the help of the unions, those institutions are superfluous. Of course if the members consider that the unions are necessary in order to prescribe and maintain a "true spirit of fastidiousness" among them about the nature of the tasks they shall perform, that will give those unions a new lease of life, but rather as ethical societies than as business-organisations.

Mr. Brigg has no right to interpret the "Scheme for Scotland" as a picture of the normal administrative features of an established Social-Credit economy. It is a scheme designed to initiate the new system with the widest sympathy and support from all the classes and widest sympathy and support from all the classes and interests affected, having regard to the fears and prejudices cumulatively built up by the economic barbarism of the system to be superseded. It is one thing to propel a boat on the open sea, and another to launch it through the surf. But even supposing that the Scheme did reflect the established system, and that everyone had

to work at a job for which he had been trained, what alternative could the Labour Party suggest except one which allowed everybody to pick and choose, with the result that certain jobs needing to be done would be left undone irrespective of whether they were vital or not? It appears to be necessary to remind critics that Major Douglas possesses a measure of common sense, and that if he envisages the necessity for requiring certain people to stick to their accustomed jobs he envisages the necessity for those jobs to be done and the provision of the jobs for those who can do them. Would even a Socialist Government, able to provide work for all, and requiring work from all, allow the population the freedom to accept or reject work on grounds of personal pride or cultural scruple? No; it would have to compel or induce certain people to do the less attractive jobs. Very well; there is nothing in the "Scheme for Scotland" that renders inducement inoperative, and, it may be added, there is nothing in the make-up of the workers' mentality that will impede their willing co-operation in all the work required provided that their incomes are adequate and assured. As for the "control of industry" by the workers, the only control that they need trouble about is control over the character, quality and quantity of industrial supplies, and this they will exercise, not as workers usurping the function of directorates, but as consumers spending their money in the shops and moulding the pattern of supply to the pattern of their demand. In course of time, as the ratio of the dividend to total incomes increases, so will industrial policy and programmes increasingly subserve the expansion of human personality reflected in the character of the community's demands upon the industrial system. Any other control would not simply be superfluous, but would signify an attempt to interfere with civil liberties.

#### Prohibiting Political Uniforms.

Sir John Gilmour, the Home Secretary, is giving his "serious attention" to the question of political uniforms (*News-Chronicle* and other papers on February 21, reporting Commons proceedings). All the evidence adduced to show the "seriousness of the question" was that whereas in 1933 there were eleven street brawls, in the last six months there were twenty-two. That is to say, "brawls" were four times as frequent, rising from one per month to four per month. It would be helpful to hear the answers to the following questions:—

- What is a "brawl"?
- What were the respective numbers of people involved in the several brawls referred to?
- How many, in each case, wore "uniforms," i.e., shirts?
- What was the colour, or were the colours, of the shirt or shirts?
- Which colour started the brawl?—or to which colour did the magistrate impute the brawl-guilt in promulgating peace-terms?

The *News-Chronicle* says, and correctly, that only two colours are involved, the Greens and the Blacks. So the public will receive the impression that clashes between uniformed Greenshirts and Blackshirts are multiplying in such numbers as to constitute a menace to public order, but without being offered any figures showing the number of people affected, or information as to the origin of the clashes. Naturally they will acquiesce in the moral that all uniforms, of whatever colour, should be prohibited by law.

Now as to the origination of brawls it will be generally found that when they arise, as is suggested here, out of a conflict between alternative political policies, the side first resorting to rowdiness is that which is less able to maintain its case by argument in the face of cross-examination, or "heckling" as it is called. It hardly needs saying in this journal that no advocate of Fascism can hold his own against a Social-Credit heckler of comparable competence when discussing politico-economic problems. So, in the absence of direct evidence, the

causation of brawls must be attributed to the loss of Black tempers, not of Green.

Secondly: when two sides are competing for public support, and when on the one side the speakers are volunteers, while on the other they are mercenaries, the former sustain no material loss by failing to attract support, while the latter do. For this reason too, in the absence of direct evidence, the causation of brawls must be attributed to the mercenaries—or, in the alternative hypothetical case of two sets of mercenaries, to the set which is the more heavily subsidised.

Thirdly: when the two sides are competing in the streets for *working-class* support, and one side arouses animosity by reason of the association of its name and uniform with the suppression abroad of organised working-class institutions (Labour, Trade Union or Communist) while the other starts, as it were, with a clean sheet, there is here another factor making for the loss of temper on the part of the unpopular side, and the temptation to retaliate illegitimately on the other side.

At the present moment these considerations are academic, for, as we say, the alleged brawls have been insignificant in their number, in their dimensions and in their degree of violence, and afford no grounds for the selective suppression even of the "worst offenders" much less the indiscriminate suppression of every uniformed group.

The *Daily Express* of February 21 enumerates and describes eight such groups, or, as it calls them, "political armies."

Fascists. Two wearing black shirts and one blue shirts.

Fascists. Grey shirts.

I.L.P. Guilds of Youth. Red shirts.

Communists. Khaki shirts.

"Constitutionists." White shirts.

Social Credit supporters. Green shirts.

Of the two black-shirted groups Mosley's British Union of Fascists is the chief; and with its membership of 17,000 it is larger than all the others put together, besides being the most wealthy. The Red Shirts claim a membership of 10,000. Khaki Shirts (Communists) may or may not reach this figure—they do not say. As for the other groups, probably 5,000 would cover their combined membership-rolls. The Mosley Fascists "stand for the Corporate State, Industrial Corporations, a National Council and a Senate of Experts. But no dictatorship." (*Daily Express* report mentioned above.)

These particulars, interesting in themselves, are irrelevant to the present issue. The supposed danger of the uniformed groups is not attributed to their characteristic political beliefs or proposals; nor to the respective numbers of people who support them. The test is: How many of them *show themselves in the streets in uniform*? It doesn't matter what colour you are, or how many millions of your fellows are the same colour, so long as you all stay at home and think of the colour instead of coming out and showing it—or, if you do come out, so long as you don the mufti of conventional class-attire. Now, the multiplicity of heterogeneous costumes in which people ordinarily walk about, viewed comprehensively and realistically, constitute, so to speak, a multi-coloured uniform symbolic of confusion, lethargy, cynicism, cowardice, weariness, laziness and everything else that goes to create and perpetuate a mass-inertia respondent only to the stimulus of intimidatory or deceptive mass-propaganda directed by the bankers and their bureaucracy through trustified channels of education. The *News-Chronicle* (February 23) in an article entitled "A Challenge to Liberty" says of the uniformed groups that their "mere existence" is a "challenge" to "undivided public authority."

Quite so; they are, or can become, an obstruction to the centralised banker domination of mass-opinions and activities disguised behind democratic forms.

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The proposed indiscriminate proscription of distinctive uniforms is an incipient attack on the rights of free speech and public assembly. It is not an attack in form, but it is in substance. For what makes these rights of any value at all to those who exercise them is the fact that by the freedom to speak they can communicate ideas and information, and by the freedom to assemble (and to promote assemblies) they can (a) attract attention, (b) communicate with numbers of listeners simultaneously, and (c) invest their message with a weight and importance not otherwise achievable. Politics is a matter of advertising; and it will be noted from the above that the right to meet and talk in the open air is the right to adopt technically efficient means of advertising at the least cost in money. Three fundamental principles of sound advertising are that the advertisement should (a) attract attention, (b) inspire confidence in the advertiser, and (c) convey information about his goods or service. And the effectiveness of the advertisement depends upon the number of people who see it. In brief, the aim of the advertiser is to *interest*, to *impress*, and to *instruct* the largest number of people in the shortest time. Further, his policy is to repeat his advertising (whether in its original or a modified or shortened form) because the repetition serves as a *reminder* to the prospective buyer; and each successive repetition deepens the impression originally made upon him.

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In commerce these advantages are open to any advertiser who has the money to enlist the recognised agencies of publicity—printers, newspaper publishers, film exhibitors and so on. These are all indifferent to what he advertises provided he pays up; and he can get all the publicity he wants on that condition. Nor does the law take heed unless he advertises something which it is illegal to sell, or puts out his advertising in an illegal manner (e.g., using obscene words or pictures). Should any advertiser do either of these things the law deals with him in respect of his act; and the penalty is imposed on him, not on other advertisers. Nobody would propose to suppress the particular agency of publicity adopted by the delinquent, much less prohibit all agencies from handling advertisements of articles similar to those involved in the illegal act. The commercial world would suspect a ramp behind the proposal immediately, and would inquire in whose interests certain avenues of publicity were to be closed to certain lines of trade.

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Similarly we suggest that there is a ramp behind this sudden spoof-panic about the menace of the "political armies." To forbid uniforms on the streets is worse than closing certain avenues of publicity to advertisers; it is to stop the only facility for effective propaganda left open to reformers whose cause is not generously financed. It amounts to imposing on them the following conditions for out-door propaganda—namely that they must not *attract attention*—they must not *impress* the public or *remind* them what they stand for. Subject to these prohibitions they may *instruct* the public. They may be heard so long as they are not seen—or so long as, when seen, they appear in the inconspicuous and meaningless garb of irresponsibility. Readers will remember a letter published some months ago in these pages in which a correspondent stated that during a long period of public speaking in his ordinary attire he was persistently ignored by the frequenters of the park where he spoke. But directly he adopted a uniform he got his crowd. Similar testimony can be cited from every quarter where the uniforms have been tried. The consequence of prohibiting them must be that the reformer's voice will be muffled in muff.

On the other hand you have *The Times*, the *Morning Post*, the *News-Chronicle*, the *Daily Herald* and the rest of the Press shouting their views in their publications, and news of their views on their placards. These placards and newspapers are uniforms and megaphones combined, and these adventitious aids to the effective propaganda are legally at the service of the interests behind those organs, and would remain so after parallel aids had been denied to impoverished reformers. And it is pertinent to observe that the use they make of those facilities plays a more potent part in the fomentation of public disorders than have the uniforms or utterances of street orators. We hold no brief for the Blackshirts, as every reader is aware (for their demands can all be implemented within the framework of existing Bank-of-England policy), but they are entitled to charge the Press—and particularly the Liberal Press—with part of the responsibility for disorders that have occurred in association with Blackshirt activities. "Has Hitler no God?" was a question which Lady Oxford put to Herr Rosenberg when the Nazis were mauling Jews and Socialists in Germany—a question which the *News-Chronicle* chose to splash across its front page on the following morning. This sort of thing must have helped to inflame hostility to the Blackshirts among the British working classes, and to threaten disorder when their uniform was seen in public.

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The danger of a uniform does not reside in itself but in what it stands for in the minds of the classes among whom the wearers pursue their activities. Suppose the whole of the six million members of the Co-operative Movement put on a uniform, is there any necessary reason why their doing so should start up any rioting even supposing that the employees or customers of capitalist enterprises did the same? It might at this moment while the Beavermere newspaper agitation is at its height. The moral of this newspaper agitation is at its height. The moral of this is that the case against a uniform is only cogent insofar as the stigma attaching to it is reasonably consequent upon the acts or views of the wearers.

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The inspired Press talks as if the shirt-habit would spread to the whole of the working classes. That is as nonsensical as supposing that every depositor in a bank might try to draw his money out in currency, or that every holder of investment securities might try to sell them simultaneously. One is entitled to rely on antecedent probability like the bankers do, and to calculate that at no time will the number of uniform-wearers be more than a tiny fraction of the population, provided that heavy-finance does not exploit them, or a section of them, for its own purposes. If they desired to run a "private army" the passing of legislation prohibiting it would be no obstacle to their getting it. Why should it? Have a look at our Parliamentary legislators; that's all!

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The Italian Blacks and the German Browns did not attain to power because they wore shirts; they wore shirts because their financial backers (banking and big-capital interests) chose this form of advertising to push their own policies. Neither Mussolini nor Hitler would have got anywhere without far heavier subsidies than they could ever have raised from the individual members of their "armies." And what is more, neither of them can retain the power that they have won without further subsidies from sources beyond their control. Mussolini, even at the peak of his dictatorship, had to take his organ, monkey and tin cup and play tunes for Wall Street dollars. And quite recently, apropos of the Nazi Government's policy, it was Dr. Schacht, not Hitler, who announced that the Mark would not be devalued. The value to the banking classes of this shirt business is that through it they can create the popular

illusion that sudden major political changes are due to open intimidation of a military character spontaneously approved and exercised by or on behalf of the people, and not to secret pressure of a financial nature. They use the cat's paw to get them their chestnuts in certain circumstances, while reserving the power in other circumstances to blame and ban cats because they claw chestnuts. In this country it is probable that the bankers have no use for a cat's-paw—they can get their chestnuts through the ordinary forms of "democracy." Having no use for a cat that will lend its paw, they can condemn cats of all colours, and thereby procure the elimination of such cats as would refuse to lend their paws and might claw chestnuts of their own accord.

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We heard no condemnation of shirts and uniforms when they appeared in New South Wales at the time of Mr. Lang's challenge to the bankers, even though these "bankers' armies" were being served with firearms. Yet when, at Perth, the destitute, shirtless, unarmed unemployed began drilling, the Government stopped them under the threat of a seven-year sentence. This shows that the hostility of the authorities is not to the shirt as such, but to something else, which is the rallying and directing of popular opinion by other than monopolistic agencies of education and exhortation. Every newspaper and loudspeaker is a recruiting-officer for the bankers' "democratic" army of rainbow-shirts, and their policy is to train recruits to have an open mind on vital issues, and then divide them into as many companies as possible according to their opinions about trivialities.

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Whether readers agree or not with the policy of the Green Shirts in relying on the pressure of opinion from the bottom to hasten the downfall of the financial usurpers of power, there will be no dissent from the proposition that the subject on which they speak is enlightening, directive, and socially healthy, because it demonstrates the feasibility of the reconciliation of material interests and cultural aspirations hitherto believed to be mutually exclusive. In a deep sense all shirt-movements, in so far as they are the spontaneous expressions of the needs, hopes and fears of members, lead to the Green Shirt Movement. Social Credit is not in competition with them all. That this is vaguely felt among the street-population is proved by the fact that the Green Shirts go unprotected and in small units anywhere they like, and say what they want to. The effect of their activities is more likely to reduce than increase the number of shirt-movements now existing. The one danger to be watched is the abuse of the shirt-movement activity by uniformed *agents provocateurs*. It is not necessary, in order to meet that danger, that shirt-movements should be indiscriminately suppressed.

#### Water Shortage.

*The Times* of February 23, in a leading article on the second reading of the Rural Water Supplies Bill, refers to the water shortage as having engendered advocacy of a "water grid" on the lines of the electricity grid. It proceeds to remind advocates that they overlook an important distinction between water and electricity in this context, which is that whereas electricity can be generated wherever man chooses to make it, water "must be gathered where Nature has placed it." Then follows an elaboration of the distinction consisting of a description of the physical difficulties involved in either undertaking. The general conclusion comes simply to this: that the water grid is a tougher engineering problem than the electricity grid. But it tells us nothing to suggest that the water grid system is beyond the wit, skill, and energy of industry to carry out. No; we soon come to the nigger in the pile, viz., that the

cost would be too heavy for the community's financial resources.

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The writer of the article proceeds to justify the rejection of the idea by reminding the readers that the present drought is quite exceptional, and that it should be dealt with by ad hoc temporary devices which, presumably, could be scrapped or suspended without waste of our precious money.

"If the country is to have water supply works adequate to meet emergencies which may come only once in fifty years, then in the intervening period it is going to be saddled with interest, maintenance, and depreciation charges for which there is no return."

Quite so under the present financial system. But under Social Credit finance the whole capital cost of installing such works would represent a new asset of the country, reflected by additional credit which would subsequently be distributed to the community at the same rate as the plant depreciated, which is the same as saying that its cost of maintenance would not be an extra charge on personal incomes. Under the present system all works of capital construction impose an invisible tax on the community through the expansion of the price level due to the intromission into circulation of the capital expenditure, which, in the hands of the people, increases demand against supply, and either causes existing prices to rise or prevents them from falling. The upshot is that the community have in a real and practical way paid the cost of the plant by the time it has been erected, in the sense of having yielded up a sum of money in respect of its construction which has been absorbed by other enterprises and cancelled in the process of repaying pre-existing bank loans.

#### Tricks of Figures.

Readers might like to have a game with the following conundrum, viz.: Can 144 be equal to 100? The answer is, "Yes, given a certain frame of reference, which is the notation under which figures are set out in numeral form." When we say that 144 is greater than 100 we are taking it for granted (and, of course, correctly) that both figures are expressed under the decimal notation. But this notation is a conventional rule which could be altered if it suited people to alter it. For instance, we could adopt the duodecimal system. If we did, then the number of units we now express in the form 100 would be 12 x 12 instead of 10 x 10. If you take a number such as 111 (decimal notation) and calculate what it expresses under the duodecimal system, the end numeral will equal 1, the middle numeral will equal 12, and the initial numeral will equal 144, giving a total unit value of 157.

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This illustration of the potential deceptiveness of numerical expressions may occasionally be useful to enable people to see that there is nothing inherently absurd in the Social Credit dictum that the Just Price of an article should be less than the cost. In a general way, the Social Credit advocate could say that the introduction of machinery and its financing into the economic system, coupled with the gradually extended time lags between beginnings and ends of production-processes, has had an effect on accounting calculations parallel to the unwitting and absent-minded substitution of one principle of notation by another in respect of a fixed initial quantity of units of money. It is agreed that the above illustration is no explanation of how the flaw in the price system arises; any Social Credit advocate who understands how it does will be able to think out ways in which this illustration can be elaborated to establish the antecedent possibility that a snag of that character can arise. And if it can arise, then the question of whether it does or not can be tested by reference to the facts that we see all round us, which, without exception, tend to suggest that the figures expressing the money we have in our pockets are not the figures expressing the prices we see in the shops.

### The Green Shirts.

For the time being we make no comment on the brutal attack made upon two London Green Shirts by a lorry-load of Fascists on Sunday, February 18, which was reported in practically every daily newspaper on Monday, February 19.

This incident in no way invalidates the official statement sent out to the Press by Green Shirt Headquarters on Wednesday, February 21.

The statement referred to above is headed: "Political Uniforms: An Official Statement issued by the Green Shirt Movement for Douglas Social Credit."

In view of the prominence given to the Home Secretary's reply to a question dealing with "political uniforms," the following official statement is made by the Green Shirts:—

1. The Green Shirt Movement is not a "private army." It is a Public Protest against Poverty in the midst of Plenty.
2. The Green Shirts wear uniform in order to attract attention, so that they may use every opportunity of putting forward the Douglas Social Credit solution to the tragic absurdity of Poverty in the midst of Plenty.
3. It is said that the wearing of uniforms is liable to cause disorders.

The Green Shirts wear a uniform because it prevents disorder. A crowd of civilians can very easily degenerate into a disorderly mob. We wish to avoid that, and we maintain that the Green Shirt uniform has become a national symbol of good order, good discipline, and decent behaviour.

4. The Green Shirts have attended every important public demonstration during the last few years. Not only have the Green Shirts never on any occasion created any sort of disorder, they have never been the cause of any disorder.

The records of the Police Authorities would confirm these facts regarding the discipline of the Green Shirts, and it is because of their orderly behaviour that the police have never had to intervene, disperse, or break up a Green Shirt parade—in spite of the fact that we hold at least twenty street meetings a week in London alone. It is because of this strict discipline under the direct leadership of properly recognised Section Leaders and Officers that the police have not found it necessary to provide special escorts for Green Shirt Patrols, even on mass demonstrations that might contain disorderly elements bent upon creating a breach of the peace.

In maintaining so strict a regard for good order and decent behaviour, the inner discipline of the movement is greatly strengthened by the wearing of the Green Shirt uniform.

Then follows the text of Decree 18 (issued November 1, 1932), which deals with Mass Demonstrations, in which "peaceful mass demonstration for Social Credit is permitted and encouraged," and which states that any Green Shirt "behaving in a way likely to cause a breach of the peace" is liable to instant dismissal from the Movement.

In commenting on uniformed movements under the heading "Peril of the Political Uniform: Home Secretary's Warning," the *News-Chronicle* (February 21, 1934) says:—

"The main parties involved are the British Union of Fascists, who wear black shirts, and the 'Social Credit' followers of Major Douglas, whose shirting is green."

For the same date, under the heading:—  
"ANTI-BANK ARMY THAT DRESSES IN GREEN,"

the *Daily Express* says:—

"And now we come to the two or three thousand Green Shirts—the smartest on parade of all the colour-shirted armies."

"They wear green to mark their support of an economic theorem evolved by Major S. (sic) H. Douglas, a Scottish engineer."

Then follow other particulars of the movement in a fair and reasonably accurate report. There is also a photograph of a Green Shirt drummer on the front page of this issue.

The official application, following the resolution passed by the London Green Shirt Delegate Assembly reported in last week's *NEW AGE*, for Green Shirt delegates to attend the National Congress was refused by the National Congress and Hunger March Council in a letter addressed to the General Secretary, under date February 20, 1934, in the following terms:—

"In answer to your letter of the 15th . . . this was discussed . . . and the Council have requested me to state that we cannot recognise your organisation as a working-class organisation.

"It has been agreed that those organisations who will be allowed to send delegates to the Congress are—Trade Union branches, political parties, Co-operative Guilds, Working Men's Clubs, and Unemployed Associations."

The Green Shirts sent an official protest against this refusal.

These notes have had to go to Press before the Hunger March Demonstration on February 25. We hope to report on this next week.  
H. T. W.

### On and Off.

By B. J. Boothroyd.

Further to our study of fundamental principles, we will now discuss the Gold Standard. It is a psychological and even mystical relationship, which supports my repeated assertion that banking is an esoteric cult, and bankers are a kind of priesthood.

It is not enough to say that we are off the Gold Standard. The Standard may be temporarily lost, but not forgotten. It is unseen but not unfelt. It may be temporarily disconnected, but it hovers. As one banker said to me when said to brood over us. As one banker said to me when we went off it last time, "We shall meet, but we shall miss it. There will be a vacant chair." And it is said that they actually leave a vacant chair at their meetings, just as the Spiritualists leave a vacant chair for the late Mrs. Eustasia Bloop.

People naturally want to know what it is that makes us go on and off gold. It is said that we can never know exactly by what means the bankers make these important decisions, because they do not know themselves. They say that bankers' meetings are in the nature of seances, or that they do it by crystal-gazing and studying the stars, to read the signs. Others say they merely toss up for it.

Many people are puzzled by the fact that when we are off gold the bankers have little to say to the public, but that we must get on to it again; and that when we are on it, all they say is that the time is approaching for a temporary suspension. Now, the reason for that is, as I hope to demonstrate, that it doesn't matter whether we are on or off Gold, for it is the idea of the Gold Standard that matters.

A common impression is that our rulers—I mean the real rulers, not the people at Westminster—finding that things are not going very well, go off Gold to see what will happen, as a matter of natural curiosity; and that when things don't get any better after a time, they decide to go on it again. And many people expect that they will continue to go on and off it until, if ever, they discover which of the two inspires confidence and raises prices.

Well, you could not have a more logical reason. You must be either on or off a thing, as any bus conductor will tell you. Nevertheless, that is not the main reason.

As a matter of fact, some of the more deep-thinking of the bankers have challenged the idea that you must be either on or off. They hold that in the realm of Finance the ordinary laws of time and space are suspended, because Finance is concerned mainly with the Unseen. Loans, they point out (having looked up Douglas to remind themselves of what they actually do in office hours), are created out of nothing, come back in the form of sold dough, and are then again resolved into the elements, thereby proving that money has no

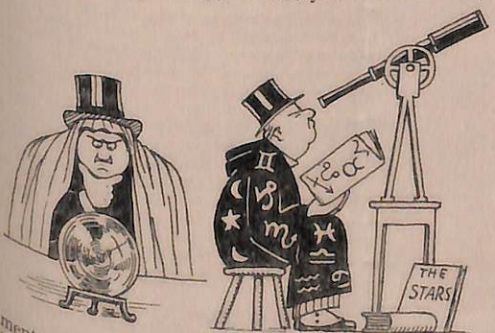


essential relation to Matter (e.g., Gold) and can therefore be regarded as either on or off Matter, whichever sounds better at the moment.

(One of them, a Theosophist, has published a treatise arguing that money is, in fact, the only known link between the astral and the buddhic planes of existence.)

As far as theory is concerned, there the matter rests. As regards practice, we can easily prove that the idea of a Gold Standard is justified. It will be admitted that there must be some means of limiting the supply of money, so that the unlimited abundance, which hangs like the sword of whatisname over the people, can be restricted. If our money was not on a gold basis, or just about to be, people would see no reason for limiting it at all. You know what people are. Money would automatically degenerate to a mere commodity basis; it might even fall on to a steak-pudding-and-afers basis. The effect would be that there would always be enough money to buy everything there was to sell, and chaos or indigestion would result.

It is, therefore, absolutely necessary to have something that can be carried through the streets by uniformed guards and put on a ship, and be photographed in the papers, so that men can see exactly why their doles or wages have been cut, and so that we can say, when they ask questions, "Well, you see, recent ship-



ments of gold. . . . And thus men know they must have less to eat because they can see the gold leaving the country. And in the other country, where the gold goes to, it has the same effect. You can say, "Well, you know, they must have less to eat, because they can see the gold arriving in the country. Further, it would not do to have a fixed standard which everybody knows, like the yard-stick, which

neither expands nor contracts, for it is necessary to be able to say that the gold standard is adaptable to the needs of the moment. And, of course, the relation of currency to gold does vary considerably: it varies, per head of the population, from the price of an earwig's breakfast to the price of a beetle's lunch.

Again, we must have gold, and not copper or platinum. There is too much copper; it would take several ships to carry about, and we must economise in ships. If it were platinum there would be too little. We could not talk about "bars" of platinum, but pilules, which would not be so impressive. And if people saw uniformed guards carrying a pill-box through the streets they would laugh. And once people start laughing at banking, all is over.

I trust I have proved that it is the mere existence of the Gold Standard in the realm of thought that matters, not the fact that we are on or off it. I have also proved that the Gold Standard works perfectly, as it has the same effect whether we are on or off it. And I have shown once again that banking is not so much a business as a religion, and deals with matters with which common men, or governments, simply must not interfere.  
(Copyright.)

### Douglas Day in Sydney.

Official notice of arrangements, Thursday, January 25. Major C. H. Douglas, M.I.M.E., M.I.Mech.E., M.I.E.E., the eminent British Engineer and Financial Expert, will arrive in Sydney per the R.M.S. Maloja on the 25th inst., and will be present at the following functions arranged under the auspices of the Douglas Social Credit Association (N.S.W.):—  
Arrival of R.M.S. Maloja at Sydney with Major C. H. Douglas aboard.

Major Douglas will be met and welcomed at the wharf by the State President (Dr. Streeter) and State Executive Officers of the Douglas Social Credit Association (Q) and the State President (Mr. S. F. Allen, F.C.A. (Aust.)) and the State Executive Officers of the Douglas Social Credit Association (N.S.W.) and Mr. D. Robertson, managing director, Life Savers (Aust.), Ltd.

10.30-11.30 a.m.—Reception to Major C. H. Douglas at the Sydney Town Hall (seating capacity 3,200) by the Presidents and Members of the Douglas Social Credit Association of Queensland and New South Wales. This reception will be preceded by an organ recital, and the whole of the proceedings will be broadcast through Station 2UW.

1-2.30 p.m.—Citizens' Luncheon to Major C. H. Douglas at Messrs. Farmer and Company's Blaxland Gallery (seating capacity 1,000). Major C. H. Douglas will speak. Proceedings will be broadcast per Station 2UW.

8-10.30 p.m.—Citizens' Meeting at the Stadium, Rushcutters Bay, at which Major Douglas will speak on the New Economics. (Seating capacity for 14,000 people.) Proceedings from 9 p.m. to 10 p.m. will be broadcast through Stations 2SM and 2UW simultaneously.

Friday, 26.—Major C. H. Douglas sails per the s.s. Wanganella from Sydney for New Zealand.



"Practising Economist's idea of two right-thinking persons in a shop."—The New Era (Sydney) 14/12/33.

## The Films.

### An Unholy Alliance.

In the course of a recent speech that has not aroused the criticism it deserves, Basil Dean outlined a scheme for an alliance between the stage and the screen. This project visualised the production of plays with a view to their adaptation—by the authors—into films, and Mr. Dean contends, would ensure continuity of employment for film players. The plan is as full of obvious defects as a sieve is of holes.

As a theatrical producer, Mr. Dean belongs to the school who aim—in his own case, not without success—in ironing out all spontaneity and personality on the part of the players. As a film producer, he has made no contribution to the art of the screen, and his previous public utterances have shown what his films endorse, namely, that he still fails to realise the essential difference between the technique of the theatre and that of the cinema. His new scheme, if it materialised, would combine some of the worst characteristics of both media.

When the talkie was born, it was natural that commercial film producers should turn to the commercial stage for their material. Writers of dialogue for the screen were non-existent; many established stars were believed, rightly or wrongly, to be bad elocutionists; many of them also had no English or only broken English; and Hollywood was, in addition, in a panic. So it drew extensively on stage plays and stage players. The second expedient justified itself and continues to do so, although not in England, which has very few actors and still fewer actresses possessing any cinematic ability. The use of stage plays as scenario material could have been justified as an emergency procedure, but can no longer be defended, although it continues. And what are the results?

To this day, not a single first-class writer of dialogue for the screen, and only for the screen, has been discovered either in America or in England (or, if he has been discovered, the studios have refused to employ him). So-called original plots we have had by the hundred, but they are mainly as stereotyped as English magazine short stories, and their dialogue is undistinguished when it is not banal. On the other hand, when the screen has gone—as it had so largely—to the novel, the play, and the short story for its raw material, it has consistently quarried from unsuitable sources, which helps to explain why in so many recent American films the function of the camera has been so neglected.

Obviously, so long as film producers sheepishly follow the easiest way, the man and woman capable of writing suitable original dialogue for the cinema will have the greatest difficulty in obtaining a hearing, which is an additional reason for the poverty of the average scenario. When the studios are not occupied in making a celluloid version of a story by Fannie Hurst, a novel by Gilbert Frankau, a play by Ivor Novello, an Aldwych farce, or a Victorian best-seller, they re-make as a talkie a film that has already had a success in silent form. This last would not matter so greatly if the dialogue writers were up to their work. But they are not. They have no literary art. They are merely word carpenters.

Mr. Dean's project might, it is true, raise the literary standard, although when one reviews certain recent theatrical successes it is permissible to entertain doubts. But it would also inevitably have two grave defects. Dramatists would also produce in one medium something primarily intended for another. It is unnecessary to enlarge on this aspect, beyond pointing out that few playwrights—in any country—have the necessary knowledge and experience of cinema technique.

The second defect is that since—for obvious reasons—the author's translation of his stage play would tend to be more or less literal, the resulting film would lack movement. It would be photoplay and not cinema. Mr. Dean is apparently unable to realise this plain truth. But perhaps we can supply an answer to a plain question—how many British film or stage players now lacking "continuity of employment" would find regular work?

### Current Films.

"The Kennel Murder Case," with William Powell, has succeeded "Little Women," at the Regal. "The Virtuous Isidore" has been revived at Cinema House. "La Robe Rouge," based on the Brieux play, is to be the next production at the Academy, which will in the near future also present "Charlemagne," a satire on contemporary French politics.

DAVID OCKHAM.

## Financial v. Political Law.

[Reprinted from "The New Economics," January 5, 1934-1.

The Melbourne "Age" has recently published a series of articles on the need for reform in the machinery of Government. The burden of its plea is that Parliamentary procedure in the discussion of Bills involves many archaic formalities causing needless delay in the passage of legislation. Taking the Victorian Parliament as an instance, it cites the fact that every Bill must pass through six stages in the Assembly, and in the Council as well, before it can be placed on the Statute Book. And many of these stages, it considers, furnish unnecessary opportunities for members to speak to the Bill.

The result of this is, it says, that:—

"Year after year bills have been introduced, debated up to a point, and then left unfinished, because Parliament in the closing stages of every session finds itself unable to cope with its work."

But, following closely on this remark, it adds:—

"Yet the same body of intelligent men which is now dealing hastily and indifferently with a mass of legislative work has been meeting regularly for the past six months, and for the first three or four months practically nothing was done."

It seems to be pretty obvious from this second remark that the conclusion drawn by the "Age" as to the cause of the trouble being Parliamentary procedure does not accord with the facts. In view of the fact that quite a number of Bills were passed in the remaining few weeks of the past session of the Victorian Parliament (the Premier, Sir Stanley Argyle, stated that he hoped to pass "twenty-seven" during the last week), and if this was the result of about two months' work only by Parliament, then it seems reasonable to suppose that if the debate and procedure necessary to the unpassed Bills were spread over the other four months of the session, there would be time and enough for their enactment, archaic formalities notwithstanding.

The circumstances point rather to a failure on the part of the Government to bring on Bills in time for discussion. Strangely enough the "Age" does not touch upon this point. Had it done so it may have stumbled upon an interesting fact that no Bills favourable to the maintenance or imposition of existing Financial Policy are ever among the "slaughtered innocents." As Sir Stanley Argyle said in the House, when discussing the possibility of several Bills being jettisoned,

"Of all the bills, however, there are only three that I can name that are absolutely essential, and will have to go through, however keen the pressure may be. They are the Water Supply Loans Application Bill, the Railway Loan Application Bill, and the Geelong Harbour Trust (Government Guarantee) Bill.

"The Geelong Harbour Trust Bill," he continued, "is particularly vital. If the Government does not get this through next week the Trust will have to default on December 31. In that case, it will be the first semi-Government concern that has been forced to default."

Our readers will observe that the "only three" Bills which Sir Stanley regarded as "absolutely essential" are wholly financial in character. The Geelong Harbour Trust (Government Guarantee) Bill is obviously a case in which agreement must be made with the banks to ensure the provision of credit to avert default.

It is possible also that the withholding of Bills from discussion until it is too late to get them passed is part of a policy aiming to maintain the semblance of Parliament as a governing body while ensuring its ineffectiveness. "Only three" out of 27 measures are considered essential by those who formulate the Government's policy. Then why not give the political hounds a few lame hares to chase around for a while? Even they can be made to disappear into the "recess" enclosures if there is a danger of making a kill.

Again, it may be that this rush of legislation at the last is deliberately designed with the object of rushing Bills through the House in such forms as would be rejected if greater time were given for debate and consideration. That there is a definite motive for this we shall indicate presently.

By way of overcoming the alleged encumbrances the "Age" suggests a modification in Parliamentary debate, the elimination of needless formalities, "elective ministers" as combating the "party system," and the reduction of "Hansard" to dimensions which will give only "really important and representative second reading speeches" and "voting on important divisions."

It suggests also the appointment of committees which "would examine the measure in detail, *securo*, if necessary,

## Social Murder.

*Social Murder.* Labour Research Department. 2d. *The Great "Scales of Diet" Scandal.* Workers' Bookshops, Ltd. 1d.

No one should be unacquainted with the gruesome facts of under-nourishment suffered by millions of the citizens of this country. The details must be horrifying to any person of normal imagination, and for readers of this journal—better acquainted than most with the current destruction of real wealth—the criminal folly of such a situation is too well known to need emphasis.

The work of the Labour Research Department and Workers' Bookshop, Ltd., in marshalling the facts of under-nourishment is admirable. Here are trenchant statements, one from the medical point of view, compiled by medical men; the other from the social point of view in comparing and analysing the recent British Medical Association and the Bowley Reports on minimum dietary, and relating them to the Unemployment Allowances.

Not only are the Allowances insufficient, by a considerable margin, for purchase of the minimum of food medically prescribed as essential, unless housing and clothing be entirely ignored, but the figures take no account of the inevitable diminution in nutrition owing to inadequate means of preparation in the homes of the poor. The cash remainder, if even the minimum were purchased, is not enough to meet the charges for any kind of permanent shelter; and clothing would be entirely dependent upon the chances of charity and the scrap heap.

The habitual consequence was recently described in the *Lancet* by Dr. Crowden, lecturer in Industrial Physiology at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, who found that "the amount spent on food by actual families was, in a large proportion of cases, little more than half that required to keep them in health."

It is not our purpose to point the finger at any of those persons directly concerned in the administration of these cruel and unnecessary conditions; not even to attack the comfortably-circumstanced traders whose prices, together with the toll of the carriers, insurers, and hosts of intermediaries, result in demanding from the necessitous in the prices of what they consume, the costs of the vastly greater production which is destroyed before their hungry eyes!

But if this infamy cannot be laid at the door of any man, it must be charged to the whole generation which permits it, and any one who can regard it with equanimity, whilst enjoying personal immunity from these terrors, must be suspect of such a degree of inhumanity as calls for retribution.

We are all concerned in the guilt of modern starvation in the midst of plenty, and if profit has largely passed from the dealers in goods to the dealers in money, it is none the less the maintenance of privilege that supports the money monopoly. The manufacturers profited as the privileged owners of the means of production; their successors, the money monopoly, profit by controlling and imposing the means of destruction!

Such facts as are given in the two small publications under review ought to be in the armoury of every exponent of Social Credit.

W. T. S.

## "The Modern Scot."

(Winter Number, January, 1934.) 2s.

This is a periodical devoted to the most "advanced" elements in Scottish literature to-day. Several of the contributors, notably Mr. C. M. Grieve and Mr. Edwin Muir, will be familiar figures to readers of THE NEW AGE. They are striving, along with their colleagues, to bring about what used to be called the Scottish Renaissance. For my own part, while I share their desire that Scotland should make her proper contribution to literature, I have never been able to feel much sympathy with the lines along which they are working.

For a Highland revival there is little hope, as, indeed, the editorial to this issue of *The Modern Scot* points out, and as for the Lowlander, he seems to me to be simply a special kind of Englishman—a very special sort, I admit. If so, his cultural prospects are bound up with those of England as a whole. He cannot strike out an entirely independent line of his own, as if he were the inheritor of a totally different language and culture. This, of course, is merely my personal view, and one for which there is no special warrant or authority. But it is as well that readers should know where I stand, if only so that they may make allowances

sary, extra-Parliamentary expert advice and report back to the House any suggested amendments or additions." By this means it considers that much time now spent unprofitably by the full Assembly would be saved, and that it would be reasonable to expect wiser and more effective detailed legislation.

The "Age" then makes a remark in connection with these proposed committees, which is worth quoting:—

"This procedure would have the important added value of restoring to Parliament powers rapidly being surrendered to officials, who to an increasing extent are governing by regulation. The rise of the 'new despotism' is due, among other reasons, to Parliament's inability to perform its work. The difficulties in passing legislation, owing to an antiquated procedure and bound-dangerous tendency to present 'skeleton' bills, leaving regulations to be added, nominally by Ministers but actually by officials, who thus become the real law-makers. Committees working on the lines suggested could ensure that legislation, when passed, was complete, and put a stop to the encroachments of officialdom in a realm that belongs to the elected Parliament."

It was Lord Hewart, Lord Chief Justice in England, in his book, "The New Despotism," who first drew attention to the practice of government by regulation, and doubtless the "Age" derives the idea from that source. It is a pity, however, that it did not refer more fully to the revelations made by Lord Hewart in relation to this practice, which he describes as "administrative lawlessness."

Lord Hewart, in his book, comments upon the fact that for some years past a "persistent influence" has been at work, which has had the effect of placing a large and increasing field of departmental authority and activity "beyond the reach of the ordinary law." We will add our own commentary that this "persistent influence" is exercised in accordance with, and to instrument, the financial principle that "credit-policy must be free from political interference," and which emanates from the Credit Monopoly.

Lord Hewart also refers to the "unintelligibility" of statutes sometimes passed by Parliament, and that apparently the object of the unintelligibility is to hide their real import. He cites the case of a Revenue Judge, who protested his bewilderment in face of such complicated legislation, in spite of the fact that he was an expert on the subject who appeared for the Crown was illuminating. He said that it would not be possible to get Bills through the House of Commons in any other form." Lord Hewart comments:—

"In other words the meaning appears to be that, if Bills which impose or regulate taxes are to be got through the House of Commons within reasonable time, care must be taken that they shall not expose too large a surface for possible attack. Or, to put the matter more shortly, to be intelligible is to be found out, and to be found out is to be defeated."

We mentioned just now that possibly the reason for delay in presenting Bills was to rush some through at the last when time for debate and consideration was limited. In view of the fore-going extract, does it not seem probable that this is one of the means of rendering Bills unintelligible to members? All-night sittings may be calculated to blunt the edge of the most penetrating mind.

Lord Hewart quotes a number of Bills in connection with his observation given above. All are economic in character, and most of them involve financial considerations. We may, therefore, conclude that the parties likely to be "found out" and if found out "defeated" are those individuals who dictate the financial policy of a Government.

(To be continued.)

## Forthcoming Meetings.

### Leeds.

Lectures on Social Credit at the Griffin Hotel, Boar-lane, Leeds, as under. Time, 7.30 p.m., admission free.  
Thursday, March 1. Mr. Robert Scrutton.  
Thursday, March 15. Mr. John Hargrave.  
Thursday, March 29. Mr. A. L. Gibson, F.C.A.

### Preston.

Public Lectures. Preston Social Credit Association. At the Victoria Café, Fishergate, Preston, at 7.30 p.m.  
Wednesday, March 7. Mr. W. H. Thomas, of Liverpool.  
Wednesday, March 14. Mr. W. J. Dunbavin, of Liverpool.

In any case, such a view would be hotly contested by this school of modern Scots. For them it is the worst kind of apostasy, and those Scottish writers, like Stevenson and Barrie, who have committed the sin of writing in English, are anathema to them. Their criticisms in this matter are usually almost worthless, since their *ex parte* nature, and the spleen of their authors, must be obvious to the most unsophisticated.

On the other hand, this group tend to write in "braided Scots" so archaic and artificial that most of the Scots of my acquaintance, which is fairly large, find it completely incomprehensible. I remember reading some years ago certain poems by Hugh MacDiarmid (I do not know why Mr. C. M. Grieve insists on using this alias) and being thankful, Scot though I am, that they were accompanied by a French translation.

Having said so much, I am not likely to be accused of favouring this school unduly. Let me, therefore, hasten to add that I have greatly enjoyed this number of *The Modern Scot*, and that it contains much valuable matter. Though there is keen criticism there is none of the kind to which I have objected above, except an article by Mr. C. M. Grieve which might well have been omitted. It is a savage and coprolic attack on the traditional and sentimental attachment of the average Scot to Burns (whom, by the way, he rarely reads, and would find difficulty in understanding if he did).

I would particularly commend an article on the modern novel by Mr. Edwin Muir, and a poem called *The Galleys*, by William Jeffrey, in which the stark spirit of Knox is caught with admirable skill.

There are also some songs set to music, of which I am no judge.

NEIL MCEACHRAN MONTGOMERY.

## Reviews.

**The New Querist.** Published by the Sign of the Three Candles, Ltd., at Fleet Street, Dublin. Price one Irish (or British) sixpence.

The author (unnamed) of this unique brochure, has written after the style of Bishop Berkeley's *Querist* (1735-7) which was a series of questions on Sociology and Economics. He was the celebrated Irish philosopher and bishop; he was only thirty-five when the South Sea Bubble burst in 1720, which stimulated his facile pen in exposing this fraud.

The author of *The New Querist* is to be congratulated upon exposing the present great financial swindle. Written in the Berkeley tradition, and in logical sequence, it should be in the hands of every M.P. both in this country, Northern Ireland, and the Irish Free State. Space will only permit of a few of the queries being given, which are taken at random:—

Whether the existence of poor and hungry people in a country plentifully supplied with food, and everything that they need, is not evidence of some dangerous malady in the economic system?

Whether our conceptions of money, and of production and distribution, be not based on the obsolete theories of a vanished age?

And whether all industry has not been subordinated to the trade in money?

Whether anything is scarce in this country except money?

Whether the uncontrolled power of Central Banks has not decreased the capacity of whole nations to consume goods?

Whether the mismanagement of a country's money is not the most powerful and the most threatening of all causes of social unrest?

Whether many farmers and traders are now more than caretakers for the banks?

Whether we are not all spending less because we have less to spend?

Whether we are not engaged in a desperate struggle to sell each other goods which none of us has sufficient money to buy?

Whether it be not customers rather than capital which our producers principally need?

Whether the prosperity of a country is not to be judged by what it consumes?

Whether, under the present system of scrambling for foreign markets, that country must not win which will produce most and live on least?

Whether the giving of bounties on goods we export is not in reality the paying of foreigners to use goods which we could with great comfort use ourselves?

Whether, though the great bulk of our trade be in the markets at home, our money is not regulated solely with a view to foreign trade?

Whether the Banks have not received their charters and their privileges from the State, and whether it is not the duty of the State to alter or resume its authority at any time that the needs of the community require it?

Whether money must not be created by someone—whether the State or private persons?

Whether the real backing of any currency be gold, or foreign bonds, or anything but the public confidence, and the power of the people to produce wealth?

## The Dowser.

IN THE NEW AGE for July 16, 1931, I reviewed a booklet entitled "The Mystery of the Divining Rod Solved: The Experiences of an Amateur Dowser," by Ernest Christie (Revised Edition).

During May, 1933, Mr. Christie issued his booklet in a further revised form under the title, "The Mystery of the Divining Rod Solved—Final Solution."

Mr. Christie has now (February, 1934) re-issued his exposition in a form that contains further material. The title of this latest booklet is "Divining Rod Mystery Solved—Final Solution" (Revised Edition), price 1s., published by the author: Pollingfold, Ockley, Dorking, Surrey.

My reason for giving serious attention to the ideas and suggestions contained in the (1931) booklet was that I felt Mr. Christie had something of importance to say, and that it was something that could be tested by (almost) anyone who took the trouble to do so. After cutting and using a number of hazel twigs myself, I came to the conclusion that Mr. Christie's methods, suggestions, and general claims should be further investigated. I still feel this to be necessary.

The matter of importance in Mr. Christie's exposition may be set forth as follows under three heads:—

1. Everything has its own special "wave-length," or magnetic vibration.

2. This "wireless magnetism" (as the author has called it) can be "picked up" by the user of the divining rod.

3. The divining rod, or twig, acts as a kind of objective instrument, or directional indicator. Thus we have (1) the Transmitting Station: an object sending out its own magnetic "power," (2) the Receiver: anyone whose heart is in the right place, apparently, and (3) the Tuning Fork: the forked divining rod, according to the author, of which are "the tuning discs," according to the author.

My own experiments with the divining rod have not, so far, led me to confirm 1, 2, and 3, above, but my everyday sensory reactions (without using a special "wave-length," or magnetic vibration. I have the idea that most people sense these vibrations (usually without knowing it) and that emotional variations in the individual, from moment to moment, from hour to hour, from day to day, may be closely connected with (sometimes entirely due to?) these sensations of vibrations given off—sent out by every thing that exists on this planet, in our own solar system, and in the stellar universe.

Mr. Christie claims that his methods can be tested and checked by anyone whose heart is in the right place. When he says "heart," he refers to that blood-pumping organ, and not to a vague spiritual something. For he says "the main reason why only some can get the twig to dance is to be found in 'the position of the heart in relation to the spine'; and he gives reasons, based on experiments, for coming to this conclusion.

Mr. Christie, it seems, is able to locate almost anything—both near and far away. For example, he claims to be

able to locate (I refer to a covering letter enclosed with the review copy of his latest booklet) a steamer from near Montrose making for Shoreham; the fact that a man had been "taken off a lighthouse off the West Coast of Scotland—confirmed in next morning's papers"; and some fish being brought to Mr. Christie by a friend (he located the fish "about a mile off," he says!). I imagine the ordinary reviewer could hardly resist that item of information, especially when the author adds, "my twig gave four dips for bloaters—it was correct." What a chance for a little harmless leg-pulling! Mr. Christie is lucky. I am not an ordinary reviewer.

I believe Mr. Christie may have something important to communicate. The difficulty is that he is not an adept in the art of communication. It is clear that he is a "receiver," not a "transmitter." He cannot transmit his ideas clearly. His words are simple enough, but he jumps from place to place, in exactly the way that a child "jumps" when it comes in from play bursting to tell you "and so we ran round behind (behind what?) and I had a piece in my pocket (piece of what?) and he shouted 'look out!' (who shouted?) so I went back (where?) and other what—dogs? children?) and we (who?) tied it round ever so tightly (tied what—round what?) and . . ."

The child knows what it is talking about and wants to tell you, but you can only guess the meaning of the words as they rush on, skipping and leaving out essential facts without which it is impossible to know exactly what has happened.

It is this childlike enthusiasm that defeats Mr. Christie as an expositor of his experiments, and it is this that half convinces me that his work is worth systematic investigation undertaken first of all by a great many independent experimenters, and not by some scientific committee dealing with Mr. Christie.

No doubt this work of many-handed experiment by all sorts of people will be carried out, for we hear that Mr. Christie and others are forming a Dowser's Society, subscription 5s. a year, and anyone interested should write to the President: Colonel A. H. Bell, D.S.O., O.B.E., Backlewoods, Lindfield, Sussex. E. G. S.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

### DETERMINISM AND FREE-WILL.

Dear Sir,—We read with interest the article "Words, signs, things," in your issue last week, and whilst we can agree with some of the ideas given out we cannot see how your contributor can truthfully refer to logic without clearly defining which school of logic he means, nor can we agree with his treatment of phrenology and metaphysics.

We should like to ask if persons are not going to be thoroughgoing in their treatment of science, what is the use of being pseudo-scientific?

If we have to bow the knee to the determinism of the banking oligarchy, what is the use of repeating ten thousand times ten thousand that free credits depend upon the amount of free-will among the people?

Surely this way of treating things proves that his logic is not a protection against his dialectical deception but an inability to understand true dialectics. We are not saying that dialectical understanding is necessary any more than a reader something by methods that he himself does not understand; again hence a better method than metaphysical mental philosophy.

Yours for Truth and Reality,  
HAROLD SHAW,  
372, Queen's-road, Halifax.  
Founder-Organ.

### GOD AND MAMMON.

Sir,—Are you not rather hard on the Archbishop, in harping on his association with Mr. Pierpont Morgan? You would be disturbing another "sacred memory." After all, why should he not be a pluralist in his leisure time, as domestic to the Corsair or the Anglo-Persian Oil Company? What is more inspiring than the thought of the High Priest of God and the High Priest of Mammon visiting the Holy sites arm in arm, or hand in glove?

O. V. BLAKE.

### THE ROBOT GOVERNOR.

To one possessing the slightest imagination, the mechanical conclusion of the Bank of England's mechanisation programme, mentioned in your last issue, presents a fascinating picture.

Behold! poor old Norman in the holy of holies—the Bank of England board room, concluding his final address to the robot directorate . . . And now, gentlemen, we come to the final item on the agenda. I beg to propose the immediate supersession of my unworthy self by one of your own kind: they are unpacking him over there in the corner.

Gentlemen, the induction of the robot chairman marks the triumphant consummation of the policy and aims of the Bank of England: the extinction of the vice of spending, and with it the extinction of the human race.

Gentlemen, carry on. I go to take the waters of Lethe."

Tableau vivant! There's a picture for you!

W. WEST.

### PROSPERITY CAMPAIGN.

Sir,—In the March issue of *Prosperity* it is stated that: "a suggestion was made by this journal that all Social Creditors should write to the British Broadcasting Corporation, requesting that Major Douglas should be given the opportunity to broadcast. The suggestion resulted in the B.B.C. receiving 2,000 letters within a very short period, and Major Douglas was invited to speak on the wireless."

What proof has Mr. Scrutton that the B.B.C. received 2,000 letters? and is he not aware that the Hawtrey debate, in March last, was a signal that the Money Power had already decided to grant a certain amount of such publicity to Social Credit? J. G.

### DEPRECIATION.

Sir,—If Mr. Coleman will reflect on the following, his difficulties may disappear.

Conventional accountancy requires that in respect of "permanent assets," e.g. machinery, buildings, etc., two distinct charges be included in cost, namely:—

(a) Proportion of original price of asset.

(b) Cost of maintaining asset in good condition.

In addition to these it is customary to earmark a proportion of net profits for the purpose of replacing the asset at the end of its life.

While Mr. Hawtrey would no doubt agree that (b) is a cost, he denies that (a) should be regarded as such, but strangely enough contends that there should be included the appropriation to reserve for replacement.

The matter might appear to be of little significance, but when it is remembered that a quite considerable time was occupied during the Douglas-Hawtrey debate without agreement being reached, it is probable that misunderstanding could be avoided if the terms used by professional accountants were introduced, these being:

(a) DEPRECIATION.

(b) MAINTENANCE.

And for provision for future—RENEWALS AND REPLACEMENTS RESERVE.

"ACCOUNTANT."

### SAVING UP ORDERS.

Dear Sir,—This year's British Industries Fair brings with it the usual Press clap-trap of buyers entering the building, seeing something for the first time, and placing an order worth thousands.

In my paper here to-night I see examples, and I doubt whether there is one transaction that could not have been done without the assistance of this dazzlingly lighted array at Castle Bromwich.

Two years ago I was talking to a merchant of this city who was an exhibitor, and he told me that a customer of his had deferred the placing of an order for two weeks until the Fair opened. He then entered the building on the first day and placed it.

This is probably only one of many examples. J. C. Birmingham.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

R. E. J.—Thank you for your letter regarding the New Zealand Legion. You will see that this has crossed the issue of *The New Age* for February 22, in which we dealt with exactly the same criticism from another reader in New Zealand. We hope that what we said then will satisfy you.

### Income Tax As She Works.

A lad summoned at the Mansion House Police Court on January 6 for non-payment of £2 income tax stated that his wages were £2 a week, out of which 25s. went in rent. "Then I have to live somehow," he continued, and "at the end of the week there is nothing left." The case was adjourned on the application of the collector. (*Evening News*.) It looks as if the means test dietary will have to be imposed on employed as well as unemployed persons if taxes are to be collected.

## THE "NEW AGE" CIGARETTE

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Comprising:—

Set "A" above.  
The Veil of Finance (6d.).  
Post free, 1s. the set.

CREDIT RESEARCH LIBRARY, 70, High Holborn,  
W.C.1.

## The Social Credit Movement.

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

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

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Published by the Proprietor (ARTHUR BRENTON), 70, High Holborn, London, W.C.1 (Telephone: Chancery 8470), and printed for him by THE ARABIC PRESS, LTD., Temple Avenue and Tudor Street, London, E.C.4 (Telephone: Central 3701.)