

THE NEW AGE

INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER."

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE AND ART

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

Finance and the Church.

Dr. Temple, the Archbishop of York, was reprimanded by Mr. Neville Chamberlain at a Conservative banquet at Birmingham on March 9. The Archbishop during the previous week had addressed a letter to *The Times* (and possibly to other newspapers) suggesting that Christian people should advocate the needs of the poor as being a first charge on the next Budget surplus, taking the form of a restoration of the cuts made in the dole. The suggestion was debated in *The Times* by several correspondents, some supporting the Archbishop and others pointing out that relief to the income-tax payer would indirectly do the unemployed as much, and possibly more, good in the long run.

Mr. Neville Chamberlain did not take exception to the Archbishop's suggestion in itself, but to the fact that he had asked those who agreed with him to write letters to their local members of Parliament accordingly. He gave two reasons: the first was that he thought it a pity for the Archbishop to suggest by implication that members of Parliament required to be reminded of humanitarian considerations as if these would not occur to them; the second, that he regretted that the Archbishop should have suggested "that members of Parliament were largely to be guided by the number of letters that they received urging one course or another, rather than by the exercise of their own judgment, being in possession of more information, perhaps, than others who were not members of the House." (Our italics.)

He continued:—

"If five hundred people write to me and ask me to reduce or abolish a particular tax the only effect upon my mind is that of a mild irritant, although one letter, if it were well reasoned and put a good case, would certainly receive my serious consideration and might possibly affect my judgment. The Chancellor mentioned later in his speech that he had not come to any conclusions as to what he would do with the expected Budget surplus."

The Chancellor's Discretion.

Our first comment on this must be to refer our readers, and particularly those who favour the Arch-

bishop's action, to what we said last week in regard to the mendacious attribution of unfettered discretion and exclusive knowledge to Chancellors of the Exchequer. As a postscript to these comments we may now add, in respect of the above quotation, that if 500 people wrote to Mr. Neville Chamberlain there would be long odds against his seeing even one of their letters. Further, if a "well-reasoned" letter putting a "good case" were sent to him there would be equally long odds that if he saw it he would not know whether it was a well-reasoned letter or not. We recall Mr. Neville Chamberlain's own admission in the House a year or two ago, that when letters from credit reformers were sent to him the Treasury officials "sighed" over them. We are entitled to adopt his language at the banquet, and to say that we regret that he should suggest by implication that the judgment of the Chancellor of the Exchequer could be affected by the breathing exercises of functionaries. It seems to imply that this country is ruled by an incommunicative permanent bureaucracy rather than by a vocal representative Government.

Who Should Mobilise Opinion?

Mr. Neville Chamberlain's reference to the five hundred letter-writers as administering a "mild irritant" to his mind suggests that if five million people wrote they would administer a violent irritant. He would probably reply that it was not to the number of letters that he was objecting, but to the fact that they all had a common inspiration in the Archbishop's suggestion. That might go down with some degree of credibility if it were the fact that no attempts were made in any quarter to affect the opinions and actions of the multitude on political issues. As things are, such inspiration is an unwritten law in politics—visible in its application at election times, and recognisable by acute observers between election times. Mr. Chamberlain might care to explain to the public what difference in principle there is between the Archbishop of York's asking people to write their views on dole-cuts and Lord Beaverbrook asking them to record their views about Socialist "ruffians" at the polling booths. If he says that it is right and proper to stampede electors, through the machinery of the Press, into selecting certain candidates, how is it that nobody may afterwards inspire a concerted effort on the part of citizens to ad-

wise those candidates (now members) of their wishes? From an ordinary common-sense point of view, an electoral mandate is bound in the nature of the case to be indefinite even to the point of unintelligibility. Hence to deny electors any chance of indicating how they want that mandate to be implemented is really to deny them any share in making the laws which they have to obey.

The Wisdom of Parliament.

Further, when Mr. Chamberlain refers to the possession of humanitarian feelings by members of Parliament he is talking mere emptiness because there is no necessary relation between benevolent intentions and beneficent legislation. Take the most hidebound financier in the world, and he will have no logical difficulty in justifying the harshest financial measures by reference to "humanity"—he would probably call it the "larger humanity." And we do not see how he can be proved wrong if he is allowed to argue from the axioms of finance which most people—humanitarians included—absent-mindedly take for granted. He could force everyone to accept his conclusion that to depart from "sound financial traditions" would cause universal suffering and thereby precipitate the very evils which humanitarians wished to avoid. This kind of logic is to be read into the letters to which we have referred, where people pointed out that a lower income tax would result in more employment, and thus, in the long run, give the unemployed something as good as, if not better than, an immediate restoration of the dole cuts.

Then as regards Mr. Chamberlain's insinuation that members of Parliament have better knowledge than citizens who send them advice, this again is talking emptiness. In so far as it is true it is irrelevant. And the irrelevancy will be fully appreciated by anyone who studies Lord Hewart's *The New Despotism* or Mr. J. J. Clarke's *Outline of Central Government*. We can make mention also of a much older book called *The Party System*, by Hilaire Belloc and Cecil Chesterton, which, though written before the War, pointed out that Parliament was ruled by the two Front Benches, no matter which party was in office. And the evidence in the facts and arguments in that book would need very little matter to be interpolated in order to bring it right up to date as an exposure of the impotence of the ordinary member of Parliament, and the reason for it. The price of liberty, it is said, is eternal vigilance. And when we see the Mother of Parliaments itself snoring during the passage of the Newfoundland "Mortgage" Bill, it amounts almost to insolence to say that ordinary citizens should not use concerted efforts to remind members of Parliament that other people are awake if they are not.

Parliament and "Retrospective Approval."

This reminds us of something we meant to point out some time ago. *The Times* of January 19 delivered a solemn dissertation on the inner meaning of Democracy. The occasion was that of Mr. MacDonald's rough reception at Seaham, and the theme of the article was that those who were impatient with the Government and demanded "action" were virtually committing themselves to the supersession of the Parliamentary system by a Fascist or Socialist Dictatorship. The passage we want to point out is as follows:—

"As a matter of fact, immediate action is just as possible to-day under Parliament as under any other form of government. Nothing is needed but the men to take it. The real point of difference is that the Executive must seek retrospectively the approval of Parliament for emergency action, that either in retrospect or in prospect all sides of a question are heard, and that periodically the whole account of legislation and administration is submitted to the electors." (Our italics.)

We suggest that readers preserve this quotation for use among those who are disposed to take fright at the sug-

gestion that the Parliamentary system as it is now working is useless. It is obvious to any experienced political student that in a system where the approval of the electorate is retrospective, it is bound for that reason to be ineffective. People talk as if when you find certain legislation to have been unwise, all you have got to do is to repeal it. That would be so if the legislation could be repealed before it had been administratively implemented. But, directly the administration commences, a new set of conditions supervenes with the more or less certain result that in a short time the repeal of unwise legislation could be shown to be itself unwise. In the old Free Trade agitation against Mr. Joseph Chamberlain's proposals it was expressly argued against that gentleman that his suggestion that the country might try Imperial Preferences, and give them up if they did not work out according to plan, was illusory, because they would bring into play a new complex of economic plans and policies, creating wide re-groupings of undertakings prospering by reason of Preferences, with the result that the legislation would be found to have created insuperable obstacles to its own repeal.

In a word, the right of the elector to approve or disapprove legislation retrospectively means nothing more than the right to laugh or cry over spilt milk. The irate elector would be told the same thing as the papers have been telling Mr. de Valera, namely, that he was obsessed by ancient history, and lacked the power of constructive thinking.

"Retrospection" and the L.C.C. Election.

The Times, opportunely enough for our purpose, contrives to reverse its own case concerning "retrospective approval" in a leading article on March 10. Commenting on the victory of the Socialists in the L.C.C. election it names, as one of the subsidiary causes,

"... the reliance which the Municipal Reform Party placed far too emphatically on their past record."

That record, it says, "is undoubtedly admirable in many respects," but—now listen!—

"No greater mistake can be made than to imagine that the past counts at all largely when so much clearly remains to be done in the future."

That is to say, an electorate will not exercise its right to give retrospective approval to the achievements of its representatives, but will give prospective approval to the prospective purposes of prospective candidates. As to disapproval, *The Times* concedes that

"It is, at any rate, one of the truisms of politics that a bad record counts adversely very much more than a good record counts favourably."

But this concession is no more than a qualification of its general proposition that at election times the past is nothing and the future everything in the view of the average elector. Well, we have given reasons why electors should ignore the past in the sense of not voting for the undoing of it, and should have their eyes on the future in the sense of voting for some method of dealing with new problems set by the past. And at this point *The Times* could say: Very well; the fact that electors do not vote on the past is not in conflict with the statement that they enjoy the power to do so under the Parliamentary system if they wish. The reply to this is that the direction of their wishing is largely determined by the past, and that in any case their power to make their wishes effective depends on whether any candidates (and if so how many of them) are prepared to implement them. In the L.C.C. Election the choice by the electors lay between two political corporations each of which put forward a programme; and the design of both was such that a vote for either amounted to a vote to let the past alone and to "think prospectively." Any body of electors who had wished to dig up the buried bones of past legislation would have had to find and finance independent candidates of their own, and to have conducted a campaign of education in competition

with the Press. The net result, at the best, would have been one or two snap victories, but apart from other cases where the independent might have affected the transfer of seats from one Corporation to the other, the effect on the complexion of the L.C.C. would have been negligible.

The Means-Test Slide-Out.

The Times must be held to interpret the "past" in the sense of the more or less distant past, because it names as another cause (but a "subsidiary" one) of the defeat of the Municipal Reformers the fact that upon them had fallen the "unpleasant duty of operating the means test." Very well; and now observe that supposing the whole of the electors had wished to change the nature or soften the consequences of the means test they could not have done so—they could not have shown their "retrospective disapproval" of its operation—because the issue has been reserved from L.C.C. politics altogether. Listen to *The Times*:

"It (i.e., the 'unpleasant duty') would have had to be discharged on similar lines whatever the political complexion of the majority of the L.C.C., and the new majority may be thankful for the Unemployment Bill which will relieve them of it." (Our italics.)

What jam for the Socialist candidates! You can justly say that the National majority in Parliament made them a present of their victory—providing them with a means of denouncing past harshness without having to promise to correct it. In the words of *The Times*:

"The effect of the Bill will be to make the means test an issue at Parliamentary elections instead of an issue at local elections."

Here is a miniature of the Australian ramp perpetrated by the bankers, who, directly Mr. Lang got a majority in New South Wales on a monetary policy, made all such policies issues at Commonwealth elections instead of at State elections, and even so, transferred the power of deciding such issues to a region higher than the Commonwealth Government, to wit, the Loan Council, which runs the Commonwealth Bank in the interests immediately of the trading banks and ultimately of the International Money Monopoly. So it will be seen that whether electors think retrospectively or prospectively they are impotent to initiate changes in Government. The most they can do is to assist in the choice of representatives destined to administer policies especially in local politics where discretion is more manifestly overridden than in national politics. And the existence of this feeling is shown by the absence of sixty-eight per cent. of the L.C.C. electorate from the polls—and this in spite of the dramatic and provocative diversion provided by the attack of Lord Beaverbrook and Lord Rothermere on the Co-operative Societies. What their intentions were will remain a mystery, but if we had been planning the campaign for and on behalf of the Treasury and the Bank of England, we could not have thought of a better method of doing a deal with the Socialist caucus to cover up our traces and facilitate our further purposes than to remove the means-test dilemma from the issues of the election and introduce the Co-operative issue therein. The Money Monopoly, having used the Municipal Reformers to fleece the poorest classes, now turn to the Socialists as the appropriate instrument to fleece the richer classes. For there have been obstacles raised by various municipalities to the development of the bankers' scheme for mortgaging personal incomes in respect of house-classes, and these obstacles come from non-Socialist classes whose interests will be adversely affected more or less directly by the extension of slum-clearance and re-housing. So it is to the bankers' interest to encourage Socialism in those municipalities. Mauling the "slum-landlords" is a game which Socialists may be relied on to play with zest. But small people will be hit as well. Mr. Herbert Morrison has already pointed out that the Socialist Party refrained during the election

from promising not to increase the rates, and since he has also declared that his Party will govern "with a sense of public responsibility" (which means that he will keep the L.C.C. Budget balanced) there is in prospect another squeeze for householders, including those who are buying their homes on the instalment plan.

The Times reads into Morrison's declaration the meaning that there will be no more "Poplarism," but if this is belied in practice "nothing is more certain than that three years hence the Labour Party on the L.C.C. will invite a defeat as startling and as extensive as its present victory." Quite so. Poplarism plus a balanced Budget would mobilise all classes but the destitute on the opposition side; while Poplarism plus an unbalanced Budget would drive the Socialists out of power in a few weeks, let alone three years, through the operation of the same check as the bankers can impose on the Government—the shutting off of ways and means advances. There are laws, too, under which local councillors can be made responsible in person and estate for expenditure certified to be irregular by auditors.

And so it goes on. London will continue to be wisely governed no doubt. And two thirds of London will continue to display prospective and retrospective indifference as to how, or by whom, the function of governing is carried on. It is a good sign. Looked at realistically, the apathy of the elector is the opportunity of the Social-Credit advocate.

Speaking of apathy leads us back to the subject of Mr. Neville Chamberlain's attitude towards the Archbishop of York. What we have just been saying in respect of London politics bears directly on the issue. We have seen that the elector has the right, but cannot exercise it, to undo the past, or, at any rate, the distant past. And we may say that the distance is the measure of his impotence. Since he cannot undo the past, and since the undone past determines the unfulfilled future, it seems that if he is to take any effective interest at all in politics it must be in the form of interim reminders to his rulers such as the Archbishop advocated. If that is denied to the elector then there is nothing left of democracy. As a matter of self-evident fact, the elector cannot know what he has voted for until he sees his mandate being set down in the form of administrative rules and figures. More important still, no member of Parliament can know what it is that he invited votes for until the Cabinet communicates the rules and figures. Yet Mr. Chamberlain declares in so many words that the very time when the member and elector first become awake to the practical meaning of their electoral compact is precisely the time when the two should hold no communication with each other. It is true that he allowed as an exception the "well-reasoned" letter putting a "good case," but, as we have pointed out, the arbiters of the reasoning and the goodness are financial officials who require the reason-ability to proceed from their own technical axioms. If it does, the conclusion cannot help being "good" in a technical sense. Yet it need not be good in an ethical sense—and readers of these pages need no arguments from us to prove that it must necessarily be bad in that sense. The axioms of finance embody a principle of evil; and the evil becomes manifest in the administration of all laws logically derived from them. They are evil because they deceive a community into striving for a result which is desirable by methods which lead directly towards the opposite result. And because the whole community suffer under the same deception they variously attribute the cause of the undesirable result to moral deficiencies in each other. The Archbishop of York is inviting Churchmen to view it as a duty to renounce relief of income-tax for the sake of the underpaid unemployed. If they do not they are, so he would seem to say, "morally deficient" in the subtle sense that they fall short of the highest dictates of the Christian

conscience. Yet the question of what is the Christian's duty in this matter is unresolved among the Christian community, because many believe that the unemployed can only be so helped at the price of hindering their employment.

* * *

If this can be proved—and there is an overwhelming body of "expert" opinion prepared to prove it—supporters of the Archbishop of York would either have to revise their conception of their duty or else to hold that the price ought nevertheless to be paid—that the provision of work is secondary to the relief of need. This would be to affirm the primacy of consumption over production. Well, if so, let no Churchman hesitate to commit himself to the affirmation. It is true that things must be produced before they can be consumed, but it is not true that everyone who participates in the consuming must contribute to the producing. Dr. Temple himself appears to realise this, for he had previously issued (see THE NEW AGE of February 8) a manifesto recognising that unemployment had come to stay and calling upon Churchpeople to prepare for training the unemployed in the use of their leisure. But he appears to think that the financing of their leisure must be done with money transferred from their neighbours. This presupposes that these neighbours are able to afford it, which again presupposes that they are receiving incomes from industry as wages, salaries, or dividends. But unless he looks outside the wage and dividend cycle for the money he will be in the same difficulty as we have discussed, namely, that the financing of training for leisure will increase the number of unemployed who will be candidates for such training.

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The full explanation of the reason must be consulted in Major Douglas's analysis of the costing-system. It is sufficient to state here that the obstacle to be removed is the very principle that personal incomes must be solely derived from industry by any person at all. It is a commonplace to-day to say that machines are disemploying men. Very well, the measure of the disemployment, looked at physically, is the measure of those men's ability to employ the machines. They are not exerting that ability because they have no money. Nor are the employed classes exerting it instead. The whole community has to disemploy machines because it does not possess the money to pay the cost of the machines' products.

* * *

If at one time you saw 1,000 men producing and consuming 1,000 articles, and at a later time you saw the same 1,000 men now in possession of a machine capable of turning out 10,000 articles with the attention of 800 men, and the 200 men displaced were getting only one article each as before, you would expect to see the employed 800 consuming the other 9,800 articles (assuming that they were able to multiply their consumption twelve times). Or, on the basis of equal shares you would expect them all to be consuming at ten times their former rate. You would base your expectation on the fact that the machine itself did not consume any articles, and that the men would not be such fools as to waste the articles or neglect to make them if they wanted them. If instead you saw the 800 men only working the machine one day out of every ten, getting 1,000 articles, out of which they gave in charity 100 to the "unemployed," and lived themselves on the reduced "wages" of 900 articles, you would say that the whole crowd had gone mad. And no amount of learned talk by their economic advisers would alter your diagnosis. You would say: "Physical possibilities—10,000 articles; physical requirements—10,000 articles; physical achievement—1,000 articles. Q.E.A."

* * *

Well, and that is a picture of what we are seeing to-day. Only we are presented with figures, calculations, and conclusions by constitutional cabbalists purporting to prove to us that the 9,000 articles represent wealth

because we have saved them by not making them, or, having made them, put them in a "pool" or thrown them in the sea, or done something else with them which prevents our getting at them. And we suck it all in.

The Government's Spy Bill.

According to *The People* (March 4) the Government contemplate spending £180,000 on espionage. In an article by a special correspondent there are some facts about the Secret Service which are worth noting as such, and more particularly as bearing on the Social-Credit political campaign. The manner and implications of this relationship were explained in these "Notes" some time ago. The writer names as the authorities making use of secret agents the Navy, Army, Air Force, Foreign Office and the "Special Political Secret Service." The agents may be, he says, officers in the Services and police detectives told off for such duty, "scientists," "leading business men," and lastly, "alluring women." Their missions, as he describes them, concern the securing of information regarding military armaments. The permanent heads of the Secret Service have full discretion to spend money without giving account to Parliament of how it is spent or even answering general questions about their policy and methods. The spies operate at home, on the high seas, and abroad. So much the writer lets out for the instruction of the kind of people who read *The People*.

* * *

Students of Social-Credit, by the way, will smile at an incidental remark he makes, namely that

"Owing to the economies effected in unemployment benefits and in the salaries of civil servants, it had been hoped that expenditure on espionage would also be restricted."

This amounts to saying that the less money you allow people to get the less need there will be to spy on them. Internationally the entire spy-system is based on the fact that every nation is under the necessity of detecting attempts on the part of others to steal a march on it in respect of (a) armaments and (b) trade. The purpose of national armaments is to protect national trade in the international market. The reason why national export trade must be protected is because without it there would be national financial insolvency manifest either among the people or in the Budget, or both. No nation can maintain solvency on the proceeds of its internal trading, not even when it can maintain itself on the products of its internal natural resources. The United States requires revenue from export trade just as urgently as does Britain, notwithstanding that whereas Britain needs imports in a physical sense the United States does not. Britain, so we are told, "must export" in order to obtain food in return. The United States also "must export," but with no physical object at all. If the United States can be conceived as having a physical objective it would be that of getting rid of things which it was Britain's objective to receive; and the two objectives would be fulfilled by the gratuitous transfer of those things to Britain by the United States. But the United States has no desire to give things away in this concrete sense; its physical objective can be derived from President Roosevelt's recent dictum, and it is that the United States must take things in (e.g., from Britain) in order to be able to send things out (e.g., to Britain). And so throughout the world—these "musts" do not clash in a physical sense: they could only do so in the hypothetical case of one country's striving to acquire from others things which those others could not spare without suffering physical injury.

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This hypothetical situation can be expressed in commercial terms as follows: Some countries must sell in order to buy, and the others must buy in order to sell. Or, in financial terms, some must receive money in order to pay money, and the others must pay money in order to receive money. If this reflected the realities there would be no inherent difficulty in accommo-

dating these "musts." But it does not. What every country is saying to the others to-day is, in so many words: "I need to send you my things for your money, but I am unable to accept your things for my money." The things, which are everything, are nothing, and the money, which is nothing, is everything. Considering the world as one country, this professed need and inability would be seen to be irreconcilable unless we imagined some chemical process which would volatilise the world's natural resources, and then precipitate them in the form of pieces of paper called money—leaves of absence, so to speak, which were to be regarded as claims to the things which were absent.

* * *

Fantastic as this appears, it does not misrepresent the fundamental cause of the economic dilemma, or the manner in which nations are trying to solve it. Each is trying to do so by and for itself, and the attempt of each is clashing with the attempts of others. Hence arises its resort to secrecy as to its own affairs, and to the spying out of the secrets of its neighbours.

* * *

The same dilemma is present in domestic relationships. For example, industry considered as an employer of labour says to its employees: "I need to deliver you my things for your money, but I am unable to accept your services for my money"—or something very near to that formula, which is a paraphrase of the dictum that industry must "reduce costs." So that you have clashes between these classes, both of which, insofar as they can, endeavour to forestall each other in manoeuvring for the bargaining-advantage, a policy which involves such secrecy on either side as it is able to preserve. For example, there is no essential distinction between secret building of battleships by any country and the distribution of profits (i.e., potential wages) in the form of bonus shares by any company. It may be allowed that the latter could be seen through by any observant person, but the factor of spying is, of course, present in all observation leading to the disclosure of matters which certain people are wishing to keep in obscurity. The power to preserve secrecy is greatest at the top of the pyramid of society, and least at the base. And the same thing is true as regards the surprising of secrets. Hence, whereas the tricks of commercial policy may be discovered by spare-time spying, those of military policy require whole-time spying.

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The paid spy, being required to discover something, has to discover the identity and activities of the spy or spies employed by the other side to frustrate his efforts. He may also be set to spy on spies employed on his own side in order to forestall their double-crossing their employers. So much for the system as outlined by the writer; its structure is, he says, not unduly distorted by respectable authors of fiction covering the subject.

* * *

But what is of more interest is something which he does not elaborate; and that is the activities of the "Special Political Secret Service." Successful fiction writers have not devoted much attention to this, perhaps because they have a feeling that success is more likely if they let it alone. *The Secret Order*, by "Dargon," was an exception, but this book has long been out of print. Even so, it dealt with the matter from a narrower angle, and staged it in a more restricted setting, than would be required to give the reader a full comprehension of the scope of the system. Even so, it exposed the machinery by which left-wing idealism could be (and was, according to the author) used by plotters in high places as a smoke-screen behind which they could manoeuvre into position to capture such privileges and powers as might be surrendered by the right wing in the course or as the outcome of the so-called class-struggle. One feature of the story was the description of how the principles of the interlocking-directorate and the holding company mechanisms could be applied to the purpose of co-ordinating the policies of all sorts of "cultural," "artistic,"

quasi-religious and metaphysical groups, and of bending those policies into lines of convergence upon the plotters' objective without the knowledge of the several memberships, and even without the full knowledge of the interlocked agents of the process. Only the directorate of the parent company, so to speak, could survey the plan as a whole and control its development. In a sense the agents operating in this mystico-cultural field of activity might be described as miniature Rasputins, the only difference being that the authentic Rasputin worked on his own account both in intention and fact. The evidence which came out during the hearing of the libel action brought against the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer combine by Princess Youssouppoff showed how nearly superstition can affect statecraft in certain circumstances—how an unscrupulous generator of hallucinations can persuade or intimidate the most highly-placed rulers into courses which their sober judgment would reject. Thus, according to the testimony of the Prince, he killed Rasputin to break a spell which was preventing Russia from severing relations with Germany. Of course, the pre-war form of government in Russia made this spell-binding comparatively easy; Rasputin had only to gain ascendancy over one person—or at most one or two—to produce results of such tremendous dimensions.

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To-day, both in Russia and elsewhere, this success could not be repeated in anything resembling the same form. The civilised world has seen the last of an undisguised direct personal domination of high-political policy. But it has not rid itself of the disguised, indirect, impersonal domination with which students of Social Credit are concerned. Prince Youssouppoff knew that Rasputin was the cause of the mischief, and that with the death of that man the mischief would cease. But there are no identifiable persons whose death would, of itself, put an end to the dominance of finance over political policy. Except for the fact that this domination had been going on elsewhere long before Rasputin appeared in Russia, it could be said that the dead Rasputin has risen again in the forms of numberless tiny replicas of himself, possessing vestiges of his peculiar powers, and exercising them among the subdivided sections of "advanced" thought on every plane of inquiry, reflection and expression. These types possess a power-mania implemented by the ability to cause a temporary suspension of the critical faculties in individuals assembled round them. And wherever one or two, of any given cult, are gathered together, there will be a Rasputin in their midst. This neorasputinism achieves its power by something other than moral suasion, something which is better described as magnetic suasion.

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These types taken as a whole constitute a panel of potential agents of financial espionage. Those chosen as such become secret agents, because the fact that they are agents at all is not known even to themselves in most cases, and because the ultimate consequences of what they do are a matter of indifference to them so long as they enjoy the exercise of their powers in the fulfilment of their immediate personal ambitions. The value of these agents to the financial hierarchy proceeds from the primary fact that the reasoning faculties of human beings suffer atrophy if not exercised. These agents provide the greater the mass of mentality impermeable to the lack of exercise! The greater their combined followings the greater the mass of mentality impermeable by reason or immune from contact with it. In a negative way they are censors of news and opinion just as is the Press. They are not so much spies on behalf of the bankers as they are obstacles to what may be called spies in the public interest. For, in a qualified sense, the Social Credit Movement is, or embodies, something like an espionage system; but with this difference, that the bankers' great secret was discovered fourteen years ago, and the problem of the Movement is not to find out any more but to communicate what has been discovered to the public whose interests are affected by it. The situation is somewhat like the case of an intel-

ligence agent who gets behind the enemies' lines and surprises their secrets, but who, when he gets back to his own lines, is prevented from communicating with headquarters because the field telephones are engaged by uplift-sputters.

What is the "Capitalist Class"?

Mr. W. J. Brown, Secretary of the Civil Service Clerical Association, in his latest pronouncement on Social Credit, says that support for it will grow much larger in the years to come, but that although the Douglas theory "answers our problem," the Douglas proposals assume that it is possible to divorce one section of the capitalist class from the class as a whole and to attack the banker with the assistance of the producing capitalist. He suggests that this is "impossible." (*Red Tape*, March, 1934.)

Mr. Brown has, in his time, shown himself to be more of a realist in economic thinking than most of his contemporaries in the Trade-Union movement. For that reason it should not be difficult for him to realise that the "capitalist class," in the old sense of the term, no longer exists.

Music.

APOLOGY.

We very much regret that there appeared in our issue of February 15, 1934, a notice of Mr. Mark Hambourg's playing to which he has justifiably taken exception. It has been pointed out to us that in the notice in question we exceeded the bounds of fair criticism and reflected on Mr. Hambourg's artistic sincerity. We realise that this suggestion ought never to have been made, and that there is no foundation for it. We accordingly desire to convey our sincere apologies to Mr. Hambourg, and we have agreed to indemnify him in respect of the expense to which he has been put in the matter.

With reference to the above apology, we feel it due to Mr. Kaikhosru Sorabji to point out that the lapse to which we refer was not committed by him, but by another writer who was deputising for him. Naturally, Mr. Sorabji takes responsibility only for his own writings.

Music.

On Friday the fourth of the B.B.C. concerts of Contemporary Music, as far as the two items to which I listened, quite down to standard. The Choral Variations of Benjamin Britten were of quite a phenomenal dreariness and dullness, tricked out with all the *quincaille* of mock-archaism, like the Gothic Revival. The new Piano Sonata of Cyril Scott shows that composer still occupied with trifling "effects" of sonority, that become incredibly tiresome, after only quite a little of his remorseless exploitation of them. The work seems almost wholly devoid of any significant or pregnant musical thinking. Under its, as they soon begin to sound, second-hand neologisms, not an idea of real individuality emerges. Mr. Scott seems to have no conception of line in composition. At every possible moment and opportunity he gets back to his chunk methods, occasionally interspersed with passages of meaningless "pianism" put in to give a factitious air of movement to what is in essence stagnant. The music never moves at all, there is no progress from point to point, no ineluctable drive towards a clearly realised end, such as marks any and all music of any genuine significance. Compare, for instance, one bar of Busoni, with one of Scott for the most startling exemplification of what is meant. Scott is a curious problem. His music bears the same, or much the same relation to the real thing, as any of those "spiritual" pictures all faintly and anaemically coloured masses of vapour that are on sale in any "psychic" bookshop, with an El Greco "Ascension" or "Apotheosis," the same relation that Mabel Collins, Ralph Waldo Trine, *ad hoc genus omne* bear to St. John of the Cross, or Jami.

Some interesting new records have been sent to me for review. The H.M.V. "Rosenkavalier" album is exceedingly interesting, from the consummate excellence of the orchestral playing—but not by any means so consummate

excellence of the conducting, by Robert Heger. The singers are the very well known, so well known that it is scarcely necessary to mention their names, regulation Covent Garden company, of Lotte Lehmann, Elizabeth Schumann, Maria Olszewska, Richard Mays, Viktor Madin, and so on. It is a cast, good enough as far as it goes, but decidedly inferior, as far as the three women singers are concerned, to that who have recorded the trio in the last act, for Polydor, namely, Elizabeth Ohms, Elfrida Marherr, and Adele Kern. Heger takes many parts of the work too fast, particularly the trio, which suffers in consequence. His tempi are appreciably faster than Beecham's, as well as the conductor of the Polydor record referred to. As an introductory, however, the album is admirable, and, of course, the playing of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra is such as we still, over here, only dream of.

The Elgar Violin Concerto, with Mehinin and the composer, is a remarkable achievement. Superb as is the violinist's playing, however, I feel that there is something not quite right with the way in which this, I readily admit, magnificent violinist treats the solo part. As Mr. Newman so well pointed out last week in the *Sunday Times*, Elgar's music is so adequately and sufficiently marked with all the necessary tonal and other nuances, that to add anything thereto, is inevitably to spoil and overdo the effect, producing, as often Mehinin's playing does, a too great lushness, an excess of sentiment that is not at all inherent in the music itself. Mehinin is such a wonderful artist, already so mature in his musical outlook, that one is inclined to criticise him the more severely for this dereliction from his own great standards of playing. Elgar's themes, like Mahler's, lend themselves fatally easily to excessive "expression," and can be easily made to sound messy and lush. It is the performer's look-out to be on his guard against this. Technically the performance is prodigious, of course, and the composer's part in the proceedings as conductor, as admirable as it always (now unhappily one must say *was*) is.

From the Columbia Company the outstanding thing is Sir Thomas Beecham's and the L.P.O.'s "Jupiter" Symphony. Admitting, as I do quite unreservedly to an anti-Mozartian antipathy, such a performance would win me over if anything on this earth could. Such a wonderful combination of the utmost *finesse*, delicacy, sharpness, and cleanness of phrasing, with vitality and lean muscular strength comes from but two conductors under heaven, Toscanini, and Beecham. Chelsea and Bloomsbohemia will revel in the Stravinsky-Dushkin "Duo Concertant." Let them, they deserve no better. The Columbia Company must be praised for their eclecticism. KAIKHOSRU SORABJI.

Forthcoming Meetings.

Glasgow.

Meetings will be held as follows at the headquarters of the Glasgow D.S.C. Association, 160, Bath-street, at eight o'clock each evening:

Tuesday, March 20.—Mr. P. McDevitt. "Social Credit and Scotland."

Tuesday, March 27.—Mr. J. Longden. "Some Criticisms of Social Credit."

London.

On Tuesday, March 20, at National Headquarters, the Green Shirt Movement for Social Credit, 35, Old Jewry, Cheapside, E.C.2, at 8 p.m. Frank Griffiths, on "Some Immediate Results of Social Credit."

Dewsbury.

On Friday, March 23, in the Exchange Hall, Town Hall, Dewsbury, Lord Tavistock on "Poverty and War—The Only Solution," supported by J. G. Dodgson, Esq., of Bradford. Chairman, the Mayor of Dewsbury (Councillor H. F. Shaw). Time, 7.30 p.m.

Notice.

All communications concerning THE NEW AGE should be addressed directly to the Editor:

Mr. Arthur Brenton,
20, Rectory Road,
Barnes, S.W.13.

Renewals of subscriptions and orders for literature should be sent, as usual, to 70, High Holborn.

Red Herrings.

B. J. Boothroyd.

I wish to discuss Red Herrings. I refer, of course, to those various means by which the ignorant public are kept ignorant in the public interest.

In a modern State, the main purpose of red herringry is to safeguard the banking system from too close an investigation by the common people. And nothing effects this so well as the encouragement of the civic virtues.

Fortunately, our bankers are aware of this. Here, for example, is Herr Schacht—dictator of Germany's Dictator—writing in a book ("Profits and Policies," by Schacht and Ewen):—

"If the nation's self-respect is preserved and its moral aspirations satisfied, it is more easily disposed to accept a lower standard of living."

And as the whole aim of the banking system is to lower the standard of living until the whole nation can enjoy



As there is so little to go round, the unemployed must come first. (NOTE:—The larger loaf does not go round!)

what Wordsworth (who must have been a banker) called "the keen, the wholesome air of poverty," this banker's interest in moral aspirations is easily understood.

It is natural, therefore, that the most public-spirited citizens are the most reliable, if unconscious, upholders of banking policy. This was happily exemplified in a recent letter to the *Manchester Guardian* by a school-teacher, who wrote:—

"I wish to say that if the Government . . . contemplates restoring any cuts, I hope that restoration or improvement of the previous conditions of unemployment insurance will come before any restoration of the salaries of teachers."

Now this is pre-eminently the Right Spirit. Here is a good citizen who accepts the money shortage as an unalterable law. If he were less virtuous he might be disposed to question it; he might even ask why there is not enough money for both teachers and unemployed. As it is, being a good citizen, he takes the money shortage for granted, which is the first duty of citizenship.

Even more influential support was given to the money shortage recently by the Archbishop of York, when he exhorted Christians to "tell the Government that the restoration of the cuts to the unemployed should have precedence over any other concessions." Here, again, we have one of the most morally influential men in the country propagating the sound financial theory that there is only a limited amount of money, and that somebody must make sacrifices.

Both the Archbishop and the teacher speak of our "resources," by which they mean that amount of money which the banks allow us to have. From this we see that there is an important distinction between the nation's resources and the nation's wealth. Our wealth is the amount we produce; our resources, apparently, are that small percentage of it which the banks allow us to buy. The student must get these economic terms clear in his mind.

The salutary effect of these utterances is to confirm the popular belief that there is only a little to go round, and that therefore someone must go short. Some people say there is actually abundance. There may be; but the point to remember is that it does not go round. It is the going round that matters: the people can only have the

part that goes round. What happens to the part that doesn't go round is not their business.

The reason why this is so easily accepted is obvious. As astrologists tell us, we are all influenced by the solar system, and our economic laws follow the same lines. In the solar system it is always the smaller parts that go round and the larger part which stays put and *cannot be touched*. Galileo pointed this out long ago, when he gave the idea to the bankers.

But whether or not astrology is the explanation, there are few nobler sights in history than that of our own people, surrounded by enough for everybody, ignoring nine-tenths of it, and willingly sacrificing their share in the remaining one-tenth for the sake of the needy.

It was doubtless the contemplation of such splendid sacrifices which made Lord Lytton (who must have been an economic expert), observe "He never errs who sacrifices self."

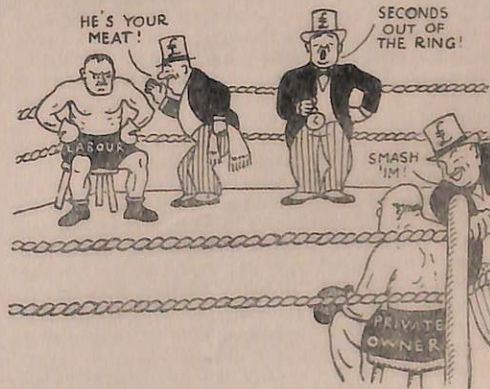
Before I leave the subject of red herrings I wish to protest against the action of the B.B.C. in cutting off that working man's broadcast the other night. Their action was no doubt well meant; but they forgot the national need for red herrings.

I have read the speech this man meant to give, and no speech could have been better designed to distract public attention from the working of the banking system. He gave an account of the hardships of the workers, notably the effects of the conveyor belt and the Bedaux system, and observing that "the machine enslaves us," drew the moral that "the cause of the trouble is not the machines but the private ownership of these machines." His remedy was that the workers should "own or control the means of production."

Now, as a staunch upholder of sound banking practice, I protest against the B.B.C.'s suppression of free speech. Particularly free speeches which help to maintain the banking system. It is a serious mistake to think that socialist propaganda threatens the basis of the economic system. It does the other thing—distracts attention from it.

So long as Socialists and Fascists are fighting each other for the control of production, the people will never notice that the bankers are controlling consumption.

So long as people think that the real fight is between capital and labour, or worker and private owner, the bankers are safe to go on governing both of them by the money shortage. And in the interests of sound financial policy I think that the bankers should promote



The Fight for the Red Herring Championship.

the fight, and act both as backers to as well as referees of both sides; and by means of long counts and short rounds keep the fight going as long as possible.

Of all red herrings, designed to keep underpaid people's attention away from the bankers who are underpaying them, there is none so potent and odiferous as Public Ownership of the Means of Production.

I therefore demand that that socialist speech be given in full, if possible with a musical accompaniment.

The Social Credit Secretariat.

INCORPORATING THE NATIONAL CREDIT ASSOCIATION.

Chairman of the Council: Major C. H. Douglas.

Hon. Treasurer: J. E. Tukey.

Secretary: W. L. Bardsley.

MANIFESTO.

The Secretariat was established as a result of a steadily increasing demand from individuals, and Groups in the United Kingdom and abroad for some central body to serve the whole Social Credit Movement, with Major Douglas himself as the final point of reference. After careful consideration and consultation in the early summer of 1933, Major Douglas decided that the time had arrived for such an organisation to be formed, and that he was prepared to be definitely identified with it.

The functions of the Secretariat are to act as a clearing-house for information regarding Social Credit activities, as a connecting link between advocates of the Douglas Social Credit Proposals throughout the world, as a central office for the collection of intelligence regarding opportunities for action, and as a source of reference for technical questions on the Proposals of Major Douglas. It is not a directive organisation except upon request, for in accordance with the Social Credit philosophy it is left to the individual to decide what form his activities shall take, but, if in the future, an opportunity arises, which the Council considers demands some form of united action the Secretariat would be the Organisation through which support would be mobilised.

In September, 1933, the demand for the Secretariat became so great, and the need so urgent for assisting Major Douglas with his correspondence that it was decided to take action immediately without waiting to circularise every individual and group in the Movement. This was made possible by the generous support from a limited number of Social Credit enthusiasts who had been tentatively approached on the question during the preceding summer.

As the demand for such an organisation had originated with individuals and Groups, it was felt that the whole Movement could be depended upon to support the only organisation with which Major Douglas is actively associated.

Present and Future Activities.

Any unconsidered attempt to fight money with money is foredoomed to failure, and therefore the Secretariat will not at present initiate any action based upon a belief that the Money Power can be combated in this way. It is for this reason that the Council has not endeavoured to raise a central "Fighting Fund," but has limited its initial appeal for money to a sum required to maintain the Secretariat and assist the official organ of the Social Credit Movement, THE NEW AGE.

The Secretariat will carefully abstain from initiating any action merely for the sake of "doing something," but it will exploit every opportunity that arises for the advancement of Social Credit, and will co-ordinate the functional activities of the various committees. All activities by individuals, Groups, and Associations affiliated to the Secretariat, which are approved by the Advisory Council, will receive the fullest support of which the Secretariat is capable, provided that their sponsors accept responsibility for raising any funds which may be necessary to carry them through.

Various new forms of activity have recently been initiated within the Movement, in consultation with the Secretariat, and ad hoc groups have been formed for specific purposes. Where these are either directly inspired or approved by the Secretariat, the co-operation of individuals and Groups will be invited as required, with the assurance that help will be given to the maximum extent possible.

All individuals and Groups are invited to keep the Secretariat informed regarding their own activities, and to ask for any assistance which it is possible for the Secretariat to give. It is particularly desirable that those who can undertake additional work without re-

ducing their existing activities should inform the Secretariat of the fact.

Affiliation to the Secretariat.

Provision has now been made whereby every Douglas Social Credit Association or Group can become affiliated to the Secretariat by direct application to the Secretary, indicating complete agreement with the Secretariat Statement of Policy. The Secretariat will make any enquiries it considers necessary, and reserves the right to decline or withdraw affiliation. The object of affiliation is to ensure the acceptance of an agreed body of principles throughout the Movement, and to make it possible for the Secretariat to put individual enquirers in touch with Groups or Associations which are in complete agreement with the Douglas Proposals.

Capitation Fees.

Associations and Groups already affiliated have been supplied with special books of receipt forms for the collection of Capitation Fees. These fees amount to 2s. 6d. per member per annum, of which 20 per cent., i.e., 6d. on each ticket, is retained by the Group or Association. The object of this is to maintain the service of the Secretariat, and the payment of such fees entitles Groups and Associations to receive copies of all notices and circulars dealing with current activities. Any individual giving unqualified support to the Statement of Policy, who wishes to receive general information regarding such activities directly and not necessarily through a Group or Association, will be put on the mailing list on payment of an annual subscription of not less than £1. Such subscriptions are subject to a discount of 5s. in respect of members of Groups paying Capitation Fees.

It is expected that as many individuals now presented will take advantage of the opportunity now presented to them of maintaining direct contact with the work of the Secretariat, and that all Groups and Associations which have not yet accepted the Capitation Scheme will do so without delay.

In addition to these measures for securing a regular income for carrying on the Secretariat, a special form of numbered receipt has been prepared for collection of donations and subscriptions from those who are in sympathy with the Social Credit Proposals of Major Douglas, or who are at least desirous of their being examined, but who are not prepared to support them explicitly. Books of these receipt-forms will be sent to all affiliated Groups and Associations and will be supplied on application to individuals at the discretion of the Secretariat.

The Advisory Council.

Lord Tavistock, who was President of the National Credit Association, has now consented to join the Advisory Council of the Secretariat; and also Mr. A. L. Gibson (of Sheffield), latterly a member of the N.C.A. Executive, who has been identified from the start with the proposal to form a Secretariat, and was signatory to the letters in which the original small committee put the suggestion before the Movement. The Council has been further strengthened by securing the services of Dr. J. Ewart Purves and Mr. Maurice B. Reckitt.

In order to avoid the protracted discussions so frequently associated with large committees, the Council has adopted the rule of a maximum quorum of five, and a minimum of three, thus avoiding the necessity for calling the whole Council together except at infrequent intervals. At all ordinary meetings only those best qualified to deal with the subjects under discussion will be called.

The National Credit Association.

From its inception, until the present time, the Secretariat has intentionally limited its activities to a certain extent in order to avoid embarrassing the National Credit Association in the latter's consideration of its relationship to the Secretariat. It was recognised that the creation of a new body, officially operating under Major Douglas's chairmanship, obliged every other Social Credit organisation to reconsider its position. The question of cessation as a separate body had to be faced, and

the policy of the Secretariat in leaving this issue to be settled in as free an atmosphere as possible has been justified by the outcome of a ballot of the subscribing members of the National Credit Association which has resulted in an overwhelming majority in favour of dissolution as a separate entity, and transfer of the activities of the Association to the Secretariat.

Functional Activities.

The National Credit Association was regarded to some extent as the propaganda organisation of the Movement, and now that it has been incorporated in the Secretariat it has been decided to set up a Propaganda Committee. A number of well-known Social Credit advocates in London, including officials of the National Credit Association, have consented to serve on this Committee, which is charged with the task of considering all aspects of propaganda other than the production of books and pamphlets and the publication of newspapers. It is hoped that the work of this Committee as an experienced group of propagandists will prove useful to all as a clearing house for the exchange of ideas and for advice upon the most effective forms of propaganda.

The Secretariat has already set up other Committees: a Controversy Committee; a Correspondence Committee; a Literature Committee; and a Publications Committee. The Controversy Committee is responsible for seeing that all attacks on the Douglas Proposals are countered. It has already been in touch with all affiliated groups, and has been instrumental in arranging for answers to attacks which have been made in the trade journals and elsewhere.

The Correspondence Committee was formed largely to co-operate in the Correspondence Committee Proposals made by the Southampton Douglas Social Credit Association.

The Literature Committee is responsible for the reading and classification of all Social Credit literature, and for advice with regard to new literature.

The Publications Committee is responsible for co-operation with all Social Credit publications, and in particular for assisting the Editor of THE NEW AGE in any way he suggests.

It is the wish of Major Douglas that the Secretariat should be firmly established, and THE NEW AGE put on a secure financial basis by the time he returns from the Antipodes, and for these purposes you are asked to give and promote the maximum support and co-operation, financial and otherwise, of which you are capable.

W. L. BARDSLEY,

Secretary, Social Credit Secretariat.

8-9, Essex Street, Strand, London, W.C.2.

STATEMENT OF POLICY.

The Social Credit Secretariat exists in order to implement the policy of Social Credit. The primary objective of this policy is to increase the economic power of the individual. The possibility and, indeed, the necessity of achieving this end rests fundamentally upon the demonstrable fact that the individual is a tenant-for-life of the heritage of civilisation, and if this heritage is not destroyed by misuse it is capable of assuring to him complete economic security.

The first necessity is that he shall be presented with a true balance sheet representing the condition of his assets and liabilities. No such balance sheet exists, because of demonstrated defects in the monetary system which is employed in the denomination of the assets, on the one hand, and the claims upon them on the other.

Certain sustainable claims arising out of the replacement of the labour of the individual by machines employing solar energy have not, so far, received recognition.

Many factors which are irrelevant to the presentation of an economic balance sheet, such as the insistence upon so-called moral qualities as a condition or participation in the assets, have further obscured the account.

It is considered that the steps to the rectification of

this situation are as follows, and broadly in the order made:—

1. The regulation of prices, i.e., the balancing of claims against assets.
2. The national Dividend, i.e., the recognition of the tenants-for-life.
3. The separation of the Governmental or moral system from the economic system. This involves the abolition of differential taxation, e.g., beer taxes.

It is a fundamental conception of the Social Credit Movement that group relationships, such as the State, are only of importance in so far as they conduce to the well-being and progress of every individual composing them. In consequence, the objective of the movement is not to construct a Utopia, but to enable every member of the community so to utilise his interest in the group inheritance that he may construct for himself an existence according to his own ideas. Social Credit is the escape from Utopia.

The Films.

THIRTY YEARS AGO.

Charles Graham, a member of the Cinematograph Veterans' Association, showed last week at the Forum (Villiers Street), a number of single-reeler films of the early Nineteen Hundreds. The display was as amusing as it was instructive, and included such classics as "The Attempted Nobbling of the Derby Favourite," and "The Village Fire Brigade." These old pictures are characterised by very flat lighting, which makes it difficult to distinguish a face—although that may be due to the worn condition of the prints; and the complete absence both of close-ups and spoken titles. The last are unnecessary; even the British performers of the time gesticulated with an abandon worthy of the Sicilian Players. Technically, the cinema has made enormous advances since the days when the camera could remain stationary throughout a whole picture, made in a few hours and costing less than five pounds to produce. But a survey of recent English and American Talkies reveals how far artistic progress has lagged behind technical achievements.

Incidentally, the Forum management should include a few of these early films in the programme; their unconscious humour is nearly as amusing as Disney's sophisticated artistry.

The Imitative Screen.

A fortnight ago, I commented on the extent to which the film industry—both in England and America—relies on stage plays and novels for its scenario material, with the result that no attempt has been made to discover or encourage new writers suited to the special requirements of the screen. This, despite the constant insistence of Hollywood on its alleged search for originality. Recent announcements by leading producing concerns indicate that when the studios are not busy with pseudo-historical drama they concern themselves mainly with adaptations, regardless of the suitability of the material. Thus the programme announced by Gaumont-British for the second half of this year includes "A Cup of Kindness" (Aldwych farce with the inevitable Tom Walls and Ralph Lynn), "Evensong," based on the Knoblock-Beverley Nicholls play, which was itself based on Mr. Nicholls's novel; and "The Little Friend," adapted from Ernst Lothar's novel. Then Radio Pictures are about to make "The Dover Road" (A. A. Milne comedy), "The Crime Doctor" (Zangwill story), and "Of Human Bondage" (Somerset Maugham), and "The Gay Divorce" (play now at the Palace). The list could be extended, but the programme of these two companies alone indicates just how much reliance is to be placed on producers' announcements of their desire for really original pictures.

Admittedly, some of the material I have cited—"Evensong," for instance—contains the germs of a good film. But, apart from the fact that experience shows that in making such film versions the latest cinematic potentialities are not adequately utilised—so that the result tends to be more photoplay than film—this policy of exploiting novels and plays is fatal to original screen work. And that is far more serious to-day than it was in the silent era, not only for the simple reason that directly dialogue becomes an essential ingredient of a film its quality assumes importance, but also because both the raw material and the treatment of so many films lack cinematic essence and suitability. So long as the screen continues to rely on best-sellers and the box office successes of the London and New

York stage, it will remain only a poor relation of the theatre.

What most directors and producers also fail to realise is that the making of an adequate film version of a novel may require a highly-specialised technique. Take, for instance, "David Copperfield," of which Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer have announced the forthcoming production. Here is a canvas crowded with characters and episodes, and although it is precisely in the field of episodic treatment that the screen has the advantage over the stage, owing to its capacity to present a large number of short scenes in a brief time, and to move the action backwards and forwards, yet the difficulties of satisfactorily rendering almost any of Dickens's novels in a form taking not more than ninety or a hundred minutes to show are considerable. Either the director must decide to concentrate on selected episodes—thereby destroying the continuity and homogeneity of the original, which becomes distorted in the process—or he attempts to put as much as possible on the screen, and the treatment becomes jerky. As a matter of fact, the usual procedure is to build up the picture on the basis of a relatively small number of episodes, and to base the whole theme on a conventional "love story."

More or less the same procedure is adopted in the case of historical, or rather, pseudo-historical pictures. "Queen Christina" is a typical example. Here was magnificent and almost virgin screen material; actually we have a Wardour Street costume piece, and a penny novelette love episode between a sentimental girl and a Seventeenth Century lounge lizard. There is no reason to assume that the threatened films dealing with Marie Antoinette, Benvenuto Cellini, and the House of Rothschild, to name only a few, will either be better films or historically more accurate.

Hot News Department.

"Leila Hyams . . . decided to cast her lot with the movies. Being very beautiful, well cultured (sic) and having a radiating personality she was not long in connecting."—*Universal Pictures Publicity.*

"Greta Nissen, B.I.P. star, never wears black shoes or hose. Says they tend to 'shorten' the leg and look dull too. She always has her initials works on her clothes, even on every article of lingerie."—*British International Publicity.*

DAVID OCKHAM.

The Theatre.

"The Country Wife." By William Wycherley. Produced by Baljol Holloway. Ambassadors.

It is an ironic commentary on the British Censorship of Stage Plays—originally instituted for purely political reasons and now mainly concerned with public morality—that no contemporary dramatist could get "The Country Wife" past the most lenient Lord Chamberlain. Not only the theme—that of the libertine who feigns impotence so that he may the more easily make cuckolds out of jealous husbands—but also the dialogue is too frank even for a generation that has taken Mae West and plays dealing with sodomy to its bosom. Yet our stage would be all the better if living writers were allowed the same outspokenness as is accorded to the seventeenth-century playwrights, especially as those trifled with superficialities, while the contemporary theatre, to use Shaw's phrase, is the real pulpit of the times. Or rather, it might be if the dramatist were granted the same freedom as the novelist.

Wycherley, like Congreve and the rest of his contemporaries, was preoccupied with the great marital infidelity joke, and the conceptions that female chastity was purely physical and that every woman was at heart a rake. Women were property, and unchastity damaged its value to either a potential or an actual husband. To the modern mind, those conceptions are essentially immoral; Wycherley and his colleagues robbed them of offence because their bloodless comedies never quicken into real life; the characters are amusing marionettes going through conventional postures, and titillating the audience by such indecencies as the double-entendres in the beginning of the third act of "The Country Wife," which would have delighted Marie Lloyd.

This production is admirable, and there is better team work than in "The Rivals," which was largely acted by the same cast. Lesley Wareing, who merely looked pretty as Lydia Languish, is admirably suited in the part of Margery Pinchwife; Baljol Holloway makes a good Horner, although the role calls for a younger man; and Valentine Rooke, Edmund Willard, and John Laurie are excellent as Sir Jasper Fidget, Pinchwife, and Sparkish, respectively. The last calls for special mention; Sparkish, as is the case with the remainder of the characters, is conceived as a type rather than an individual, but Mr. Laurie so builds up the role that in the end a human being emerges from the fop.

The production is not only an unusually successful revival, but is also one of the most amusing plays to be seen in London at the moment.

"Jane and Genius."

When "Genius at Home" was produced at the Embassy in January, I expressed the hope that it would be transferred to the West End, so as to give a larger public the opportunity of enjoying Marda Vanne's impersonation of Jane Carlyle. The transfer has been made; the play is now at the Royalty under the style of "Jane and Genius," but with certain changes in the cast, including Agnes Lauchlan, who is playing Lady Fidget in "The Country Wife."

VERNON SOMMERFIELD.

Major Douglas in Sydney.

A private message states that Major Douglas's audience of the Sydney demonstration included 10,000 ticket-holders who had paid for their seats. Reports are not yet to hand of the speech itself. Another interesting item is that when Major Douglas's boat left for New Zealand it was escorted out of the harbour by enthusiasts in aeroplanes.

The Food Council.

The *People* (March 11) is scoffing at the impotence of the Food Council and the Consumers' Committee. "Food Ramp Drive Ends in Fiasco" is its headline. Recent rises in the price of bacon, meat, milk, and other articles have resulted in several meetings of these bodies, with the only result that they have "discovered themselves powerless to check the ramp." They have no power to fix prices, and, if they had, they have no power to compel people to produce. Some members are so disgusted that they are threatening to resign. The *People* ascribes the rises to Mr. Walter Elliot's import-restrictions, and points out that these are to be extended in the near future. Quite so; his policy has the same effect as did the German submarine attacks on our commerce during the war. Of course, that war never stopped—the Versailles Treaty-mongers, who were supposed to be producing a new film of history, made no change in the old one except to cut out the sound-effects. No noise—therefore Peace!

The impotence of the Food Council to fix prices is a reflection of the impotence of Parliament to interfere with credit-policy. It is obvious to all that if Parliament controlled credit it could decide the rate at which new loan-credit should be issued. But it is not obvious, though equally true and important, that if Parliament controlled prices it could decide the rate at which outstanding loan-credit should be retired. Both these powers of decision are claimed as the exclusive prerogatives of the bankers, and implicitly recognised as such by Ministers of the Crown. The Food Council might just as well resign *en bloc*—and so, too, might the Commons and Peers. The bankers are running the country.

Japanese Monetary Policy.

Correspondence has recently passed between a certain member of Parliament and the Department of Overseas Trade on the question of whether there is any evidence of Japan's subsidising exports with non-repayable loans. The Department's answer is that this is not likely to be taking place on any considerable scale, if at all. It refers to its Report on Economic Conditions in Japan up to December 31, 1932, prepared by Mr. G. B. Sanson, C.M.G., Commercial Counsellor to His Majesty's Embassy at Tokyo, and Mr. D. W. Kermod, Acting Commercial Secretary to the Embassy, from which it would appear that the figure of subsidies to Japanese industries is in the neighbourhood of £1 million per annum, of which £1 million goes to shipping. (This Report was published by H.M. Stationery Office and costs 3s. 6d.)

We should not expect the fact and measure of Japanese subsidies to be verifiable by British officials if the Japanese Government wished to keep them secret. And even if they could be so verified it is morally certain that the information would not appear in a Report purchasable by the public if the Bank of England considered it inadvisable, and might not be conveyed even to the officials of the Department of Overseas Trade. In short, there could be effective censorship at both ends. It is quite easy if the bankers and interests want it. For example, take the Exchange Equalisation Fund: who knows what is being done with it? We do not suppose that Mr. Norman is giving subsidies away; our point is that if he chose to there would be nothing to stop him.

and nobody but himself and his chosen confidants who could know about it. Just as words can conceal thoughts, so can figures conceal facts.

As regards the size of subsidies, it should be remembered that the faster Japan picks up new overseas trade the smaller the subsidy required to keep it, owing to the increasing ratio of turnover to overhead charges. The best disproof, if there be one, of the alleged recourse by Japan to subsidies would be to show that British manufacturers could compete without subsidies provided they could use identical plant and pay identical wages and salaries. For instance, take men's pants at 7d. per pair c.i.f. Could we make similar pants to put down at the same figure c.i.f. Japan simply by improved process and cut wages?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

GREENSHIRTS AND THE HUNGER MARCH DEMONSTRATION.

Sir,—I have read the report in THE NEW AGE for March 8, of the Greenshirts' participation in the Hyde Park Demonstration on February 25 with much interest.

I should like to congratulate them on their excellent march discipline, which was in very marked contrast to the general sloppiness of the demonstrators, commented upon by Mr. Hargrave. There is, however, one point of criticism I should like to make regarding the slogan, "Would a maggot starve because the apple was too big?"

Prior to this demonstration, I was of the opinion that the slogan was quite a good one; but, having listened to a number of comments by bystanders, in the park on the 25th, I am convinced that it is too clever, and fails to get home on the average man: he only sniggers and wonders what it means! It would seem that the slogan should be preceded by some such trite statement as "Poverty in the midst of Plenty" if it is to "get across." M. J. W.

"DUAL CREDIT DISTRIBUTION."

Sir,—I have read articles and letters by "Accountant" which have appeared in recent issues of THE NEW AGE with much interest and appreciation, but his article under the above heading in the issue of March 8 makes me wonder if he has ever heard of the analysis of Major Douglas on which the Social Credit proposals are based.

The analysis demonstrates a shortage of purchasing power in the hands of consumers, the proposals provide for that shortage to be made good, thus enabling consumers to buy the goods available. The additional credit created for this purpose will be retired in exactly the same way as existing producer credits reaching the hands of consumers through wages, etc., are retired—i.e., through the purchase of goods for consumption.

There is no need for taxation to retire consumption credits, the cause of their issue is the provision for their retirement. It must be recognised that the beneficial ownership of credit is vested in the community, which is the basis of all credit creation; but this does not imply nationalisation of the banks, which is an administrative and not a technical question.—Yours faithfully, A. T. 64.

"THE MODERN SCOT."

Sir,—There is one thing that "A Free Scot" might have learned from his forbears, and that is that only open fighting is honourable, and that is that to snipe your enemy from behind on the safe hedge of anonymity is an act of cowardice. But, on the other hand, of course, one can readily understand his reluctance to append his name to such a letter as his.

If one were to hazard a guess as to the identity of this free, but discreetly anonymous Scot, one would be tempted to put him down as the son of a Protestant clergyman or a schoolmaster, according to Nietzsche's dictum that such people may be recognised by "the naive confidence with which they assume their case to be already proved when once they have stated it stoutly and with warmth."

But what can my nameless critic mean by saying that the Lowlander is the inheritor of a totally different language from the English? Presumably he must be like the Lowlander to whom a Highlander once said, "She will be one of those people who will be calling themselves Scots, and cannot speak to Gaelic, and will be calling themselves English, and cannot speak that dirty language either." It is perhaps typical of the mentality of the author that he should try to confuse the question of literary criticism by turning it into a political issue; but no doubt also this Douglas over my head. I am properly frightened, and cling in terror to the consolation my nurse used to hold out to

"Wheesh't ye, wheesh't ye, dinna fret ye,
The Black Douglas'll no get ye."

I am naturally as proud as every Scot ought to be to share the same nationality with Major Douglas, but I have yet to learn that he has written his illuminating works in "braided Scots."

This Wee Free Scot also accuses me of being able to see nothing in Burns but sentiment. How little he understands. What I said was that Mr. C. M. Grieve had attacked the traditional sentimental halo which has been woven round the head of Burns. I agree with him that this halo exists, but objected to the manner of his attack. By the by, "A Free Scot's" passing shot is also a miss. The fact that Mr. Grieve's verses have been translated into French proves nothing but that there are literary coteries, of varying value, in other countries than Scotland, and that the members of such groups tend to quote one another.

"In short, what does he pretend to know of the country of his forbears?" I admit the reticent gentleman has me there. My knowledge of the matter is so vast that it cannot be expressed "in short."—Yours, in amusement,

NEIL MCEACHRAN MONTGOMERY.

GREEN SHIRTS AND CREDIT TECHNIQUE.

Sir,—In the article on "Dual Credit-Distribution" by "Accountant" (New AGE, March 8) we notice the following statement:—

"Quite recently the Green Shirts were jockeyed into attaching themselves to the principle that in a Social Credit State producer credit would continue to be granted by the banks, leaving the National Credit Office to issue consumer credits."

Reference to my letter (New AGE, February 8) will show that so far from being "jockeyed" into any such position, it was exactly that position that we did not, and do not, take up.

Mr. Rands, in his letter (New AGE, February 15) wrote:—

"I am relieved to see that Mr. John Hargrave agrees that in a Social Credit State the banks could and should continue to grant Producer credit, provided the power of credit issue and withdrawal is vested in a National Credit Authority."

Many Social creditors will be relieved to know that there is general agreement on this important point, for the statement that a National Credit Office would, in a Social Credit State, take the place of banks in granting loans to manufacturers has caused much unnecessary opposition.

My letter (February 8) showed that I had not agreed to anything of the sort, but when a proposition has been clearly stated once there ought to be no need to state it again. My reply to the whole question was summed up in the following words:—

"We have no desire to interfere with the function of the banks as a National Book-Keeping Organisation, such as they would automatically become in a Social Credit State, but the power of credit issue and withdrawal could not be exercised as at present."

The banking system as we know it to-day does not function as a National Book-Keeping Organisation, but, if it did (as it would in a Social Credit State) there would obviously be not only no reason why the banks should not operate as part of the necessary mechanism of Social Credit, but very good reasons why they should.

Social Credit makes provision for what may be called "dual credit-distribution" (i) for Production, (ii) for Consumption, but I think it must be clear that there could be no dual credit power. There could be but one Credit Power within the community, and that would be the National Credit Authority, or National Credit Office.

To make sure that no further misunderstanding of our position in this matter is possible, we wish to point out that under a Social Credit regime as we envisage it, the banks will not have the power to "grant" anything to anyone. They will do their proper work as the book-keepers of the Nation's Production and Consumption, and not one iota of the power to "grant" or to "withhold" the National Credit will remain to the bankers. My letter of February 8 made this perfectly clear.

A Dual Credit-Control, (i) by the bankers, and (ii) by the National Credit Authority, would be absolutely impossible. We are not concerned with the fact that our point of view may create "opposition"—necessary or unnecessary, within or outside of the Social Credit movement. We are concerned only with what is possible and what is not in order to bring about the complete liquidation of the Credit Monopoly, and to establish the Social Credit State.

JOHN HARGRAVE.

Green Shirt Headquarters.

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