

# THE NEW AGE

INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER."

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE AND ART

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## NOTES OF THE WEEK.

### The European Tangle.

(MARCH 9-12.)

Hitler's "symbolic occupation" of the demilitarised Rhineland zone took place on March 7. At the moment of writing (March 12) France is demanding Hitler's symbolic evacuation of that zone, failing which she wants the League to apply sanctions to Germany in the form of an economic blockade. If not, she may feel compelled to leave the League and rely on her soldiers and diplomats to guarantee her security. In the meantime she has Britain's and Belgium's guarantees to join her as allies if Germany commits an act of war against her.

\* \* \*

Now it is possible to hold two opposite points of view as to the significance of this quickly-moving spectacle. It may be considered as disclosing a general recognition by statesmen that another great war is inevitable and imminent; or it may be interpreted as a majestic ramp to mislead and muddle the peoples of Europe. Evidence in support of the first view is too plentiful to need citation or discussion. But precisely because it is so plentiful, because there is so little attempt on the part of responsible statesmen to conceal from their respective peoples the apparently touch-and-go nature of the situation, it is possible to take the whole body of this evidence and ask whether it is being obtruded on the public for other reasons than to warn them of, and prepare them for, battle. It is an old tradition that the more grave the issues were, and the more delicate the diplomatic exchanges arising therefrom, the less should be said about them to the people. To advertise a crisis was to accentuate it. To-day that view seems to have been reversed. To advertise it is to resolve it. The new view, to be credible, must depend on the postulate that the so-called opinion of the public is a dynamic factor in a sudden emergency needing lightning treatment. It obviously is not. The voice of the people may be the

voice of God, but the minds of the people, like the mills of God, grind exceedingly slowly. To-day, Governments are less responsive to popular feeling than ever before in history, and by this token they have become less dependent on it. For the same reason this opinion is less helpful to them. You cannot impose on the people, year in and year out, an outlook manufactured by experts, and then expect the masses who take that outlook to be able to help the experts when they are stumped. Hitler is a dangerous man, exclaims Sir Austen Chamberlain in the hearing of the public. Well, let's all hold our hands up and cry "agreed, agreed"; what about it? Nothing but applaud what the experts do about it. We might, of course, go and smash the windows of the German Embassy, thus registering our symbolic preoccupation with Hitler's symbolic occupation—but that wouldn't help our experts; in fact, they would tell us it hindered them.

(MARCH 13.)

The Locarno-Treaty signatories have unanimously found Germany's symbolic occupation of Rhineland to constitute a violation of that Treaty. This judgment has no significance other than that it shows these signatories to be joint-plaintiffs seeking judgment before the Council of the League of Nations. At the moment the Council have not met. Meanwhile Mr. Eden has invited Hitler to "make a contribution" to the amicable solution of the problem, but Hitler has shown an uncompromising attitude, declaring that German soldiers won't yield what they hold—that they are strong enough to resist invasion—and that if Germany fails to get a just settlement by negotiation she will seek the remedy of "honourable isolation." Certain unofficial wiseacres (or humorists) had suggested that perhaps France would be mollified by a symbolic reduction in the number of German troops in the re-militarised zone (variously estimated as 30,000, 90,000 and a few guesses in between). Let Hitler, they said in effect, march a few thousand men back again, thus implementing the idea of symbolic evacuation, and then perhaps

France will overlook the remaining unfavourable balance of symbolism and agree to negotiate. But France is furious, and won't tolerate the presence of a single German soldier on the ground consecrated to peace by the Versailles and Locarno Treaties. She, like Germany, threatens to leave the League if she does not get satisfaction. Hitler's case is that France had already violated the Treaties by forming certain alliances of a military character. So the League Council is faced with the problem of trying a case in which both parties appear as aggressors and victims of aggression at one and the same time if their stories are to be believed.

So much for the situation at this moment. While waiting to record developments in the manoeuvring of official political diplomats let us spare a glance at that of unofficial financial super-diplomats. And a glance will suffice, for there is so little to be seen. However that little makes up in its significance more than what it lacks in size. Just as the announcement of Hitler's coup appeared on the front pages of the Press generally there appeared in one newspaper an inconspicuous paragraph relating that Dr. Schacht, the President of the Reichsbank, had attended a meeting of the Bank for International Settlements, where he met his "colleagues." These would, of course, be the Governors or other representatives of the chief European central banks. What they said was not reported (nor could be) but the writer indulged in the speculation (possibly inspired) that Dr. Schacht was pretty thoroughly examined by his colleagues as to what was behind Hitler's contemplated coup (for it must be remembered that this meeting took place before Hitler had committed himself to the official announcement of it).

One is left to guess whether the Basle bankers liked it, disliked it, or were neutral to it; also whether they had had short or long notice that it was coming off. The only (but perhaps most relevant) evidence lies in the fact that the reactions in the London Money Market and Stock Market were not of a nature suggestive of nervous intervention by the Bank of England. The financial Press remarked at the time that movements in markings were very slight in relation to the apparent extremity of European tensions. This might be explained on the theory that the Bank of England (and the other central banks) had had long notice of the event and were able to make preparations slowly. If so, these preparations could have taken the form of developing plans calculated to delay the event (maybe to prevent it) and to render it innocuous from their point of view if adopted and announced.

We submit these governing propositions:

- (1) The Basle banks don't want war.
  - (2) But given that war can be prevented by any acts within their power (and we know that the act of introducing Social Credit is within their power) it suits their game to keep the peoples of Europe in a state of continuous apprehension of immediate war and therefore a deep absorption in international politics, to the exclusion of domestic politics.
- Students of Social Credit know that war between nations is an extension of wars within nations. The cause of quarrels at home is the cause of quarrels abroad. That common cause is the Flaw in the Price System. Now, however difficult it may be for people

at home to identify their internal disputes with this cause, it is infinitely more difficult for them to relate their external disputes with it. And if they fear war, they will not even think of looking at home for any cause at all—particularly a mechanical and undramatic factor as is the cost-income disparity. So if the bankers can keep peoples in a perpetual condition of expecting "war to-morrow" their secret will be guarded automatically and perpetually.

#### War and the Church.

Nor does our prompting them do any good. In 1922 the League of National Awakening was formed by Mr. R. L. Pearson for the precise purpose of conducting a crusade among the churches (of all denominations) based on the Social-Credit Analysis of the root causes of war. The League's literature was designed to prove the inevitability of another war if the economic system persisted under the governance and principles of orthodox finance. It was well argued and strikingly presented. Mr. Pearson hoped that leaders of the churches would be persuaded to give a lead to Christian people in general to take up the study of Social Credit. The result was negative, and the League closed down, leaving himself, and friends who assisted him financially, out of pocket by something like £400—a serious sacrifice at that early stage in the history of the Movement. There is no need to discuss at length why the experiment failed; the fact that it did fail is the point that matters here. Christian leaders and followers were not interested in hearing about any causes of war except those of a moral order. Presumably, despite the slump in trade, the prospects of renewed economic rivalry and resultant war seemed too remote in time for the ordinary citizen to get busy about averting the catastrophe. Needless to say this attitude of feeling suited the interests of the Money Power who desired everyone to believe that the way to a prosperous peace was fundamentally a matter of turning "bad" people into "good" people. This was the prime function of the Church—as Mr. Baldwin implicitly reminded the late Archbishop of Canterbury in 1926 when the General ventured to submit a scheme for resolving the Strike involving what might be called a "symbolic renewal" of the miners' wage-subsidy, the withdrawal of which had precipitated the trouble. "Mind your own business" was Baldwin's reply to the official repository of the Christian conscience: "Stick to your job and convert the miners and trade-unionists generally from impatient turbulence to peaceful submissiveness." And the Money Power cried: Amen. Not long afterwards, when the late Archbishop died, it will be remembered that part of the ritual of induction cementing the assumption of office by the present Primate was his tête-à-tête voyage to the Mediterranean as guest of Mr. Pierpont Morgan on board the "Corsair."

#### The Primate and Social Credit.

Some years afterwards we learned that the Primate, in a discussion with a delegation of prominent Churchmen who were sympathetic to the Social Credit objective, and were persuading him to give it his blessing (thus carrying on the good work that the League of National Awakening had to abandon) he was inclined to agree that this objective was morally compatible with Christian ideology, but held back on the ground that he was not convinced that it could be reached by the technical methods embodied in the Social Credit Proposals. "I would gladly bless them if I could be

certain that they would work," was the substance of the impression that his words left on the deputation. We vividly remember the occasion of our learning this, because it was communicated to us by someone associated with the deputation to enforce a reproach against us for having published comments (on some matter or other) calculated to prejudice the Primate against Social Credit and to hamper the work of those who were trying to win him over.

#### Blinkers on Investigation.

This means of enforcement was not completely convincing to us, because we suspected (as we still do) that persons of high official status—whether in the Church or any other organised hierarchy of influence on the public mind—do not trust themselves to an independent examination of the evidence relating to the feasibility of the Social Credit Proposals, and, if they look into the matter at all, seek advice from their opposite numbers in the orthodox financial field of function on how to assess the cogency and relevance of the evidence. Inevitably they bring to the task minds governed by the axiomatic premises on which their advisers tell them the present system is founded and with which any modification in the system should be consistent if the safety of the State is not to be jeopardised. They place themselves in the position of a jury listening to the direction of a judge before retiring to consider their verdict. In the courts of law the function of the judge is to say what evidence is relevant, and the function of the jury to say to what extent the admitted evidence is cogent. But in such a case as an inquiry into a matter of the nature of Social Credit, it is an arguable question whether the above allocation of function would not need to be reversed—not to speak of the question whether the "jury" should not assume both. We will not elaborate this now: we mention it here to indicate the factors which fetter the initiative of juries (we do not say wrongly so) in courts of law. Then again, in complicated cases, juries are directed to consider, not a general verdict, but a series of answers, "yes" or "no," to a series of specific questions. Very often, after doing so, they do not know what their general verdict is—which way it has gone—until the judge, barristers, and others have discussed "points of law" and elucidated the meaning of the yes-no complex of opinions for the purpose of arriving at a correct basis of judgment. So now, we hope, we have made clear the subtlety and potency of the disturbing influences which can supervene on any inquiry into the technical feasibility of the Social Credit Proposals so long as the inquirers seek initial rulings from orthodox financial authorities as to the general design of the inquiry—in familiar terms, as to the standing orders or frame of reference.

It is impossible to resist the conclusion, in the case of the Archbishop of Canterbury, that a good deal of his hesitancy arose from the "guidance" thrust upon him by Mr. Pierpont Morgan during that celebrated voyage. In fact the very words he used in replying to the deputation might well have been Mr. Morgan's words to him: we may imagine them to have been as follows: My dear friend, I, as a banker, am anxious to bless the Social Credit objective as you must be as a Churchman—but I cannot, no I cannot, see how it can be attained by such a thing as mechanical adjustments in the credit system, let alone the unprecedented nature of the

particular adjustments provided in the Social Credit Proposals."

#### The Primate's Dilemma.

Note particularly that no disrespect is implied in this diagnosis. The Archbishop of Canterbury would have been obliged to think very carefully in any case about the implications and consequences of his publicly blessing the Social Credit technique along with the objective. For to the extent that his gesture were noted and reflected upon, to that extent would it seem to lead to the practical conclusion that the essential function of the Church could be suspended—that the Christian ideal of peace on earth and good will among men could be more reasonably hoped for, and more quickly realised through secular education and activity than through spiritual teaching and edification. In that event there could be a part of the Church's traditional function which could coincide with and potentise the drive for emancipation along the secular path; but it would impose on the Church the duty of prophesying against the powerful human agencies who are working (and confessedly so at this moment) to bar the entry of the people into the Promised Land. The Church could not declare of Social Credit: "This is the Way, the Truth and the Life," without pronouncing these three inseparable aspects of Social Credit science and philosophy to be coequal Persons in a Holy Trinity symbolising the process, purpose and promise of the world's attainment to happiness, peace and righteousness.

#### The Way, the Truth and the Life.

Such is the logical dilemma which would present itself. The "Truth" might be safely proclaimed in relation to the "Life," but to proclaim the "Way"—("Ah, if only I could be convinced that this was the key which would turn the lock of the Door.") That is the obstacle. The bankers stand like dark angels with flaming torches at the entrance, forbidding the return of the sons of Adam and daughters of Eve into that Paradise which, but for those guards, would be so easily regained.

To re-state the argument in colloquial terms, it is impossible to say that Social Credit is the way without saying that the bankers stand in the way. Conversely there would be no point in the Church's prophesying against the bankers except on the ground that the way they were prohibiting was a way through as well as a right of way. So the final conclusion of what we have been saying is that unless the Church gives her blessing completely and unreservedly to Social Credit in all its three aspects, she is not blessing it at all; she is merely blessing the unfulfilled aspirations of people after things without saying whether they are attainable.

#### Ecclesiastical Strategy.

It will be important to keep this in mind, because now that the stone neglected of the Church builders in 1922 is beginning to be recognised in 1936 as destined to be the head of the corner, we may expect all the churches to recognise this, yet without directly acknowledging it. The leaders of Christendom, who have for these years been watching from the back of the footwalk, and between the heads of jeering sightseers, the forming of the Social Credit procession, are now hearing the jeers die down and cheers spring up, and find more space to peep through because numbers of sightseers are joining the procession and providing the spectacle

instead of watching it. In course of time, when the swirl of the procession washes more sightseers off the edge of the kerbstone, these leaders will be able to move through the sparse crowd along the back of the sidewalk until they get level with the head of the procession. Then there will come a day when banners will fly; and these leaders will say, each to the others: "Brethren, I feel a call from God to lead this procession. We will lead it for Truth and Life—but another way." Whether they succeed in doing so will depend upon who is heading the procession before they emerge from the footwalk. If these are people who know where they want to go and the best way to get there, they will tell the late arrivals to fall in at the rear. But if by long-distance visionaries they will welcome the new leaders; and then the processionists will suddenly find themselves jammed up a side-street so tightly that no-one can fall out to see what is happening in front. If, however, one of them happened to stick up a portable periscope he would see that the new leaders had come up to some newer leaders still—probably a detachment belonging to the "Pied Pipers" of Hambro Brothers or of some other cosmopolitan financial institution. But, since periscopes are not available in this special sense, nobody would know of the change.

#### Churchmen and Dividends.

It is the best wisdom to expect no effective assistance from large organised institutions, whether religious or secular, until their assistance is superfluous. We have no objection to their benevolent neutrality, which is the most they lend, because since they get more good from their distant association with the Movement than the Movement gets from them, we don't have to enter into any obligations to them. This leads to consideration of the Dean of Canterbury's association with the Movement. He is officially connected with the Church of England on the one hand, and also officially connected with the Social Credit Secretariat on the other. He is a director in both, in the sense that he is invested with directive authority in both. It may be taken for granted that this dual rôle has the concurrence of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Now we understand (we think we read it in the organ of the Secretariat) that the Primate has subscribed to the doctrine that the business of the electorate is to demand results. He may have gone further, and approved the demand for Dividends—perhaps with the added proviso "without taxation." We do not know. At any rate, he must be considered as being content that the Dean is identifying himself with the full doctrine. Now the proviso against taxation, though it does not describe a method of accounting the issued Dividend indicates that *some* ways are barred. An optimistic inference from this is that the Archbishop has progressed in his study of the technique of Social Credit since he confessed his uncertainty to the deputation we have spoken of. In fact, for all one can know, he may have become convinced of the soundness of the full authentic Social Credit proposals. Anyhow, what appears to be a reliable theory is that he has sufficient confidence to grant the Dean a dispensation, so to speak, to combine his duty to the Church with his duty to the Secretariat. Further, he allowed him leave of absence to undertake his tour in the United States and Canada, thus advertising the fact of his activities in the world's Press.

Now, when the Dean was there we have it on the testimony of a Mr. Dunningham, who accompanied him

as private secretary, that his addresses were received with enthusiasm by the most responsible and highly-placed people—senators, congressmen, bankers, statesmen, press-magnates, and so on. (This was in an address to the London Social Credit Club a month or two ago.) This is not surprising to those of us who have heard him speak. And it is less surprising still when we add the account by Mr. Campbell, of Alberta, that the Dean spoke acceptably, but was considered too elementary. This must mean that his remarks were confined to those aspects of Social Credit which appealed to the conscience and stirred the emotions, but did not satisfy the intellectual curiosity to hear how it was to be done. The "truth" and the "life" were in his speeches, but not the "way."

This was correct strategy from the point of view of Major Douglas, the Secretariat, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and, last but not least, Mr. Pierpont Morgan. We have shown reasons why the last-named gentleman would doubtless approve and even encourage the expounding of Social Credit as far as the Dean took it. In fact many of our readers who heard Mr. Dunningham's enthusiastic description of the Dean's progress from triumph to triumph even among "millionaires" may concede the possibility that they were there because Mr. Morgan persuaded them to go. Anyhow, it is a tenable hypothesis, and one which, for certain reasons, we are entertaining. Being ourselves alleged agents of the "Hidden Hand" we may be suffering from delusions, so readers must be left to form their own judgments. Note that it is not an *acceptable* hypothesis to us, for if sustained it would weaken the optimism which inspires our hope in the early achievement of the Social Credit objective, a hope derived from the calculation that there is as much uncertainty and division of counsels among the High Financiers on how to hold their position as there is on our side on how to take it. We would prefer to believe that the Dean's successes were won in the teeth of Mr. Morgan's disapproval; for the proof of the real success of any line of Social Credit action would be the inability of hostile bankers to interfere with it. We have frequently said that because there is an inherent flaw in the technique which is geared up to their policy of action, it serves the true Social Credit purpose equally well to push behind it or obstruct it. The same observation is true the other way round, namely, that if we permit a flaw in our policy of action it would suit the bankers as well to push behind it as to attack it—perhaps better, since they are becoming suspected as spoilers.

This consideration leads point to our attitude on actionist policy, which is that in no circumstances should the technical principles which we all agree are essential to a sound Dividend system be left out of sight by advocates of the Dividend. If not always explained they should be recited, named, or alluded to in every speech and pamphlet on any theme for any audience. A few years ago we suggested a cryptogram: "I M.E. 295" as registering the user's knowledge of the existence of Major Douglas's restatement and elucidation of those principles on page 295 of the first volume of the Macmillan Evidence. That is by the way. As objectors urge, this may entangle us in unprofitable technical arguments at times, but we would prefer that being obliged to puzzle out what influential allies push behind the Movement were doing it for. Alternative

systems to Major Douglas's are conceivable; but we don't know what they are. What we do know is that the system we have studied and taught is *adequate to the purpose*. Any person claiming to belong to any organisation inside the Social Credit Movement should be required to affirm, or should be clearly committed to the affirmation, of his belief in that truth. Others who cannot should be enrolled in organisations which are unconnected with Major Douglas's name and do not claim to be "Social Credit" organisations.

#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

##### "RABELAIS."

Dear Sir,—I am a regular reader of THE NEW AGE, and have always valued it. I confess, however, that I was shocked at the opening paragraph on Page 151 of the current issue which, in an "Impression" of the Central Hall meeting, attributes to me words I never uttered, and imputes to me a joke which had I made it would have been in abominable taste. Let me say emphatically that the words attributed to me were never uttered by me, and the meaning imputed never for a moment intended.

Reference is made to "Razzle." I do not know what, or who, is "Razzle."—I have never heard of the person, book, or thing—and, as for any Rabelaisian meaning in my reference to the Sir Oswald Mosley story, nothing could have been further from my mind, and I deeply regret that anyone could have read a nasty meaning into my words. I never said "Sir Oswald, you may leave the room." I said, "Sir Oswald, you may go," as when I say to a child at my table, "Yes, you may get down"; or when I say to a boy who has finished his recitation and done his work, "Yes, you may go now." I gather that your correspondent read some other meaning into the words, which would, I suggest, only occur to a rather dirty little schoolboy mind. I assumed, and I believe rightly, that I was talking to a decent audience.

Yours truly,

HEWLETT JOHNSON.

The Deanery, Canterbury.  
March 12, 1936.

[We deeply regret that our correspondent's comment has caused offence to the Dean of Canterbury, and gladly give publicity to his disclaimer of having had any notion that the construction referred to could be placed on his remarks. Nevertheless, he will, on inquiry and reflection, see that no other possible construction could be placed on the allusion by the audience. The original joke, precisely because it was vulgar, was approved and disseminated as a telling jibe at the Fascist salute, and it indicated the popular antipathy in this country to despotic policies, and a desire to ridicule them.—ED.]

##### SELLING PARTIES.

Dear Sir,—I am as highly amused by my promotion to the position of vendor of political parties, as stated in your report of the Central Hall meeting, as the members of the chosen party will be!

Since Major Douglas is so very anxious to keep his proposals from the criticism of the platform, but wishes to use the machinery of any of the traditional parties, the suggestion of making a contribution to their funds will not seem unreasonable to reasonable people.

To construe such a suggestion into an offer of barter, bears little relationship to the facts of the interview as his "Banker hunt" bears to the economic life of this country.

Yours faithfully,

T. H. NICHOLLS.

10, York Road, Erdington, Birmingham.  
March 12, 1936.

##### NOTICE.

All communications requiring the Editor's attention should be addressed direct to him as follows:  
Mr. Arthur Brenton, 20, Rectory Road, Barnes, S.W.13.

#### Land Lore.

In the December number of the Journal of the Ministry of Agriculture (6d. through any bookseller) there appeared a description of the activities of the various Marketing Boards of recent history. In addition there are two pages of photographs of loaves produced in the bread-making contests under the auspices of the National Bakery School from English (Yeoman) Straights milled from the 1935 crop. It may be remembered we spoke at length some time ago about the necessity that if we are to have a virile population it must be fed on our native food, particularly starting with the wheaten loaf. The white flour milled from overseas wheat is not a food at all, wheat grown in short, hot, dry summers on an iodine-free soil has no food value compared to our wheat slowly matured from plants that have well tillered and "laid their ears down." We also remarked that the idiotic legislation fining bakers for not putting enough water in their bread forced them, against their own better sense, into using overseas flour that soaked up water galore while the English article refused, except to a limited extent. Even in the Journal it is reported that the 1935 crop did not "possess the same ability to carry the water absorption of the past years." Quite so, but a practical farmer will tell you that denotes a higher food value. Again "there was a tendency to run after moulding." Of course that, along with the water shortage, showed a better content of gluten.

It is not only in those particulars that we find ourselves in divergence with some of the writers in the Journal. All the various bodies at present interfering with our farming economics have good points intermingled with their bad ones, and in this connection the Wheat Commission stands out as one that really strives its very utmost to do good, but fails to score a bull. We must remember that the farms of England have gradually been going derelict, thus losing millions of tons of soil, and to genuinely farm land wheat makes in most cases an all important crop. It is always bad policy to buy on a farm or sell off a farm such an asset as wheat straw which is valueless to sell, but costs carting to buy. As our Journal remarks, the cattle rush to the freshly threshed wheat straw, but refuse all stale stuff—one of the thousands of facts science will never explain, and what good will it be if it did? The farm hand knows and that is enough. The Wheat Commission gives a bounty on wheat of "millable quality." All the farmer has to do then is to sell his wheat to the corn merchant and provided it is a level sample, nice and clean, that certificate is duly issued. But mark this, the system applies to the soft, white wheat as well as to the hard wheat, and the millers hate the white wheat, they will not pay the price, for one thing it gives a miserable bran almost unsealable at 30s. a ton against £6 9s. per ton for the bran of hard wheat. This white wheat will produce two quarters more per acre than its superior brother, the hard wheat, and both attract the bounty to make up the price to the 45s. per quarter. The farmers are now being forced, against their better judgment too, in producing a totally inferior article. Now we are back to where we started, the bread-making contest was carried through on hard wheat, no one in their right senses could possibly have suggested a white wheat for a bread contest. The unpleasant fact remains, the Wheat Commission have not yet attracted the man of knowledge, it is just possible



## The Films.

**"Crime et Châtiment."** Directed by Pierre Chenal. Academy.

This is at least the third screen adaptation of Dostoevsky's masterpiece. Robert Wiene, who made the classic "Cabinet of Dr. Caligari," was responsible about ten years ago for a silent version under the name of "Raskolnikov," and Edward Arnold has lately appeared in an American rendering. Insofar as it is possible to bring to the cinema the atmosphere of the original, and to compress an immense canvas within ninety minutes of celluloid, Pierre Chenal has done it admirably and convincingly. His success is largely due to the fact that he has kept to the essentials of the story, and has concentrated on the murder of Alena and her sister and the subsequent duel between Raskolnikov and Porphyrius, instead of diffusing so much interest over the Marmeladovs, Sonia, Looshin, and other characters, as is the case in Gaston Baty's excellent stage production. Pierre Blanchard's Raskolnikov is masterly, but Harry Bau's impersonation of the examining magistrate suffers somewhat to my mind through his not looking the part.

**"Ah! Wilderness."** Directed by Clarence Brown. **"The Last of the Pagans."** Produced by Philip Goldstone. Empire.

The first of these pictures is one of the most completely satisfying and thoroughly charming films I have seen for many months. Strung on the framework of the slightest of stories are humour, pathos, and humanity, reinforced by wholly admirable acting, dialogue, direction, and editing. Only Hollywood can make this type of picture; it does not do so very often, but they are all the more welcome when they do arrive. Incidentally, "Ah! Wilderness" gives Lionel Barrymore his most convincing role since "A Free Soul," and its success in recapturing the small town atmosphere of a generation ago lends it definite value as a contribution to Americana. "The Last of the Pagans" derives synthetically from both "Mala the Magnificent" and "White Shadows in the South Seas." As melodrama it is good, and in essence it is frankly and cynically dishonest. We are given something of a glimpse of the brutal and shameless exploitation of primitive peoples, and of the extent to which they are forced into slavery under the legalised presence of a system of indentured labour, and then the problem is shirked through the medium of a conventional happy ending in a fashion reminiscent of "Oil for the Lamps of China" and "Black Fury." It is such films as these that are responsible for so much of the contention that the commercial cinema is being used for purposes of anti-social propaganda.

**"Strike Me Pink."** Directed by Norman Taurog. Pavilion.

Eddie Cantor began by being a comedian, then became a national institution, and is now an American industry as mechanised as the mass production of Ford cars. He makes one picture a year, and his latest is so far from living up to its claim of being "the greatest comedy of this or any other year" that it is amusing only in spots, and singularly unfunny for much of its length. "Strike Me Pink" is, in fact, one of those characteristically synthetic productions built up with so much care as to lack all trace of spontaneity; one can hear the gag-men thinking out lines and situations that they fondly hope will arouse loud laughter. Cantor himself is not a screen comedian as are Chaplin, Laurel, and Hardy; his methods are essentially those of the variety theatre, and events happen round him instead of his controlling them. That is not the stuff of comedy, although it may be of knockabout farce, and this picture resolves itself into an imitation of Harold Lloyd relying on out-of-date effects. I am told that it cost £300,000 to make; which throws a vivid light on the fantastic economics of the cinema.

### Postscript.

Owing to my illegible handwriting, I was made to refer last week in reviewing "Plan for Cinema" to persons who "send out the most virulent propaganda" in films made solely to entertain. What I actually wrote was "sent out."

DAVID OCKHAM.

## The Theatre.

**Ibsen Season. Criterion.**

Miss Jean Forbes-Robertson is even more impressive than I expected in "Rosmersholm" and "Hedda Gabbler." The noble reserve of her Rebecca West, and the flourish with which, as Hedda, she flings all her cards on the table, are admirably contrasted. Both the plays are ably produced by Miss Irene Hentschel and, though Mr. John Laurie is not quite up to standard as Rosmer and Lovborg, the Company as a whole could hardly be bettered. It is some time since I have enjoyed two such satisfying evenings in the theatre. Mr. D. A. Clarke-Smith makes the Master Builder surprisingly attractive and humorous, without losing sight of the underlying brutality and madness of the man who can never forget the menace of the rising generation. Madame Lopokova's Hilda Wangel is a little better than her Nora led one to expect. Her English is as distressing as ever, and she still pokes her head forward in a way that reminds one of a hen rather than the bird of prey she compares herself to: but the crude intensity of her methods is not so damaging to this play as it was to "The Dolls House." There is one grave fault on an otherwise excellent production: Hilda's final scene is played on a verandah, and when she stands on a chair and cheers the Master Builder she is so masked by the roof that her dramatic gesture goes for nothing.

ANDREW BONELLA.

## Forthcoming Meetings.

The following public meetings will be held at the Blewcoat Room, Caxton-street, S.W.1:—

March 20, 7-45 p.m.—"Foreign Trade Under Social Credit," by Mr. Marshall Hattersley, author of "This Age of Plenty."

March 27, 7-45 p.m.—"The Immediate Future, as I See It—with a Spot of History," by Mr. Edgar J. Saxon.

### The Social Credit Party of Great Britain.

National Headquarters: 44, Little Britain, E.C.1.  
Saturday, March 21., 3-30 p.m. "Wanglings in Wall Street." A Unique Bazaar. Opener: Lady Clare Annesley.

## Wanglings in Wall Street.

The Social Credit Party of Great Britain (The Green Shirts) are holding a Bazaar at their National Headquarters, 44, Little Britain, London, E.C.1, on Saturday, March 21, which will be opened by Lady Clare Annesley, at 3-30 p.m. In addition to following the usual practice of only selling goods that everyone requires at very reasonable prices, there will be side shows, competitions, and performances by the Green Shirt Players. A unique feature during the afternoon will be "Wanglings in Wall Street." At stated periods during the afternoon and evening prices of goods on sale will fluctuate—regulation being based upon facts which it is beyond the power of any officials to control. Not only will there be an opportunity, therefore, of picking up bargains, but a special prize will be awarded to the first two persons who detect the basis of fluctuation. Come, and bring your friends! Try your hand at market rigging!

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