The chief difficulty in the way of arousing public interest in English foreign policy is that England has, so far as the public knows, no foreign policy. It is understood, of course, that by virtue of his office Sir Edward Grey must have a policy of his own, but neither he nor his colleagues in both parties have succeeded yet in making it plain to the public. The so-called policies of Defence and Peace are, strictly speaking, not policies at all. Defence and Peace are the natural aims of any policy, but they cannot be said to be policies in themselves. Everything depends upon the means which it is proposed to employ to accomplish these ends, the nature of the obstacles to their accomplishment, and the steps necessary to overcome those obstacles. Without an understanding of these broad particulars, it is impossible for the public to share in the day-to-day progress of the Government's foreign policy. At one moment we are told that things are very critical, though why and with whom we are left to guess in the completest dark. Suddenly the news is vouchsafed that we are out of the wood again and that England's relations with foreign Powers are bordering on those of love's young dream. The mystery created by this absurd secrecy, punctuated alternately by panic and panegyric, is far from stimulating a healthy curiosity or interest in the whole subject. On the contrary, public curiosity, too long baulked of satisfaction, ceases altogether; with these results, that we find ourselves called upon to pay gigantic sums for shipbuilding, and denounced at the same time as a people without manhood and patriotism.
rious peace. And war, we boldly say, could not be more costly. If Germany is really responsible for the despair of Anatole France and the Navy and Conscription campaign in England, it is time that our national foreign policy should be made its effective. It is largely by our own doing (if we do) in a perpetual state of panic when the enemy is known and we have the means of, at least, challenging him. Defeat could not be much worse than peace on the present terms. A national Foreign Minister would, we are certain, find, means, not merely of defending England against open attack, but of defending her against a standing menace. Until, at any rate, a Minister is found to say so and to mean it, no public interest need be expected to be taken in foreign policy.

It does not follow, however, that with a revived interest in foreign policy, conscription would or could or should be established in England; even in its mildest form of compulsory service in the Territorials. It is the first place, a foreign policy that was so obscure or dubious in character as to require conscription for its pursuit would almost certainly be a fallacious policy. Something, after all, must be credited to the communal instincts of a nation even by the individualist Ishmaels now in power, and such a something as should command most respect in the occasion appears most critical. Even a naturally bellicose nation like our own requires prodding to defend itself, the safe assumption, we may surely say, that is the nation divests no danger where the prodders profess to see it, and is probably right in its judgment. On the other hand, if the danger really exists and our rulers are frank about it, the demand for conscription would be drowned in the tumult of voluntary enlistment. Too late for effective training, it may be said. But the fault of that will lie and does lie in the Government, who refuse to take the nation into their confidence in respect of the contingencies of to-morrow. Even granted that conscription may conceivably be necessary, its possibility is still another matter. Many nations have first to be overcome, before mere mention of the Conscriptionist is seen to be an idle. The industrial system is more advanced in this country than in any of the Continental countries; and with its advance and the accompanying degradation of its wage-slaves, not only military arduous, but even its mass of passive resistance in the class of the proletariat increases in weight. As the slave becomes— and they are becoming—conscious of their status, this passive mass will in the end be effective. The Romans, realists in the true sense, recognised the fact by refusing to admit slaves even as volunteers into their army. By calling our wage-slaves citizens we do not alter their nature. They remain slaves and non-citizens, and are not realising it. We do not believe they could be conscripted under any circumstances. We are certain that it would not be worth while putting them into uniform.

The conclusion to be drawn, however, from these reflections is that England will be ruined by the selfishness of her common people, but by their deliberate degradation under the wage-system. In short, it is the wage-system that must be destroyed. That Continental nations have both the wage-system and a national army is, as we have said, no reply to our own case. We have had the wage-system longer, we have it more severely, we owe it otherwise to the rich. It is not possible that a class shall from the slum infant school to the university, Lord Haldane has said it, Mr. Lloyd George has said it, and now Mr. Pease has said it. In his speech to the National Union of Teachers at Sheffield, Mr. Pease explained the object of the forthcoming memorandum for discussion is to provide that “the best brains should come to the top.” Laudable ambition, and identical, its high-priest tells us, with the ambition of the life-force. But there is the same difficulty in Mr. Pease’s scheme as in Mr. Shaw’s. Who is to see that the best brains come to the top? A life-force without intelligence, a life-force, in fact, without a supreme and competent judge and director, is in danger. The Romans, realists in the true sense, recognised the fact by refusing to admit slaves even as volunteers into their army. By calling our wage-slaves citizens we do not alter their nature. They remain slaves and non-citizens, and are not realising it. We do not believe they could be conscripted under any circumstances. We are certain that it would not be worth while putting them into uniform.

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Great things, however, are to be done next Session or the Session after, or the Session after that, this time, and weather and electoral conditions and the Labour party permitting. Among them is the creation of an educational ladder from the slum infant school to the university. Lord Haldane has said it, Mr. Lloyd George has said it, and now Mr. Pease has said it. In his speech to the National Union of Teachers at Sheffield, Mr. Pease explained the object of the forthcoming memorandum for discussion is to provide that “the best brains should come to the top.” Laudable ambition, and identical, its high-priest tells us, with the ambition of the life-force. But there is the same difficulty in Mr. Pease’s scheme as in Mr. Shaw’s. Who is to see that the best brains come to the top? A life-force without intelligence, a life-force, in fact, without a supreme and competent judge and director, is in danger. The Romans, realists in the true sense, recognised the fact by refusing to admit slaves even as volunteers into their army. By calling our wage-slaves citizens we do not alter their nature. They remain slaves and non-citizens, and are not realising it. We do not believe they could be conscripted under any circumstances. We are certain that it would not be worth while putting them into uniform.

Beyond this fundamental objection to a great change in education before the future of society is decided, there are other objections to be brought against even the bare
outline of the plan offered by Mr. Pease. No mention was made by him of the real material impediment to the education of the poor, namely, the size of the classes in elementary schools. Large classes and education was made by him of the one real material impediment to the education of the poor, namely, the size of the schools of the poor to the dimensions of the classes in the schools of the rich. If that, as we are told by the Education Department, is impossible, then any revolution in education is impossible. The more the remaining circumstances are changed, the more education will remain unchanged. It would be quite possible now, with the existing conditions, to do for elementary education all that can be done under a national system (for we hate a "national" system of education), by merely reducing the size of classes without a single further provision of "steps" or increased attendance or even additional payment to the teachers. So great an obstacle to education is the large class! Not only was this genuine grievance of both teachers and taught unmentioned by Mr. Pease, but a grievance, not less, and not less damaging to education, though peculiar directly to teachers alone, was honoured by his silence. The elementary teachers of the 318 local education authorities suffer under an inspectorship as brutal as it is "efficient," and as wooden as it is tyrannical. The lay public cannot have a notion of the inspector, and its just cause, which these bulldogs of the rates exercise upon elementary teachers in their pursuit of Government grants. Imagine the worst skunks among wage-earners promoted to be foremen and our readers will perhaps form some sketch of the commonplace type of the local authorities inspectors. That they have been permitted to look a second time into a school they have once visited is a reflection on the spirit of elementary teachers; but that their continued existence, with all their powers reinforced, should be contemplated in vacuo by the Government is a proof that neither Lord Haldane nor Mr. Pease has even the ignorance necessary to an educational revolution; being unable so much as to learn.

We shall have, unfortunately, a great deal more to say on the subject as the programme of the Government develops, but one further remark we shall allow ourselves here. At the meeting at Sheffield, addressed by Mr. Pease—a man who has never seen a normal elementary teacher in his life—were probably some hundreds of teachers, any one, almost, of whom would make an infinitely better Minister of Elementary Education than Mr. Pease himself. The reflection is forced on any common-sense mind that the teachers above all are the people whom the Government has the duty to expect the plan, as well as its execution, of a system of national education. It is true, of course, that direction and execution are separate branches in servile industry; but in the professions (and teachers are fond of regarding their occupation as a profession) the two are united. The lay public does not lay down the rules of medical service, it submits to them. Similarly we submit to the rules as well as to the conduct of professional lawyers and dentists. Knowing our needs, they attempt to satisfy them. If we are writing the laws of their science and the rules of their art. If the National Union of Teachers realised its professional character, its treatment of the subject of education would be more truly professional in spirit. In place of Mr. Pease pompously addressing them on the machinery he thought necessary, the changes he was preparing to make, the curriculum, grants and classifications he was willing to allow, the National Union would have been addressing them that habit and the local authorities' inspectors have inflicted on elementary teachers a subservience, even in matters educational, which nothing we can say will remove. How, then, if they dare not call their own souls their own can they undertake the responsibility, as a Guild, for the souls of their pupils? It was perhaps the irony of a reporter that punctuated one remark only of Mr. Pease with the word "Cheers"; it was that the Government hoped (merely hoped) that the local authorities would see their way to—to-to—raise teachers' wages. Why call them salaries after that?...
Current Cant.

"As a Socialist, I am very strongly in favour of compulsory service. All income-tax returns and insurance cards should have a column for chest measurement and age; and all able-bodied persons should be obliged to give the country 35 years' service."—G. BERNARD SHAW, in the "Daily Chronicle."

"Rag-time for the King.—Epoch-making incident of State Ceremony.—For the first time in the history of England the King was played to the opening of Majesty's Parliament yesterday in rag-time. All the glitter and glory of State coaches and crystal windows and emblazoned panels were ushered in not to the splendid martial music of royal processions, but to the compelling strains of "Hitchy Koo." When the stately melody of "Waiting for the Robert E. Lee" banged out at a quarter to two, every British heart must have thrilled to the splendour of the moment, with its memories of historic Parliaments."—"Daily Express."

"The National Liberal Federation is to be congratulated on its unanimous resolution in favour of the abolition of the right to capture private property at sea."—"News and Leader."

"To a majority of the people to-day the opportunity for a later living is immediately superior than at any previous time."—EDWARD JACKSON, in the "Milgate Monthly."

"Women have always been interested and active in politics."—Sir C. HERBERT H. PARRY.

"Civilisation is now at the point where a gigantic wave of doubt is testing ideas and constitutions, and where faith is making ready a City of the Soul."—F. J. GOULS.

"The East-end did not fail to do its part, and nowhere could the King and Queen (with whom rode Mr. McKenna) have had a more stentorian and hearty welcome. The Voice of the People was, indeed, heard in the land."—"Evening News."

"A notable demonstration was held under the auspices of the National Uniting League for the Queen's Hall on Friday. One of the speakers was the Rev. R. J. Campbell, who revealed an intimate knowledge of practical issues, despite his withdrawal from the political sphere two years ago."—"Labour Leader."

"The Bishops were late. . . . The King was in crimson and white, and the crown upon his head flamed. . . . The Queen, too, in precious stuffs of white and gold, was all ablaze with the light of diamonds. . . ."—ARTHUR MACHEN.

"The majority of the 45,000,000 people in these islands enjoy a fairly high standard of comfort."—HAROLD FREEMAN, in the "Standard."

CURRENT SENSE.

"The most intellectual race in the world, with the possible exception of the Chinese, are ruled by Anglo-Indians, and the oldest empire in the world is going down before the most barbaric nation in Europe. India under England, Persia under Russia—such is the product of imperialism—such is the victory of body over soul."—"The Oxford Fortnightly."

Foreign Affairs.

By S. Verdis.

We need not worry ourselves unnecessarily over the fall of the French Cabinet. In the first place, it had been generally expected, and in the second place, adequate arrangements had been made to meet the situation. No one knew better than M. Briand himself that Proportional Representation, as embodied in the Bill passed by the Chamber, would meet with determined opposition in the Senate. The Upper House, it must be recalled, is elected not merely for a much longer period than the Lower House (viz., nine years), but in a somewhat different way. Each Senator is elected for nine years, but one-third retire every three years, whereas the Chamber is dissolved and elected in a mass. It follows that the seats of the present French Senate are Combi's, and absolutely opposed to the principle of Proportional Representation—not because they see any inherent defects in the principle, but simply because they fear that, by its general adoption, the so-called "Reactionaries" would be returned to power. In other words, the two extreme minorities of Royalists and Socialists might well combine against the Republican régime to return, say, a Socialist in a Royalist constituency and a Socialist in a Socialist constituency.

Even under the present system of election there have, it is alleged with some truth, been numerous cases of the member returned representing only the minority of the electors, because his return is desired by anti-Republican combinations. It was, in fact, a consideration of these cases that induced M. Poincaré, when he was Prime Minister, to hurry forward the discussion of the Electoral Reform Bill. This measure has received the approval of the Chamber four times; but it was always perfectly well known that the Senate objected to it. And the Senate objected to it because, in the opinion of the Republican leaders there, the Bill would have the opposite effect to that expected by M. Poincaré; they thought, in other words, that the new system would lead rather to the return of more "Reactionaries" than to the dismissal of those at present sitting in the Chamber.

Even this opposition, however, would not have led to the early rejection of the Bill had not M. Clemenceau, whose reputation as a Cabinet-breaker is well known, thought it an excellent opportunity of "getting back" at M. Poincaré, who had attacked the Presidency in spite of M. Clemenceau's efforts to secure the return of M. Pams. M. Briand, it was realised, was in this instance pushing ahead with the Proportional Representation Bill chiefly in order to carry out the pledges of his former Ministerial colleague, now President of the Republic. The defeat of M. Briand, therefore, would be indirectly the defeat of M. Poincaré. There was one grim reference in the old "tiger's" attack that sen; a shiver through the Senate. M. Briand, on a previous occasion, had alluded to certain constituencies, which elected members under the present arrangement, as "stagnant pools." Anxious to alarm the nervous systems of some of the doubtful Senators, M. Clemenceau said that these "stagnant pools" were often filled with constituents who, like frogs, were croaking—for a king. The reference to the Bourbons was not lost, and went out the Bill.

M. Briand's own speech in the Senate was not without value. He intimated clearly that his Ministry would resign if the Senate left him in a minority, and he kept his word. An hour or two after the division the resignation of his Cabinet was in the hands of the President.

I say that we need not worry ourselves unnecessarily over the business. As I have often pointed out in this
column, we are, as a nation, practically interested in the internal politics of other countries only in so far as such politics are likely to affect the foreign policy of the party in power. There have been a dozen or more Ministries in power in France since the Anglo-French Agreement of 1904, but the Agreement still exists. It will go on existing; and it may be predicted that, no matter what Government comes to power, the army will not be neglected. I write this bearing in mind that almost anything may happen in French politics. Why, there might even be a "coup" by M. Poincaré—he is the Emperor Majesty Raymond the First. At any rate, his friends would not be surprised if such a thing happened. The name of the next Premier is, for the time being, quite immaterial, though M. Barthou, Minister of Justice in the present Cabinet, is mentioned at the time of going to press.

The assassination of the King of Greece is, diplomatically speaking, a "regrettable incident," and raises no awkward questions of policy such as would have to be considered if, say, the victim had been the Emperor of Austria or the Kaiser. The late King had many excellent traits but it is sheer fudge when mañana newspapermen try to make out that he was a great man, simply because he was the brother of Queen Alexandra; for he was not even a man of average ability. His virtues were the virtues of unostentation and simplicity. He never did anything unexpected, he never made himself troublesome. He meekly submitted when the politicians of the time expressed their dissatisfaction with the one adviser he brought with him from his own country when he was elected King—the phrase is almost a contradiction in terms—and he submitted with equal meekness when the Military League was formed and threatened some of his pet plans in 1909. He was quite safe in these respects, and he never harmed any of his subjects, and his brains spring chiefly from his Russian Grand Duke Constantine; for the Danish Royal family, with whom he was elected King, the Premier, M. Pasitch, whom he knew fairly well. He withstood all temptations to intervene anywhere in anything, and accepted without a murmur the back seat offered to him. Few rulers of the sun have treated the people of that Republic in the mass, are profoundly influenced under him, it is true, but not through any exertions of his; and if he had made himself unpopular or troublesome he would have either been assassinated by his own loyal subjects or forced by the Powers to abdicate. But he was unpretentious and unassuming. He frankly recognised that the problem of the Balkans was a complicated one, and he realised that he could not solve it. So he left the solution to abler minds: to his fellow-citizens Ferdinand of Bulgaria, to his own Prime Minister, M. Venizelos, and even to the Servian Premier, M. Pasitch, whom he knew fairly well. He withstood all temptations to intervene anywhere in anything, and accepted without a murmur the back seat offered to him. Few rulers of the sun have displayed such a sublime spirit of self-abnegation.

His son, the present King, is a man of much stronger character, but inexperienced. He is a good soldier, even if not quite the military genius his friends make him out to be. His brains spring chiefly from his mother, Queen Olga, daughter of the Russian Grand Duke Constantine; for the Danish Royal family, with which we are so honourably connected, has never been noted for intelligence of an unusual order. It is exceedingly odd that the claim Salonika, which has done practically nothing for several weeks, is alone costing the impoverished country nearly £100,000 a day.

At the conclusion of a short series of articles, embodying an Australian view of foreign and Imperial affairs, prepared by the present writer and published by The New Age during March and April of 1912, it was pointed out that the indifference of England, with regard to the interests of the Outer Empire, would, sooner or later, compel those Commonwealths to look elsewhere for friends and allies.

Nothing that has occurred in the comparatively short interval has provided reason for a change from that opinion. On the contrary, the events of this past year—and more especially the ominous American event of last November, when the "standing" element of the Republican Party employed Governor Woodrow Wilson's candidature as a final means of defeating Roosevelt—have vitally stressed the increasing interest of Australia in the foreign and domestic policy of the United States. For all practical Australian purposes, the strategic centre of the British Empire—the Empire to which the citizens of this Commonwealth now nominally belong—is no longer placed in London. Washington is the military and naval centre of our world, and the policy of Dr. Woodrow Wilson matters infinitely more to us than all the political incoherences and platform vagaries of, alternately, Messrs. Asquith, Bonar Law, Lloyd George, Winston Churchill, and Lords Haldane, Morley, Crewe, and Lansdowne. We stand or fall, as a Younger Nation, with the United States of America. Intellectually, politically, commercially—in every department of human activity a wise and far-sighted Australian policy compels us to turn our backs on England and to seek an active offensive and defensive alliance with the land that nurtured Lincoln.

The Americans themselves, no doubt, are taking the people of the Republic in the mass, are profoundly influenced by the events of this past year. They are profoundly influenced by the events of this past year. It pervades the politics of the United States every whit as much as it hangs over the national affairs of Britain. It is the most deadly menace of the English-speaking world—a menace that calls as emphatically for American as for British and Australian thought.

The reasons actuating the present writer, in his anxiety for the election of Roosevelt, had nothing to do with the respective personal ambitions of Mr. Taft, Dr. Wilson, or Mr. Roosevelt. Had the predecessor of Mr. Taft refused in advance so much as to consider a nomination, those reasons would have still affirmed the necessity for his candidature. Those reasons may be condensed into a few words.

After the sea-battle of Tsu-Shima, which annihilated the last prospect of success for Russia in the Eastern
war, President Roosevelt, acting on behalf of the American nation, addressed an identical Note to Russia and Japan, urging the expenditure of a peace-consultation between the parties. On August 5, 1905, representatives of the two warring Powers were brought together by Theodore Roosevelt, on board the "Mayflower," at Oyster Bay. The conference at Portsmouth, in the State of New Hampshire, duly followed; and Japan, after stipulating, at the commencement of the negotiations, for the most onerous terms, including a substantial cash indemnity, had to accept an arrangement embodying the views, not of Baron Komura and Takahira, but those, substantially, of Count Witte, Baron Rosen, and President Roosevelt. Now, the principles which Russia played, with regard to the claims of Japan against China after the war of 1895, led with absolutely automatic precision to the war whose terms of peace were settled by Roosevelt's intervention at Portsmouth. The Japanese do not forget. They commenced their preparations against Russia with instantaneous zeal. Similarly, their preparations against the United States date from the day that the Roosevelt conference ended.

Roosevelt has committed America to a course whose end is war. The identical part that Russia played, with regard to the claims of Japan against China after the war of 1895, led with absolutely automatic precision to the war whose terms of peace were settled by Roosevelt's intervention at Portsmouth. The Japanese do not forget. They commenced their preparations against Russia with instantaneous zeal. Similarly, their preparations against the United States date from the day that the Roosevelt conference ended.

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Theodore Roosevelt, at the end of his successor's Presidential period, should have been permitted to resume the Presidentialship. Step by step, the Americans are all these were steps, and in their effect they remain encased to the Washingtonian tradition, should now resume the Presidency. Step by step, the Americans are advancing along the path that leads to military and naval competition. The war of 1895 ended at Paris on December 12, 1898, carried the flag of the United States almost to the very doors of Nippon. McKinley's assassination brought Roosevelt to the Presidency, enabling him to play the part of a virtual mediator in the war Russia at the Portsmouth conference in August, 1905. The strenuous policy inaugurated by Roosevelt with regard to the American fleet, the diplomatic manoeuvres at Panama, the determined attack upon the problem of making an international fleet of the United States to patrol the Pacific and the Atlantic at will—all these were steps, and in their effect they remain steps, whose sole conclusion is war. Theodore Roosevelt having played the decisive part in embarking the United States against the inflated pretensions of Japan, Theodore Roosevelt, at the end of his successor's Presidential period, should have been permitted to resume his all-important duty—the duty of preparing America, parochial-minded, noisy, spread-eagle, but vigorous and practical America, for the certain test of war.

When one nation prepares silently but incessantly for war, whilst another—and that the provoking nation—allows its mind to dwell upon the workings of an internal kaleidoscope that conceals the urgent by virtue of its parochialism, on the one hand the Conservative-Unionist Unspeakables, on the other hand the Liberal-Radical Incomprehensibles. Why should we waste our time and money on the Unionist Unspeakables and Liberal Incomprehensibles? What is the difference between the two? The former, the Liberal-Radical Incomprehensibles, are no less concerned with the question of the future of Imperial America than the Conservative-Unionist Unspeakables. The difference lies in the fact that the Liberal-Radical Incomprehensibles are in favour of a Liberal-Radical Commonwealth, whereas the Conservative-Unionist Unspeakables are in favour of an Imperial Commonwealth.

Canada, in the words of The New Age, has been persuaded to seal with the sum of seven million pounds its membership of the British Empire. Any Dominion that pays over such instalments of financial tribute to a Government of Liberal-Radical Incomprehensibles, and expects to obtain security thereby, is governed by fools, and puts its trust in political worthlessness. The people of this Australian Commonwealth are making no such blunder.

Professor Goldwin Smith is dead, but the wisdom of his views with regard to Canada's future lives after him. Students who have experimented with chemistry have seen how two given chemicals, hostile and separate in a common vessel, require only the temperature to be raised to fuse them into a solid, homogeneous mass. War between the United States and Japan will provide the Dominion of Canada with the essential third chemical. Canada, as a junior nation of the disappearing Island Empire, would be better employed in establishing the most intimate relations with the United States and Germany, instead of throwing its seven millions into the North Sea. To mediate between Germany and the United States, drawing them into a warm friendship, and warring off the possibilities of an alliance between Germany and Japan—an alliance that might conceivably overwhelm England, Canada, the United States of America, Australia and New Zealand in a common ruin—that is the sort of task whose execution would do more credit to the wisdom of Canada's Prime Minister Borden. Why should the Canadians, any more than the Australians, waste their time, temper and money on the Unionist Unspeakables and Liberal Incomprehensibles of Great Britain?

Mr. Maurice Low, like a number of other British journalists, is worried about this pre-eminently sensible attitude of America with regard to the Panama Canal. He deals despairingly in the December "National Review" with the inclination of the Americans to repudiate certain obligations laid upon them by the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty of 1901. If the Americans are not only to fortify the Canal, but also exercise the right of closing it in time of war, the British-Canadian naval forces will run the risk of being shut out of the Pacific. The only
hope for Britain, in fact, is that Dr. Woodrow Wilson, the President-elect, may be persuaded to convert the Canal into a common international traffic thoroughfare. One suggestion only may here be offered. It is this: Will Mr. Maurice Low and his unhappy journalistic legion address themselves to this solution of this problem? What has Great Britain done in the Pacific that she should expect to find an eleemosynary gate-opener in the person of the United States?

The Trans-Pacific peril that threatens the western coast of North America is a peril for which England is responsible. Lord Lansdowne's was the statesmanship—what statesmanship of a pluperfect Unionist Unspeakable—that negotiated the treaty of alliance between Great Britain and Japan. The army and navy of Japan were enabled to smash the army and navy of Russia solely by the connivance of England. That Japan now dominates the Northern Pacific on the one hand, whilst Germany assumes the mastership of Central Europe on the other, is unmistakably due to the political insanity of England. Great Britain had tremendous vested interests in India. Sound policy inculcated the encouragement of Russia in a continuous policy of Eastern expansion, away from Afghanistan and the Himalayas, and towards the Yellow Sea. The further Russia moved eastward, on a bee-line towards Port Arthur, the better for England and for India. Remember the words of the imperial Kuropatkin of Liaoyang, of the Shaho at Askabad in 1897:—

The policy of our Government in Central Asia, since the accession of the late Tsar (Alexander III), has been eminently one of peace; and recourse has never been had to the weapon unless another means of a given result has failed. . . . A solitary traveller can now cross Central Asia, from the Caspian to the Siberian frontier, without incurring the smallest risk of attack. The last complication on the Persian frontier dates from 1860—nearly seventy years ago. I am led to be explicit on these points by a sincere wish that the public may be convinced that a settled Anglo-Russian policy which is no way inimical to Great Britain, and that we are perfectly satisfied with our present boundaries.

To-day, the fresh complications upon the Persian frontier are a commonplace of politics. Russia has been driven back from Manchuria, and compelled to bring its weight along the Persian line of least resistance. India is threatened again, the war in the Balkans has stirred the Moslem world to its depths, Japan—at the cost of a staggering burden of taxation—is increasing the strength of its navy, Germany is levelling on Britain like a perpetual nightmare; whilst the crumbling banking of many thousands of Russia's bankrupt sons—a sacrifice to the age-long, mad hostility of England—keep on the growth of Manchuria's crops of Kaolion. In what particular state is England proved a gainer by this unspeakable alliance? There has been no gain, but one long and constant procession of loss. America, confronted with the certainty of a bloody struggle for the Pacific, has reason to curse and denounce the insanity of England; Australia hates the policy that binds Great Britain in the toils of a modified but still detestable alliance, all the citizens of Canada bleed financial tribute to be spent in an insensate effort to strangle Germany upon the sea; South Africa is splitting up again into rival camps of Britain and Boer, with the certainty that a modified Hetzogovina is again; New Zealand is playing the part of a lonely ocean outpost, ignoring America and Australia to snivel at the heels of Britain—the whole edifice of Imperial solidarity has been smashed asunder. And by whom? By Lord Lansdowne. By Balfour—how all the senior Tory Unspeckables delight in the spectacle of this anxious England, dependent upon the self-same Russia for aid against the German menace; compelled to assent when Russian diplomacy ordered the American Treasurer-General Shuster out of Persia; compelled to assent to the ruthless partition of the Turkish Empire, with all its consequences in India; and now howling to this same America because the American builders claim the right to open and close as they please this Isthmian Canal—to-day, a review of the world at large inclines the average thoughtful American to inquire: How much hide have these Britishers got?

Washington is now our Imperial centre. Australia's interests are America's interests. The peril of one is the peril of both. And in the case of either country the external danger is as nothing to the internal. The Australian Legislature, like the Houses of Congress at Washington, is now gathering to the way of a plague of mediocre politicians; men whose minds are in a process of continuous orientation—towards the parish pump! Condemnation of Dr. Woodrow Wilson, before he has assumed office, before he has nominated the officers of his Cabinet, would be entirely out of place. But Wilson is not Roosevelt. Behind this President-elect are all the triumphant forces of the Democrats, the ultra-parochial American party; the party that is opposed to war and to pre-emptive war; the party that has been upon the reduction of expenditure essential to the efficacy of the American Navy—a party, in short, whose administration, unless it differs in every particular from the Democratic tradition, will have gone far enough, along the line of national disorganisation, to give the signal for the smashing onslaught of Japan.

Mediocrity and parochialism are the internal foes against which the intellectual forces of this Commonwealth and of the United States must be directed. As a prelude to political alliance, we seek an intellectual entente with the thinkers of America. America's population is as huge as ours is small, but Australia is a land of tremendous possibilities. The American Treasury Department is in a process of continuous orientation—towards the parish pump! The magazine directed by Dr. Shaw, the Outlook for the Average Man, one of the few American magazines that preserve a high political and intellectual standard. Dr. Albert Shaw is the editor of the American Review of Reviews—one of the few American magazines that preserve a high political and intellectual standard. The pages of the average American periodical are filled with barbarous imitation humour and sloppily sentimental mush. But the magazine directed by Dr. Shaw belongs to a very different category. In its issue of October, 1912, this able American writer and thinker has done the present writer the honour of reprinting his views upon the American presidential issue from the columns of The New Age. "Criticism from our cousins across the Atlantic," the "Review of Reviews" observes, "is nothing new, but criticism from the young Commonwealth of Australia is something to which we are unaccustomed." Such criticism has for its cause the earnest desire to bring the two nations, the junior and the senior, together. We ask Dr. Shaw to believe that there are other lands besides the United States whose destinies are wrapt up in the observance of the Monroe Doctrine that brought America into the Pacific; but the Americans remain at Manila for reasons that have no reference at all to the Monroe Doctrine—reasons that relate instead to America's new Pacific interests and responsibilities."
Notes on the Present Kalpa.
By J. M. Kennedy.

XVIII.—Representatives.

The mistaking of a symptom for a cause is not so modern an intellectual vice as others which have already been dealt with in The New Age; but there seems to be little doubt that it is becoming more and more common. When we find even Labour leaders objecting to strikes because of the inconvenience they cause to the public, we need not be surprised if the same point of view is expressed in the newspapers; and this very phrase, “inconveniencing the public,” may perhaps be the key to the origin of much of the unrest which is characterising the present epoch.

It would be absurd for any paper, or any political party for that matter, to represent the vague entity which we call the public as caring very deeply for any principle, any idea. At moments of great national import we shall find among the public what we may call an average national opinion. Such an opinion arose from, but did not itself develop, the Volunteer movement; or, to come nearer to our own times, there was a very genuine feeling of “national” grief when King Edward died. Instances like these, however, are infrequent, and the profound feelings awakened on such occasions are not lasting. Grief for the late King did not greatly interrupt the ordinary run of business and pleasure, and in a day or two the crowd was looking forward to the funeral purely as a matter of curiosity.

Deaths, invasions, and the like, are all concrete cases. They awaken the feelings of the crowd for an instant and no more. It is much more difficult, as may be imagined, to interest the public at all in any abstract idea. It is, in point of fact, impossible. An abstract idea has to be first seized upon by some prominent leaders of the public, and then communicated downwards to their followers in a concrete form. To take an example of recent legislation, the idea of Old Age Pensions was never adequately realised by the public. The “people” never inquired into the justice or injustice of the plan,—probably the only material from which an enduring idea can be formed—but, where they did consider the matter at all, they looked at it solely from the point of view of its expediency: an unsafe basis for the consideration of any problem. Those who expected to benefit did not think of the abstract side of the question—they felt the silver jingling in their pockets even before the Bill became an Act; and those who did not stand to benefit simply hoped that the “lower classes” would now be kept quiet for a while.

“Keeping the working classes quiet,” indeed, is the touchstone by which the “public” is referred to by politicians and pressmen judges any new legislative idea. The “public” does not care two straws when told that the bakers have had to work a hundred hours a week, that hotels and restaurants did not bother about the Shops Act, that mining is a dangerous occupation, and that preventible fatalities occur among railwaymen every week. These are abstractions. The public wonders vaguely what all the row is about, and refuses to concern itself further. It is idle to pretend that either Socialism or Women’s Suffrage, to mention two typical modern movements, is taken into serious consideration by the “public.” Certain groups included in the public may be for or against these movements; but the public as a mass has no views either pro or con. Abstractions are associated by the great amorphous public with striking concrete characteristics, and to the “public” even now Socialism means red ties and long hair, exactly as women’s suffrage means elderly females with window-breaking hammers. In no case is the idea underlying the movement (and there can be no movement without an idea of some sort, good or bad) included in the following:

It follows that the public will take no interest, let us say, in miners’ wages, but that it will take an interest in a miners’ strike—not, of course, because of the economic problem as it affects the miners, but because of the economic problem as it affects its own purse. Let the miners receive forty shillings a week or thirty pounds, let the mines be located one mile or twenty miles below the surface, let the miners work ten hours a day or twenty-four—the public cares for none of the things so long as it can buy its coal at what it regards as a normal price. “The Public,” in short, will permit anything on the one condition that it is not inconvenient.

It happens, in consequence, that the first tendency on the part of the public, when a strike breaks out, is to lay the blame on the trade unionists, and to band together, as it were, to show that only a really national appeal can be our touchstone by which the “public” referred to by political leaders is tested. The newspapers that appeal to the middle and upper classes are less narrow minded; but each one of them, like each political group, presupposing this individualism, will care for the nation as an entity, but only for itself. In this way we can explain, though we cannot justify, the narrow outlook of the Labour Press. The newspapers that appeal to the middle and upper classes are less narrow minded; but each one of them, like each political group, has its “public,” and the “public,” to that group, means only a limited number of people—a section, as we have said, of the population.

Yet, out of all these groups, there is to be found at times an average opinion. True, it may be found only at times of great national crisis; but, in the spirit that forms it is always latent, and not even the machinery of the party caucuses can crush it. The very difficulty experienced in rousing this spirit from its customary apathy, and making it articulate, is sufficient to show that only a really national appeal can be our instrument. But there are indirect means of ascertaining what this opinion is likely to be. Somewhere in a nation there are men who are national—in other words, men who typify the nation in themselves. They have the virtues, good qualities, and even vices and weaknesses, of the average body of the people. To bring such men together, to ascertain their views, to realise that those views were national, and to legislate accordingly; these would be the characteristics of the ideal prime minister. For such men would be, in every sense of the word, representative—their very prejudices and weaknesses, assuming a general harmony of spirit, would still typify the people as a whole. To act through such men is the only way to Defend Democracy. If it is difficult to find men like these, it is a hundred times more difficult to get them elected under the present caucus system. But, when we speak of representative government at all, it is typical individuals like these that we have, or should have in mind. A few names may be subsequently mentioned.
Business Jinks:
By Charles Brookfield

Scene: The private office of John Bennett, Senior Partner of the firm of John Bennett and Sons, General Import and Export Merchants.

Time: About 11.0 o'clock.

(The office is fitted up in the most up-to-date manner, radiators being scattered round the room, while on the desk: two bell-pushes, two telephone receivers, and a small private line telephone instrument can be seen. A flexible electric light standard reposes on a small shelf on the left of the desk, in addition to the many lights suspended from the ceiling. The floor is covered by a thick and expensive carpet. John Bennett, a tall and thick-set individual, is seated in a chair smoking a cigar, gazing abstractedly at the ceiling. The private telephone bell rings.)

John Bennett: Damn! (Picks up receiver.) Hub! ... Who? ... What's he want? ... Tell him I'm busy. ... Important? ... All right, ask him in. (Blinks kindly into the outer office. The door suddenly opened, and an ink-flecked usher bawls out: "Mr. James Dollmore, Sir.")

J. B. (aggressively): What have you come round for now? How many more times am I to tell you that I can't do anything in your line? Your stuff's rotten, Sir—it's rotten. Your Pavement Lights are vile.

J. D. (in a meek voice): Well, we've got a new line out now, quite a new manufacture, Sir. I've got a sample here, Sir. (He shows it.)

J. B. (taking it): I don't want to look at the damned thing. (Examines it.) Good heavens! Call this a Pavement Light? I wouldn't pave a pigsty with these.

J. D.: For pig-styes we have a special line, D4, but unfortunately I have no sample on me, Sir.

J. B. (wraithfully): I'm not a pig-sty contractor, Sir! If I were I might consider the advisability of using those to throw at the pigs. I would not insult any pig by asking him to tolerate an article of this description in his house. What d'you make the things of? Brick?

J. D.: No, Sir, glass.

J. B.: Glass? Call this glass? This is an imposition, Sir, nothing more nor less. Look at it for yourself. Look at it, I say. ... And, good Lord, look at the shape! How much light do you expect to get through here? The angle of refraction is abominable. And you think I'm going to ruin the reputation of thirty-five years by offering these as a saleable article? You're mistaken, Sir, if you do. I refuse to make myself the laughing stock of the firm.

J. D.: That's very extraordinary.

J. B.: What d'you mean, extraordinary?

J. D.: Well, you see, this is one of your own Pavement Lights. I got it from Thomas Jones and Co., 487. If you'll look very carefully at the front edge, Sir, you'll find that something has been scratched out and the surface re-polished. The letters that I've had scratched out were 'J.B. & Sons R42.' That's your own Pavement Light, Sir.

J. B. (dumbfounded): Er... Eh... Er... Ah... Er. ... Well, I'm sorry the quality is not good enough, Sir. It struck me as being quite a fair sample of quality, but, of course, you know your own goods best, Sir. Good morning.

J. B. (after two minutes of hard breathing): Thomson! Thomson! (Pushes all the bells near him and at the same time knocks over a telephone receiver.) Thomson, come here! (The inky office boy enters.) What the devil d'you mean by letting that man in?

T.: You told me to, Sir.

J. B. (purple with rage): And what if I did? Eh? Haven't you got better sense than to let in a person of that description? Is it for this that I pay you 8s. a week? Do you want to ruin us? ... I shall have to consider this incident very seriously—very seriously—eh? ... Where's Mr. Norman?

T. (on the verge of tears): H-h-he's in his room, Sir.

J. B.: Ask him to come in. (Exit Thomson. In a few minutes enter Norman Bennett, junior, Partner.)

N. B.: You called me?

J. B.: Yes. What the dickens have you been doing all the morning? Where are the cheques? Have you signed them yet?

N. B.: No, I'm waiting for Arthur.

J. B.: What? Hasn't he come yet?

N. B.: No, not yet.

J. B. (pacing the room furiously): Good Lord! What does he think this place is? How the deuce you two are going to manage the business when I've gone, I can't imagine. ... Half-past eleven I Tell you what it is. You young men don't know what work is. Now, in my time, d'you think I would have come later than 9.0 o'clock, Sir? No. We had to work then. ... Why, even now I'm in the office regularly every morning at half-past nine—every morning. (And so on for a few minutes, when Arthur Bennett, partner in embryo, suddenly makes his appearance in an immaculate morning coat and top-hat, smoking a cigar.)


J. B. (bitingly): Good afternoon. You're just in time to catch the 11.40 home.

A. B. (serenely): Oh, no! I'll stay till half-past three. It's not a matter of course, so I needn't go early.

J. B. (taken back for the minute): Eh—er—what? (Recovering himself) What d'you mean by turning up at this hour? Haven't I got enough to do besides waiting and watching to see what time you're coming in? Tell me what it is, you've no more idea of business than the man in the moon. You come here at any odd hour—look round—go out to luncheon—come back—go out to tea, and then you go home and complain of the hard work you are the victim of... As I was telling Norman just now... (etc., etc., until exhausted and breathless he stamps out of the room in a fury.)

A. B. (grinning amably): What's the matter with the Guv'nor? Got the pip, hasn't he?


A. B.: So I inferred from his language. He'll be like this all day now. Thank heavens, I'm clearing out early. (They walk out.)

(Meanwhile, in the outer office, one of the clerks has discovered that the private telephone receiver in the private office is not on its rest, and has availed himself of the opportunity to listen to the conversation between Mr. John Bennett and Mr. James Dollmore, and afterwards between the former gentlemen and his two sons. All the details are generally communicated to his fellow clerks, to their intense amusement. The rest of the week is spent by the office in hurling forth such phrases as, "Call this a Pavement Light?" "Do you think I'm a pig-sty contractor?" Luckily for the peace and harmony of the office the object of their imitations is blissfully ignorant of such a state of affairs, but as may be imagined, the spirited but unfortunate Mr. James Dollmore is for ever a stranger to the portals of the house of John Bennett and Sons.)
Letters from Italy.

VII.—Ostia, Genzano, Frascati, Tusculum.

HAMPSTEAD HEATH and Richmond are all very well, and I suppose the gardens at Hampstead Court, when the spring flowers adorn them, are delightful, are the most beautiful in Europe. And I know Suresnes, and "St. Cloud on the Hill," and the Forêt de Meudon, where the long avenue of limes leads up to the château. But they are poor things beside the beautiful country round Rome—Frascati, Tusculum, Genzano. Ostia is not beautiful; but it is more interesting than either Richmond or the Roman amphitheatre in the Rue de Navarre—the second of which I saw on a sunny June afternoon when it was full of dust, Socialists, stench and incredible sullenness. Rome has the loveliest environs of any city I have seen.

I was taken to Ostia in a motor-car by one of the idle rich. He was charming, and had almost ostentatiously correct manners. Also came a young Italian Count and an English County Court Judge. (I forget their names, and they are not likely to read The New Age, and if they did they'd probably be more flattered than annoyed.) The judge hurled Matthew Arnold, Colume, and Mr. Frederic Harrison at me when I suggested that John Milton was a pock-bitten poetaster. Ecco! the joys of education! Ostia was the Tilbury, Liverpool, and Portsmouth of ancient Rome. It is not yet properly excavated, but even now it takes nearly two hours to walk through the remains. You begin at the ancient Forum and go through various buildings and streets. You see the Temple of Vulcan, and the Palestrum and guard-house of the firemen of the city. In this latrine is a small marble shrine dedicated to the Goddess of Fortune. Frescoes in houses; mosaics with the "bipedes equos" of Pergivillium; and two long perfectly-paved streets are shown to you. When you see these Roman roads, still perfect after seventeen centuries, you realise that the Romans believed in the eternity of Rome. At the end of the city are two arches, a recently discovered statue of Victory, and the cemetery. The last is rather beautiful. Among the brown clay pots which hold the dust and charred bones of Roman citizens grow dark violet flowers among the clustered leaves. They are not Shakespeare's "violets blue," those little scented things which cover the English copses in early spring—fields of grass, deciduous trees bare of leaves, oaks with a few brown leaves remaining, beech trunks with bright green lichens and soft moss upon them. On the other side are olive-groves and vineyards; and the flat Campania stretches over to the hills by Tivoli; and behind them gleam like yellow pearls the snow peaks of the Abruzzi mountains.

To get to Cicero's villa I have always taken to the fields and gone straight up the hill, over walls, through brambles and birch saplings, and over trees to the top. Tiens, il y a de la vue, la! If you stand by the wall that runs beside the Roman Theatre you look over the country on all sides. To the Abruzzi, to Rome, to the sea, and to the hills. In the afternoon the sea is a shining gold plaque on the horizon, and the more distant line of hills is clear blue. I used to think the hills by Storrington the most beautiful, but I guess Cicero knew better. You could not imagine a more beautiful place for a villa. What days he must have spent here with Tiro, turning over his rolls of Theocritus. I suppose enough Greeks came for flowers to have been scattered over the dead. And now the violets grow there.

I was amused by my companions. There were a crowd of more or less attractive American girls collecting culture from an old guide. The Italian youth urged us to hurry and keep as near the damsels as possible. The judge stayed to read each Latin inscription and to speculate on the exact date of its erection. The silence was like oil upon a burning flame.

The town of Genzano is amazingly filthy. In the middle of the chief Piazza is a fountain, with a short over-decorated pillar as a centre ornament. Here the inhabitants do repair for water, which they carry in large pitchers of bronze (imitation). All the Hydrophori are women, and as they place the filled pitchers on their heads and stand still to balance the weight, they unconsciously take the beautiful attitude of the Caryatides on the Erechtheum. One leg is slightly forward, the hips a little shifted, and the torso and head are upright. Still, they are pretty women, attractive.

The first thing to do when one arrives at Genzano is to get out of it as expeditiously and swiftly as possible. The male inhabitants are indolent, unclean, and not even picturesque. The inside of those dwellings I glanced into had neither floor-covering nor wood around the walls. They looked as ragged and damp and dirty as the battered walls of a ruined Roman villa. O, the days that are no more! Laus Deo. I don't live in the Middle Ages. Outside the town the country is most beautiful. The Lago di Nemi lies in the deep cup of a crater, and the clear water holds the colours of the green and brown hills and of the sky. It was a grey day when I saw it, but the lake must be brilliant when the sky is clear. I sat on a ledge of bare rock and dangled my feet over a cliff edge; the silence was like oil upon a burn after the horrible din of the city. And on the hillside behind were bare saplings and violets and pale-coloured periwinkles growing in the damp grass. And I looked over to Nemi on the other side of the lake and watched the still water and the roll of the green hills.

Yet the country round Genzano is nothing to that about Frascati. When you come to the town you are annoyed by touts of all kinds—hôtel-touts, cab-tours, guide-touts, kid-touts, donkey-touts. I was so annoyed with a donkey-tout when I went to Frascati once with a beautiful lady, that as he dunned me with "Ho, have a donkey, want a donkey?" I snapped, "No, can't you see I've got one." Alas! for my puerile joke—some things cannot be forgiven. But the Villa Falconieri has lovely gardens. You eat lunch—God, can an Englishman do, think, or be anything without eating?—at an eat lunch by a romantic pool, green-olive in colour, surrounded with cyprus trees. No noise, no tourists, only the sound of a fountain splashing a light jet of water. There are pictures inside the villa—horrible eighteenth century things—who can, may admire.

It is the walk to Tusculum which most delights me. You wind up the hillside past a half-broken late Renaissance gateway towards a cross stuck arrogantly on the hill by Cicero's villa. The country on one side is Sussex in early spring—fields of grass, deciduous trees bare of leaves, oaks with a few brown leaves remaining, beech trunks with bright green lichens and soft moss upon them. On the other side are olive-groves and vineyards; and the flat Campania stretches over to the hills by Tivoli; and behind them gleam like yellow pearls the snow peaks of the Abruzzi mountains.
"Simpkins Wrote a Play."

By Norman Fitzroy Webb.

SIMPKINS wrote a play and took it to Doctor Jones in the hope that he would dry-nurse it.

Everyone considered Simpkins very lucky in his acquaintance with Jones; for Jones was widely known and respected among the theatres—I think he had put money into some of them. Whatever it was, he was the man for Simpkins and his play.

The play was a long one, with a Biblical setting, and one wonders how it was that Jones allowed himself to meddle with it. When you have money in the theatre you must know a good play when you see it. That was how it was argued, at the time, but as an argument it does not really hold water, because I understand that Jones was in love with Simpkins’ wife. This is certainly the supposition now.

Well, Jones showed the play to Smith, the actor-manager, and the end of it was that it was to be produced early in the autumn, and Simpkins was busy rehearsing, and I suppose Jones was making love to Simpkins’ wife—that is, if they really were in love. It was vaguely known in the neighbourhood where he lived that Simpkins’ play was going to be acted, and that he was rehearsing it himself, and had actually seen the stage from the other side of the footlights: otherwise the affair made no noise.

And then, one fine morning, Simpkins hailed Brown, and asked him whether he had heard. "What play?" asked Brown. And then remembered.

"Haven’t you heard that the Censor has banned it?" said Simpkins, excitedly.

"No," said Brown. "Was it too ’steep’ for them? I thought it was religious."

"Steep?" cried Simpkins. "Here, take this copy of it home with you and judge for yourself. You can let any of the donors. Of course, Brown was delighted, and went and fetched the man. When they arrived, and had no seat, and would Brown give him one in his box. Of course, Brown was delighted, and went and fetched the man. Outside there was an immense crowd. Smith stepped before the curtain and read the official message about taking steps. He said that, though he should die tomorrow, Simpkins’ masterpiece should see the light.

Brown had a box, because he had given seventy-five pounds. And just when the hubbub had quieted down and the audience was waiting for the curtain to rise upon the Prologue, an attendant brought him a note. It was from Jones to say that the critic of some paper or other had arrived, and had no seat, and would Brown give him one in his box. Of course, Brown was delighted, and went and fetched the man. When they were seated the critic startled Brown by saying, "By the way, what is the play? I’ve been away for the last two months. I only came back to-day. They never told me what it was. Is it a charity matinee?"

Brown explained as well as he could, but the curtain was just rising, and he didn’t want the critic to miss any of the play.

At the end of each act the audience roared its approval, but the critic in Brown’s box sat silent and perplexed. During the fourth interval Brown found time to ask him what he thought.

"Are you the author?" he asked in return. Brown shook his head.

"Well, but it’s the usual sort of rot, isn’t it?" said the critic. He was obviously perplexed. The curtain rose on the last act.

During the ovation which Simpkins received at the end of the performance the critic must have slipped out, for when Brown looked round to have the point out with him he had disappeared.

Brown tells me that he has often thought since of what the critic said, and especially this summer, when he couldn’t go away for lack of the seventy-five pounds that he had—well, given to Simpkins.
The Great Ship.

By S. N. Anglia.

Our in the stream she lay, magnificent in length, towering.

A wonder of snow-white deck-houses, boats and ventilators cunningly piled up to support the huge lemon-tinted funnels. Passing steamers, lords of the sea in their way, grew suddenly insignificant as they approached her; ferry-boats swaying against the tide from under her stern seemed as little pieces of wood, stream swept, eddying round a log; the occasional lines of strung out lighters wallowing laboriously in rear of some smoking tugboat were, in comparison with the monster, mere flies upon the water. The sun shone out and burned up the glory, emblazoning a golden bar on each of the lemon fields, seeking a thousand reflections in the repeated rows of tiny ports.

From the mighty city upon the bank of the river down to the water's edge came men to do obeisance. The first was a poet; he looked afar at the soaring spars, around them a cloud of wheeling gulls, precious handful of silver filings flung over the muddy stream. Then, to the four great funnels, colossal in their elegant vastness, poised aslant, high above the tiers of promenades, the river and its swiftly moving life; from them a net of cordage seems to fall and envelop the faintly pencilled lines of her upper works; they cast cold shadows on all beyond them. To what volcanic depths did they not lead; how, when the pulsing heat came roaring up, royally would they lift the wreathing sable to the stars. Whence might they not be borne, emblems of a great endeavour of a mighty nation?

So the poet went home, chewed his pen for awhile, and wrote a poem describing the wonders he had beheld.

The builder of ships came and in a comprehensive glance took in the lines of the model before him: the mighty bows and the thin line of the anchor chain running aslant into the water, the half-hidden winches on the for'ard deck and the mass of terraced promenades about the navigating bridge; the spacing of the funnels, the ventilating plant, the boat accommodation—each in their turn received professional attention till the discarded husk of the ship's mystery fell from her and floated away.

A man dressed in black, one whose business it was to minister to men's souls, was the next to come. Having neither the eye of the poet for beauty, nor that of the builder of ships for utility, he looked out on the stream and seeing a huge mass with funnels and masts, and murmured: "They that go down to the sea in ships and do business in great waters." Uncomprehendingly he gazed at the huge structure, vaguely wondered why it did not topple away; musing—musing—on the progress of civilisation that he might sit down, and, like the poet, write something—something in his case that would help the souls of men.

The financier brought his daughter: fingering binoculars they swept the ship. The father paid much attention to the ability of his costly lenses to enable him to spell out the distant name; it was the glitter of gold that the myriads of ports flashed back to him; in the blackness of the mighty hull there were enclosed enormous profits; the girl, however, as her eyes wandered over the distant promenades, was lost in a reverie. The scent of many flowers, the rhythmic beat of the engines—their cases that would help the souls of men.

The magic of thy siren-song
To what elements belong
What the secret of thy art
Could frame thy fearful politics

Garvin, Garvin, burning bright,
In the "P.M.G." each night,
What immortal hand awry
On what wings dost thou aspire

GARVINIAN EVOLUTION.

Garvin, Garvin, burning bright,
In the "P.M.G." each night,
What immortal hand awry
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

Framed thy fearful politics

Neath what strange exotic skies
Opened thine all-prophetic eyes?

What the secret of thy art

That wins the way to Bonar's heart?

Some immortal from the Styx

To lead thy Party through the mire?

What elements belong

The magic of thy siren-song

Garvin, Garvin, burning bright,
In the "P.M.G." each night,
Some immortal from the Styx

A. H.
Literary Notes.

MESSRS. BELL recently announced that they proposed to republish the Bohn Libraries at what now seems to be the standard price for new reprints—one shilling net. The announcement was naturally welcomed by all lovers of literature. In particular the large number—a number which is continually increasing—of readers who have become tired of the tawdry productions of modern times will look forward with unusual eagerness to a cheap edition of the Bohn translations of the Latin and Greek classics. Of all the Bohn series, probably this series of translations is the most celebrated. It was with keen disappointment, then, that we read the preliminary announcements of the new reprints. There is hardly a book among them which we cannot already buy at the same price in some other series. With the Latin and Greek translations, apparently, we are not yet to be comforted. Messrs. Bell doubtless have their reasons for postponing our pleasure. Perhaps the translation "pay" so well at the present prices that it seems to the publishers a pity to bring them out at a shilling. It is not our business to speculate on this point. We have merely to place on record our disappointment and the disappointment of our readers.

Surely it is strange that after a generation of cheap and ever cheaper reprints there should still be considerable difficulty in obtaining Latin and Greek translations; and it is no less strange that the translations with which we are provided should be, as a rule, so inferior. Publisher after publisher has reprinted a few classics, and publisher after publisher has reprinted the same few—Virgil, Horace, Tacitus; Thucydides, Herodotus, Æschylus, Sophocles, more or less complete; and selected pieces from Plautus, Homer, Cicero, Demosthenes, Catullus. Messrs. Dent have given us, or are about to give us, a cheap Livy, and the Scott Library contains a version of Petronius. But, with the very few exceptions we have named, it will generally be found that the classics are presented to us in a more or less fragmentary condition, with frequent omissions and "tuning down."

Believing, as all men of taste will believe with us, that even the second and third-class Greek and Latin authors are infinitely higher in the literary scale than the Masefields and Gibsons of our own day, we regret that so many classic authors are practically unobtainable in translations, cheap or dear. Even the best authors are not fully covered. There are over a hundred volumes in print in the Bohn translation series, but even this large number does not include Dion Cassius, Manilius, Aulus Gellius, Suidas, Publilijus Syrus, Quintus Smyrnæus, Diodorus Siculus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and the Augustan historians. We have not gone out of our way to look for names. Even if we exclude Suidas as a bad Greek book of reference—though a book of reference of unsurpassed philological interest—we must recognise that no lover of poetry can afford to pass by Manilius, no lover of anecdotage Aulus Gellius, and no historian of Christian antiquity of the others. The shrewd aposthegms of Publilijus Syrus will doubtless have to appear in The New Age before the man is brought to the recollection of the modern reader.

We have indicated a few writers whose works are only to be had with difficulty in English versions, and at relatively considerable expense. But there are other classical authors of all descriptions whose works can hardly be had at all in translations—either they have never been translated, or only in part. Let us mention, for instance, Statius, Calpurnius, Valerius Flaccus, Ausonius, and Claudian among the Latins, and Lysias, Æchines and Ancareon among the Greeks. And with these names we are only on the fringe of classical translations; for there are innumerable works of quite different varieties that we have not touched upon. There is still extant, for example, the correspondence between the celebrated Roman "rhetorician," Marcus Cornelius Fronto (he appears in Patern's "Marius") and his even more celebrated pupil, Marcus Aurelius; and the traditional "Have mi Fronto merito carissime," "Magistro suo Caesar suus," and "Domino meo" stand at the heads of letters which was in the habit by Cardinal Mai has enabled nearly three generations of philoclassics to appreciate. Again, both Cato and Varro wrote on agriculture—the former as a shrewd farmer, soldier, and man of affairs, the latter more in the manner of a bookish Gilbert White. But both of them might as well not have written at all, so far as English readers are concerned. And Varro, in addition, wrote on Roman antiquities. Who, again, would wish to be deprived of the fragments of the Greek philosophers, "those beloved of Our Saviour," "whose writings..." published by the famous firm of Didot in three huge volumes?

We have not yet come to the second and third-rate classical writers we spoke of. We have not mentioned the early Christian authors—Tertullian, the master of savage irony, for example. We have not mentioned the later Greek Alexandrian writers, or the Byzantine historians. What a mine of literary wealth, and what an influence it has all exercised for nearly twenty centuries!

We come back to practical details. The Bohn translations are good in their place. But many of them were done in the eighteen-forties and eighteen-fifties, and since then we have had many better texts. Texts aside, the craftsmanship in many of the Bohn versions does not—well!—does not adequately represent the originals, let us say. Yet, take away the Bohn series, and we have hardly any translations at all. Is it not appalling? There was a time when we fondly believed that Mr. Heinemann's Loeb Library was filling the vacancies on the bookshelves; but not a bit of it. If Mr. Loeb is "supporting" this series of translations, his charity, like most forms of charity, will be an expensive matter for the recipient. Five shillings a volume net! We shall look at our two half-crowns twice before we hand them over in exchange for Apollonius Rhodius. And fancy spreading Terence into two volumes and Appian into four! The thing is preposterous.

The initial mistake made in connection with the Loeb Library was the publication of the Latin or Greek on one page and the translation on the page opposite. No Latin or Greek student will care a snap of his fingers for even the best translation. No one who cannot understand Latin and Greek will want to look at the original. And the few people who want translations as cribs will buy cribs, and not expensive, well-bound volumes. We have referred to the Loeb two-volume Terence, and on looking up a few prices we find that he may be taken as a typical example of our argument. A perfectly trustworthy text, edited by Weise, is published by Tauchnitz, Leipzig, at 1s. 4d. The more elaborate edition of the text, edited by Fleckelhausen and published by Teubner comes at 4s. 6d. The most minute "key" by the famous Dr. Giles, giving the Latin text and the English version of every individual word, is published by Cornish at 7s. 6d. less the customary 25 per cent. The Bohn Terence is 5s., less discount, and Phaedrus—Phaedrus, of all men!—is bound up in the same volume.

We have taken a very typical example, and if New Age readers were not by this time a weary of prices we could give many similar cases. The long and short of it is this: English publishers do not know their business. They are inefficient, hesitating, and lacking in knowledge of the public. Go down to Natt's or Mudie's any day, and you will find lovers of the classics (those, we mean, who read the classics in the original)
buying cheap, well-edited, well-produced texts, both Latin and Greek. Are these texts published in London? No; they come from the House of Teubner as a rule, sometimes from the House of Tauchnitz. The object of this: the Teubner Sallust, edited by Eusenius, and including the fragments of the orations and the epistles, costs sixpence. The Tauchnitz Sallust, also quite complete, edited by the celebrated Nobbe (who also edited Cicero) costs eightpence.

* * *

It is not our intention, let it be well understood, to glorify mere cheapness; we are only showing what can be done abroad. The textual editions we have referred to are edited by well-known scholars, who, in most cases, have to be paid as much by the publisher for supervising the text as a translator for rendering it into a modern language. There was no reason at all why English publishers should not have had this business of selling Latin and Greek texts; but they might at least have sold translations on the same basis of price. The fools would probably tell you that there was "no demand," "afraid to risk it," and so on. The Germans, their competitors, risked it. And if it be objected that we have quoted the Teubner prices for paper-bound books, whereas published books in England are usually bound in cloth, we reply at once that Teubner has for some years published all his Latin and Greek texts in paper and cloth—you can have whichever you prefer, and the cloth-bound editions cost only from three to sixpence more than the paper-bound. The type used, by the way, and the quality of the paper, are everything that the most fastidious student could desire.

* * *

It is doing the Oxford University Press the barest justice to mention that it has recently begun to publish Latin and Greek texts in stiff paper covers, well printed and well edited. The series is creditable; but it is more expensive than the Teubner series—the books cost, on an average, at least twice as much—and of course it does not yet include even a tittle of the books published by the Teubners. But it is at least an attempt to do something, even if it is not quite on the lines we should have recommended. A great deal more praise is due the Oxford University Press for its complete and very scholarly edition of Aristotle, in Greek and Latin, printed on average price of 3s. 6d. net per volume. It is surprising to think that we have not yet had a complete Aristotle in English, though the first (and by far the worst) edition of Jowett's Plato appeared as far back as 1871. The Oxford Aristotle is in four volumes, every one of them well done; print, paper, editing, and translation are all in harmony. When we think of classical texts and translations, we always wish that some wealthy person would subsidise the Oxford Press and allow the Delegates a free hand.

* * *

Let us pass to the literary event of the day. The members of the Poetry Society are going to meet and dine and drink and smoke in the cellar of the Olde Cheshire Cheese. Why? You would never guess. "The sponsors of the proceedings are seeking to revive the atmosphere which surrounded the company of wits and poets at the old 'Mermaid' nights," says the "Daily News" of March 10. The well-known "pudding" will be "washed down"—imagine poets "washing down"!—by "plentiful supplies of John Barleycorn from little brown three-handled mugs, and digested over merry jest, repartee, and, we may hope, impromptu stanzas, amid the smoke from seventy churchwardens."

As the company, we are told, will include Mr. John Hassall, Mr. Ernest Rhys, Sir Herbert Tree, and Mr. Israel Zangwill, among many others. "Revive the atmosphere," indeed! As if an "atmosphere" could be revived! An atmosphere, it is true, can be created. One was created in the time of Ben, and another was created at the Cheshire Cheese itself by the literary set of the eighteenth century. But these creators are dead, and, although their works survive, the "atmosphere" they created has died with them. Perhaps the estimable gentlemen we have mentioned will create another poetical atmosphere, but we have our doubts. Can we picture Sir Herbert Tree, after "washing down" solid pudding with ale, improvising the lordly hexameter with a mug in one hand and a churchwarden in the other? We cannot. And so ready to swear for it that Mr. I. Zangwill never perpetrated an impromptu stanza in all his life, and that Mr. Rhys could not if he tried.

The Chemist's Wife.

By Anton Tchekov.

The tiny town of Balmish, which consists of not more than two or three crooked streets, lies fast asleep. Not a breath is stirring, all is still. There is no sound save the faint, hoarse barking of a dog somewhere in the distance, probably between the town. Dawn is imminent in the east.

Everybody has gone to sleep long ago—only the young wife of M. Tschernomordik, the solitary drug shop in Balmish is still awake. Three times she has lain down, but sleep has stubbornly refused to come—she knows not why. She is seated at the open window, in her night dress, and is looking out into the streets in great agitation. A feeling of such unmitigated boredom and irritation overcomes her that she feels inclined to burst into tears. But why? That, too, she is unable to explain. A sort of lump lies in her throat and mounts steadily higher. In the background, she hears the carbuncle in the great distant M. Tschernomordik himself lies extended, his face toward the wall, blissfully snoring. A rapacious flea has fixed itself to the bridge of his nose, but the sleeping man is quite unaware of this. Of course he is even snoring, for he dreams that every soul in the town is afflicted with a sigh and that the entire population is buying Danish cough drops at his shop. Not by pin-pricks, nor by cannon-thunder, nor even by tender caresses, will he permit himself to be wakened.

The chemist's shop lies close to the borders of the town—this offers a wide vista to his wife. She observes how the horizon grows steadily brighter in the east, and then dyes itself with purple, as though a great conflagration were raging there. Unexpectedly the great moon emerges from behind a mass of foliage in the distance. The moon is ruddy—one is disposed to wonder why the moon, whenever it comes out from behind the bushes, should be afflicted with blushed. What might that mean?

Suddenly in the midst of this nocturnal quiet is heard a sound of footsteps and the jingle of spurs. Voices become audible.

"They are officers who have been to see the circuit judge," thinks the apothecary's wife, "they are now returning to camp."

Soon two figures in white linen military coats are visible, one tall and stout, the other small and lean. They are sauntering lazily along the wall and are talking loudly. Having reached the shop their steps grow still and more leisurely and their eyes wander to the windows.

"I smell drugs!" remarks the lean man. "Here is the chemist's. Of course! I remember that I dropped in here last week for some castor oil. You ought to see the chemist! He is quite mad with the fever. He is feeling his jaws! Jaws, my dear fellow, like an ass! It must have been with a jaw bone such as his that Samson licked the Philistines!"

"Well," the stout man answers in a deep bass, "the pharmacy is shut, but a few pieces of bread are a little more leisurely and their eyes wander to the windows."

"I suppose not," the doctor replies, with a sigh, as though he felt sorry for the chemist. "The dear thing is now sleeping behind that window. Just picture it.
to yourself, Obessoff. She has thrown off the burden-
some blankets because of the heat—her little mouth is
slightly open—and one tiny foot protrudes beyond the
bed. Apparently that dolthead chemist has no idea of
the value of the property—no doubt it is all gone
to him whether he has to do with a pretty woman or
a bottle of carbo lic acid.”

“I say, doctor,” remarks the officer, standing still,
“suppose we go into the shop and buy something? Per-
haps we may get a glimpse of Mrs. Chemist!”

“What an idea! At this time of night!”

“What’s the odds! They are forced to sell things
at all hours. Come along, old fellow.”

Very well. Lead on.

The chemist’s wife, who had concealed herself behind
the window curtains, hears the hoarse little bell. She
casts a glance at her husband, who is still snoring and
smiling, then she flings on a gown, slips her feet into
heless slippers, and runs into the shop.

Two shadows loom behind the glass door of the
shop. She turns up the lamp and hurries to open the
door. Now she is no longer bored, nor irritated, nor
feels inclined to weep—her heart is beating rapidly.
The fat doctor and the team Obessoff enter the shop.
One is now able to scrutinize them plainly. The fat
doctor is brown and bearded, a heavy, cumbrous sort
of man. At the slightest movement his linen coat cracks
as if about to tear asunder, his face is covered with a
red roux complexion and is smooth-shaven. There
is an English riding-switch.

This is the first time that I’ve seen a lady officiating
in a drug shop,” remarks the doctor.

“Why, there’s nothing extraordinary in that,”
the chemist’s wife replies, “my husband has no assistant—
so I’m forced to help him out.”

“I see. You have a very pretty little shop here.
What—ahem!—what do you keep in all those jars there?
Are you not afraid to meddle with all these poisons?
Brother!”

She wraps up the lozenges and gives the packet to
the doctor. Obessoff hands her a piece of fifteen
copecks. Half a minute passes in silence. The men
look at each other, make a step or two toward the
entrance and then look at each other once more.

“I should also like ten kopecks worth of peppermint lozenges,” replies the doctor.

She reaches quietly for a glass jar upon the shelves,
and then the chemist’s wife weight out the peppermint lozenges.
The customers keep their eyes riveted upon her back.

“The victory is yours.”

She nods her head and the chemist’s wife rises up
and runs in, to the shop. She turns slightly open—and one
tiny foot protrudes beyond the

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“I should also like ten kopecks worth of peppermint
lozenges,” says the doctor.

“Again, with a slow, deliberate motion, the chemist’s
wife stretches her hand toward the shelves.

“You don’t keep some sort of—” murmurs Obessoff
with lively twirlings of his fingers, “some sort of
drinkable, you know—something refreshing—like—like
seltzer water. Do you keep seltzer?”

“Oh, yes, we keep that,” she replies.

“Good! Why, you’re a regular angel! A fairy!
Just let us have these small bottles.”

The chemist’s wife hastily wraps up the carbonate
of soda and disappears through the rear door into the
darkness.

“A pretty bit of fruit!” says the doctor, his eyes
 twinkling. It isn’t likely, Obessoff, that you’ll find
anything like that in your favourite Madeira, eh? What
do you think? Then—just listen to those snores,
will you? His worship, the honorable apothecary
sleeps within.”

After a few moments Madame returns with five
bottles which she sets upon the counter. She has been
to the basement, so her face is flushed and she is just
a trifle heated with her exertions.

“Hush,” says Obessoff, as she drops the corkscrew
with which she has opened the bottles. “You shouldn’t
make so much noise—you’ll wake your husband.”

“Well, what does it matter if I do wake him?”

“He’s sleeping so sweetly. He must be dreaming of
you! Here’s to your health!”

“And besides,” the doctor remarks in his deep bass
voice, after several hiccoughs—due to the effect of the
seltzer water—“the best thing they could do—would be to
sleep without any periods of wakefulness at all. Ah, if we only had
a little claret with this water!”

“What a queer notion!” says the chemist’s wife,
laughing.

“It would be splendid! It’s a thousand pities that
no spirituous liquors may be sold in chemists’ shops.
But surely—you sell wine as medicine? Don’t you
keep minum gallicum rubrum?”

“Oh, yes!”

“Well then! Let us have a little. Devil take it!
Fetch it out!”

“How much do you wish?”

“Quantum satis. First let us each have one of
your seltzer—then we’ll see. What do you think
Obessoff? At first cum seltzer—then per se?”

The doctor and Obessoff seat themselves before the
counter, take off their caps, and begin to sip the red
wine.

“But really! I must say this wine is villainous!
Vinum elendissimum! In your presence, however—
why, it begins to taste like nectar. You are ravishing,
Madame. In thought I kiss your dear little hands.”

“I’d give a good deal if I might do it—not only in
tough,” says Obessoff. “‘I would have my word I’d give my
life!”

“Oh, don’t be foolish!” exclaims Madame Tschorno-
mordik. Her flush has darkened, and her face is very
frowning.

“But what a charmer you are!” remarks the doctor,
tittering, and regarding her mischievously with a
sidelong look. “Your eyes are regular rapid-fire guns.
Pop! hop! I congratulate you! The victory is yours.
Here we lie at your feet!”

The wife of the chemist looks at their red faces,
listens to their merry speeches, and then grows lively
herself. She is already quite light-hearted. She  takes
part in the persiflage, she laughs, she practises her
comedy, and then after prolonged begging on the part
of her customers, she slips a little of the claret.

“You gentlemen ought to come in oftener from camp
—for it is dreadfully monotonous here—I’m almost
tired to death!”

“Surely not!” cries the doctor, as if horrified. “Great
heavens! A peach like you—a marvel of Nature—and
you waste your sweetness on the desert air! Do you
remember that fine song of Gribiofeld? “Off to Saratoff
in the wilderness!” But it is time that we went. Delighted
to have made your acquaintance—vastly delighted.
How much to pay?”

The chemist’s wife lifts her eyes to the ceiling, her
lips move slightly.

“Twelve roubles, forty-eight kopecks,” says she.

Obessoff draws out a fat wallet, digs about for some
time in a mass of bank notes, and then pays.

“Your husband is sleeping so soundly, I’m sure he’s
dreaming,” he murmurs, as he presses her hand in
farewell.

“Don’t say such stupid things!”

“What stupid things? On the contrary—these
things are not at all stupid. Why ever, Shakespeare
says: “Who’s young in youth hath happiness.”

“Let go of my hand!”

At last, after a long parley, the two men kiss
Madame’s hand and leave the shop, albeit with great
hesitation, as though they had forgotten something.
She, however, runs quickly into the bedroom and once
more seats herself at the self-same window as before.
She sees the doctor and the lieutenant emerge from the
shop, walk slowly some twenty paces, then stand still
and begin to whisper. About what may they be
whispering?
Her heart throbs, and in her temples there is a riot of blood—but for what reason she cannot say. Her heart beats violently. It is just as if these two whispering men out there in the street were deciding her destiny.

After some five minutes the doctor leaves Obtessoff standing and walks away. Obtessoff comes back again. He walks past the shop once—twice. Now he stands at the door, now he resumes his walk. Then, very carefully, he pulls the bell.

“Who's there?”

She suddenly hears the voice of her husband. The bell's ringing—and you're not answering it!” he cries sharply.

She tumbles out of bed, puts on his dressing gown, and still half dizzv with sleep, sluffles in his carpet slippers into the shop.

“What can I do for you, Sir?” he asks Obtessoff.

“Give me—give me—fifteen kopecks' worth of peppermint lozenges!”

With interminable yawns and pauses, almost dropping into a fit of bitter weeping. “And how unhappy I am!” murmurs the chemist to herself, and throws an evil look upon her husband, who is standing and walks away. Obtessoff comes back again.

“Here are your lozenges,” he adds. “Now pour from the printing machines.”

Two minutes later the chemist's wife observes Obtessoff come out of the shop. After making a few steps, he throws the peppermint lozenges into the dusty road. As he turns the corner the doctor advances to meet him, they join arms, and then disappear, gesticulating violently, into the mists of the morning.

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How unhappy I am!” murmurs the chemist to herself, and throws an evil look upon her husband, who is swiftly disappearing so that he may plunge into sleep again. “Oh, how unhappy I am!” she repeats, and then suddenly bursts into a fit of bitter weeping. “And nobody, nobody knows...”

I left fifteen kopecks 'lying on the counter,' grumbles the chemist, as he wraps himself in the bed-clothes. “Please go and put them into the drawer.”

And then he drops off into the profoundest sleep.

(Translated by H.S.)

Views and Reviews.

The writer of "Literary Notes" began his career with a straightforwardness. He said: “the 'output' is in full swing.” I am, of course, obliged for the encouragement, but I receive it not with undue scepticism, but with legitimate doubt. "The 'output' is in full swing," and we have no evidence of it in The New Age. To ask me to believe that there are such beings as publishers who can make a preposterous demand on my credence. A publisher is a person who publishes books, and a book is not published if it is not sent to The New Age. I have seen many books since Christmas, and if I reason from my definition, I must conclude that nearly all the publishers are dead; but logic is not always a satisfactory method of arriving at truth. I am assured that volumes are "now pouring from the printing machines," and I accept the testimony as credible. Somewhere, somehow, books are being produced, and hurled into the vast inane of the circulating libraries. Furtively is this being done, for The New Age sees none of them; it is as though the publishers had emptied their commodities through a secret window, with a wink of the eye and a whispered injunction not to let The New Age know about it.

I write this article to reassure the publishers. Furtiveness is unbecoming to men who are engaged in legitimate business; it looks suspicious, and may in time lead to suspicion. Of course, we of The New Age know that all is "done in love and reverence care" for us; but the public, that baffle-headed beast of many burdens, cannot be expected to understand this. We know that the publishers withhold their books from us because they think that we should not like them. "The New Age," they say, "is so superior in style and taste to the mass of our publications that it would be almost offensive to offer them to it. Besides, the reading of our publications might corrupt the style of The New Age, and degrade its taste; and we do not wish to spoil the only literary periodical that now exists." That difference is not only intelligible, it is admirable; it shows that even publishers have somewhat of that sense of grace and graciousness left in them. But the public, that baffle-headed public, will suppose that The New Age is beingboyocotted, for even courtesy may be misunderstood by people who have no manners. I thank the publishers for their consideration, although I protest that it is unnecessary. We are used to bad books; indeed, they are as manna unto our souls, for they provoke us to write good reviews. From all points of view, it must be admitted that a good review is desirable. It maintains the reputable nature of reviewing as a craft; it should save the author from succumbing to the hirpling voice of praise; and it does no damage to the sale of a book, for sales are determined not by reviewers' but by travellers' eloquence, and the average book has a saleable life of only about a month, during which period, as a rule, The New Age reviews do not appear. Of course, it must be admitted that The New Age does not supply those pellets of praise that disfigure the published works of the wretched. "This is Mr. Penman at his best,—Daily Liar!" or "Mr. Penman has never done anything better than this. —Another Daily Liar!" or "Balzac is surpassed and Hugo submerged by the amazing genius of Mr. Penman."—More Lies! I see The New Age in that gallery. But it argues a lack of originality on the part of publishers to continue to print these delectable extracts. When every book is everybody's best, and is better than every other book ever published, even advertisement loses its proper reward, and is unable to influence the sale of a publication.

It happens sometimes, but very rarely, that unfavourable reviews of a book are received from the daily press; usually, the proportion of favourable to unfavourable reviews is that announced by Mr. Evelyn Nash in the case of Lord Somebody's reminiscences. Out of 150 reviews 146 were favourable. With plays, the proportion would probably be reversed, for dramatic critics always damn; but a woman showed the way to deal with this sort of thing. When a play by Mr. Arnold Bennett was unfavourably noticed, Miss Marie Tempest published the most unfavourable extracts she could find as her advertisement of the play. It is not beyond the reach of intelligent publishers that they might think of something similar. Mr. Shaw has not even heard of her; he asks Obtessoff.

"Me?" says Obtessoff. "I protest? No! We were subsidised with about £200 a year. Indeed, we are the only creators of wealth, and a grateful country voted them recognition.

The writer of "Literary Notes" began his career with a straightforwardness. He said: “the 'output' is in full swing.” I am, of course, obliged for the encouragement, but I receive it not with undue scepticism, but with legitimate doubt. "The 'output' is in full swing," and we have no evidence of it in The New Age. To ask me to believe that there are such beings as publishers who can make a preposterous demand on my credence. A publisher is a person who publishes books, and a book is not published if it is not sent to The New Age. I have seen about two new books since Christmas, and if I reason from my definition, I must conclude that nearly all the publishers are dead; but logic is not always a satisfactory method of arriving at truth. I am assured that volumes are "now pouring from the printing machines," and I accept the testimony as credible. Somewhere, somehow, books are being produced, and hurled into the vast inane of the circulating libraries. Furtively is this being done, for The New Age sees none of them; it is as though the publishers had emptied their commodities through a secret window, with a wink of the eye and a whispered injunction not to let The New Age know about it.

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March 27, 1913.

THE NEW AGE

proval, and we know that silence gives consent, and Shakespeare has assured us that it is the perfectest herald of joy. True, there was that unfortunate lapse from felicity when Mr. Wells claimed damages from us for breach of copyright; but any man not a lawyer might misunderstand his legal rights. We cannot suppose that Mr. Wells deliberately damaged the commercial prospects of his later novel, "Marriage," by instructing his publisher not to send a copy to us; it is more probable that he had a hand-illuminated copy prepared for us, bound in rich leather and elaborately tooled, and that the porter employed to convey it to us purloined it, and disappeared from the haunts of men with his treasure.

Authors, I am sure, are not to blame for the defects of distribution of their output; it is the publishers' exaggerated regard for us, and the jealousy and stupidity of their minions, that are responsible for the apparent boycott of THE New Age. But I assure them that what is good enough for the public to read is bad enough for us to criticise; and as the publishers are among the most enthusiastic admirers of our criticisms, I may remind them that it is not advisable to drive us to writing reviews of imaginary books. There has been done in the columns of THE New Age, and correspondents have protested their frantic desire to read the books. It is better far for everyone to read some version to distinguish the reviews in THE New Age; and if the "torrent of volumes now pouring from the printing machines" turns this way, I will say, like another Lear: "Pour on, I will endure." A. E. R.

REVIEWS.

Anecdotes of Bench and Bar. Collected and Arranged by Arthur H. Engelbach. With an Introduction by the Right Hon. F. E. Smith. (Grant Richards. 7s. 6d. net.)

The stories in this quite unnecessary book have not been "arranged by Arthur H. Engelbach"; there is no sign of any arrangement whatever. They are not placed in chronological order; they are not grouped under authors' names, except in the index; they are not grouped according to their subject-matter or even according to the courts or circuits wherein or wherein they were uttered. They are not arranged; and so many of them were told in Jerrold's recent "Book of Famous Wits," that it would not be really unfair to say that they were not collected by Mr. Engelbach. True, Mr. Engelbach gives a bibliography, which does not include Mr. Jerrold's book; but the fact that he is unaware of the existence of the "Book of Famous Wits" does not make his own compilation any the worse.

Mr. F. E. Smith says in his Introduction: "I am satisfied that no one who glances through these good-humoured pages will refuse an expression of gratitude to the gentleman who has made so discriminating a compilation." Mr. Smith is satisfied about many things that do not satisfy us; and we are not satisfied that this compilation is "discriminating." It tells us all the stories we ever knew, and a few others that a merciful Providence had withheld from us; and the proper description of such a compilation is "comprehensive," not "discriminating." But we never were satisfied with Mr. Smith's use of the English language; and the fact that he is ignorant of the proper use of the word "discriminating" is indicative of the lack of comprehensiveness manifested in other of his public statements.

Health Through Diet. By Kenneth G. Haig. (Methuen. 3s. 6d. net.)

Every Christ has a St. Paul; even a lawyer sometimes has a devil; and why should not a doctor have an interpreter and apostle? Dr. Kenneth Haig is the son of his father, Dr. Alexander Haig; and he has written this book to tell us briefly and clearly what his father said about the new devil, Uric-Acid, and his warfare with the Great God, Diet. He warns the unregenerate of the error of their ways; he counsels and corrects the weak in the faith; and he pleads long and earnestly with the backsliders. There is, and can be, nothing wrong with Diet; to go gathering nuts and whey is the only satisfactory method of obtaining and maintaining health; and if any untoward consequences have followed the adoption of the new régime, not Diet, but the folly and insensibility of the backsliders, must be held responsible. You cannot serve two masters; you must not eat Haigs and bacon, or you are yet in your sins, and Coliemia, which may be defined as the Diabolism of the Devil, will afflict you. To those who are strong in the faith, Dr. Haig practically promises a new heaven and a new earth. There shall be no more fatigue; there shall be no more pains in childbirth; and he even prophesies that ovulation will not be accompanied by haemorrhage. There shall be no more influenza, there shall be no more gout or rheumatism, there shall be no more Bright's Disease, there shall be no more tuberculosis, there shall be no more cancer. Even cancer, that Dr. Forbes Ross has shown to be due to a deficiency of an alkali, is assumed to be due to the presence of an acid. But "not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, cometh into my kingdom;" there are people so diseased that not even Diet can cure them. They shall be handed over to Uric-Acid, and there shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. They should, if possible, avoid stopping in their sins; no one is too young or too old, too sick or too well, for Diet to improve them. If you have been ill, Diet will cure you; if you have never been ill, Diet will likewise cure you; indeed, the greatest benefits of Diet are bestowed on the laggards. For Mr. Haig says that, although they have never been ill, they have never known Health; and it is to be supposed that they will know it, probably by memory, if they adopt the Uric-Acid-Free Diet. For tips and starting-points, readers may be referred to the book; everything that is needful is either given or advertised therein; and we have no doubt that when next we ask, with Job, "Is there any taste in the white of an egg?" we shall hear a chorus of affirmative answers, and he further instructed that the white of an egg also contains albumen.

The Peace Movement of America. By Julius Moritzon. (Putnam. 12s. 6d. net.)

The peace movement of America began in 1809 with a David Low Dodge; this is another of them. For in spite of its price, and its appearance between covers, Mr. Moritzon's work in it is no more than the first attempt to treat the subject as real news." The proper place for news is the newspaper, of which there are some even in America; in a book, we expect a more exacting treatment, more complete and concise information, more balanced judgment, and a more fair style. In this volume, we get none of these things; although in proportion to mass, we get "more" of everything than we do in the newspapers. The book is not exactly a history of the movement, nor a biographical dictionary or portrait gallery of the people who take, and have taken, part in it, nor a record of the tours of various speakers, nor a report of their speeches; nor is it exactly an enumeration of the various societies for the propagation of peace. It is something of all six; it is everything by turns, and nothing long; and it may be recommended to those who like to know how many people can say the same thing in the same words. The book does not state, in summary or extensively, the arguments for peace or the arguments against war; we are told only of the eminence and number of the speakers, of the solemnity or gaiety of the occasions on which they spoke, and are expected to be interested in extracts from after-dinner speeches and pulpit utterances.

Half-Lengths. By the Right Hon. G. W. E. Russell. (Grant Richards. 7s. 6d. net.)

Mr. Russell continues in this volume the publication of his reminiscences, his reviews, and his romances. His reminiscences are so like his reviews that one is not quite sure whether all of them ought not to be included under the heading of his romances. His
romances, of which "A Forgotten Panic" is an example, bear so obvious a resemblance to certain interludes in Disraeli's "Coningsby." Coming Mr. Disraeli's first meetings with Sidonia and with Mr. G. O. A. Head, of Stalybridge, come to memory," that we hardly needed to be told that "the personal part of this narrative is fictitious." We could not imagine Mr. Russell ever doing anything so romantic as talking to a stranger in a train. His review of Mr. Wilfrid Ward's "Life of Cardinal Newman" is competent, and his articles on the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Belmore, and Mr. Labouchere, were acceptable in the periodicals and on the occasions of their publication. But they are not worthy of exhumation than "A Cabinet of Miniatures is worthy of Christian Burial. Not all reminiscences are interesting, and Mr. Russell tells his with such discretion that they are no more valuable as biography than the records of the Court Circular.

**Faith.** By R. B. Cunningham Graham. (Duckworth. 28s. net.)

We could have dispensed with this republication, but Messrs. Duckworth have no mercy. Cunningham Graham, with his keen nose for stinks, and his sharp eye for the detestable features of the human race, is just upon the right track. Here are Candida and the Bird, still charming, but for the rest of the volume we have anything but thanks. Mr. Graham smells too much powdered horse-gang in the air, sees too much ophthimalia, to say nothing of scabby heads. among his Arabs, in too many cases the cutting of throats is more heroic than, say, the cutting of corns, to make his sketches valuable. His brothel yarns are outclassed by those of Mr. W. N. Willis, in whom Mr. Graham has a most formidable competitor in this genre. His disdain for this disgusting globe is rather antiquated at this time of day, and, as Mr. Graham is still alive, it does not seem genuine. We discover that Mr. Graham's mental equipment is really insufficient for any office but that of mob orator; and if, as he says in his preface, he has some difficulty in writing, we can assure him that there is no necessity for him to take the trouble. Really, we do not deserve his pains.

**Western Men with Eastern Morals.** By W. N. Willis. (Stanley Paul. 5s. net.)

Mr. Willis continues to talk about other people's love-affairs, and to pretend that they are scandalous. Of course, Mr. Willis has the best intentions when he exposes the concubinage adopted by the white men living in our Eastern possessions; he only wants to rouse public opinion to compel employers to pay wages that will enable an employee to settle in the country of his adoption, legitimate his property, and so forth. What Mr. Willis would call "a dusky spouse." Bastardy, it seems, accompanies the white man in Burmah and similar places, and bastardy, Mr. Willis predicts, will lose us our Eastern Empire if we are not careful. Celibacy, he agrees, is not possible in that climate, nor is that climate suitable to white women; moreover, the wages paid would not enable a man to support a white woman there. But really, you know, it is not proper for white men to live with coloured women out of the bond of wedlock; bastards are born, hearts are broken, murders are committed, and all sorts of fearful things happen if any but a life-long union regularised by law be the custom. Besides, what would mother say if she knew what her son was doing in Burmah, getting wenchs with children and all that sort of thing? So Mr. Willis tells her, and gets the editor of "Truth" to write a preface declaring the scandalous nature of these facts. Of course, Mr. Willis could not keep out of the brothels in Japan or Singapore or wherever he went; but he no longer pretend to legitimate his dispositions from an undesirable woman. I, Willis, admirable man, am never thus tempted. I sit in your brothels. I buy no drink. I catch no disease; but I am sometimes thrown out." Therefore, the Government ought to manage these houses, price the women, inspect them, provide police protection for the innocent women; in short, nationalise the oldest industry in the world. And so on, and so forth. Really, when Mr. Willis has become accustomed to his new knowledge, he should be in much request as a teller of spicy yarns. Some of these, stripped of their sociological surpluses, have a decidedly high temperature, and really ought to be published in yellow-backs.

**The European in India.** By H. Hervey. (Stanley Paul. 12s. 6d. net.)

This is a volume of no particular merit, and of interest only to those Europeans who have been in India and are now content to exchange stories in the club smoking-room. Mr. Hervey gossips about people to be met in India—military men, pressmen, cranks, medical men, Civil Servants, etc., and of all the various types of women. Indeed, the book is not unlike a dissected novel, with its character sketches, its anecdotes, and its description of life in the station. Here is all the material of a novel, except the story, and the skill to make a book. We advise Mr. Hervey to turn his attention to the writing of novels: he has all the clichés pat, and nothing particular to say. The volume is illustrated, as it deserves to be.

**A Crystal Age.** By W. H. Hudson. (Duckworth. 2s. 6d. net.)

Mr. Hudson deserves his republication in "The Readers' Library," and "A Crystal Age" may delight a generation that finds "Looking Backwards," as well as its antidote, "News from Nowhere," intolerable. For Utopian as this story is, it is not doctrinaire; it cannot conceivably be called either Collectivist or Communist. Exactly how the work of the world is performed in "A Crystal Age" we do not know; but we never do know this in romance, nor, indeed, do we need to know. But we must be confessed that the conclusion of this volume is tantalising; we do not know whether the draught from the bottle sent Smith to sleep for ever, or for only a little while. The opening, too, is unsatisfactory; even an Englishman might find himself in Utopia without tumbling into it. These things apart, "A Crystal Age" has the haunting beauty of imagination that is denied us by this life of ours; and if we find that Mr. Hudson arranges for the renewal of the family by a device similar to that of the book, we need not be surprised the book has been relegated to its proper place in fiction. "A Crystal Age," in spite of a few longueurs of description, is a delightful book.

**The Redeemer.** By René Buzin. (Stanley Paul. 6s.)

Leaning out of her bedroom window, gazing into the warm spring night, she mused: "I should like to see him well married—married into some one of the many respectable families round about. In a well-kept house, with two children on his knees, or three, or four. . . . And he— he was living with some one. Oh, he hung the sin of it! And when she meets him he pleads: "You want her to drive me away? You would be the cause of her driving me away?" "The schoolmistress forgot all conventions."

"So much the better," she replied, in virginal indignation. "Ah! you want her to desert me. You will repeat those words."

"It is your place to repent. You—who are living an evil life; you—the lover of a married woman." And, of course, he repents. And, of course, she marries him. And another sinner's soul is saved. Magnificent.

**The Pearl Stringer.** By Peggy Webling. (Methuen. 5s.)

Miss Webling has tried to write the story of a simple friendship between a man and a woman. Weary of all the sexual shush of to-day we naturally were interested. But alas! the book is full of bad writing; grammatical errors are frequent, syntax is ignored, and the style is altogether abominable.
Drama.

BY JOHAN FRANCIS HOPE.

ALTHOUGH "The Pretenders" will have been withdrawn by the time this article appears, it is none the less worthy of consideration, for it relieves us from the necessity of solving the sex problem. Reminiscent as it is of the work of Shakespeare (Hamlet and Macbeth, two of Shakespeare’s most tragic characters, were both firm of purpose, like Earl Skule, when it came to killing a king), yet the character of Bishop Nicholas gives the play its distinction. For "The Pretenders," unlike "Hamlet" or "Macbeth," is a philosophic drama; like "Emperor and Galilean," it is a proleptic refutation of Nietzsche’s doctrine of the will. In other words, "The Pretenders" is Christian in its assumptions and in its demonstrations; and if Nietzsche’s dictum that "Christ is the priest’s will to power" is too extreme, the character of Bishop Nicholas shows that Christianity at least fulfills that purpose.

I have said that the play is a philosophic drama, and in that fact is concealed an artistic weakness. The whole play is self-conscious: the motives are not revealed to the audience by the actions of the characters; they are clearly and deliberately stated by the characters. The play is argumentative in its basis; the action only accompanies the argument to illustrate it. Hakon Hakonsson pleads his right to the kingship like any lawyer, with attestation of veridical proofs; Earl Skule justifies his ambition, and his defect of will to achieve its object, by the lack of decisive evidence of Hakon’s legitimate descent. The self-consciousness is carried to its extreme in the death-scene of Bishop Nicholas, when the Diabolus ex machina gives his reasons for fostering enmity between Skule and Hakon. In fact, we have reason substituted for motive, with the consequence that the play is really a psychological demonstration rather than a spiritual effluence. Ibsen tries, it must be confessed with some skill, to attach a larger drama to the supernatural, he attempts to transform a political issue into a combat of universal purposes. But his debating skill is too great; he argues and argues until he convinces our intelligence, until there is nothing for us to believe, except what he tells us, with the consequence that we cannot believe all.

We can accept Hakon Hakonsson as an exemplar of faith, Earl Skule as an exemplar of doubt, and Bishop Nicholas as envy denying to others the pre-emience it could not attain for itself. But puerile as this conception is, we cannot accept the larger issues that are intended to add majesty to it. For if Hakon Hakonsson were God’s chosen (the Son of God, as the conclusion Ibsen. thought," it is a little strange that this thought had not come to the skulking mind of Skule, "What is called, by the modern sociological school of thought, the constructive genius of God’s chosen is not very remarkable; indeed, his greatness is not intrinsic, it is apparent only by contrast. “Religions are like glow-worms,” said Schopenhauer, “they require darkness to shine in.” God never descended to tell the Pretenders that he was in favour of a monarchy for Norway; but Ibsen raised up Hell to show that Satan disapproved of any such conservation of energy. Goethe’s Mephistopheles was imported from Germany to appear as Bishop Nicholas, and to lure the soul of Earl Skule to perdition. The man who could not think the “king’s thought,” nor renounce his pretensions, who could not will the death of the king because he was uncertain of the rectitude of his claim, is induced to divide the kingdom by rebellion, to set up two kings in Norway, by the last cynical suggestion of Bishop Nicholas. For a time things thrive with him; he beats Hakon in battle, only to be perplexed again by his victory. When the thought of the kingly right over me awakens,” he says, “I’sever he, not I, that is the true king.” He asks why it is that even victory cannot assure him of his right, and discovers that it is the “king’s thought that gives assurance of Hakon’s right only to Hakon, but to himself.” We have God’s calling glimmered through these strange words? “he asks. “If God had garnered up the thought till now, and would now strewn it forth, and had chosen Hakon as the sower? It would have been an unconscious act, without the intervention of a divine will. Hakon has no right to his kingdom; what Hakon says is of the work of Shakespeare (Hamlet and Macbeth, the Pretenders’)(though the motive is not revealed to the audience). But his fantastic projection of character. It would seem that Christians know more of, and have more interest in, Hell than in Heaven; certainly, their genius is better exemplified in the denunciation of evil than in the declaration of good. Ibsen has not succeeded where Milton failed: Paradise is still lost to us, in spite of the triumph of King Hakon over the mere Pretenders.

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Art.
A Question of Finish.
By Anthony M. Ludovici.

This is far too vexed a question to be settled in a single article, even if I were the person to settle it—a suggestion which I should be very loath to make. Still, it is possible to discuss it to some purpose, I believe—more particularly when at least half the pictorial art-problems of our time can, in a sense, be traced to cluster round it. For the question of finish is the question of adequacy of expression, and without plunging into any metaphysical vapourings, we all have more or less of a clear idea of the meaning of adequacy of expression. It means that the original conception of the artist—be he poet, architect, musician or painter—has been sufficiently fully exteriorised to do justice, in the eye, ear or heart of the man of taste, to that original conception. It may be argued that to the artist the most adequate expression always falls very far short of his original conception; but in this respect let allowances be made for the exuberance of the artist’s spirit at the moment of generation and conception, which bears the same relation to the lover’s feelings before the consummation of love, as the artist’s comparative indifference to his expression once it is done with, bears to the lover’s feelings after the consummation.

It is the constant endeavour, however, of every sound, unromantic artist, to make his expression as adequate as possible, and only thus can he exercise the power he feels within him, only thus can he materialise that power. If this be so, then every sound artist must instinctively long and strive for an ever greater and greater mastery over his means, so that the power within him can be exteriorised with ever less and less loss. This must constitute the passion of the classic artist; it must constitute his apprenticeship; it must constitute his struggle. In other words, to be true to my original definition, the sound artist will be for ever striving to attain to that high degree of finish which will yield the closest material approximation to his original conception. Because loss of vigour means inadequate expression, provided that the original conception had vigour. Finish, in this sense, then, is a highly desirable, indeed eternal, perfection, since it is a quality which, if insisted upon to-day would drive not a quarter, nor a half, and not three-quarters—but at least seven-eighths of the present poets, architects, painters, furniture builders, sculptors, musicians and others who now work with such evident poverty of means, scrounging life from the works of others. For this reason, the quality of adequate expression, or high finish, is one of the most attractive qualities of high finish and academical exactitude without any longer possessing the wherewithal to exercise these qualities; without, that is to say, possessing the love, passion and vigour to create a fine content, a great work of art. In this way high finish has become associated in modern minds with decline, with emptiness of motive, with jejune and with speciousness.

For, what was the artistic movement provoked and practically brought into being by the Graeco-Roman school of France in the first half of the nineteenth century? It was Impressionism. The Impressionists protested against all this high finish, this consummate technical mastery, without a vestige of heart or soul behind it. They protested against mere technical excellence, devoid of all love and passion. They said that because high finish happened to be unfortunately connected with these sterile painters of the Graeco-Roman school, it was therefore a quality wholly to be condemned. This was a facile and plausible way of settling the difficulty. It was a manner of shelving the question once and for all, which opened the flood gates to all the ruck and scum of the studios, and which allowed no hope, no aim in existence. The cure for this was to correct their scheme of life, or the scheme of life of their nation. The corrective would have consisted in giving a meaning to their lives; or the scheme of life of their nation. The corrective would have consisted in giving a meaning to their lives; which might have given a meaning and a purpose to their skilful technique.

What did the Impressionists do? They painted “atmosphere,” “values”; they reformed the palette, all more accessories—and they inveighed against the careful technique of the Academy in such a manner which allowed every impudent and incompetent little student upstart to regard his confused rubbishy daubs as masterpieces! In fact, these people of “sufficiency” in my presence, turned up their noses when the Futurists came over, actually paved the way, prepared the terrain, for these Italian anarchists, and did everything in their power in painting Futurism in impossible.

And now, are we to suppose that this mistake, this blasphemous error, was perpetrated in the pictorial arts alone? Is there not evidence enough that it has also been perpetrated in music and in literature and in architecture? Let those who cry too readily against high finish consider these matters, and look into their own hearts. Nothing is understood nowadays. The whole of the Impressionistic movement has not yet been placed and by those who are the most eager to "gas" and to scribble about it. When painters began to talk they damned their calling.
Pastiche.

The Profound and Poignant Musings of a Bachelor of Arts, who has relinquished the Position of Pedagogue after Divers Vicissitudes in that Calling.

The deuce take all this usherdom! At length, Haggard and woebegone I hang my gown—

isk-eaten, shabbily spectre, that has haunted

Class-room and corridor and dormitory.

On yonder nail, where now it idly sprawls,

An emblem of futility.

Only to think that I have borne thus far

Blatant chicanery and blustering

Of pettifogging dullards with their names

Puffed and upholstered with a bloated pad

Of padding alphabetical; whose portent,

Vouched for by framed diplomas—gaudy trash—

Was darkly dubious,

And bores themselves, through

The sordid catalogue of femines

That end in us, and such-like jettison

From Roman galleys, I could hear the sweet

Uncumbered music of the men, whose art

Knew not Declension, stumbled not upon

Defunct Verbs, and soared above the litter

Of Ablatives and Supines.

Thus Elliman,

Burly of frame, full-throated, headstrong, loud

Of laughter, doles out his didactic shreds—

Algebra, Latin, French, Geography,

Was vented on a blubbering brat, who strove

To stab and slander with a peevish sneer,

For hot pursuit of skirt.

After Divers Vicissitudes in that Calling.

Art for Art's sake,

And so they all

Ply their mechanic round, that bores themselves,

And bores their listless audience, whose ears

Deaf to all else, are doubly grown alert

To catch the tinkle chiming out the knell

Of irksome jouising.

Well, enough of this—

This and the niggard skimping out of fare,

This and the scowls of domineering apes,

This and the skulking fellowship of fools,

Of weaklings, braggarts, liars, knaves and curs,

Alert to fawn and wheedle for a coin,

To stab and slander with a peevish sneer,

To out and trample under foot.

So I, Spurning the dust as Holy Writ ordains,

Go forth—I reck not how—to gain release,

As fiddler, sexton, huckster, fisherman,

Tramp, tinker, forester, an I but find

Freedom and space and air and buoyancy.

P. Selver.

THE BLACKBIRD.

Up at five, by half-past on the road,

Roasting it bravely, dinner-box in hand;

And meeting now and then, with friendly nod,

A fellow-worker; sometimes joining band

Of laughing; joking, argufying friends.

And Katie, she got red in the face a bit,

While blackie the rogue was ever in front with twit

And then, 'twas in the lush and leafy June,

Sweethearts sweet, he chuckled,

"Kiss her, kiss her, do it now, taste of bliss."

And so they all Ply their mechanic round, that bores themselves,

And bores their listless audience, whose ears

Deaf to all else, are doubly grown alert

To catch the tinkle chiming out the knell

Of irksome jouising.

Well, enough of this—

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Freedom and space and air and buoyancy.

P. Selver.

DEFINITIONS.

For Art's sake, Art for Art's sake, Life for Life's sake.
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

BRITISH JOURNALISTS IN PORTUGAL.

Sir,—It is not long ago that I attempted to comment in The New Age on the treatment of political prisoners in Portugal. The New Age published a series of articles certain British journalists, invited by the "Propaganda de Portugal," have visited Portugal. This excursion trip did not, of course, attract any attention here in England. To my surprise, the tour, which was the result of inspiration from the Portuguese Legation in London, has been turned into a sort of semi-official visit of journalists to Portugal. However, absurd this delusion may appear to journalists in this country, its prevalence may do some mischief in Portugal. For the fact has often more influence in Portuguese politics than the fact itself. Motives of prudence, Sir, might have prevented the Portuguese Republic from making their new device known, still their Press delights in the fact that the guests of the "Propaganda de Portugal" saw one of the prisons, and that their impressions could not have been more favourable. Into the prison horrors I do not enter here. The incredible duration of preliminary detention, the congregation of prisoners in filthy chambers, the physical degradation of prisoners, are accusations not yet withdrawn by the "Times," "Morning Post," and the "Daily News"—papers which, I note, ignore this opportunity of visiting Portugal. It is sufficient, however, for me to mention the following fact: Several non-commissioned officers," to quote the "Times" (February 13), "who were arrested some twenty-one months ago against the Republic, and imprisoned in the Castle of Saint George, are still waiting for trial. They recently sent a letter to the Press asking that some foreign (sic) journalists who are about to visit Portugal should inspect their prison and investigate their case. As a punishment for this, the Government now refuses to allow the prisoners to receive the usual visit from relatives and friends. This may make your many readers realise the distance that divides the two civilisations—that of Northern Africa and that of Western Europe.

* * *

AMERICAN LIBERTY.

Sir,—I enclose a most exquisite cutting from the Calgary "Herald" describing the advance of civilisation in Spokane. I may explain that Spokane is a town of something over 100,000 people in the State of Washington, Washington is famous as the most progressive State in the Union, and very proud of its "one hundred thousand fellow-floggers have a nature other than mine? In their usual fashion, women are now to retire to harems—the need seems incredible! We get a little higher: my intelligence, my discrimination from the wallowing mass, yes, while I consider that Adeline Duchess of Bedford, for instance, so endowed with all that civilisation can give a woman, supported an Act which reintroduced flogging, I decide that there must be some fundamental difference between me and her. Nothing more can be done for her by civilisation than has been done. What can I suppose but that she and her hundred thousand floggers have a nature other than mine? In their usual fashion, women are now denying that they mean to roll over on the ground that men have examined all things I might possibly write about. Literary men would have an equally good excuse for excluding nothing new under the sun, but some people can say the old things better than others. I have something more than a common talent in literature, and that is why I contribute to The New Age. But I will answer about this harems suggestion in a purely womanly way, without more literary style creeping in than I can help. This is, perhaps, a happy idea I Co., but, for my part, I have never been so luckless as to have to share a man with another woman—in fact, things have so happened that it would never occur to me to advise other women to retire to harems—the need seems incredible!

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The whole history of civilisation, the position of subject races, etc. : Finland, I suppose! But I cannot very well argue with a lady who credits the harem system with the fall of Turkey. Turkey rose to glory with the harem system. That is also where the philosopher of The New Age, with its overweening male vanity, leads. But that is Mrs. Hastings' Movement, glowing with a life and energy which will be the salvation of a decadent and machine-made world.

K. B.

Mrs. Hastings replies: Whatever can I reply to this illiterate femalen? I must rise, plane by plane, after her own manner. First about the harem. I cannot in the least comprehend why any man on this ground that men have examined all things I might possibly write about. Literary men would have an equally good excuse for excluding nothing new under the sun, but some people can say the old things better than others. I have something more than a common talent in literature, and that is why I contribute to The New Age. But I will answer about this harems suggestion in a purely womanly way, without more literary style creeping in than I can help. This is, perhaps, a happy idea I Co., but, for my part, I have never been so luckless as to have to share a man with another woman—in fact, things have so happened that it would never occur to me to advise other women to retire to harems—the need seems incredible!

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The whole history of civilisation, the position of subject races, etc. : Finland, I suppose! But I cannot very well argue with a lady who credits the harem system with the fall of Turkey. Turkey rose to glory with the harem system. The "rise" of women seems invariably to accompany de-
WOMAN'S SUFFRAGE.

Sir,—May I add briefly to what your courtesy has already permitted me to say on this subject?

Miss Frances H. Low, whose fine dealing with the woman's question appeals strongly, nevertheless appears to me to lack so much on one side the numerical disproportion between the sexes which denies to so many women the full normal human life as home-maker and mother which she holds in honour. Yet that is surely radical to the generation and growth of this movement. The old-timed refuges of the unmated maker and parent which she holds in honour. Yet that numerical disproportion between the sexes which denies to me to leave too much on one side—the problem of the to so many women the full normal human life as home-with its competitive cruelties, so destructive of Individual and of race vitality. Surely the woman's revolt against passu, men, I presume) as women has no meaning for her. But I think it has a achieving race-destiny through the experience that our Western civilisation, is already its almost unheeded tendency.

It is, I believe, claimed by advocates of political activity for women that her activities are essentially the same as men's. I will be told that the failure rightly to reverence and protect motherhood is no more than as the bird's seed-carrying to the patient nest. But let the sacrifice of women and the chivalry of men being dealt with a scientific one. He, like the rest of us, has the two alternatives: either to accept the poetical interpretation of a myth or the many scientific explanations of it, bearing in mind that, as a rule, a poetic interpretation contains the elements of many scientific explanations. A scientist will probably dismiss the former alternative with contempt; an artist is at liberty to take a scientific view into consideration if he wishes. As Mr. Hare knows, there are numerous treatises bearing on the Antichrist legend and the Ten Terrors. Most of them are certainly all the important ones, are known to me; but I did not refer to them in detail, simply because they had no bearing on the poetical part of the subject. I am unable at the moment to refer to my back numbers; but I believe I am right in saying that it was Mr. Hare, and not I, who first materialised the question. The NEW AGE, I take it, does not profess to be a threepenny edition of "Notes and Queries." If it did, I should never have referred to the Talmud at all.

Sir,--As I do not quite understand Mr. William I. Hare's attitude with respect to a point he raised in connection with one of my articles, perhaps you will allow me to suggest, with due respect to him, to the many scientific explanations of it, bearing in mind that, as a rule, a poetic interpretation contains the elements of many scientific explanations. A scientist will probably dismiss the former alternative with contempt; an artist is at liberty to take a scientific view into consideration if he wishes. As Mr. Hare knows, there are numerous treatises bearing on the Antichrist legend and the Ten Terrors. Most of them are certainly all the important ones, are known to me; but I did not refer to them in detail, simply because they had no bearing on the poetical part of the subject. I am unable at the moment to refer to my back numbers; but I believe I am right in saying that it was Mr. Hare, and not I, who first materialised the question. The NEW AGE, I take it, does not profess to be a threepenny edition of "Notes and Queries." If it did, I should never have referred to the Talmud at all.

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