NOTES OF THE WEEK.

It has been contended, on the one side, that the strike is due to an "anarchist plot"; and, on the other side, that it is a mere dispute about wages and conditions. If it were the former, it would be something to marvel about, and even, perhaps, to congratulate ourselves upon, for it would undoubtedly be flattering to the Labour leaders to be able to convict them of any idealistic intentions; while, if it were wholly the latter, it is due to an "anarchist plot"; and, on the other side, that it is a mere dispute about wages and conditions.

From the very first, for some reason or other, the Trade Union movement has been comparatively easy in the absence of the sinister atmosphere created by the brothers Geddes. From the very first, for some reason or other, the Trade Union movement has fastened its suspicions upon these two men, with the consequence that at the moment neither the Geddes brothers nor the Government that contains them are in a position to negotiate without risking the kicking over of the table by the men's representatives. It is a lamentable situation in which to find ourselves; but honesty and sense must admit that the Government is much to blame for it. No doubt the Government has a good case; we could state it much more plausibly, indeed, than it has yet been stated. But this excellent case has been obscured and distorted by the fact that Sir Auckland Geddes said he knew that the strike was certain to occur. It is this element, we believe, that has not only prolonged the strike, but transformed the character of Mr. Thomas from that of Privy Councillor to that of an "anarchist" strike-leader. He and his colleagues are justified in their resolution not to be beaten by the recollection and anticipation of the brothers Geddes and Mr. Churchill jubilant. Come what may, they appear to be thinking, a victory for the Geddes can spell no good for Labour; for if the Geddes win to-day, there is no knowing what they will not be at to-morrow.

The carefully taught parrot Press has been repeating the phrase, as if it were a mantram, that this is a "strike against the community." So, in effect, it is; but in this respect it does not differ from any other strike, great or small, or, for the matter of that, from any lock-out, or even from any of the normal operations of capitalist industry. The very conception of capitalist industry is anti-social, or, at least, social only by accident; and it comes ill from the "community" that tolerates profiteering and other and worse forms of social robbery to complain that the employees of its robers are "striking against the community." In the particular case of the railwaymen, moreover, the "community" has almost fewer claims to a decisive opinion than in the case of some other industries. The railways do not belong in any effective sense to the community; they are not run by the railway directors in the interests of the community; the railwaymen themselves have no kind of responsibility for the management and control of the railways; and the "community" at large takes so little interest in the industry that even properly audited accounts are not demanded of its directors. Such a strike might be a "strike against the community" if the community had ever bothered itself with railwaymen's affairs, or had even taken some pains to appoint trustworthy deputies. But since, as we know, the "community" has concerned itself as much with the Martian canals as with the English railways, and has been quite content with the administration of men like the brothers Geddes, the community has really only a small title to respect for its opinions. Its feeling, its needs, its conveniences—these, we admit, are another matter. But the plain fact is that the community must be prepared to take a more active and responsible part in their satisfaction—at least, to the ex-
tent of exercising a right choice of public servants—before it can claim the privilege of judgment between the contending parties.

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Though the Government (and the "community") may be said to have the strike in the depths, it does not follow that the character of the strike is justified, except as a pathological phenomenon. In the present instance, for example, it is obvious that the men have all the excuses it is possible to make for a Trade Union strike. They have been provoked, they have been threatened, they have been the victims of a "plot," and they may well say their general situation has been rendered intolerable. With their known lack of ideas, in short, they had no choice between a strike and a final surrender. On the other hand, we cannot pretend that these excuses appear to us to be more than excuses; for when we come to consider, apart from the suspicions surrounding the strike, the kernel of economic fact contained in it, we cannot shut our eyes to its fallacious and empty character. The ultimate issue of the dispute, it is claimed, is the schedule of future wages; while the standard rates are to include or exclude the war-bonuses added to pre-war wages during the period of the war. Very important, no doubt, if the nominal amount of wages, the mere figure in which they are expressed, were a fixed or even a relatively fixed quantity; under such conditions a wage-strike might, indeed, be said to be concerned with reality. But since we know that the value of wages depends upon prices, and that prices rise faster than wages, a strike for nominal wages ought to appear as the error it is. The wretchedness of the present strike will be most clearly seen if we assume that the railwaymen win upon their issue of wages at the same time that the Government maintains its constitutional right to arbitrate in communal interests; in other words, if we assume that the dispute has the happiest possible conclusion. In that event, we ask, how much better off will the railwaymen be in the possession of the nominal wage-rates they are demanding? Is the 51 shillings weekly minimum anything in itself? Is it any guarantee of a correspondingly adequate purchasing power? Has it, in short, any necessary relation with the general level of prices? If Prices are fixed—as they certainly are—by factors of which Labour is only one—it is not only conceivably, it is in the highest degree probable, that the nominal wages obtained by the railwaymen, whatever their amount in figures, will only serve to cover the cost of subsistence, and probably even less of this. To return to our muttons, it appears to us that the issue of the present strike is entirely obsolete. It is a nominal wage-strike, from the most successful issue of which nothing can be expected by the men but increased prices more than sufficient to cancel the increased wages obtained.

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It is unreasonable to expect that the Labour movement will suddenly realize the folly of its attempt to raise wages at the cost of driving up prices. The education of Labour in even the simplest propositions of economic common sense is painfully slow; and only the experience of the hardest of brickwalls—such as Labour has not even yet encountered—seems likely to bring home to Labour the truth, which a little thought would demonstrate with ease. Nevertheless it is conceivable that as a consequence of the present strike Labour may for once put on its thinking-cap and set itself to compare the advantages contained in the two policies of price-reducing and wage-increasing. The acquisition of purchasing power being the end in view of all economic agitation (on the side of Distribution), there are two methods and only two methods conceivable: one is to raise Wages, and the other is to reduce Prices. Hitherto, it is clear, the whole and exclusive policy of Labour has been that of the latter of these methods. Since as long as we can remember, Labour has been intent on raising wages. But it is no less obvious that, in comparison with the second method—that of reducing the railwaymen's prices in order to obtain increased purchasing power by means of increased Wages has nothing to commend and much to condemn it. See what is involved in the adoption of the first method. In the first place, it isolates Labour and sets it in sharp opposition to the consuming community whose interest naturally leads to rise in prices. Higher wages under the existing system mean higher prices; and thus, not only is Labour condemned to forfeit the presumed advantages of higher wages, but the community likewise suffers in the consequent increased prices. The striking possibility is that wage-demands as arising from the "selfishness" of organised Labour, and as aimed at the throat of the community. All the moral advantage of Labour, in short, is thrown away when the wage-policy is adopted. On the other hand, the adoption of a price-reducing policy would not only spare Labour the onus of the foregoing unavoidable and justifiable charges, but it would, for the first time in history, unite in a common enterprise Labour and the general public. At present and for as long as Labour continues to aim at higher nominal wages, the consuming public is bound to be hostile to the claims of Labour. The public is represented economically by Price; and since the effect of higher wages is to increase Prices, only by a rare impartiality can the public be expected to favour wage-strikes. That is to say, that Labour aims at reducing Prices and at once the situation is transformed. From a force necessarily antagonistic to the interests of the consuming public, Labour becomes a friendly and, very soon, an indispensable and a leading force. From an unpopular movement, Labour would certainly become in a very little while the most popular movement in the country. It is amazing that Labour should have so seldom found occasion for revising its strategy in view of the obstacles it has hitherto encountered, and of which the undoubted opposition of the general public is the greatest. There is not the least need for such an opposition. On the contrary, as against the capitalist system, the real interests of Labour and the public—that is to say, of ninety-nine hundredths of the population—are identical. Labour has only to abandon its present suicidal policy of raising nominal wages and to direct its attention to reducing prices, to bring about a revolution both in its own and in the national history.

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The moment for making the decision herein suggested is distinctly favourable. In the reaction certain to take place after the present strike, whatever may be its immediate results, not only will an opportunity be offered to Labour for a reconsideration of its policy, but the grey dawn will reveal to the general public the mounting cost of living as affected equally by the success or by the failure of the present strike. Prices will more than occupy the stage in the rôle temporarily dropped by Labour, of the villain of the piece; and in no long time the minor villain of Wages will return to bear Prices company. For it cannot be assumed, however the strike may end, that the Wages arrived at will permanently or even for as long as a year satisfy the economic demand of the railways; even if the general public should accept the consequent increased burden of Prices with relative equanimity. Moreover, as we have observed before, Prices are bound to rise and to continue to rise; they constitute, in fact, a peevish law of Prices. The agitation before the winter is over, the agitation now associated with Wages will be reinforced even if it is not overwhelmed by an agitation against high and ever higher Prices. That we are not merely guessing at this conclusion, but calculating in the most coldly scientific method, may be clearly seen by the fact that we have been able to trouble to examine the facts. Price, it has been pointed out, is the product of two factors, that of the supply
of commodities and that of the supply of currency; and if, therefore, we discover that of these two factors the second is increasing faster than the first, no great exertion of brain is necessary to forecast with certainty that Prices will rise. Is it then the fact that the currency—in one of the publications of which we have spoken—is increasing faster than the production of goods? We have only to ask the question to answer it. Everything demonstrates the existence, for the moment, of two streams of opposite intensity but of a single effect. Production is at this moment declining while the currency is being increased. Their common effect cannot possibly be any other than to bring about a momentary, of two streams of opposite intensity but of a single effect. Production is at this moment declining while the currency is being increased. Their common effect cannot possibly be any other than to bring about a momentary depression—may be increased in their real purchasing power without any other effect on Prices but to raise them.

The methods employed by the Government in the present dispute are not such as to make nationalisation popular, least of all, we should say, with the rank and file of organised Labour; and even the Trade Union leaders themselves must begin to entertain doubts concerning the desirability of giving to the State more power over Labour than the State now possesses. It is common ground that the railway industry is at present only partially nationalised. As we interpret the facts, Sir Eric Geddes (an old railway manager) undertook the office of State bailiff in the interests of the private companies over the difficult period of post-reconstruction, intending, when the trouble had been settled by means of State control, to return the industry to its original private owners. But the interlocutor of the State's present control must not be allowed to obscure the fact that in all probability the State's permanent control of the railways would be characterised by still more unscrupulous diplomacy. If while acting merely as a warming-pan for the private capitalist companies, the State can discriminate in the matter of unemployment pay between strikers and non-strikers, and even order the withholding of the pay actually due for work done by the railwaymen, it is not difficult to conceive what action the State might take if the strike were indeed a "strike against the community" under a nationalised railway industry. And if, in addition, the proposal of Mr. Bevin's Union were adopted, to give the State a monopoly of the existing credit or purchasing power of the community, the absolute despotism of the State would be theoretically and practically complete; not a soul would be able to live without the permission of the brothers Geddes and Mr. Churchill. In view of this possibility, although abundantly clear by the action taken by the State during the present dispute, if the movement towards Nationalisation is not immediately dropped by the Miners and Railwaymen, we shall know that they are men incapable of learning even in circumstances which should be more clear than the character, the natural character, of the State when entrusted with the supreme power resident in economic power. In the supposed interests of the community it will stick at nothing to suppress liberty. Wanting control over their own economic power, even the greatest Labour organisations are powerless against the tyranny of the State. Unless, therefore, the Trade Unions are prepared to obtain control over their industry without the intermediate of State control, they are preparing for themselves and the public an era of unparalleled State-slavery.

The verdict on the printers' unions which have attempted to exercise a censorship over the Press in the interests of Labour must be: "Not guilty; but don't do it again." As an exemplary branch of exceptional malice and mendacity of the Keep Press, the protest of the printers has every justification; and what years of reasoning, appeals for fair play and moderation of statement on the part of the Labour Press have failed to accomplish, the threatened strike of the printers has brought about in a day or two. It is true that the action of the printers is an exception which ought to establish more firmly the rule of free speech and free publication; for these are essentials of civilisation, and, still more, of democracy; but even our dearest rights need occasioning to be remembered that they are not absolute rights, but rights conditional upon responsibilities accepted and duties performed. It is ridiculous to pretend that the Press is "free" but for the printers, or that, without any other censorship than its own, it is "fair." The Press, like other commercial institutions, is under the permanent censorship of its capitalist proprietors, or of the capitalist advertisers; and its conception of "fair play" is usually that of repeating lies the more blatantly as they are reasonably exposed. Moreover, it has become almost a rule of the Press never to enter into a criticism of its policy, or to advertise the fact that reasonable objection exists. If the printers' action induces the kept Press to have some respect for truth and fair comment in the future; in short, to do its own censoring—we shall owe to the printers a moral reform of incalculable value.
Towards National Guilds.

[In the present series of Notes we have in mind the scheme already several times referred to for bridging over, without social catastrophe, the interregnum between Capitalism and Economic Democracy.]

The whole of the Socialist movement has been based on an intellectual error: the error of supposing that it is the business of the community to socialise and control production. The business of the community is to socialise and control the product.

Whoever, among theorists, first attempts to get something done is regarded by the rest as a heretic. Practice is heresy to theory, as theory is, too often, foolishness to practice.

In Utopia there is a cotton factory so perfectly designed that one man, by pressing a series of electric buttons, can turn out cotton goods sufficient for the whole of the neighbouring population of 100,000 persons. Alas, they have not the spending-power to enable them to purchase the product; and, as for the engineer himself, if he lived upon cotton he could not absorb the funds of his industry. Utopia is not a remote country. In a measurable time, at the present rate of invention, many of our industries will be able to be operated by a small minority of the population. If this minority should price its product at cost the rest of us will have to go without, since the sums dispensed to us in labour and salaries and dividends would be equal in purchasing-power only to a small fraction of the price put on the goods. It is necessary to sell below cost if consumption is to equal production. In other words, let production go on as it will with the aid of all the invention of which the producing geniuses are capable, but let us fix the price of the product for the social end of equitable distribution.

Why should the producer be the distributor also? Skill in production does not necessarily imply skill in distribution; and a system organised perfectly for production has no necessary affinity with a system organised perfectly for distribution. Lord Leverhulme is a great organising producer, a producer of genius; but his ability to distribute equitably is lower than that of a Bantu chief.

Miner: "I have the coal, which has cost me so-and-so much labour to produce. I'm prepared to dispose of it to anybody who can give me my cost for it plus a little bit of mark-up in the way of inducement to go on getting coal. If I get only my costs it wouldn't hardly draw me down the mine to-night, daddy! I don't want to be paid in money; money's no goad to pant with me. Give me money, but give me money's worth something. I'll part with my coal to anybody who will give me money enough to cover my costs plus the extra. That's true. But I'll do better than that, if you haven't got the money on you; I'll take a little sum on account and an I.O.U. to say that you'll share with me in the goods you make with my coal. I'll do better than that if you like: I'll take an I.O.U. down for a share in the proceeds—provided your I.O.U. is good enough to enable me to raise money on it. What's that? You've got a better idea still? Right you are! I'll let you have the coal at half cost me if you'll let me have a share of the goods at half they cost you. Good all round. We each get our costs, and each get our goods below cost."

Compare the real credit of a Bank of Producers with the credit of a Bank of Property-owners. The credit of the Producers' bank is backed by Production; the credit of the other bank is backed by titles to property. The one is a real, the other only a legal, credit. If the latter banks all failed nobody need be a penny the worse off, provided the Producers' banks continued to be backed by Production.

We are aiming at bringing into existence a new kind of credit—credit on its ability to produce—Labour credit. Labour credit, backed by the power to produce and deliver the goods, would only subordinate the credit that is based only on property.

A Producers' Bank, say in the mining industry, would bring about the following results: enable the price of coal to the ultimate consumer to be considerably reduced; put the miners in a position to pay the current dividend on all the existing capital invested in the industry; ensure Producers' control in course of time by their acquisition of the right to introduce fresh capital based on their Labour-credit; put a premium on efficiency of production by raising wages (or reducing prices in general) after each economy or labour-saving discovery; enable the industry to dispense with State aid or State-control; bring about a revolution of price and conditions in a few months; make the transition from Capitalism to National Guilds easy, expeditious, and to the public advantage of all! A Producers' Bank is worth striking for, if, indeed, there were any public opposition. But of what would the opposition consist? The public would sympathise with a demand that meant the instant reduction of the price of household coal; the existing proprietors could not object to a scheme designed to increase their purchasing power, improve their conditions, unite them as prospectively senior partners in the industry, and bring them into public favour as the saviours of the nation. Who, then, would object? There are left only the finance-merchants, the dealers in proprietary credit, and the ultimate price-fixers for the community. Even they, however, would have no just title to object; for we do not propose to confiscate or nationalise or, in any way, trench upon their present monopoly. All we intend to do is to create a new form of Credit, based on Labour's ability to produce; and to employ that Credit in Production. Why, then, should even the financiers object, unless their purpose is to retain their monopoly by the suppression of a possible competitor? There's the rub! As has been said before, however, the people including the public, the coal-proprietors and the miners) are many, while the financiers are few.

"Nobody has ever lived in a healthy society." A healthy society is one in which the Distribution of commodities keeps pace in equity with the Production of commodities. Every century the capacity to produce is multiplied four-fold; but in this present century, the purchasing power of a day's labour is less than it was a hundred years ago. The criterion of a healthy and advanced society is the amount of goods (of all kinds) you can obtain for an hour's or a day's labour. An advanced society such as ours that rewards a day's labour with a day's food is advanced—towards corruption. With the mechanical resources and organisation of modern civilisation at our disposal, a few years' labour should keep a man in comfort for life! The incredulity I felt on reading this confirms the truth of the opening sentence.

"Ring the bell," as Bacon said, "and call the wits together." Give the leaders of the Miners' Federation, the leaders among the colliery-proprietors, and the heads of the Government, and our combined wits could perfect a plan which without further ado would settle the Labour v. Capitalist problem for all time.

National Guildsmen.
Northern Lights.

By Leopold Spero.

III.—WILD RASPBERRIES.

The wisdom of dining in an Automat, aye, and of luncheon and breakfasting, too, in the same earnest and respectable milieu, becomes most apparent only when you have learnt the unbelievable lesson that Great Britain, compared with Scandinavia, is a very Paradise of cheap submarine campaign first began to be pushed to its logical living. The Swedes blame our blockade for this pleasant and friendly anticipation of an event which was after all.

damaged us, what indemnity are we to demand from the Germans. For two years they had combined Grasshopper made all their preparations with an eye upon that three months, with Deutschland ueber alles, that they finally persuaded that things would not perhaps be the days when Liege remained more than humanly.

sacred pledge of Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B., and his way across the Eastern sea; at all events, we were the sea-power of Germany was felt in all its bitter force when indemnities are duly apportioned against those who have variously scored among his understrappers who joined in the conspiracy to discredit the good name of our country in the eyes of neutral peoples?

Let us leave an unfruitful subject. The Swedes began to respect that of the proletariat which is the proper meed of those who have backed the wrong horse. It was so obvious, they more than ill when their indemnity were not reciprocated. Perhaps a waft of that strange disease which kills the sense of humour had found its way over the Eastern sea; at all events, we were branded unreasonable—but, we were respected the more in proportion to the stubbornness of our unreason.

True, with money enough, one could still get what one needed for the table, by dint of scheming, lying, and playing the whole gamut of the old devices which we, too, learnt in our season. But for the poor there was nothing except higher wages, and when these did not suffice to still the clamour of hungry bellies, the blessed word Bolshevism appeared to save the moral situation. Simultaneously, it is true, there appeared in Stockholm some hundreds of unwelcome visitors from Russia, whose conduct and activities made it all the easier to abuse bourgeois浅薄ism, hereditary darkness of spirality, which is the proper need of those who have the impertinence to be hungry without being as rich as those who have enough, and the result is the present-day political situation of Sweden, where all the consequences of aristocratic and militarist blindness, plutocratic scoundrelism, and bourgeois snobbery and untruth, is laid upon the broad shoulders of the working man, strangely unwilling to bear the burden. The middle-class citizen, exasperated by the bad state of the investment market and by the knowledge that his own economic reserves are not without their limit, and being far too deeply awed and impressed with the godfather merchant either to legislate towards effective taxation of his ill-gotten gains or towards removing the possibility of propagation in the species, finds comfort in referring broadly to those who are poorer still than himself as "These Bolsheviks." Well, it may be that the quickest way to make Bolsheviks of the working-class is to call it Bolshevik long enough and with enough earnestness and consistency. We shall soon find out, here at home just as soon as in Sweden.

The Automat mitigates the shock of Sweden's dearness, for here at least you can get a sort of beer for a threepence and a sort of false steak and potatoes for a florin, and sandwiches of certain kinds for anything between fourpence and a shilling. But to one who remembers the pre-war glory of the Swedish smorgas-bord, that apotheosis of the spirit of Ant; storing up the money they made, they frailly posed on a slice of roll and butter partake of the nature of a tragedy, for they arouse both pity and horror in the mind of the spectator. Sooner or later, you are bound to face this reflection, if your purpose has been to keep within the limit of a pound a day, and leave the luxuries to profiteers. At the same time, it is not fair to picture Scandinavia as a land where the tradition of hospitality and good feeding has been suffered to languish into something pale and repellent, in caricature of its former self. It is still possible to be well fed for a price. Let us have our four o'clock lunch on the good ship "Goteborg," bound for Kristiania from its godfather port. The saloon tables are scarcely decked for the sacrifice, the diligent stewardess has hardly set the table. One is horrified . . . suppose there should not be enough! But there is more than enough of everything. Insinuatingly, while you are still thinking partly about the butter and partly about the girl whose skirts blew close around her and staring out to sea and totally ignoring the "Goteborg's" inquisitive nose poked almost into the door of a red-plank house among the cliffs, seeing a better and more enduring sight than the visit of a small white steamer with letters and soda water and a few steel pipes and a case or two of dry goods . . . insinuatingly, the stewardess murmurs the word "schnapps," and you nod a far-away assent, as if these things were not for you to decide, but in the hands of the gods, who would not have brought you in the reach of aquavit unless they had meant you to take your share. There is lager beer, too, at this remarkable meal, and a tangled wilderness of cold dishes, salt herring, cucumber salads, tomatoes, sausage, veal, tongue, ham, hard-boiled eggs, anchovies, salmon, cheese. To the knowledge, you are convinced that there is more than sufficient for any man's lunch; and yet, it is not the
lunch at all, but only the outposts of the vast entrenchment of cooked fish, meat, vegetables, biscuits, stewed fruit, tea and coffee that will be found behind and be attacked, taken at the point of the best Eskilstuna knives, forks and spoons and utterly destroyed, even by that frail, ethereal-looking, flirtatious young virgin with the corn-coloured hair, who has been exchanging razor-edged grin, as he points a toe and postures and idly toys in your sight with her flash engagement ring, to intimate discretion to you lest a sleepy fiancé awake at last to the sad realities of his position. What a formidable race!

Stromstad, where we must put up for the night on account of grave but unexplained sea-perils, has a cozy harbour to itself, an esplanade in the best Eastbourne manner, shops and other attractions to tempt the over-fed passengers to land and see what is doing. Some of them find a dance in progress on the boarded floors of the Kurhaus, the children and very young folk among the visitors—for this is one of your Marstrands—much excited about it, for they are the chief revellers, and some of them have put on fancy dress, and those who have not gone so far are nevertheless a comely sight in their flannels and white cotton dresses. But that is no reason for the horror that follows, a minuet danced to the tinkle of a maltreated piano by a thin-cheeked spinster rigged out a la Pompadour and a silly forme of self-satisfaction crossed by an inane, insane cigar shift their fat knees uneasily under the round tables, and the pert, attentive waitresses in cloaks of self-satisfaction crossed by an inane, insane, ill-fitting frock. The production and distribution matters are mentioned and want is made to return to the House of Parliament at the other end, and in between, the production matters as of minor importance and want to argue on the evils of the present system of distribution. The production and distribution matters are tempting enough red herrings trailed across the real track of our argument, but I prefer to stick to the first track and explain my objections to the agitator, and why I recommended propaganda counteracting his. (I am not deliberately shirking the stating of a case on Production matters, and have stated it elsewhere many times to the best of my ability, when and where I thought it would do most good.) Yours may be a sound argument that the main thing to attack is the evil which breeds agitation and agitators, but that is no reason for failing to squash the agitator if, as I believe, he is harmful to industry and society.

If you have a splinter in your eye I'd try to remove the splinter before trying to cure the eye. If I have a nasty open sore on my arm and you insist on prodding at it and irritating it with a dirty drawing stick in the sore, the fellow trying to sink the boat or throw the kerosene on the blaze, I want him outed as quickly and effectually as possible. I do not say, and have not said, the agitator is the sole cause of Industrial unrest. But I do believe and say that he kinders or prevents any cure of the unrest, that he foments it, tries to prevent settlements of vexed questions, makes trouble and keeps it alive, breeds class hatred, stirs up perpetual strikes, acts as an irritant and a disturbing quantity on every possible occasion. I don't say that if or when the agitator is silenced all industrial troubles will cease. I do say that there would then be more chance of curing them, that when employers and workers are at outs on any subject there is less chance of making peace between them if the agitators are allowed to raise and magnify points of difference, to 'sool on' one side at the throat of the other. rulers come to desecrate these solitudes with the melody of concertina and mouth-organ, or, still worse, irritating the unhappy country people with the shrill, breathless thoroughfare for Norway has gone over to Prohibition, and by consequence an important section in all classes of the population is permanently intoxicated. But the sweet air cools foolish foreheads, and it is better to stumble over a pine root and lie there till the beastliness has passed than to walter below in the kennel among the sounds and sights and smells of an untidy city.

Agin the Agitators.

DEAR BILL,—

I'd gladly 'cut the cackle (of personalities) and come to the 'osses' (of our opposing beliefs), but this isn't altogether easy. One difficulty is that I can't well throw a brick at an agitator without hitting you, and the other is that you seem to me to be shifting the ground of the argument all round the compass. You began by strafing me over those articles in the "Times" and my urging therein propaganda to combat the agitators, you shunt on to objections to my beliefs that greater production is good, and finally you shunt production matters as of minor importance and want to argue on the evils of the present system of distribution. The production and distribution matters are tempting enough red herrings trailed across the real track of our argument, but I prefer to stick to the first track and explain my objections to the agitator, and why I recommended propaganda counteracting his. (I am not deliberately shirking the stating of a case on Production matters, and have stated it elsewhere many times to the best of my ability, when and where I thought it would do most good.)

If you have a splinter in your eye I'd try to remove the splinter before trying to cure the eye. If I have a nasty open sore on my arm and you insist on prodding at it and irritating it with a dirty drawing stick in the sore, the fellow trying to sink the boat or throw the kerosene on the blaze, I want him outed as quickly and effectually as possible. I do not say, and have not said, the agitator is the sole cause of Industrial unrest. But I do believe and say that he kinders or prevents any cure of the unrest, that he foments it, tries to prevent settlements of vexed questions, makes trouble and keeps it alive, breeds class hatred, stirs up perpetual strikes, acts as an irritant and a disturbing quantity on every possible occasion. I don't say that if or when the agitator is silenced all industrial troubles will cease. I do say that there would then be more chance of curing them, that when employers and workers are at outs on any subject there is less chance of making peace between them if the agitators are allowed to raise and magnify points of difference, to 'sool on' one side at the throat of the other.
Industrial ills may, as you say, be the outcome of a bad system of production and distribution; but I fail to see how it is going to help eliminate those ills to have never-ending strikes and quarrels in industry.

I believe all the ills can best be got rid of by calm consideration of them, peaceful reasoning, experiment, and amicable settlement—and then further reasoning, experiment and settlement. The agitator is against this. He appears to hate peace, and to miss no chance of stirring up strife. You may tell me all this is not true of the agitator, that he honestly wants peaceful settlement, and wants most of all to wipe out industrial ills. I believe some do want to wipe out the ills, but I think they go quite the wrong way about it—as in your own case, for instance. You say your fury was lit not by the fact of the lecture, but because of my unacquaintance with the facts of the case—the facts accepted by the agitator. I'd ask you to look at it another way. If two men are fighting and I see a third man egging them on to the fight and recommending them to use axes instead of fists; and if the third man refuses to stop egging them on, I should feel entitled to do my best to persuade him he was wrong or to recommend others to so persuade him. You have no right to be furious with me for doing so. Even if I don't know the facts of the fight you ought not to object to my trying to stop it, especially if I believe the disputed points can be better and more satisfactorily settled without fighting.

I repeat that you may tell me I am wrong in these beliefs about the agitator, that he doesn't try to make strife, that he is disposed to industrial peace. I don't believe it, I can't believe it, because all my experience goes to prove the opposite. I've heard too many agitators talk to the workers, have argued with too many myself, have seen the effects of their agitation too often, to believe them anything but a cause of trouble.

I'll put a blunt question to you, Bill. Does not the average agitator try to stir up industrial strife, to set class against class, to make workers believe employers as a class are tyrants and brutes against whom no weapon is too bad to use? Is not your own earnest work likely to attain these ends?

I must object to your formula of my beliefs as set against yours. For one thing it is impossible to set these formulae against each other. You state mine, "A. Greater production is for the good of society," as against your "A. The present system of distribution of the products of industry is an evil one—and a worse one the harder it is worked." This is like saying "The cat is white" as against "The dog is black—and the bigger it is the more black about it." Still preferring to stick to the original cause of these letters, I'd put my formula as:

A. Industrial war is bad for all concerned.
B. The agitator supports war.
C. The agitator is the enemy of all concerned.

As for stating a case that the agitator supports industrial war, I need only refer you to the average speech of any "rebel against constituted authority," I need not go outside instances of your own work. Even if you and they are specialists in hate of a hateful thing or system, it does not justify breeding hate between the people engaged in the hateful system.

You say that "a change into the most amiable intentions all round would make no great improvement." I think it would, and that's why I think the agitator harmful in the birth of his work. You say that a piece of mechanism producing certain results will go on producing those results regardless of the morality of the operator. That is no reason why the agitator should fight anyone who wants to examine the machine and see or try if altering a wheel here, a cutting tool there, won't alter or improve the product; or that he should urge the operator to take a sledge-hammer to anyone who tried to alter and improve; or that he should refuse to allow any alteration short of smashing the whole machine to scrap iron. You believe the present machine is producing evils and unhealth, if I believe the machine can be altered, is being altered, to produce content and happiness. And I know that where such alterations have been suggested or tried (in the shape of various profit-sharing schemes, for instance) the agitator has fought tooth and nail against such schemes.

I had quite determined to stick to the original argument and finish it on the ground where it began, on the goodness or badness of the agitator, and not to sidetrack on the fresh points you raise about production and distribution. You might even doubt my competence to argue on the latter since you tell me plainly I don't even "know there's a war on" between us consumers and the system of distributing commodities to us (although, to be sure, you state on the other hand that "Boyd Cable supports it and the harder working," the "it" being your A., "The present system of distributing, etc.," so that apparently I'm supporting a side I don't know exists, in a war I don't know is on, which is rather confusing, Bill); but I can't refrain from some remarks on this new argument of yours that the war between Capital and Labour over the system of production is a mere minor affair, and that "the real tragedy" is in the distribution of products. I'll advertise and propagate more widely these views of yours that there is no real war about production and nothing but "some sectional and technical quarrels with this of greater or less importance." In the last year or two I've talked and argued and debated with all classes and grades of labour, have lectured to many thousands of workers, have been heckled and questioned, have engaged (as I still am) in correspondence with many workmen, have listened to the speeches and demands and threats of agitators in and out of factories all over England; and I had formed a conception that there are serious causes of dispute on this very subject of production, the sharing of the profits therefrom, the hours and wages of producers, the whole production question. I thought, and still think, these points of vital importance to the mass of workers, the matters that disturb them most urgently.

You tell me it is not so. You surprise me, and I fancy you'll surprise a good many of your admirers. In fact, I think most of your admirers firmly believe the war you wage so hotly is in the main one between Capital and Labour over production issues, and I don't know they would regard it as your "helping your own cause" if you should refuse to advertise and propagate the views that there is no real war about production and nothing but "some sectional and technical quarrels with this of greater or less importance.

Quite honestly and seriously, Bill, I believe that if you ceased to make your followers believe that the capitalist is necessarily a monster, and instilled a belief that at heart he is on the average quite a decent sort, you would be doing real good. You would be doing what I'm trying to do—bring both sides to consider each other's grievances, settle them amicably without the waste and wickedness and misery of strikes over every trifling quarrel, and in the long run bring about decent content and happiness amongst producers, distributors, and consumers of all classes.

BOYD CABLE.
Drama,

By Joan Francis Hope.

The recent revivals of Restoration comedy by the Incorporated Stage Society have been enthusiastically received by its members; and to meet the demand for more frequent presentation of Elizabethan, Restoration, and later plays (up to Sheridan, I suppose), the Council of the Stage Society has decided to form a new Society for this purpose. Organised under the auspices of the Stage Society, "The Phoenix" now appeals for membership and support; its address is the same as that of the Stage Society: 36, Southampton Street, Strand. "The Phoenix" will give its first performance on Sun-
day, Nov. 16, and Webster’s "The Duchess of Malfi" will be the play. The programme for the first season will be the play already mentioned, Dryden’s "Marriage à la Mode," the first part of Heywood’s "The Fair Maid of the West," Otway’s "Don Carlos," and Ben Jonson’s "Volpone"; and the main purpose of the Society is to restore our classic drama to the stage, instead of letting it rot in the library.

It is a most gallant enterprise, and I wish it all success. I have my own quarrel with modern dramatists, but there is this excuse to be made for them—that they have not been blessed with the classic models of English drama. Modern drama propagates itself after the manner of the thistle; a man writes, let us say, a bedroom scene, the seed is blown hither and thither by the wind of popularity, and instantly there are fifty plays running to advertise some somebody’s furniture and somebody else’s lingerie. That a bedroom scene may be dramatic, may have the poetic quality of mystery, Shakespeare showed in "Othello"; but the model is so rarely before the eyes of modern writers that the limits of the dramatic possibilities are reached by them when, as in "Scandal," they make a man refuse to go to bed with his reputed wife.

Modern drama suffers chiefly from two things, the epicene convention and the ignorance of classic drama. I think it was "R. H. C." who, some years ago, put forward a plea for a Theatre for Men Only; and, although the phrase is unnecessarily aggressive, the main conception is sound enough. There is no real objection to be made to women playing parts for men, any more than there is to woman reading men’s newspapers, but there are powerful objections to be made to compelling men to see plays that are fit for women only. The epicene convention has ditched the art of drama in these times, would not dare to write "Hamlet," "Macbeth," "Othello," "King Lear," and so forth; but would offer us "Ophelia," "Desdemona," "Lady Macbeth," "The Three Sisters," and take the women’s point of view of his male characters. There are two main themes of modern drama on which all manner of variations are played, and they reveal clearly the extent to which the modern dramatic imagination is obsessed by purely feminine influences and values. Those two themes are, of course, "Virtue in Danger" and "The Concealment (or Discovery) of Unlawful Love"; and in the treatment of these two themes the emphasis has shifted from the dramatic expression of passion mounting into poetry to the mere parlour-game of preserving appearances and talking in the style of "Home Chat." The literature for the Theatre for Men Only exists in the classic English drama that "The Phoenix" is formed to produce. It was written before the epicene convention was invented, when women were a part of life instead of being merely the censors of it. The virility of it is shocking to those who accept the epicene convention; the works of Beaumont and Fletcher, of Massinger, of Webster, and the rest, are not "nice." But: "if it be true," said Swinburne, "as we are told on high authority, that the greatest glory of England is her literature and the greatest glory of English literature is its poetry, it is not less true that the greatest glory of English poetry lies rather in its dramatic than in its epic or lyric triumphs. The name of Shakespeare is above the names even of Milton, Coleridge, and Shelley; and the names of his comrades in art and their immediate successors are above all before the Tennysons, the names in any province of our song." Yet, by one of those paradoxes that have made England what she is, most of these works are known only as literature to a comparatively small body of students, and as drama, even students know little of them. To continue to play Molière, Racine, Corneille, Voltaire, and incidentally to maintain the tradition of acting in the grand manner; but in England, we are told, only four of Beaumont and Fletcher’s fifty plays have been produced within the memory of living man, and those only at odd intervals and for a few performances. Massinger wrote nineteen plays, of which one has been revived, Brome’s fifteen plays attracted the attention of a dramatic club in 1913, which produced one of them; with one exception, the whole of Webster has been forgotten; Shirley wrote thirty plays of which seven were revived last summer; Mr. Poel has revived one of Heywood’s twenty-two dramas; amateurs have attempted to play one of Dryden’s twenty-eight plays, and another was semi-privately produced in 1886; Chapman, Middleton, Marston, Wycherley, Etherege, and others have never in our time been revived. We need not wonder that modern English drama, like Disraeli’s mule, is without pride of ancestry or hope of posterity.

The prime difficulty attending this revival of the classic drama will be the renewal or establishment of an acting tradition. There were a few meritorious performances in the Stage Society’s productions of Restoration comedy, several more of promise, and many of appalling incompetence. There is no reason why "The Phoenix" should not become the nucleus of a classic theatre if it concentrates rather more attention on the acting than the Stage Society could do in war time. These plays require not merely actors with the dramatic imagination, but also actors with something of the historic imagination, and most particularly of all, with the ability to speak verse and prose without trying to make it sound like the language of telegrams. If Benson could be induced to superintend the rehearsals of the Elizabethan plays, the delivery of verse would not be such an obvious embarrassment to the actor and such a painful ordeal to the audience. The modern actor, trained in the "natural" technique, plainly feels ridiculous when reciting verse; yet Mr. Quartermine’s recitation of the "Queen Mab" speech in Miss Doris Keane’s barbarous production of "Romeo and Juliet" was one of the few successes of the revival. Verse is a most "natural" form of speech, although English people usually adopt their most affected manner when reciting verse; yet Mr. Quartermine’s recitation of the "Queen Mab" speech in Miss Doris Keane’s barbarous production of "Romeo and Juliet" was one of the few successes of the revival. Verse is a most "natural" form of speech, although English people usually adopt their most affected manner when reciting verse; and it will probably be easier to secure a performance homogeneous in style of the verse plays than of the prose comedies. I shudder when I remember how Mr. Basil Sydney and Mr. Gilbert Cannan walked through Congreve, and translated the cadences of his prose into the commonplace sentimentality of the undergraduate. We cannot reasonably expect to recover at once the acting tradition of high comedy; but much may be done by careful casting to give those who have the talent the opportunity of developing it. An actress like Miss Ethel Irving, for example, with her almost uncanny flair for the period, would need very little experience to enable her to perfect her technique; while, on the other hand, Miss Lilian Braithwaite, who is "so lovely fair" and makes such a good photograph, would remain hopelessly modern if she wore Restoration costumes, and played Restoration comedy, for the rest of her life.
On the Translation of Poetry.

V.

But it is one thing to point out faults, and another to suggest a remedy for them. Here, perhaps, it will be as well to formulate the real nature of the problem with which we are confronted. It is the clash between two opposing tendencies, one to produce a sonnet-structure imposed by the original, and the process akin to mechanical versifying, which the attempt to translate the original will almost inevitably involve. What we have to decide is whether, and if so, how, a reconciliation can be effected between these two factors. Let me add that the results of an attempt to harmonize these two would be trace of the conflict. Now can the thing be done without recourse to the deplorable methods of Longfellow? The examples of good translation which I have already quoted show that it can, but as an additional and more convincing proof, I will take a case where the sonnet-form imposes considerable restrictions on the translator. This is Ronsard's original:

Quand vous serez bien vieille, au soir, à la chandelle,
Assise auprès du feu, devidant et filant,
Direz, chantant mes vers et vous esmerveillant:
Ronsard me célèbre du temps que j' estois belle.

Lors vous n'aurez servante oüant telle nouvelle,
Desja sous le labeur à demi somnemallant,
Qui au bruit de "Ronsard," ne s'aille réveillant,
Bénissant votre nom de louange immortelle.

Je seray sous le terre, et fantasme sans os,
Par les ombres myrteux je prendray mon repos;
Vivez, si m'en croyez, n'attendez
Desja sous le labeur à demi somnemallant;
Qui au bruit de "Ronsard," ne s'aille réveillant,
Bénissant votre nom de louange immortelle.

None of your maidens that doth hear the thing,
None of your maidens that doth hear the thing,
Hearing my name, will rouse at sound of my name,
You'll sit and spin beside the fire, and say,
"Ah, love me, Love!"

None of your maidens that doth hear the thing,
None of your maidens that doth hear the thing,
Hearing my name, will rouse at sound of my name,
You'll sit and spin beside the fire, and say,
"Ah, love me, Love!"

Andrew Lang has translated it thus:

When you are very old at evening
You'll sit and spin beside the fire, and say,
"Ah, love me, Love!"
When I was young of me did Ronsard sing.

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C. Kegan Paul's rendering of the same sonnet is worth quoting to show how the technical difficulties may be variously overcome by two skilful translators—

When very old, at eve, while candles flare,
Chatting and spinning by the fire you sit,
And, marveling, you hum the lines I writ,
Say, "Ronsard sung me once when I was fair."

Then every serving-maid who slumbers there,
Nodding above her task with drowsy wit,
Hearing my name, will rouse at sound of it
And bless your name, your deathless praise declare.

A disembodied ghost, I shall have laid
My bones to rest beneath the myrtle shade,
While you, a crone, crouch o'er the embers' glow,
Mourning my love, and your sublime disdain;
Live, trust me, wait not for to-morrow's pain,
But cull to-day life's roses as they blow.

I must leave the reader to decide for himself which of these two translations is truer upon the translators, neither of them has taken undue liberties with Ronsard's text. I shall return to the special cases presented by difficulty of poetic forms, when I discuss the fulfilment of my third demand.

I think it may reasonably be agreed, then, that the process of translating poetry without sacrificing sense or beauty is, in most cases, a possible one. How it is to be accomplished is a matter which can scarcely be indicated by precise directions. For we must remember that, after all, it is a process which springs from the same impulse as original composition. So much, however, may be said: Stubborn passages, which seem to defy all attempts to master them, must be dealt with by a patient system of coaxing and judicious paraphrase. In the end they will generally yield. A felicitous rendering may result from an immediate flash of inspiration, or it may have been arrived at after days of thought. But if it is really felicitous, it will bear no trace of the labour which achieved it. Above all, the translator should be his own sternest critic, and not be satisfied (as many seem to be) with the first solution of his difficulty, unless he himself is thoroughly convinced by it. Carlyle's "infinite capacity for taking pains" applies with peculiar aptness to the translation of poetry.

In the preface to Freiligrath's translation of "Mazeppa," which was published posthumously, his wife makes this interesting comment: " . . . as the poet took his art more and more seriously, he made almost incredible demands upon himself. No difficulty daunted him, and if a passage proved obstinate, he would carry it about quietly with him for days, weeks, nay, even months, until he had given to it the form which he deemed the right one. With all the mastery which he thus obtained, and with all the severity which he acceded to his own production, even he was sometimes fain to acknowledge that he had accomplished some perfect translations in his early youth, half unconsciously at it were." To this I can only add that by no other method would it have been possible to translate with equal dexterity, as Freiligrath did, such varying originals as Shakespeare's "Venus and Adonis," Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner," and Tennyson's "Lady of Shalott."

Of course, there will always be a certain number of poems which cannot be translated adequately at all. Even Freiligrath with his enormous industry and talent, his abilities as an original poet, and his intimate knowledge of English, had to admit himself defeated now and then. Thus we are told that he was baffled by Wordsworth's lines "To Lucy," Burns' "To Nancy" and "To Mary in Heaven," and he quoted the opening line of the latter poem: "Thou lingering star with leth-" as an example of language which was beyond translation. (This, I think, shows the deceptive-ness of appearances.) Freiligrath also regretted his inability to render "Hark, hark! the lark!" from "Cymbeline," and he deplored the feeble German text which formed the basis of Schubert's setting. Finally, he admitted being unable to make anything of Herrick's "Delight in Disorder," the particular stumbling-block here being the "tempestuous petticoat." The instinct of the translator will enable him to discriminate between the technically difficult and the fundamentally impossible, between what can be obtained after long search if necessary, and what will elude all search. For the true translator is master of his medium, and is consequently aware of its natural limitations.

VI.

The emotional effects produced by poetry are so intimately connected with its form, that the necessity for preserving the latter in translation would seem beyond argument. Such details as the external type of the stanzas, the distribution of stresses in each verse, the arrangement of the rhymes and the nature of the dis-
tion, must therefore inevitably find their approximate counterparts in any serious attempt at poetical translation. If I appear to emphasise this aspect of the subject unduly, it is because the assertion has been made by persons who cannot be altogether devoid of intelligence, that the only satisfactory method of translating poetry is to reproduce it in verse. As regards this, Matthew Arnold, in his essay "On Translating Homer," says: "There are great works composed of parts so disparate that one translator is not likely to have the requisite gifts for poetically rendering all of them. Such are the works of Shakespeare and Goethe’s 'Faust'; and these it is best to attempt to render in prose only." But he immediately proceeds to discredit whatever critical authority might be attached to this opinion by adding the following extraordinary statements: "People praise Tieck and Schlegel’s version of Shakespeare: I for my part would sooner read Shakespeare in the French prose translation, and that is saying a good deal; but in the German poet’s hands Shakespeare so often gets, especially where he is humorous, an air of what the French call râliserie! and can anything be more un-Shakespearian than that? Again, Mr. Hayward’s prose translation of the first part of 'Faust'... is not likely to be surpassed by any translation in verse."

I intend to discuss the Schlegel-Tieck translation of Shakespeare in a later section of this work. As for Mr. Hayward’s prose translation of "Faust," which "is not likely to be surpassed by any translation in verse," I will content myself with the opening lines of the "Walpurgis-Night" scenes where Mephistopheles is made to remark:—"Do you not long for a broom-sick? For my part, I should be glad of the sturdiest he-goat. By this road we are still far from our destination."

The argument underlying many of the current ideas about prose translation is, as I understand it, that in his endeavour to preserve the form of the original, the translator obtrudes an alien personality between the original poet and the reader. How this is to be avoided by utterly destroying the most prominent features of the original poem is a mystery which is left unexplained by the advocates of prose translation. I cannot attempt to fathom it, and I must confess myself a believer in the proverb which fixes the relative value of half a loaf and no bread.

I have no desire to be dogmatic over this. The great epic poet who can be read for the contents of their narrative, without regard for the structure and style of their verse, may, I am prepared to grant, be submitted to such treatment with fairly satisfactory results, and so we have good prose translations of Homer and Dante. But as far as lyric poetry is concerned, I can sanction no other method but that of the most scrupulous fidelity which is compatible with the spirit of the translator's language. Even with Dante, for instance, I would rather read a translation which made some endeavour to preserve the euphony of his rhyme-scheme, than a more verbally accurate one in plain prose. Here we can easily put this to the test. Here is an extract from the "Purgatorio" (Canto XXVIII, ll. 13-33) in the prose rendering by Mr. Thomas Okey:—

... yet not so far bent aside from their erect state, that the little birds in the tops ceased to practise their art;

but, singing, with full gladness they welcomed the first breezes within the leaves, which were murmuring the burden to their songs;

even such as from bough to bough is gathered around The pine forest on bleak Chiassi’s shore, When Aeolus Sirocco has unbound.

My slow steps had already borne me o'er Such space within the antique wood, that I Perceived not where I entered any more,

When, lo! a stream whose little waves went by, Bending towards the left through grass that grew Upon its bank, impeded suddenly

The rays of moon or sunlight ne'er endure. Without questioning the merits of Mr. Okey’s translation, I am not convinced that he obtrudes less than Shelley between Dante and myself.

I am aware that the alleged universal practice of French translators is also urged in favour of this method. Apart from the fact that English and French are two languages with certain fundamental differences, this argument is based upon an inaccurate generalisation, for the French do sometimes produce metrical renderings (and excellent ones) of foreign poetry. Here, for example, are the opening lines of Goethe’s "Faust;" as translated by M. Monnier:—

J'ai tout appris : philosophie,
Droit, médecine et chirurgie,
Même, hélas ! la théologie,
Tout l'ouvrage d'un esprit fervent;
Maître et docteur—l’un sauve !
J'en suis juste aussi long qu’avant.

Les écoliers dont je me charge,
Dix ans je les ai promenés,
En haut, en bas, en long, en large
En avant, en arrière, par le nez.

Je vois qu'on ne sait rien au monde,
Voilà ce qu'on sais voir croiser.

Quand j'entends ergoter en chœur
Les nigauds dont la terre abonde,
Magister, docteur, mineur ou clerc,
J'en sais plus qu'eux tous; j'amours douce,
Ni scrupule ni doute,
Ni peur du diable et du fenier.

This is Mr. A. G. Latham’s English version of the same passage:—

I have studied, alas! Philosophy,
And jurisprudence, and Medicine too,
And all the rest of all, Theology,
With ardent labour, through and through!

And here I stick, as wise, poor fool,
As when my steps first turned to school.

Master they style me, my, Doctor, forsooth,
And night ten years o'er rough and smooth,
And up and down, and acrook and across,
I lead my pupils by the nose,
And know that in truth we can know—naught!
My heart is turned to coal at the thought.
Conscience and Fanaticism.

By Captain Anthony M. Ludovici, R.F.A.

When, at the end of his career as a philosopher, Herbert Spencer wrote his Autobiography, it will be remembered that he expressed the view that if a young man should ever come to him declaring his intention of writing upon philosophy, he would most certainly discourage him, for the simple reason that the whole field had already been explored—or words to that effect. (I write only from my memory of a passage read eight or nine years ago.) William Morris likewise, in an address on the Decorative Arts, maintained that no man, however original he might be, could sit down to-day and design anything new in the nature of decorative ornament. In the same manner old musicians, appalled as they may be by the incomprehensible difficulties arising from this aspect of the translator’s task,

more profound problems of our being is most necessary at the present time. Words are used so loosely and are so seldom the signs of definite ideas which one can feel assured have their place in the speaker’s mind, that it is impossible to over-estimate, at this stage in our history, the value of reiterating the simplest truisms. As Mr. Pitt Rivers says:—

Men from the very indolence of their minds, love to set up symbols and to worship them, without verifying the truths they are supposed to represent, for symbols are easily acquired and easily perceived, and dispense with the arduous necessity of probing reality and the mental discipline without which truth cannot be reached. The power of words and symbols is entirely independent of their real meaning. As we have already shown, the most meaningless and the most obscure phrases are, as a rule, for that very reason the most potent. Such terms as liberty, equality, democracy, socialism, etc., whose meanings are so vague that whole libraries do not exhaust their possible interpretations, are solemnly uttered as though they were magic spells, at the very sound of which all problems disappear. Symbolism and mysticism form the fanatic’s charter of licence (pp. 108-109).

This is all very true, and cannot be repeated too often, particularly in these days of irresponsible journalism, with catchphrase as the motif d’ordre. But there are many points which the author takes for granted in regard to the fanatic, which it seems difficult to concede. Where to begin, however, in an examination of his treatment of this profound problem, is, perhaps, even more difficult.

Briefly, Mr. Pitt Rivers’ thesis is as follows:—

The psychic life of human beings is conditioned by three factors:—(1) Heredity; (2) The net results of the habitus and acquirements of the individual from the moment of conception to the end of existence; this with the first produces character; and (3) Environment. The Environment referred to in Mr. Pitt Rivers’ book, however, is something more than the concept we are led to form of it in the works of the evolutionists. It is not merely composed of ambient material conditions, it involves a psychic factor, to which the author would ascribe more than ordinary importance. To use his own terms, it includes “Cosmic suggestion”—that is, if we understand him correctly, an intangible force which, emanating from the conscience of the community, secretly operates upon and directs the conscience of the individual. In this connection there are some profoundly interesting remarks on the instinct of Imitation (see pp. 77 and 78). In order to understand the action and the potency of this force, we are given a description of research in the science of hypnotism and of the influence of suggestion on the minds of the non-hypnotised.

Much of this can be granted without hesitation, and we arrive at the conclusion (based largely upon the observation of hypnotic phenomena) that “the communal conscience reacts upon the individual conscience in inverse ratio to the latter’s emotional or intellectual capacity for resistance.” Thus, the factors of conscience are: (1) emotional; (2) intellectual; (3) internal (hereditary and organic elements); and (4) external; and its validity, in ultimate analysis, can but rest in codes, which may be moral and utilitarian, but also Rational or Intellectual, Social and Utilitarian.

When it is not merely the expression of an individual attitude, the validity of moral judgment will therefore always depend upon the criterion of conduct previously adopted. In this way it is held that a certain judgment differs from a statement of fact, which is valid irrespective of the existence of any mind capable of apprehending that fact.”

The code, or criterion of conduct recommended in this book is that supplied by the principle of “Utility.” The corrective to a conscience, powerful but misguided,
is "Reason." Fanaticism and emotional guidance go hand-in-hand, and are equally detestable to Mr. Pitt Rivers.

The chapters on Religion and Morality, and Values and Valuation, contain much that is new (at least to me), and exceedingly illuminating; the objections, however, that I raise to Mr. Pitt Rivers' whole thesis, depend more upon our difference of opinion as regards first principles.

There are too many assumptions in this book—assumptions which are actually dangerous.

For instance, the obvious questions raised by Mr. Pitt Rivers' confident acceptance of utility as the principle in which the authority for a code of morals is to be sought, is clearly, whose utility?—what utility? The very conclusion arrived at under the guidance of Mill to the effect that proximate considerations take precedence of remote considerations (p. 24) plainly leads us into a controversy not concerning values, but concerning the ultimate gain society derives from the quality of hypermetropia in one type of man and that of myopia in the other.

Again, when we hear that "emotion never brings us nearer to the truth" (p. 46), or that "no cosmic problem is solved, or even advanced by the cerebral function we call emotion" (p. 47), we are again inclined to ask—whose emotion? If emotion is, as the author admits, the outcome of hereditary influences, I can imagine a person, so thoroughly and correctly trained and organized through the generations of his family, as to be incapable of emotions that are not the surface perturbations of sound and reliable instinct. To pit the reason of a mere dialectician against the emotion of such a creature (the case to some extent of Socrates and his contemporaries) may be to prepare a dialectical victory for reason, but not necessarily a victory for desirability, or even truth, about which Mr. Pitt Rivers has much to say that is very useful.

And it is curious that in this attitude towards emotion Mr. Pitt Rivers has two opponents whom I should imagine he least expected to meet on this field—Herbert Spencer, and the frigid, deliberate author of the "Stimmung." Yet from the blurr of this Beethovenian performance was not more distressing as might have been expected, and may possibly have given a good deal of pleasure to the not quite musical ear. We can imagine a really erudite musician like Czerniowski leaving the hall in fury at once, but the postprandial inertia of the critic retained him further into the programme.

A perfectly plausible and explicable dislike to Beethoven's "Appassionata" might lead a performer to play something else on the same notes; I do not know that there was any such dislike at the bottom of Miss Macbride's softly sentimental Debussysisms, of her sort of blunt, cotton-wool fireworks, of the blatancies of her treble; and it would not explain the lumpiness of the ensemble ever, if it did elucidate some of her detail. I sat in intellectual puzzlement, wondering whether I had gone a little—just a little—bit daft, or whether it was the pianist; or whether vacation had ultimately unfitted me for my job. Then gradually into my bewilderment as to what just what, might be going on there crept the suspicion, the more and more clearly defined suspicion, that it should not.

The lady has intentions; so far so good. She has perhaps "something to express," though she herself is not perhaps quite sure just what it is. Out of the wuzz there came finally the standardised Beethovenian swarmishness I sighed for Lamond, I sighed...
for the school of playing which recognises music as a structure. I am not crushing the glowworm on the wheel. Miss Macbride is at the beginning of her career, and she will recognise that method of playing falls flat, will go completely to pieces because it depends, apart from some digital ability, upon emotional energy, always a tricky possession, and not on sheer comprehension of music. It holds her audience, not because it is wholly understandable. The opening of the Brahms Capriccio was trite and intolerable; the method for the Debussy was perhaps more successful than a more frigid approach would have been, but the lady must use her head if she hopes for more than a third-rate public.

The real events of the week are the Gilbert and Sullivan Opera and possibly the Russian Ballet. The music of the “Gonodies” ranges from thin Mozart to Floradora, via Messrs. Chappell and Co. It is adequate for what it sets out to do. It conveys no emotion and but a frail sort of sentimentality or spritely activity. The performance is well carried out, Mr. Toyce conducts very well, the chorus behaves very well, the company acts very well along conventional lines, and Mr. Lytton acts with distinction. D'Oyly Carte scores over Beecham by the superior polish of the ensembles, staging, etc.; there is one good piece of duet writing; Sydney Granville and Helen Gilliland save the musical situation by the pure quality of their voices; there is no strain for effect, just very beautiful singing of the by no means unusual matter provided for them.

When Sullivan’s music is bad, it is not so much that it is wrong as that it is “like good music with something left out of it.” He is perhaps a tradesman giving just as much as the contract requires; just enough good music to carry the show, just enough harmony (in places) to keep the impoverishment of other choruses from getting on the nerves of the audience. If he had had anything better than Gilbert to set he would probably have had it; as it is, the “When You Marry” song is bad Chappell ballad, other numbers are satisfactory but unoriginal; but contemporary song-setters would do well to observe how ably he secures his librettist, how well Gilbert’s point and poise are enforced by the supple compliance of the music.

Not that there is anything musically memoriable in the performance. The opera is carried by its libretto; the songs, such of them as are remembered, are remembered by reason of Gilbert’s wit. This wit is in the “Punch” genre, and is the acme of the Victorian titter, the keynote being a sort of unserious compliance with what cannot be altered. Which things being so, the performance as a whole is acceptable to those who like opera. The opera has a main form; it, indeed, complies with the sensible specifications of operatic classical structure. And certainly the producers and performers get every scrap out of both music and libretto. The success of the season is assured, both by the efficiency of the company and by the solid affection of the public for this Simon-pure-British mode of entertainment. It is also certain that we shall never see Gilbert and Sullivan better done, and that the D’Oyly Carte season is “an opportunity,” an opportunity emphasised by the presence of Mr. Lytton, Mr. Sydney Granville, and Helen Gilliland.

The Ivan Yorke-Yvonne Phillopowsky concert (September 29, Wigmore) was successful.

Rosing’s season of recitals begins October 4 at the Aeolian, and continues on alternate Saturdays (three o’clock) until December.

The London Symphony Concerts begin on Monday, October 27 (Queen’s Hall); and Rosing appears in that of November 24.

Adrian Boult is conducting impeccably for the Russian Ballet, and “La Boutique Fantasque” is not to be missed.

Views and Reviews.

CATHOLICISM AND CLEANLINESS.

Controversy sometimes take a surprising turn, and I must admit that I was not prepared to hear a Catholic, defending Catholicism against a charge of tolerating dirt, raise the cry of “Liberty.” It is true that my “G. K. C.” has not yet issued a “G. K. C.,” but that dates back some sixteen years, when he opened a debate in support of the motion: “That the solution of the political problems of the future lies with the Liberal Party”; and that, in most of his subsequent writings, he has maintained the thesis of that address, that liberty is an essential condition of man’s existence, its own progress. But, as I have urged so often in other connections, liberty is not a political principle; you could not found even a cricket-club on it; and apart from the other principles of the trinity, Equality and Fraternity, Liberty is simply an expression of anarchism. I find it only amongst primitive peoples, like the hill Veddas of Ceylon; and even there, the practice of “secret barter”—showing us the rudimentary beginnings of a social sense. To us, born into Society, the ideal of reality presents itself in a triune manifestation of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, and each of these theses is a right to have baths; he also asserts that they have a right not to have baths—but it is precisely at this point that the other principles of Equality and Fraternity become operative. St. Paul himself, while claiming the utmost liberty for the individual, declared: “It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak”: and any man, born into and living in a society, is under a natural obligation not to be offensive to his fellows. “Happy is he,” continues St. Paul, “that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth”—and the miners do not “allow” dirt.

The only real hope of a healthy society, suggests “G. K. C.,” lies in the recognition of individual liberty—in the admission, for example, of the miner’s right not to have baths. But if we take the instances that “G. K. C.” gives, we may well doubt whether it will be a healthy society. He is “all for giving pennies to beggars,” for example; and begging, we know, has been identified with sanctity for centuries.

King Bomba’s lazzaroni foster yet.

The sacred flame, so Antonelli writes.

But the Neapolitan lazzaroni are the lice of society; and the odour of sanctity that exudes from them, however meritorious it may be, is distinctly unwholesome. Anyone who has ever seen a man suffering from trench fever, for example, may admit the sanctity of the lousy lazzaroni, and yet be quite sure that the society which tolerates them is neither healthy nor admirable—for dirt, with its concomitant vermin, is a most prolific source of disease. It is on the score of charity that “G. K. C.” defends the giving of pennies to beggars; but wisdom is a virtue no less imperative than charity, and it is not wise to finance what is not only a positive danger to ourselves, but is, in the usual case, a positive vice in the beggar. The simple fact that most beggars are richer than their patrons suffices to show us that our charity only finances the multitude of their sins.

“G. K. C.,” too, makes great play with his “dung-hill,” although it is surely the most curious symbol of liberty ever devised. He alleges: “Any free peasantry will not use of dung, as the Irish are accused of dirt. If the peasant has a chicken in the pot, he will have a cock on the dung-hill; and ‘A. E. R.’ will shudder as he passes the dung-hill. For the dogma is that dung is dirt, and cannot be manure.” Who formulated this dogma, I do not know; but it is a simple fact that not until it ceases to form a dung-hill does dung become manure. It is also a simple fact
that a dunghill does not provide suitable seating accommodation for a human being; and it was for this reason that I objected to Mr. Maynard's prophecy of a protest against hygiene being made "in the person of some fierce and spotless St. Simon Stylistes, raised high upon a pillar of filth as a sign before the world." That St. Simon Stylistes was not spotless, but vermin-ridden, is also a simple fact; and my point is that he is an exemplar who would be repudiated not only by the high priests of hygiene, whoever they may be, but by the working classes themselves. To them, he would be simply a "dirty devil," and not a reformer.

Whether we approach the subject from the religious or the social point of view (in practice, they are identical), we come to the same conclusion—that no man has the right to be offensive, and positively dangerous, to his fellows. Not even "the magic of property," as expressed in the Distributive State advocated by "G. K. C," can justify the positive injury to life that the acceptance of these nostrums ideals would entail. It may be true as Mr. Maynard declared in his essay, that "the mediæval man had a different standard of values"; but we are living in the twentieth century, and find nothing admirable in the instance that he gives. Let him tell a gathering of demobilised soldiers what he tells his readers, that "when St. Thomas of Canterbury was murdered and the monk found beneath his costly robe his hair-shirt, a great cry rang through the Cathedral, 'A saint! A saint!'", and he will certainly discover how different our standard of values is from the mediæval.

When we remember that this is one of the facts behind the "Merrie England" ideal put forward by the Catholic school of writers, we may prefer a Utopia that does not harbour parasites. Our ideals, at least, need not be lousy.

The gravamen of the controversy lies in the original assertion to which I took exception—that the elementary duty of cleanliness is, in some unexplained sense, an hereditary duty and that the Catholic Church has made. The gravamen of the controversy lies in the original assertion to which I took exception—that the elementary duty of cleanliness is, in some unexplained sense, an hereditary duty and that the Catholic Church has made.
Kirk Winfield, the artist, Steve the prize-fighter, and the three worlds of sport, art, and finance, are sketched in with a few sure strokes. There are passages in the book, notably describing Winfield's return from his unsuccessful odyssey, which suggest that Mr. Wodehouse could, if he would, write of subjects of more universal interest than the fads of a few theorists; and the quality of suavity that creeps into his best satirical passages indicates that he is capable of developing an individual style. That he can use slang to extraordinarily humorous purpose the first dialogue between Steve and Mrs. Porter proves; but American humorists are common, and her serious writers seem to be afflicted with Parnassianism. Mr. Wodehouse has qualities that are not limited by American parochialism, and we should like to see him exercise them in work of more universal appeal than this.

The Groper. By Henry G. Aikman. (Boni and Liveright. $1.60 net.)

This is another study of a business man who feels "unrealised," and has an ache where his heart ought to be. With Mr. Wodehouse, he stretches same hands of faith, and gropes, he always finds a woman in them; and, most wonderful of all, the last woman is also the first. All that lies between the first and last chapters amounts to a census of the more convivial portion of the female population of Detroit, with descriptive notes; enlivened (shall we say?) by descriptions of the hero's adventures as a real estate agent, as a window-dresser in, and subsequently advertisement writer for, a departmental store, the whole concluding with a magnificent tableau of the hero as financier of a motor company. The hero's appearance in the bankruptcy court, and his reunion with his first-beloved, brings the entertainment to an appropriate close.

American fiction seems to be re-acting against that other form of American fiction, the literature of Success; but we must admit a certain weariness of these studies of business men who wander about, with an unsatisfied look in their eyes, searching for their souls as though they were lost luggage.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

SIR,—In your issue of August 21, Mr. S. Verdad, discussing the Irish question, says: "The desperately serious character of the problem is to be found in the fact that, while progress unites both America, upon which not only we depend for peace, but the world depends for peace, is under constant and, perhaps, increasing embarrassment." I am surprised that a man like Mr. Verdad, who has actually lived in America, should be able to make himself believe that the Irish question, or any other question, has anything to do with the American dislike of the English. If Mr. Verdad will turn over the pages of "Martin Chuzzlewit," written when there was hardly an Irishman in America, he will find that the English were then regarded in America exactly as they are today. Canada is full of Orange men, and has hardly a Catholic in Irish Catholic; yet it has always been a debated question whether the sentiment against the English is stronger in Canada or in the States. The last discussion I had on this point was with an observant Yankee hotel-keeper settled in Canada. "The Englishman in the United States," he said, "no longer ventures to put on this god-damned proprietary air" says the matter up. Not long ago a lady and I were on a street-car in Edmonton, Alberta, and just behind us was an Anglican clergyman, who in a pontifical voice was finally disposing of many questions. When we got off we looked at each other, and then burst into a roar of laughter. We quite agreed that a few such voices would break up any empire.

The situation is made worse by every English attempt to make friends with Americans believing that the English are incorrigible bullies, and they despise them for cringing to America while holding down Ireland and India. Every time a speech about Anglo-American friendship is made in England, thousands of Americans shout, like Rebecca in "Ivanhoe," "The giant totters—he falls—he falls!" If English orators could avoid all allusions to "our American cousins," and simply speak of America as a sort of giant tottering, there would be an immense improvement in Anglo-American relations.

R. B. KERR.

AN APPEAL TO REASON.

SIR,—At this crisis in our domestic history is there one of us whose feelings are not mixed? It would hurt something deep down and British in us if the N.U.R. feebly capitulated after the determined statements such a man as Mr. Thomas has made. Yet all of us are aware that the Government is equally true to itself and to the rights of property. We believe that the N.U.R. will not compromise, nor will we. If we shudder at the thought that the N.U.R. might succeed, we must also shudder at the thought of attempting to run industry in the atmosphere of bitterness and sullen disappointment that will follow the failure of such a large and well-organized union.

I wish to suggest, Sir, that these two are not the only alternatives, and that, if changes in our social system are made that go deeper than the grounds of dispute to where we are all one—in our human need of commodities, there is a possibility of settlement that is not compromise or the acceptance of either side but would be a free admission by both that the subject under dispute is far too trivial to warrant such suffering of the whole community, and a waiving of the issue because of a more fundamental agreement in the matter-in-change.

That I may give practical point to the suggestion I have made I will propose a change of the type that might suffice. We are aware that impotence is a most fruitful cause of bitterness and that economic impotence is largely at the root of unrest. We are aware that fear is the father of reckless action and that the workers go all their lives in the fear of that destitution which the Premier has himself tasted and condemned. We are aware also that vital as is production, if all are to be properly supplied with commodities, yet, despite a general improvement in the standard of living (an improvement which many challenge), there is no specific guarantee that greater production will be shared by all alike.

These three essentials are all provided for in the State bonus scheme, which is a proposal for the equal sharing among all of one-fifth of the national output measured by the equal distribution of one-fifth of the national income raised as a direct extra tax of 20 per cent. on every income. The amount would be distributed as a weekly allowance of, say, 7s. to 8s., although the removal of taxes due to the abolition of workhouses, unemployment doles, etc., would make an average benefit of, say, 9s. 9d. per week per head—a cash benefit to 87 per cent. of the population. Being continued during employment, there would be no premium, as now, on idleness; being given unconditionally, it would provide that economic independence essential to the striking of a fair bargain about wages; being given per head, it would permit children to stay longer at school and relieve some of the burden on families; being a fixed proportion of the national output, all—even the unemployed—would have an interest in greater production. Rationing of food and clothing would be a natural accompaniment of the rationing of food, if the strike continues to add daily to the ranks of the unemployed; it is not possible to institute this along lines that will form a permanent improvement in the social system, but it is the goodwill of the community towards every individual reinspire that confidence in the institution of government so essential to the future of our beloved country?

DENIS MILNER.

Finchley Road, N.W.2.
The salt of the earth is not localised or monopolised by any one district; a suitable modus of intercourse occurs, regarding of national borders—or, to avoid generality: the three men whose quotidian actions followed, with us, these, we, what the most moderate and rational course were respectively an American, who had been in different parts of America, but did not travel in Europe until after his formative period, let us say a forty-five years old Frenchman who had travelled in the West Indies; and a Frenchman. I do not say that they held any religions or political or any other opinion in common; but the normal minutiae of their acts, their receptivities, the considerations for their entertainments, were, as nearly as I can make out, identical. I suppose they all owned high hats, but this totem was not an ineluctable association. I have seen my own father wearing one, but my prevalent impression of the object is that it was, as a rule, purchased, that it then proceeded, in the maker's box, to the trunk-room, where it remained until, with the passage of years, the slight modifications in the form of other high hats made its emergence impossible; after which another "stove-pipe" was acquired and proceeded along similar lines into desuetude. At least, I can remember no period when there was not one of the circular cardboard boxes in the trunk-room.

The three fathers of families escaped, all of them, from that stiffness which, after ten years' effort to avoid the term, I must now apply to the normal English gentleman, bounder, clubman, knut, and male of attendant demeanour that does not exude and communicate an active portent that is rare enough to be memorable.

Whether the capitalistic system can survive the demise of its competitive institutions, with the employees largely in the hands of the employers, is a question not requiring that a comprehensive revision of the price system and free enterprise is an interesting speculation, but not relevant here. As enterprise is restricted and prices merge into rates, the form of price fixing disclose that unrestricted enterprise makes for higher prices and greater control of proportion to the gains involved that enterpris in productive lines will be controlled likewise. The fixing of prices generally will necessitate the restriction of enterprise and protect the existing producers working under those prices, as in the case of public utilities; and, as during the war, priority ratings will be required to discriminate between who-be purchasers who can no longer express their needs as readily as others than others. The experience of the Government price-fixers during the war suggests ideas about the possible treatment of the inefficient or "marginal" producers, those fosterlings of unrestricted enterprise, which are enlightening for the future.

Undoubtedly the price system and free enterprise are to be subjected to much grumbling at the hands of politics and economics, while the efforts of Labour to obtain self-government in industry must bring about a modification of industrial organisations and processes. Whether the capitalistic system can survive the demise of the price system and free enterprise is an interesting speculation, but not relevant here. As enterprise is restricted and prices merge into rates, the form of industrial organisation and its operation will tend toward the public utility order of regulated, fixed-return, non-competitive institutions, with the employees largely in control.

Curiously enough, a modification of the profit-making technique may be effected through the accounting procedure. Some of the engineers who have been studying the problems of production and cost have made perhaps the most suggestive and far-reaching contributions to this economic complex in stating that, if the entrepreneur chooses to keep his plant idle because the market price for his product is not profitable, then the cost of that abstention from production (the accruing interest, depreciation, maintenance, and the like during the period of idleness) is not a part of the cost of production for the consumer to pay in the purchase price of the commodity, but rather is it a cost to be deducted from the profits of the enterprise for the sake of which it is incurred. In other words, the overhead expenses of the idle plant are to be taken out of the profits and not passed on to the consumer, as though they were part of the production costs; thereby the abstention from production is to be penalised. When the full implication of this doctrine put forth by reputable engineers is understood by economists and business men, the results will be worth observing. The line-up of the engineers with Labour through fuller prices, will make the productive capacities of society organise the conflict of economic and aims and which the reconstruction programmes of the employers and the demands of Labour involve.

—Lawrence K. Frank in the "Dial."