THE
NEW AGE
INCORPORATING "CREDIT POWER."
A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE AND ART

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

Readers of *The Times* should look up the issues for December 8 and 9. In the first they will find (a) a letter entitled "The Basic Necessities of Life," signed by E. Owen Williams, of 5, St. George's Rd., Westminster, S.W.1: (b) a leading article called "Bankers and Monetary Theory": and in the second (c) a letter under the main title "'Greats' at Oxford," signed "Oxoniensis." The three are inter-related inasmuch as they all deal with current problems by reference to physics or mathematics. Mr. Williams illustrates Britain's dependent situation as regards food supplies by saying: "It is as though we had not bothered to have our own water supply—just had a pipe-line from outside our borders." His letter ends: "Is it not probable that the integrity of any governing system is fundamentally unsound unless within its own borders it has ensured and maintains as a prime effort the basic necessities of life? Without that confidence what can it do in any international discussions? The man at the end of the pipe-line will call the tune." Is not food, he says, "the constant of life, and, as a constant, to be kept separate in the equating of other things? Can like be equated to unlike by any necromancy of gold?" Mr. Williams draws no moral other than his general suggestion that every country should make itself self-supporting in terms of basic necessities. And we may assume from the fact of his letter being accorded a prominent position in *The Times* (page 15) that that journal is able to see a way of drawing a moral compatible with the maintenance of Mansion-House mathematics—i.e., the prevailing system of cost-accounting. Perhaps we ought to remind Mr. Williams that at present it is the man at the other end of the pipe-line who is going short of food. "Seventeen thousand men and women made a house-to-house appeal in New York to-day for money to help the unemployed" (*Daily Herald*, November 17)—and it is a fair general statement to say that in terms of basic necessities the poorer classes are worse off in every country producing a surplus of them than they are in this country whose production is chronically short. We suggest that Mr. Williams ponders on the apparent physical law that starvation is most rife where gluts of food are largest: and we feel sure that he will not ponder long before he discovers that any practical attempt to put the anomaly right will be pronounced unsound by the professors of banking-arithmetic. However, we congratulate him on his choice of the physical frame of reference as the proper criterion of analysis, and hope that he will stick to it throughout his further research.

* * *

Next we come to exhibit "b" set out above. This article discusses Sir Josiah Stamp's "Ludwig Mond Lecture" at Manchester on the previous day. Sir Josiah, it appears, had been pointing out certain "highly debatable questions of abstract monetary theory." This, of course, pleases *The Times*, because so long as the monetary-mathematical system remains a question of debate, and so long as the debaters are content to discuss it without reference to the physical methods and objective of the economic system, the disputation will go on indefinitely—which is to say, the monopoly of credit will persist indefinitely. We read that "Sir Josiah Stamp does not venture to propound his own answers" to the aforesaid highly debatable questions. That does not surprise us; for a *definite* answer on a monetary question must of necessity involve either *no* change or *some* change in existing industrial policy and practice: and we will guarantee that the more intelligible the answer of the monetary theorist, the more definitely will the industrialist object to its practical implications. The mathematics of money are based on the concept of progressing production and retrogressing consumption. This involves the continuous accumulation of unconsumed wealth, which of course must not be wasted, and therefore must exist in the least perishable and longest-lasting form. The whole trouble of monetary theorists is to decide how to reconcile monetary policy with the consequences it has brought about; or how to mitigate the consequences without altering the policy—how to

reconcile the arithmetic of money with the arithmetic of action—to reconcile methods of measuring cost with methods of measuring energy. For example, a canon of financial law is that all costs of production must flow into price, including a profit. This amounts to saying that there must be not only no loss, but a gain, on all conversions of energy—which are what "production" really is. Accordingly, Sir Josiah, as *The Times* says, "attempts to hold the scales of justice evenly between theory and practice by pointing out the real difficulties involved in the theoretical solutions of currency and banking problems." It then makes the statement that

> "The practical man has to work upon a book of rules which are agreed on internationally and in harmony with the psychology of the practising financier; and before the rules are changed he is justified in demanding that the modification of circumstances is sufficiently permanent to warrant such a charge, and that competent theorists are agreed what the new rules shall be. Moreover, merely to pick out odd rules from the new book in advance of public understanding and to superimpose them upon it does not offer any fair chance of success to either."

This is a subtle suggestion that bankers' psychology and rules are the product of "circumstances"—a complete inversion of the fundamental truth that the "circumstances" are caused by the bankers' rules, which proceed from their policy, which policy proceeds from their psychology. Another trick in the passage is the putting forward of the "practising financier" as the person who has the power, as well as the qualification, to accept or reject changes in the rules. The financiers who have this power, and are responsible for the "circumstances," do not practise. Practising financiers are people like Mr. McKenna, and other officials—that is to say, administrative functionaries. They constitute what may be called the "Civil Service" of the "Credit Monopoly," and the "book of rules" to which they work corresponds exactly to the code of Departmental Orders which the political Civil Service administers. Neither the Civil Servant nor the Bank Official is responsible for high policy. The attitude, too, of both is this: "We have to do certain things to produce certain results in a certain time; and the rules to which we work are the best that we can devise for this end." And what is more, they are probably right. If the policy which requires those results is absent-mindedly accepted the rules for achieving them are most unlikely to be capable of any perceptible improvement. So unless the policy itself is challenged *The Times* is right in talking disparagingly, as it does, about the "imperfect" and "contradictory" conclusions of "monetary theorists." It has, for example, a complete answer to Mr. J. M. Keynes, but no answer at all to Major Douglas.

* * *

Major Douglas does not "pick odd rules" from a "new book" to "superimpose them on the old." He has challenged the axioms of the Credit Monopoly, and has demanded a reversal of the policy based on those axioms. He is not primarily concerned with monetary theory, but with physical results. Grant him his case that the results now being achieved are the reverse of those which everybody wants—those which Capital and Labour co-operate to achieve under the delusion that High Finance is also co-operating with the same objective—and he will be quite content to leave the Permanent officials of the Bankers' Civil Service—the "practising financiers"—to make their own "new book of rules." The most emphatic passage in the report of Major Douglas's evidence (during cross-examination) before the Macmillan Committee was one in which he said that, granted the national policy was to equate consumption to productive capacity, it was "*inconceivable*" that no financial mechanism could be designed to accomplish that purpose. In short, given agreement on the objective, and the "book of rules" virtually makes itself.

* * *

Listen to *The Times*: "Merely to pick out odd rules from the new book *in advance of public understanding*" and so on. One may invite *The Times* to point to any occasion when the public understood, or were even consulted upon, a single rule in the old book. Take an existing practice—a perfectly good one in itself—namely the circulating of money by cheque. Does anybody suppose that if, prior to its adoption, the public had been asked for their unguided judgment on the safety and feasibility of the idea, they would have endorsed it? Not they! They acquiesced in that practice, as they have in others, because the bankers started it and said it was all right. And they will acquiesce the more readily when the bankers, under persuasion or otherwise, start to work on the Social-Credit rule-book.

* * *

The Times remarks that the "monetary theorists," in spite of their shortcomings, have at least done something which should be of value to the "practical man" who is "groping after a solution of the concrete difficulties of monetary practice." There is only one concrete difficulty facing the practical man with regard to money; and that is—to get hold of it. So far as our observation goes the researches of "monetary theorists" have produced no results that directly affect this concrete problem. The reason is that they have been trying to perfect a monetary system designed to prevent the practical man from getting money for the purposes for which he wants it—whether that purpose is to make something to fulfil another's need or to acquire something to fulfil his own.

* * *

The Times proceeds to associate the "practical man" with the "engineer."

> "The engineer need not, indeed he should not, be a theoretical mathematician, but that does not mean that the mathematical theorist has not contributed immensely to the progress of engineering science. Indeed without him the progress in practical technique would have been much slower than it has been."

The article then ends, with a reference to Sir Josiah Stamp's conclusion, which was that the bankers should undertake a "fearless exploration of new and theoretical ideas," and attempt to "comprehend the true relation between their functions and the working of the economic machine," and that they should show more toleration for "the mental labours of those who are endeavouring, however imperfectly, to search out truth in an expanding universe." These words confirm Major Douglas's warning that the bankers would borrow Social-Credit sentiments and use them to side-track the Social-Credit Proposals. We declare, with maximum emphasis, that the time for theoretical exploration is past. The economic problem was solved once and for all time by Major Douglas thirteen years ago. Before any responsible representative of finance may insinuate that research is still necessary, he must first prove, on technical grounds, a flaw in Major Douglas's analysis and proposals; or else impugn, on moral grounds, his definition of the right objective of the economic system. People want to live comfortably and securely in this world. One of two answers is necessary: (a) that *Major Douglas's proposals cannot* achieve this for them; or (b) that *no proposals ought* to do so. If the object of the economic system is to make, not this world, but the next, safe for Democracy, the existing financial system is beautifully adjusted to the concept—as is testified by Major

Douglas's graph of suicides who have hurried off there to queue up at the early doors.

* * *

Now we come to exhibit "c." The purpose of "Oxoniensis" is to draw attention to the absence of mathematics and natural science from the list of subjects set for the Final Honour of *Literae Humaniores* ("Greats"). People, he says, who have taken this Honour have enriched "the Church, the Bar and the Press" out of all proportion to their numbers. Naturally, he continues, the ablest men at Oxford desire the training of "the most famous course in the world," and yet when they go through it they find themselves with

> "*no knowledge of the forces that, more than anything else, are transforming the lives of all mankind* . . . they constantly find themselves, as statesmen, publicists, preachers and thinkers, called upon to *pass judgment on scientific questions*, and have *not knowledge enough to form it satisfactorily* . . . Mathematics now, as in the days of Plato, is the most outstanding achievement of the human mind, and it is fitting that the *guardians of our civilisation* no less than of his 'Republic' should be acquainted with them. . . . They need not be obligatory, but those who take 'Greats' would not then be obliged to *renounce what are the most important of human interests at the present time*. . . ." (Our italics.)

A reply to "Oxoniensis" appeared in *The Times* of December 10, and can be cited as exhibit "d." The writer signs himself Reginald Blomfield and addresses his letter from The Athenaeum. He objects to the suggestion of the first correspondent that:—

> "It assumes that the object of the School is to *accumulate knowledge of facts* as against those who maintain that its whole value rests in the *training of the mind*, not in the specialised development of one faculty. . . . I am more than ever convinced of the *gymnastic value* of 'Greats' as it is, or it used to be when I went through that School some 50 years ago."

We take Mr. Blomfield to mean by "gymnastic value" the flexibility of mind imparted by the course—the aim being not to stock the mind with specialised facts, but to make it receptive to all sorts of facts, and capable of evaluating and correlating them upon occasions when wise judgment is to be pronounced upon any of them. This objective has much to be said for it, and the results of the training find justification in the promptitude and competency shown by, e.g., His Majesty's judges in applying formulae of judgment to the factual material of judgment in all sorts of suits involving all sorts of facts. We advisedly choose judges because, for reasons known to our readers, we regard them at present as the most valuable "guardians of our civilisation," if not the only "guardians. Now, if, as "Oxoniensis" says, the "ablest" men have taken "Greats," and have enriched the Church, the Bar, the Press, and Statesmanship out of all proportion to their numbers, it is a necessary inference that "Greats" has set the fashion in thinking for these professions. Inevitably the fashion in vogue among the Four Limelight Professions affects the thoughts and actions of the public, in some cases through spontaneous expressions of opinion, and in others through solicited adjudications having the force of law when pronounced.

* * *

Now, what we are going to say will probably not appear to either of the two correspondents mentioned as anything more than an irrelevancy to the question at issue between them. But we feel bound to say that, judged by the kinds of views spoken and written by these "enriched" Professions on the economic problem, their fashion of thinking indicates a fundamental flaw in their training. And since the economic problem is essentially one of relating monetary policy to human activity—i.e., mathematical computations to physical possibilities, there is strong presumption that "Oxoniensis" has a case to go to the jury. There is ample ground for the suspicion that "Greats" has overtrained gymnasts and turned out contortionists. Assuredly the primacy of the reflective faculties over the perceptive can be unduly emphasised; and, if it is, the result must be a tendency towards a similar situation to that which would arise if the school tuck-shop were abolished to extend the gymnasium. If facts would remain unchanged we could all think with our eyes shut. But in a world of changing fact, and changing factual relationships, the most brilliant mind needs nutriment through the channels of the five common senses.

* * *

We subjoin some extracts from *The Times* of December 12 on the proposed scheme for reorganising Lancashire's cotton industry. They are from a leading article, and will be read by at least a substantial number of personages who have gone through "the most famous course in the world." Yet it is a fair surmise that not one of them will see any anomaly or incongruity in these passages.

> "The basis of the scheme . . . is similar in principle to that embarked on by the shipbuilders—namely, the co-operative purchase by the various firms engaged in the industry of spinning and weaving mills at a low valuation for the purpose of closing them down in order to eliminate the excessive internal competition which . . . has wrought such havoc in the trade."
>
> "The purchase . . . is to be financed by a levy statutorily imposed upon all firms."
>
> "By these measures it is hoped that a sufficient fund can be raised by way of a 10-year loan to purchase the 10,000,000 spindles and the 100,000 looms which are presumed to represent the permanent excess plant of the spinning and manufacturing sections."
>
> ". . . there can be no doubt that an agreement to eliminate surplus capacity is eminently desirable, and once that has been reached the financial details can be worked out at leisure."
>
> ". . . in order to arrive at a successful result it will be necessary to secure the willing co-operation of the banks which have long been the principal creditors of the industry."
>
> ". . . some form of compulsion appears to be inevitable in the national interest."
>
> "No one acquainted with the history of the Lancashire cotton trade since the war will dispute the necessity for the drastic elimination of redundant plant. It has been a crying need for the past ten years."

Our readers will know what to say about this. All we will observe is that legal compulsion to destroy physical property marks the apotheosis of lawlessness. If the reply is that the property will not be destroyed but held idle, the question arises: Who will eventually pay for the purchase? If the answer is that British consumers will not bear the charge because the spindles and looms will be sold abroad, the question arises: At a low valuation?—and if so, is that not fitting out foreigners to compete with the reorganised British industry? A further comment is that since banks are the principal creditors of the industry the proceeds of the compulsory levy will be largely withdrawn from circulation and destroyed in the process of repayment. Such are some of the facts, with their implications, that the "guardians of our civilisation" have been trained to ignore.

Rationalising The Bench.

The *Daily Herald* (December 14, p. 3) reports rumours of retirements from the Bench. The names of Judges who qualify for pensions are given as Lord Justice Scrutton, and Justices Eve, Avory, Horridge, Rowlatt, and McCardie. The suggestion made is that the retirements are connected with the recent cut in Judges' salaries from £5,000 to £4,000. The pension is £3,500. This raises the question whether the cut was not made in order to tempt them to retire. It is to be hoped that Lord Justice Scrutton will hang on. His country needs him more now than ever.

Social Credit Problems.

The immediate object of public propaganda is to recruit students, not to make converts. Enlist your students, and then set them to work out their own conversion. In this they will need guidance—and the most valuable guidance that you can give them is to show them how to study the subject systematically.

The task of a recruiting-sergeant is entirely different from that of a drill-sergeant. There are all sorts of motives which the sergeant can appeal to in "selling" the army, but once the "prospect" joins up he comes under orders which ignore private motivation and impose specialised discipline and training. *Why* he wants to be a soldier has nothing to do with *how* he becomes a soldier. There is one manual for all alike.

The authority of the Social Credit advocate rests entirely on the fact that he is able to affirm that there is a technique for raising the collective standard of life; and that that technique can be taught to those who will go through a systematic course of instruction. Broadly speaking, his task in public is to "sell the course." And the customers whom he wants are those people whose motive for taking the course is that they desire to see happen what they are assured can happen, and for that reason want to see how in order to tell others how, and so help to bring about the new economic order.

His authority otherwise is no higher than that of any member of his audience whose general intelligence is equal to his own. For example, he may state with authority that by the technique of Social Credit everything that can be made for consumption can be bought for consumption. But supposing someone raises the question, for instance, of what will be the shares of buying-power as between the "rich" and "poor," the answer cannot be authoritative: that is, no answer can be derived merely from the technical truth of the Social Credit proposition. The proposition certainly involves a non-technical idea of the purpose of the economic system, viz.: that the object of production is consumption. But this means no more than that the consumption market should be emptied as fast as it can be replenished. *Who* shall empty it is irrelevant. The promise of the Social Credit Proposals is fulfilled in a technical sense when the goods are all sold—*even if it is the rich who buy them all.* The Social Credit advocate will of course have his personal view about whether that would be desirable; but his view depends for its validity not on the truth of the Social Credit technique, which is a matter of physico-mathematics, but on moral or humanitarian criteria which he has no better right to prescribe for others than they for him. What *can* be done is demonstrable beyond the range of discussion. What *shall* be done remains to be settled by the "will of the people." It was Hugh Walpole, we think, who, whenever he happened to be entertaining a company comprising persons of widely differentiated intellectual capacities, tactfully led the conversation towards "smoke-room" stories—"*because, then, everybody could join in.*"

Anybody might win the prize, or, more probably, everybody might win a prize—the order of merit being impossible to establish because the only criterion would be that undefinable thing called "taste," which would differentiate every individual at the table. And somewhat along this line it can be seen that there is a clear-cut distinction between the science of Social Credit and the tastes of its students and advocates. That Social Credit is an efficient mechanism for an immediate objective is demonstrable beyond the range of discussion. What is legitimately debatable is (a) how to get that mechanism brought into operation, (b) what natural consequences may be reasonably calculated to follow and (c) whether those consequences are desirable or otherwise in whole or in part.

Now the authority of the trained Social Credit advocate is absolute on the question of the soundness of the Theorem. Further, on the question "a," his authority is superior to most other judgments, because in the process of studying the Theorem he has inevitably been driven to reflect on the question why it is yet only a theorem and not a policy—a question to which the general answer emerges from Major Douglas's analysis of the credit-system, wherein the nature and alignment of the forces maintaining the old policy are disclosed. That is to say, comprehension of the distinction between Real and Financial credit involves that of the distinction between Real and Parliamentary Politics. Thus the Social Credit advocate although he cannot speak with absolute authority on the problem of getting the new policy adopted, can at least speak with the same authority as that of the most experienced permanent officials in the present Governmental system. He is "in the know" both as to what the financial secret is and as to how it is guarded. His judgment therefore outweighs those of a majority of officials on the inside of politics, not to speak of the millions of ordinary citizens on the outside.

This, of course, does not mean that students who have taken their degree in the science of Social Credit necessarily come to the same judgment as to the strategy required to secure its adoption as a policy. Nevertheless, the answer to this problem is inherent in their collective judgment. They have got it potentially, and its actualisation will proceed out of their personal researches and, perhaps, out of their internal disputes. The one external aid by which they can benefit is the commission of bankers' blunders—which are now multiplying at a pace that may at any moment precipitate a catalytic resolution of all our uncertainties.

Next we come to questions "b" and "c." They overlap to some extent, but in the main the answer to the first is a matter of reasoning, whereas that to the second is a matter of feeling.

Now, postulating that the Social Credit Theorem is outside the range of debate (nobody may "join in") the number of persons who are qualified to contribute to Social-Credit counsels progressively increases stage by stage in respect of the sequence of questions "a," "b," and "c"—*in just that order*. To the last question, which virtually asks: "What sort of a new world pleases your fancy?" practically the whole adult population can give answers of some sort; and in certain circumstances are entitled to give those answers. At the same time there is at present a particular circumstance which renders them premature, namely, the circumstance implied in question "a," that Social Credit is not yet the policy of the Government. This submission applies in a limited degree also to question "b." The dominant problem at this moment is that raised by question "a"—how to get Social Credit adopted in the shortest possible time: and although questions "b" and "c" cannot be said to be entirely unrelated to the problem, the values of the answers to them descends in order of immediate practical incidence. Not fifty million ideals of a new world-order would serve directly to solve the problem of making Organised Finance renounce its usurped powers.

This by no means involves the conclusion that these ideals are of little importance: potentially they are more important than anything else. Without vision, the people perish. No beautiful picture, no blue print: no instinct for release, no plan of release: no desire, no design. And it is just as true at the other end of the scale. If anyone who should thoroughly grasp the technical truth of the Social Credit Theorem is content merely with this achievement of his intellect, and is unmoved by its practical implications for humanity, he is as useless in the counsels of Social Credit advocates as the least instructed idealist.

The bearing of the foregoing on propagandist policy is generally this. That we must regard questions "b" and "c" as important ones to answer as best we can to *people outside the Movement*, for the reason that it is chiefly the moral considerations coming under these heads on which they will decide to enrol as students in the course of instruction which we want them to take. But when once they become students they must concentrate on the physico-mathematical basis of the Theorem. Apart from the more obvious reason why they should do so, there is the additional reason that without this discipline their counsels *inside the Movement* in what are the politics of Social Credit will be valueless. Needless to say, we want their enrolment not merely that they shall learn, but that they shall thereafter help the Movement by their teaching outside it, and by their counsels inside it. To go back to our hypothetical recruiting sergeant; he might appropriately assure some young man that in His Majesty's uniform he would fix his young lady's wavering affections; but afterwards, on parade, love affairs would be no excuse for slackness. Somewhat similarly, whereas at a Social-Credit recruiting-meeting a member of the audience could legitimately require information on some such question as whether, under Social Credit, the poor would have "first turn" at the National Dividend; such a question would be ruled out as irrelevant to his course of study if he took it up—and, in fact, we should rely on systematic technical instruction to correct the jealousy-complex which had made him fidget about "rich and poor." A thorough survey of the physical background of the Social Credit Proposals will show that these antipathies arise out of an incomplete grasp of the fact that production is capable of surfeiting the rich and poor of the world alike within a measurable period after being set free from financial restraints.

At the present time the ideal frame of mind for the Social Credit student, outside the technical problem, is that in which he contemplates, not what sort of a world he wants, but what sort of things he would like to do in that world. The two thoughts are "interdependent," as the bankers say, but they are psychically antithetical—the first indicating a propensity for interfering with other people's affairs, but the second, an instinct for personal freedom from interference. It was put in a phrase the other day when someone remarked that the most important reason to him for wishing to see Social Credit brought in quickly was so that he could say "good-bye for ever" to most of the Social-Creditors he knew—or, more sincerely and profoundly, in the remark once attributed to a young French *demi-mondaine* who wished she could inherit a little fortune so that she could sleep alone. The most harmless likeness of the future—and probably the most faithful—is that of a world in which there is room for people to get out of each other's way.

Those who are busying themselves in planning the Social Credit world before the coming of Social Credit are wasting their thoughts, and often wasting other people's time when they discuss their thoughts. We have ourselves heard advocates of Social Credit who were Churchpeople say that it will mean the re-birth of religion: and we have also heard other advocates, who were Freethinkers, prophesying the death of religion. Some expect a renaissance of art-appreciation and indoor-culture generally: while others bank on nature-appreciation and outdoor-culture generally. It is all very interesting when we are "all joining in" to entertain each other; but purposeless in, if not a handicap on, clear counsels of Social-Credit action in the existing situation. Naturally the Social Credit world will be governed in some form, but, in speculating on it, perhaps the safest generalisation we can make is that the Government will then rest on the active, authentic and spontaneous consent of the governed—a complete reversal of the present system of Government resting on passive, nominal and procured acquiescence. It will be the end of hide-and-seek politics and false-pretence policies.

Notice.

All communications requiring the Editor's attention should be addressed directly to him as follows:

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

NOTICE OF MEETING.

DOUGLAS CREDIT ASSOCIATION: GLASGOW MOVEMENT, Christian Institute, Bothwell Street, Glasgow. On Tuesday, December 22, at 7.45 p.m., J. Longden (D.C.A.) will give a lecture on "The Economic Blizzard and the Douglas Credit Proposals." All interested invited to attend. Questions. Collection.

PLAYING THE GAME.

[The following letter appeared in the *Christian Science Monitor* of November 21.]

I am submitting for publication what I consider a very generous and considerate procedure which a local bank performed recently.

The Mayfair State Bank, Chicago, upon investigation, realised their investments were losing money, and that this situation could not under prevailing conditions continue much longer; but, instead of accepting deposits up to the time of closing the bank, the bank notified all its depositors to call and collect 100 cents on the dollar, thereby considering others and forgetting self.

Surely an act of self-forgetfulness in consideration of others is worthy of mention and a good example for other institutions of similar character to follow if their financial affairs are in a like condition.

BERTRAM WEILL

Chicago, Ill.

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Current Sociology.

I.

Mr. Chamberlain's declaration, "there was every reason to suppose," etc., that the Budget would be balanced caused a "small Stock Exchange boom" in Government stocks. So far as information is available, Mr. Chamberlain's optimism is based on revised estimates of expenditure resulting from Departmental economies, and unrevised estimates of revenue. It is intended, by one means or another, to cajole taxpayers into meeting the demands—wrongly called their dues—at the expense of this year's income or the next. Nevertheless, the disastrous effect of the efforts at collection on the incomes on which the tax is levied will surely upset prophecies and optimism together. A type of currency management appears about to be tried which can only worsen the total economic situation. When Mr. Chamberlain asserted his confidence in a balanced Budget, and at the same time assured the House of the essential stability of sterling, he did not, as the Press announce, particularly please the City. His comments were completely in accord with what has been going on in the City for some time. For the City of London is so anxious to preserve itself whole that it continues slowly to kill its host, the industries of Great Britain.

* * *

Private memoranda circulating among London bankers give the reasons why Mr. Kirkwood and Sir Thomas Bell may not have a change in favour of industry in the Bank Rate or the bill market. According to the City a high Bank Rate and curtailed credit are necessary to keep down prices, to make the present cash basis enough without "inflation," and to ensure that credit is "given" only to those industrialists and traders "strong enough to use it profitably and pay well for it." This is precisely the exploitation of a credit-monopoly both to increase the price and limit the supply. It is not a sign that the subscribing bankers are more wicked than the fellows in other professions; but it is a sign that a profession which requires, because of its social consequences, a higher responsibility than other professions is controlled by men no higher in calibre in any way. The curtailment of credit is a form of machine-wrecking, which was excused in the originators on the ground of their ignorance of capitalist economics. It cannot be excused in the bankers on the ground of the ignorance of credit. That they are ignorant is a fact; but they pretend to be wise, and are generally accepted as wise. By either orthodox or Marxian economics the bankers would be right to limit the supply of credit to strong concerns which can pay a high rate of interest. Such a policy, according to orthodox economics, spiritually sprung from Malthus and Darwin, increases efficiency, destroys the weak, and promotes development. According to Marxian economics the policy hastens on that trustification of industry which must inevitably result, as surely as Marx is in his Heaven, in collectivisation, but never does so result. It is also sound finance as bankers, the intellectual leaders of Liberalism and Socialism, and the gramophones of Conservatism, accept it. It is, nevertheless, impossible finance. If the bankers curtailed credit so that only the half-dozen strongest concerns in the country could obtain it, some of them would immediately become weak, since they could not pay out enough purchasing-power from which to recover their costs. Until purchasing-power is definitely reinforced by cashing real-credit for the consumers' sake, industry will surely remain a battle of Kilkenny cats, in which industrial concerns fight until nothing is left but their debts.

* * *

The opinions expressed by Mr. Justice McCardie in the Assize Courts are news. They shock people on Mr. Justice McCardie's, not the Press magnets', responsibility. From such news as is obtainable Mr. Justice McCardie is horrified by the procreation of mentally unfit persons, whom he would sterilise; by the abominations ensuing from incestuous unions; and by the ignorance of birth-control which leads poverty-stricken mothers into breaking the law. It is regrettable that the learned judge should appear not to have studied whether means other than "eugenics," "birth-control," and "abortion," are available to the *community* which, in all his utterances, it is his duty to represent. One of the clearest morals of British industrial history is that prosperity fosters responsibility, and that economic degradation destroys it; and the clearest fact about the real-credit system is that it would be far easier to bring about responsibility by way of prosperity than to usher in compulsory eugenics, or alter the criminal law. Birth-control is not even a remedy for abortion, since the fact about birth-control is that *there is no technique*. When we have seen the effects of the prosperity which modern industry is equipped to provide it will be soon enough to talk of compulsory sterilization and other things. The reason why abortion or birth-control is excused or advocated in the case of poor women amounts to this: there is no Cunarder for them to travel in. The learned judge's sympathy with those women is to his very great credit, and to be respected. But it is the community's lack of respect for financial and economic science which is at fault, not the law which places a certain value on life. Mr. Justice McCardie's present views do not enable him to reply to Father Woodlock, who remarks with that Jesuitical logic so much like Shaw's, but on life's side, that the conclusion to which the learned judge's views go is the drowning of one twin. If the financial system is right, not only the drowning of one twin is obligatory, not only the drowning of two triplets, not only all other means for economising in new life, but the shooting of every surplus worker. Rationalisation would mean combing out every profession, and would ultimately mean killing the whole lot. Mr. Justice McCardie, in spite of his sympathy and his courage, is, in an age of over-production, advocating that life should adapt itself to the financial monopoly, after life has already adapted the world to itself.

II.

Was ever such lunacy as the settlement of the test case between the bill-market and the Cunard Line? We have the men, we could have the ship. We lack the slips of paper. The vessel is partly built; "in the early future" orders for fittings were to have been placed to the amount of two and a quarter millions. The prospective suppliers are no doubt ready in anticipation. The Clyde, man's own river, had been enlarged to accommodate man's new ideas. As a proposition in real credit the ship was entirely practicable. There might have been good reasons for suspending construction. A petition from the whole population of Great Britain might have protested against anyone going down to the sea in ships again, the present generation and their heirs for ever. The whole population might have objected to any further opportunities of seeing the world, at anybody's expense. Even then, if the Clydesiders liked the ship they might have gone on with it as a show-place and a Clydeside pleasure-boat. They go instead on the paltry but necessary consumer-fund of unemployment benefit, while their argosy takes no risk. Shipbuilders have superseded the sailing-ship only for the community to refuse to raise the wind.

* * *

A short time ago millions of pounds were subscribed to a sweepstake fund for chances of travelling on the new Cunard liner or the equivalent. It

was a miserable way of redistributing purchasing-power by comparison with the possible ways. It would be possible to build the Cunard liner with world-tours, all found, for prizes. That, fortunately, is illegal. Does Glasgow know that the capital required for building the London Albert Hall was partly subscribed in return for the right to sit in the hall when it was built? Does Glasgow remember how the Jersey market was financed? Is Glasgow ready to use the great nervous energy, the outstanding organising capacity, and the real credit idea, all of Scottish production, to build the Cunard Line in spite of the bankers? A ticket for a world-tour or an American holiday is worth something, otherwise the liner would not have been begun. Let a price be set on the tour, say a hundred coupons. Any person who succeeds in collecting a hundred coupons shall be entitled to a trip to America, all found, in certain years, 1934, etc. Surely coupons may either be left to the mercy of stock-exchange quotations, or issued conditional on disposal at a fixed price in sterling, if that standard is not too wobbly for Scotsmen. Dare the Glasgow workmen take such coupons as wages? Have the Glasgow shopkeepers enough confidence, not in sterling, not in gold, but in two other much more real things, to accept the coupons for goods. The two things in which faith is necessary are, equally, in the desire of men and women in and out of Glasgow to accumulate the requisite number of coupons for the trip, and in the ship itself. With small agencies in London, Glasgow, and Liverpool, for collecting small deposits in return for coupons, just as building societies collect small deposits, what Glasgow requires from outside can be obtained. Coupons would begin to be as good as money anywhere. The cost of the ship would be so many coupons, and the coupon could be recovered, in addition to ordinary money for part of the accommodation, when the ship at length put to sea. Any Glasgow printing works and a facsimile of the signature of Sir Thomas Bell is good enough for coupons which promise to pay the holder of a hundred of them a trip to the United States; and it would be as much as such a trip against nothing compared with what a Bank of England currency note promises, which is nothing but itself.

* * *

Glasgow requires its thinking-cap now as never before. It possesses a great quantity of real credit which is being machine-wrecked, printing-machine-wrecked, by the failure of the community as a whole to adjust financial to real credit. The Cunard liner is one of the first occasions when an experiment in cashing real-credit was practicable as a voluntary, initiatory act. Economy, the bankers say, requires the destruction of capital. Human desire for adventure, romance, experience, says that the worth of a Cunard liner is not assessable finally in bank-currency. This plea that Glasgow should consider, should definitely practice the above scheme, rises from both heart and head. Bank-currency is only a medium of exchange. As a medium of distributing the product of industry, as a medium for assisting capital into being it has failed. Looked at simply the value of a Cunard liner is the number of trips it is capable of giving to life-hungry people, who are eager, before their life ends, to see farther afield than Rothesay or Blackpool. In theory the bank-currency which would have been paid out to the workers, organisers, directors, would have been recovered sometime from the trippers. Glasgow has a chance to make financial history by making it more than a theory. Glasgow can dispense with bank-currency by at once distributing the cost of the ship as promises to deliver what the ship is for; and those promises can be exchanged, in part, by those who do not want a trip, or want food and clothes now, for food and clothes, even for bank-currency. Those promises would have an exchange value in other countries. It is even likely that they would become currency, accepted in all places because they had a real value, not merely a conventional one set on them by bankers and the faith of the people.

* * *

Glasgow, instead of going unemployed, ought to become very busy. Who are the firms which were to supply the fittings? What proportion of their prices are they prepared to take in promises to deliver sea-voyages. What proportion of the Scottish people are prepared to receive them in discharge of debt or payment for services? What Scottish banks independently of English banks are prepared to cash out overdrafts on the security of promises to deliver voyages, and to dispose of those promises to their customers as and when required. The suspension of the construction of the vessel has shocked Britain. It is almost at the point of awakening to the realisation of what money is. This economy is the most senseless action ever performed by persons who depend on the construction and use of real wealth, at the command of persons who manipulate only coupons and promises without any understanding of real wealth. Scotland has now its opportunity to create future history, and to rewrite all past history.

PAUL BANKS

Press Directory.

JOURNALS WHICH HAVE PUBLISHED SOCIAL-CREDIT IDEAS.

"BRANCH NOTES."—London County Council branch of the National Association of Local Government Officers. Editor and Advertising Manager, A. C. Garrad, Flat Eleven, 5, Powis Square, London, W.11.

"THE HEALTHY LIFE."—Described as "The Independent Health Magazine." 6d. monthly. Editor, Edgar J. Saxon. Address: The Health Centre, 56, Wigmore Street, London, W.C.1.

"THE ADELPHI."—1s. monthly. Address: 58, Bloomsbury Street, London, W.C.1.

"THE CIVIL SERVICE ARGUS."—Organ of the Ministry of Labour Staff Association. Editor, Reg. D. Crook.

THE "BLACKBURN MAGAZINE." A monthly review circulating in the district. Editor, Bernard Clayton. Address: 25, Azalea Road, Blackburn, Lancs.

"CHRISTENDOM: A Journal of Christian Sociology."—Published by Basil Blackwell, Oxford. General Editor, Maurice B. Reckitt. Literary Editor, Rev. V. A. Demant. Quarterly, 2s. Annual subscription, 7s. 6d.

"THE LIBERAL CATHOLIC."—Organ of the Liberal Catholic Church. Editor, F. W. Pigott, 30, Gordon Street, W.C.1. Monthly, 8d.

"THE SCHOOLMASTER AND WOMAN TEACHER'S CHRONICLE."—3, Racquet Court, Fleet Street, E.C.4. The organ of the N.U.T. Telephone: Central 3488.

"THE MODERN SCOT."—A high-class Scottish Nationalist literary quarterly (2s. 6d.). Has published articles by Major C. H. Douglas, H.M.M. (2), and Eimar O'Duffy. Editor, James H. Whyte, 3, South-street, St. Andrews, Scotland.

"THE SCOTTISH EDUCATIONAL JOURNAL."—Organ of the Educational Institute of Scotland (weekly). Editor, Thomas Henderson, B.Sc., 47, Moray Place, Edinburgh.

"TWENTIETH CENTURY."—Organ of the Promethean Society Editor, J. R. Evans. Address, 6, Guilford-street, W.C.1.

"THE TORCH."—Organ of the Industrial Christian Fellowship Director, Rev. P. T. R. Kirk. Address, 4, The Sanctuary, Westminster.

"FRIENDSHIP."—The journal of the Friends' Hall and Walthamstow Educational Settlement. Monthly, 1d. Edited and published by Will Turner, Friends' Hall, Greenleaf Road, Walthamstow, E.17.

"SOUTH AFRICAN REVIEW."—Published in Cape Town at 3d. (See "Notes of the Week" of December 10 for quotation from this journal.)

[Will readers add to these items, writing out the particulars on the same model as those printed above?]

"The attack on personal property, which superficially would appear to proceed from the less fortunate strata of society, would never have become effective had it not been a perfect tool for the transfer of real property, both territorial and industrial, from the individual to the financial institution."—Major C. H. Douglas, "The Monopoly of Credit."

Verse.

By Andrew Bonella.

The lecture (1) delivered by the Poet Laureate at the Queen's Hall on October 15 is a plea for the transcendental view of Poetry. Without telling us anything new, Mr. Masefield contrives to speak with ability and charm. "Poetry," he says, "is the light surrounding us. . . . It is not only the wine from the human grape, but wine from the life of the universe. I would say that it is a touching of the Life of the Universe, a lifting into the Universal Mood." This is none the worse for being Wordsworthian; it is Wordsworth above all who cultivated

> that blessed mood,
> In which the burthen of the mystery,
> In which the heavy and the weary weight
> Of all this unintelligible world,
> Is lightened;—that serene and blessed mood,
> In which the affections gently lead us on,—
> Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
> And even the motion of our human blood
> Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
> In body, and become a living soul:
> While with an eye made quiet by the power
> Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
> We see into the life of things.

"Poetry," says Mr. Masefield, "is profoundly influenced by the sun. It is best in lands of vintage and in those sunny years which have been years of good vintage. It does not prosper in the cold, nor in lands where the heat is a burden. It is something vital and of the nature of radiant energy, which is perhaps the very life of the Universe." Mr. Masefield can hardly mean this literally; if he did he would be faced with the awkward and obvious fact that the greatest mass of great poetry has been produced by sunny Greece and misty England. Taken metaphorically, however, there is good sense in what he says; and he is probably right in thinking that "this best, truest, and greatest poetry . . . will only appear in a race strongly believing in a spiritual order in the Universe." Scepticism is very charming and very civilised, but it never produced a sonnet worth writing or worth reading.

Mr. Edgell Rickword is a typical intellectual of the period. His verses (2) are amusing, clever, unkind, reminiscent of T. S. Eliot and John Donne, with plenty of buttocks and breasts and pimps and prostitutes. Some of the satire is fairly good, but even in this medium one must believe in something. Compare, for instance, Mr. Roy Campbell's satirical achievements with Mr. Rickword's. Mr. Rickword is probably quite as clever as Mr. Campbell, but he doesn't hate so splendidly.

Miss Webster (3) writes with feeling, sincerity, and some skill. Here, for instance, is a neat piece of poetic observation:—

> I woke with dawn upon my pane,
> Bemused and sleep distraught,
> And vaguely groped to find again
> What thing I have forgot.
>
> Then like a sad, familiar bird,
> From out a solemn tree,
> My sorrow came without a word,
> And perched again on me.

But this, like the rest of the book, has—going back to Mr. Masefield's vintages—a low alcoholic content; it has little body; it is a pleasant beverage rather than a real drink.

The methods of Miss Matthews' publishers do not encourage me to review her book (4). They enclose with the Review Copy a paper headed "For Information and Quotation," which gives, besides facts about the author which might conceivably be of use to the critic, the publishers' own opinion of the work. They think, for instance, that Miss Matthews' poems bear some resemblance to those of Francis Thompson in respect of "a spirit of quietness and serenity pervading them." This sounds rather silly on the face of it, but apart from that, what the publisher says is not evidence; and it is impudent to provide the critic with a ready-made review.

(1.) "Poetry." By John Masefield. (Heinemann 3s. 6d.)
(2.) "Twittingpan." By Edgell Rickword. (Wishart 2s. 6d.)
(3.) "The Silver Flute." By Mary Morison Webster (Poetry Bookshop. 2s. 6d.)
(4.) "The Winding Way." By Dorothy Matthews. (Headley Brothers. 1s.)

The Films.

New Adventures of Get Rich Quick Wallingford: Empire.

I have the greater pleasure in commending this excellent entertainment in view of the rarity of genuine screen humour. Here is an hour and a half of fun, and if a more amusing film has been made this year I must unaccountably have missed seeing it. It is excellently cast, acted, edited, and directed, and its speed is as high as its spirits. Only an American producer could have made so good a job out of this type of picture, and the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studios are to be congratulated on a further addition to their considerable list of successes during the present year. The role of Wallingford might have been created for William Haines, who is admirably partnered by his two "business" associates in the persons of Jimmy Durante and Ernest Torrence, the latter in what is for him a somewhat unusual part. Sam Wood directed. I recommend "Get Rich Quick Wallingford" as a sovereign antidote against the general depression of the times; it should even enable you temporarily to forget the January income tax instalment.

A Gentleman of Paris: New Gallery.

This new Gaumont (English) film has the merits of good photography and atmosphere, while no picture directed by Sinclair Hill can be entirely bad. But in the main "A Gentleman of Paris" has most of the characteristic defects of British studios. Much of the dialogue, for which Sewell Collins is responsible, is of a dreadful banality; the speech is slow; and the credibility of the story, which is already stretched to breaking point by the excessive employment of coincidence, is strained still further by the ending, which is forcibly dragged in, and not rendered the more convincing by Arthur Wontner's acting. Mr. Wontner is another theatrical veteran who has still much to learn of the technique of the screen; he is far too stagey, and although his immobility is suitable to the role of a judge on the bench, it becomes simply wooden during the philandering scenes. Vanda Greville, the lady of Paris with whom he has an affair, is almost equally unimpassioned; the two in concert reminded me of Dean Swift's "lovemaking of two elderly oysters." Far and away the best feature of this production is the acting of Phyllis Konstam, and an admirable little character sketch is contributed by Millicent Wolf as the counsel for the defence. Sybil Thorndike is also in the cast.

This Week's Films.

"The Man Who Laughs" and a Lottie Reiniger silhouette film are at the Academy. "The Ghost Train" is being exclusively shown at the Stoll, and "Seed" is in the Tussaud programme. "Rich and Strange," a new English film, is having its preliminary showing at the Regal, and the Pavilion is giving an exclusive presentation of another native production, "Dance, Little Lady." This is the British International film that it had originally been intended to call "Carnival" (not the Matheson Lang picture), and then "The Soul of Jenny Pearl." In the circumstances an alternative title might have been "Third Time Lucky," if that were not pre-empted.

DAVID OCKHAM.

"The Curse of the Gold."

THE ALLEGORY OF "THE RING."

By A. L. Polak.

The genius of Wagner the musician is world-famous, but it is not generally realised that his greatest work depicts in glowing colours the injustices and weaknesses of the capitalist system of his day, and proclaims in rich and stirring harmonies the final downfall of the world-edifice based on greed and gain, and the founding of a new Socialistic order of justice and love.

The Ring of the Niebelung—the name given to the complete cycle of the four operas of *The Rhinegold*, *The Valkyrie*, *Siegfried*, and *The Twilight of the Gods*—is an allegory, veiled in the old Norse legends of gods and heroes, the inner lessons of which are being strikingly brought home to us in the present crisis.

* * *

Wagner himself was early in life attracted by the revolutionary thought of his day, and actually played a part in the political unrest which showed itself in Germany in 1849. As a result of his activities he was forced to flee the country, and he remained in exile for twelve years, during which time the idea of the *Ring* was conceived, and a great part of the poems round which the music is woven were composed, though the musical score itself was not completed until many years later. Here again Wagner showed himself a rebel against tradition. The older opera-composers, typified by Meyerbeer, had been in the habit of adopting without much care any *libretto* or "book of words" that came to hand, however second-rate, and concentrating on composing music which would suitably display the powers of the great singers of their day. Revolting against the artificiality of these old operas, Wagner set himself to compose not *operas*, but music-dramas, and his productions are masterpieces in which the literary and dramatic qualities, and the thought behind them, are fully worthy of the greatness of the music. It is to this fact that is due the tremendous power of Wagner's works, beside which many of the old operas appear superficial and insipid.

* * *

In *The Rhinegold*, the first of the four music-dramas, we see the gold guarded by the Rhinemaidens in the depths —the mineral reposing harmlessly amid the primeval forces of nature. A mysterious booming, rolling rhythm in the music describes the ebb and flow of the great river overhead. To them comes the dwarf Alberich, ugly, misshapen and greedy. He learns that the gold they guard may only be won by him who forswears love—wealth, they say can be amassed only by one who gives his whole life to its pursuit, who casts out all the finer feelings. As they speak, the rays of the sun strike through the water, and in the orchestra we hear reflected the flashing splendour of its brightness as the gold shines forth in the sunlight. The sight is too much for the rapacious Alberich; proclaiming aloud his renunciation of love he seizes the gold and disappears, leaving the Rhinemaidens lamenting in vain behind him. The scene changes to Valhalla, the home of the gods, who for Wagner typify the ruling powers. The portrayal of their characters is a merciless satire on their diplomatic methods, their conventional respectability, their physical strength, and their moral weakness. Wotan, the chief of the gods, has persuaded the giants, Fasolt and Fafner, to build Valhalla as a new home for the gods, promising them the goddess Freia as a reward. The giants—rough workmen, unskilled in the wiles of diplomacy—claim the reward of their labour, but Wotan does his best by specious arguments to cheat them of their due. Here the character of the ruling powers, represented by Wotan, is brilliantly portrayed; Logë, the god of fire, whispering how easily a superior being like Wotan can outwit the untaught giants; Fricka, Wotan's wife, arguing loftily on the other side that "we gods do not break our word." Ultimately Fricka gains the day, and the giants drag off the terrified Freia. But Logë has found a way out. He tells Wotan of the dwarf Alberich and his theft of the gold, and argues cleverly that there is no crime in robbing the thief. This is just the argument to appeal to Wotan's sense of the conventions, and Fricka warmly supports it on moral grounds.

* * *

Alberich, meanwhile, has become an employer of "sweated labour", on a large scale. Out of the stolen Rhinegold he has fashioned a magic ring, which confers mighty power on its wearer; armed with this power he has enslaved his brother Mime and numberless other dwarfs who, miserably ill-treated, are seen feverishly working in the underworld of Niebelheim to pile up more and more wealth for their insatiable master. Wotan and Logë come upon him, and after soothing his suspicions with soft words, bind him hand and foot and drag him up to the light of day. As the price of his freedom they demand not only his hoard, but the magic ring itself.

* * *

Alberich long resists the final surrender, but when the ring is finally wrested from him he pronounces a terrible curse on his spoilers:—

> "As through a curse it came to me, so be this ring accursed. If its gold gave me might without measure, now may its magic bring death to its wearer. No fortune shall delight him; may its bright glow gladden no one. May sorrow sear its possessor and envy gnaw him who hath it not. All shall yearn after its gift, but none shall enjoy its use. Profitless let it be to its owner, yet let it draw murder with it. Devoted to death, let fear enchain him so long as he lives; may he perish longing for death, lord of the ring, to the ring enslaved, till in my hands I hold once more the stolen treasure. Thus the Niebelung in direst need blesses his ring! Hold it fast now; guard it well; from my curse there is no escape!"

A weird, sinister phrase from the orchestra introduces this dreadful malediction. Almost at once it finds a victim. Fafner and Fasolt, the giants, returning at Wotan's behest to allow him to ransom Freia with the gold, are dazzled by its richness and, insatiable in their turn, will not loose the goddess until the ring itself is added to their price. At once they begin to quarrel over the sharing of the treasure, and Fafner, swinging his club, strikes his brother dead. Wotan at first is horrified at the swift manifestation of the curse, which has caused the shedding of a brother's blood, but Fricka calls him from the sorry spectacle to behold the glories of Valhalla. To a triumphant burst of harmony from the whole orchestra the gods cross the rainbow bridge into their new abode, while the crafty Logë mocks their hypocrisy, and far below, in the depths of the river, the Rhinemaidens mourn the loss of their gold and foretell the woe which the theft will bring upon its ravishers.

* * *

Each of the subsequent dramas brings a step nearer the fall of the gods, and the gold and its curse are the underlying motive throughout. In *The Valkyrie* we see Wotan forced, by the conventional morality to which he bows, to sacrifice the heroic earthly children whom he has created to build up a race who will rid the world of the curse. His best-beloved daughter, the warrior-goddess Brynhild, dares to disobey him in endeavouring to save them; for this offence the code of the gods demands that she be deprived of her divinity and left sleeping on a fire-encircled rock, which none but a hero will dare to scale. The oft-repeated theme of the curse, in the music, continually reminds us of the source of all this tragedy. But Brynhild does not entirely fail in her purpose, for Wotan's earthly children have left a son behind them.

* * *

This son, the beautiful and fearless youth, Siegfried, is brought up in the forest after the death of his mother, by the dwarf Mime, who is still scheming to secure the hoard and the ring. Fafner, the surviving giant, has meanwhile changed his shape to that of a fearsome dragon, and, doomed by the curse to possess the treasure without enjoying it, lives in a cave in the forest, mounting guard night and day over the gold. Siegfried, who knows no fear, typifies the ideal man of the future who will establish the new order of peace and justice in the world. He slays Fafner and secures the ring; defies Wotan, who strives to check his impetuous course, and striding unafraid through the flames, awakens the sleeping Brynhild, now become a loving woman, and makes her his bride. But the power of the curse is not yet spent.

* * *

Owing to the treacherous machinations of his enemies, Siegfried, too, is slain at last. Riding her horse into the flames of his funeral pyre, Brynhild flings back the unhappy ring into the Rhine, where the Rhinemaidens receive it with loud rejoicing. Meanwhile, the flames of the pyre have reached even to Valhalla; the whole vainglorious edifice of the gods crashes in flames, while amid the ruins the music tells us of the new world that will arise on the ashes of the old—a world redeemed, not by gold, but by love and justice.

* * *

Are Wagner's prophecies being fulfilled to-day? Does the curse of Alberich still lie heavily on the world? There is an amazing parallel in the present crisis.

* * *

In 1919, the Rhinegold, in the form of reparations, was wrested from Germany. To the spoilers it has proved a

curse indeed. It has brought to them, if not death, continued adversity, widespread distress and unemployment. Sorrow has "seared its possessor," and envy has indeed "gnawed him who hath it not." The United States and France, who hold three-quarters of the world's gold, though envied by less wealthy states, are yet in the grip of a crisis as grave as theirs. "Profitless to its owners," it has certainly been; powerless to save them from depression and distress. And who knows whether it may not yet "draw murder with it," if we are not vigilant—that the present financial and economic depression may not lead to a war more destructive, more shattering than the last, which will bring, not only the present system, but the whole Valhalla of Western civilisation tumbling in ruins about us?

* * *

Wars, reparations, debts, a system based on greed and gain—these factors are leading us inevitably to catastrophe. Let our leaders heed Wagner's warning, and fling back the accursed gold while there is yet time. But woe, says Alberich, to them that hold it. "From my curse there is no escape."

News Notes.

SOCIAL CREDIT LITERATURE.—Will readers note that further supplies of Mr. Hattersley's book, *This Age of Plenty*, will not be available until the New Year. Messrs. Pitman and Sons do not say why, but we presume that the demand has been unexpectedly heavy since the election. Mr. Hattersley's pamphlet, *Men, Money and Machines*, is now in its second edition, and its price is reduced from 6d. to 4d. Mr. A. E. Powell's book, *The Deadlock in Finance*, is also in a second edition, and its price has been reduced from 5s. to 3s. 6d. The first publication of the Legion of Unemployed is a 24 pp. booklet entitled *The Coming Crisis*. It expounds the Social-Credit diagnosis of the economic situation and urges readers to demand the National Industrial Dividend and join the Legion as a step towards getting the remedy adopted. It is, of course, written primarily for the unemployed and wage-earners. The price is 2d. Curiously enough the address of the Legion does not appear. Enquiries had better be addressed to the Commanding Officer, Mr. George Hickling, 54, Poole Road, Coventry. There are no supplies available in London yet.

BANKER'S VETO.—We hear a rumour that a certain lady connected with the B.B.C. wanted to arrange for talks on economics, and was told by a famous banker that any such talks must be given by Professor Henry Clay. Can anyone authenticate this?

POLICE AND TRAFFIC.—According to the *Daily Express* of December 11 a move is being made to replace police by automatic traffic-control devices in order to free them to deal with "crime." The penalty on a motorist who disregards the signals will be just severe as if he disregarded a living policeman.

CLUBS FOR THE UNEMPLOYED.—This idea has been discussed in the Press recently. It is recommended as a means of maintaining the morale of people for whom there is no prospect of work. This looks like a counter-move to the policy of the Legion of Unemployed, which is to enlist recruits and put them through a six-weeks' course of Social-Credit economics as a condition of promotion to the rank of squad-leaders. It is not unlikely that these Clubs will develop into a sort of local headquarters for quasi-military purposes. Already in some parts of the Continent there has been a move to form "flying-squads" of workers, and it is not difficult to see this developing into a general scheme for mobilising and organising a blackleg army for the peaceful suppression of strikes. And no doubt the penalty for rough-handling a blackleg will be as severe as that for assaulting a policeman when carrying out his duty. It will of course be necessary to provide him with a uniform or a badge so that aggrieved trade-unionists may know at sight that he is acting under the Bank's orders.

A POOL FOR PERISHABLES.—On November 17 *The Times* brought out a "British Canning Industry Number" full of particulars and pictures showing the development of this "thriving young industry." A firm advertising on the front cover explains that hitherto crops of fruit and vegetables had to be sold when ripe at "*prices they would fetch as perishable goods.*" "Bountiful crops, instead of being a benefit to all, frequently became mere glut and waste." But now the development of canning "has caused perishable goods to be *no longer perishable*." To the "great mass of the people" it will ensure a plentiful supply of home-grown food the whole year through *at reasonable prices*. (Our italics.) On mere inspection readers will see the reason for *The Times's* interest in the canning industry. The policy is: "Can" the glut. And the object is to hold up prices against the consumer. We do not remember, in pre-canning days, that greengrocers' prices reflected the scrap-prices at which growers are now said to have sold their crops. Consumers do not appear to have received what the farmers lost; and we are pretty certain that the farmers are not going to receive what consumers are now going to lose. There may be an increase in revenue for fruit-growers, but if so the money will be gathered up by mortgagors. The canning industry will be the agency for collecting a general subsidy through prices for the reduction of debt on agricultural property. Notice that the booming of canning took place three weeks after the National Government came in. That was a convenient period after the result of the election was known in which to prepare *The Times's* supplement. There is no doubt that the financial interests had provisionally pre-determined the fiscal policy now adopted by Mr. Runciman (an old Free-Trade gamekeeper turned poacher, by the way) and had planned to put an import duty on foreign fruit and vegetables. These interests can now win either way. If foreign imports get past the tariff, the revenue from the duty will help to reduce the Government's debt to the banks. If the tariff keeps them out, the extra price then recoverable for home-produce will help to reduce the farmers' debt to the banks. And in either case the consumer's money will be taken away and destroyed. The advertiser referred to reminds the reader that when he buys "British canned goods" he is helping other home industries such as Iron, Coal, Steel, Tinplate, etc. Now these industries feed the Bankers' Canning Corporation with material. So the material must be cheap. Therefore it must not be taxed. And this will explain to the impatient Conservative claimants for duties on imported steel and other metals why Mr. Runciman (supported by *The Times*—which means instructed by the Treasury nominally, and by the Bank of England actually) is playing them off with nebulous references to the complexity of the subject, and the need for prolonged consideration.

SOCIAL CREDIT AND "PUBLIC OPINION."—There is a short notice on the back page of this journal, last week's issue, referring to Major Douglas's theory, and mentioning that he had given evidence before the Macmillan Committee. A reference is also made to Mr. W. Allen Young's *Ordeal By Banking* as an exposition of Major Douglas's proposals.

SOCIAL CREDIT AND THE "DUBLIN EVENING MAIL."—This paper prints a letter, December 12, from Mr. T. Kennedy, in which Major Douglas is mentioned, and also his well-known principle quoted: "That the cash credits . . . shall at any moment be collectively equal to the cash prices for consumable goods . . ."

SOCIAL CREDIT AND "NEW INDIA."—In the issue dated October 29 is an article signed by R. E. Hansen, in which he prescribes the "Douglas Social Credit Proposals" as the "only scientific and effective answer" to the questions arising from the economic situation. He describes the "Just Price" proposal (the discounting of financial cost, and the reimbursement of the seller), and concludes by emphasising the special importance of Social Credit as a policy for India.

SOCIAL CREDIT AND THE "BIRMINGHAM MAIL."—This paper publishes in its issue of December 7 a review of Major Douglas's new book, *The Monopoly of Credit*, extending to nearly a column. The reviewer refrains from critical comment, and contents himself with quoting passages from the book. These are fairly selected, one of them reproducing the A + B Theorem, to which he adds the hint that Major Douglas has a reply to the criticisms likely to be brought against his division of the two categories of business expenditure, but says that it is "impossible to summarise" it. The review, on the whole, is very satisfactory. The writer evidently recognises that the nature of the subject is outside the orbit of perfunctory criticism, and that the proper way to handle it is to state the Social Credit case and leave arguments to the experts.

THE SPANISH CONSTITUTION.—A leading article in *The Times* of December 8 on this makes amusing reading. The new Constitution renounces war as an instrument of policy, but the army is still to be retained for the preservation of "law and order." In other words, the army exists to protect Spain against Spaniards. The Constitution provides for a single-chamber legislature, but any law passed by the Cortes may be referred back for reconsideration on a petition signed by 15 per cent. of the people entitled to vote.

Whence the dissatisfied petitioners get the money to organise this is not stated. However, the banker has plenty, and will probably oblige with accommodation if he approves the petition. *The Second Chamber? C'est moi!* Already under this revised Republican Constitution the President has assumed "dictatorial powers under an emergency Act which would *never have been tolerated under the Monarchy.*" However, says *The Times*, "it is at least a well-balanced and very democratic Constitution." Quite so: even the humblest Spaniard will enjoy the privilege of helping to produce a well-balanced Budget. And what Democrat can ask for more?

Reviews.

Nothing But the Truth. By Frederick H. Haines. (The Pure Thought Press, 173, High Street, Watford. 7s. 6d.)

Mr. Haines is transparently honest, and therefore the story of his conversion to Spiritism, though badly written, is of considerable human interest. His experiences are not such valuable evidence as he seems to think; for instance, there is no evidential significance in the fact that certain developments in his life were foretold by one of the "spirits," since the prophecy may have governed the event. But to those of us who agree that some of the Spiritists' phenomena are probably genuine and not simply ingenious conjuring tricks, the interesting point is not so much the evidential as the pragmatic test. Even if we accept the phenomena we may differ as to the interpretation. Some of us think that the modern "medium" is in the true line of descent from the witch of Endor; and, since "by their fruits ye shall know them," the alleged evil effects of so-called spirit-intercourse may be used to support this suggestion. There seems little doubt that the medium, whether deliberately or not, often stimulates an unhealthy craving to know more and more, far removed from the desire of the Christian for spiritual progress. The interesting thing about Mr. Haines, however, is that his adoption of Spiritism appears to have done him good in body and in soul. His creed is perhaps worthy of the name, so often basely used, of *Spiritualism*: his is, in fact, a spiritual point of view, and he is not so much interested in mechanical phenomena as in messages from "the beyond" of philosophic and religious import. The Church, he complains, did not give him what he needed, and he was driven to find his God elsewhere. No doubt he is right; no doubt the Church, as an institution, is slow to see that certain natures need a more mystical creed than the general run of church-goers: but it seems likely that Mr. Haines could have found all he needed in the writings of the Christian contemplatives if his Vicar had only showed him the way. It may be objected that, while he might have found the doctrine there, he would have had no "evidence": but then, to believe in the Love of God on account of a scientific experiment has as little of religion in it as to be honest because it pays. Perhaps Mr. Haines is like that earlier disciple who believed in the need for scientific proof, to whom it was said: "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

M. J.

Popular Entertainments Through the Ages. By Samuel McKechnie, author of "The Romance of the Civil Service." (Sampson Low, Marston and Co. 12s. 6d.)

After the fall of the Roman Empire the personnel of its circuses, etc., were dispersed and wandered over Europe with their amusements, mingling with the gleemen of the barbarian invaders. From their contact there came the "jongleur," of the Middle Ages and the more aristocratic "troubadour." Some of the entertainers took up playacting, as did the household minstrels of the great nobles. Theatres were put up in London to accommodate their performances, "thrillers" in great variety being turned out by a needy actor-author, William Shakespeare. Other entertainers found scope for their talents in local fairs, of which the chief was that held in Smithfield, Bartholomew Fair, which lasted until 1855. In Italy popular entertainment took the form of the "Comedy of Masks," in which the players were only given an outline of their story and invented the dialogue as they went along. This came to England first as the prototype of the Punch and Judy Show and then as the Pantomime. Partly through the brilliance of the clown Grimaldi, the latter changed greatly in character and became humorous; it was also influenced greatly by the Music Halls. The Halls arose from entertainments given in inns and taverns (which, on a more fashionable plane, also produced the cabaret). A device of the entertainers, the magic lantern or "phantasmagoria", fell into the hands of the scientists and produced the kinema. With the revival of the circus, popular entertainment in England returned almost to its original form. All these developments are described in detail and with a wealth of illustration in Mr. McKechnie's work.

I. O. E.

The Green Company. By Leslie A. Paul. (The C. W. Daniel Co. 2s.)

The Woodcraft Folk have already been mentioned in THE NEW AGE as a co-operative offshoot of the Kibbo Kift Kindred. Since their formation in 1924 the groups of the Folk have progressed steadily, and form a valuable feature of co-operative work. They have now produced their handbook of training for boys and girls. Written by their founder and leader, "Little Otter," the book follows the tradition of Seton, Lord Baden-Powell, Westlake, and Hargrave. Its sections deal with the value of woodcraft, the folk, health, "Tribal Lore," camping and hiking, natural history, handicraft, and ultimate ideals. I. O. E.

A Green Love and Other Poems. By Leslie A. Paul. (Published by the Author, 19, Gaynesford-road, Forest Hill, S.E.23. 3s.)

Mr. Leslie Paul, who is one of the best-known poets among Co-operative workers, here expresses the ideals he holds. Among his emotional nature-verse are others of a more strenuous nature, notably his memorial to Sacco and Vanzetti, and his version of "Little Boy Blue." His "Indian File" and his "Nomad" will appeal to every hiker, and his tent reverie to all who have camped with children I. O. E.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

BANKERS' BLIGHT.

Sir,—I very much enjoyed this article in a recent issue of THE NEW AGE.

Our friend "Yaffle" in the *New Leader* rubs in the same moral with a railway story.

Both have one weakness, found by Jack London in that prophetic novel of his, *The Iron Heel*.

Certain dispossessed farmers, agricultural workers, and so on, retreat to lonely wilderness sections, where they set up cultivation and barter communities.

What smashed them was their discovery by the Oligarchs, and the imposition and demanded collection *in cash* of local rates and national taxes.

That was the hidden rock in the Tolstoyan colony at Purleigh thirty years ago. It is the hidden rock in the Catholic Land Colonies of to-day. WILLIAM J. PIGGOTT.

MACMILLAN REPORT.

Sir,—The following may be of interest: The trade discount allowed by the Stationery Office is 25 per cent., so your £2 should be £2 9s.; and much the largest portion of S.O. publications are sold at retail price. The imprint on the volume shows that 500 copies were printed, the demand for such publications not being usually great. All Government work type is kept standing for six months after publication. Thereafter it may be taken down, but the S.O. can instruct the printer to keep it standing indefinitely and is then charged a monthly rent for the type. The cost of a reprint would be paper, making ready, and machining and binding. The record of free copies will be on file at the S.O. Sales Dept., who, of course, act on Department instructions, and it could be readily supplied in answer to a question in the House. W.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W. A.—Your letter received. We would not write anything from the Social-Credit point of view for submission to the publishers you name. The chances of their accepting it are too remote. Also we think you overestimate the importance of their readers. We think they are of the culture-fan type, who are ready to read any theory on any subject—and the more the merrier so long as there's something fresh every time. They are tasters of view-points, and all they do on each occasion is to say "My!" and wait for the next. If you think it worth while to write something for them to see, do so by all means. But we fancy that your MS. will be submitted to an economic adviser and turned down on account of its (a) "unsoundness," or (b) "controversial nature."

H. P.—The signatory of the letter in our issue of November 26 relating to a meeting-place for a Social Credit Group in Birmingham was W. B. Bruges (not Bridges), of 59-61, Cape Hill, Smethwick, Staffs. He writes that he received six replies to his announcement; so it is curious that yours was returned to you by the Post Office.

ACADEMY CINEMA, OXFORD STREET
(Opposite Waring & Gillow). 'Phone: Ger. 2981.
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20th, for 5 days only—
Brigitte Helm in Pabst's Drama "THE CRISIS" and Hitchcock's "THE RING."
Last Days, Conrad Veidt as "THE MAN WHO LAUGHS" and a Reiniger Silhouette Film.
From Xmas Day. Dec. 25th, "LE MILLION" and Dutch Sound Film.

TUBERCULOSIS
ITS TREATMENT AND CURE
by Dr. ADRIEN SECHEHAYE.
(Translated from the French.)
No one interested in T.B. can afford to miss reading this book.
Price, 5/- from Booksellers or Post Free from the Publishers, B. FRASER & Co., 62, Pepys Road, S.W.20.

THE "NEW AGE" CIGARETTE
Premier grade Virginian tobacco filled by hand in cases made of the thinnest and purest paper, according to the specification described in this journal on January 23, 1930.
Large size (18 to the ounce). Non-smouldering.
Prices: 100's 7/6 (postage 3d.); 20's 1/6 (postage 2d.)
Price for Export ex English duty quoted on minimum quantity of 1,000.
FIELDCOVITCH & Co., 72, Chancery Lane, W.C.2
(Almost on the corner of Holborn and Chancery Lane).

The Social Credit Movement.

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

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

The Subscription Rates for "The New Age," to any address in Great Britain or Abroad, are 30s. for 12 months; 15s. for 6 months; 7s. 6d. for 3 months.

CREDIT RESEARCH LIBRARY.

Books and Pamphlets on Social Credit.

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Social Credit in Summary. 1d.
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Through Consumption to Prosperity. 2d.
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