HOW ABOUT EUROPE?

By the same Author

SOUTH WIND
OLD CALABRIA
FOUNTAINS IN THE SAND
SIREN LAND
LONDON STREET GAMES
THEY WENT
ALONE
TOGETHER
EXPERIMENTS
BIRDS AND BEASTS OF THE GREEK
ANTHOLOGY
IN THE BEGINNING
THREE OF THEM

HOW ABOUT EUROPE?

SOME FOOTNOTES ON

EAST AND WEST

By

NORMAN DOUGLAS

LONDON

CHATTO AND WINDUS

1930

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
BY T. AND A. CONSTABLE LTD.
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS
EDINBURGH

To

OSCAR LEVY

HOW ABOUT EUROPE ?

A good while ago, as I was stepping into the train, a friend who had come to see me off put into my hands a book and said :

'Have a look at this. Very rich, in places. Pure sensationalism, of course ; she wants to get herself talked about. I think you 'll enjoy it. If not, just throw it out of the window.'

That is how I came to read *Mother India*, while the train crawled slowly through a level, dried-up landscape under the cobalt sky of early autumn. It was a drowsy afternoon ; the corn had been cut long ago, the country wore an air of exhaustion, and everything seemed half asleep. And still we panted forwards, past white farm-houses and fields of yellow stubble, stopping at every station. *Mother India* is a

fairly long book; this was a fairly long journey, hot and tedious.

'Pure sensationalism,' it soon became evident, was not quite correct. If you poke your nose into unsavoury corners, the result is bound to be more or less sensational. It struck me that the author had performed in business-like fashion her job of disembowelling old Mother India, though some of her arguments, I felt sure, would certainly be challenged—as indeed they were. In other circumstances I should have read it with greater attention (I did, later on).

That railway carriage was not conducive to the reading of a book like this. The heat, the proximity to objectionable fellow-creatures, children squalling in the next compartment, the screeching of machinery, the perpetual coming and going, the banging of doors, the whistling: what a coarse, undignified mode of travel! Here we were, cooped up like hens in a basket; open the windows, and clouds of noisome

smoke pour in ; shut them, and you are suffocated. A man sitting opposite me was intent upon some newspaper article ; I caught sight of the heading ' Indemnity.' Indemnity—reparations ; it was all we could talk about then, it is all we can talk about now ; an endless, unbecoming haggle. . . .

And the red velvet seats, my pet aversion. Velvet in the brooding heat of August ! Here was a sample of the unnecessary discomfort which we Europeans endure all day long in one form or another; that railway trip, a trifle in itself, made me resentful against the Western world and its institutions, while this book, with every page I turned, took me further away from them and conjured up memories of a land where one feels more at ease. As I read those disclosures, I could not help contrasting the two and thinking : What she tells of India is all very sad and unpleasant, but—but how about Europe ?

Well, Europe has lost her smile. More-

over, she is growing smaller than ever ; small and explosive and hectic—*balkanized.* An air of parochial defiance broods over us, signalizing its presence by offensive aggressions upon liberty. Life in this continent must present considerable difficulties just now to a really conscientious person. They who make it their business to evade its laws and conventions whenever possible are on a different plane ; they find their existence tolerable, and some of them—one, at all events—would not be sorry if it lasted for ever.

* *
*

A FEW observations then scrawled on the margin of *Mother India* have now blossomed, or at least expanded, into the following footnotes. The long interval between the two events may suggest that the

idea of this book was conceived, and again discarded. So it was. Why bother about the state of Europe? Such tasks should be left to the qualified Western enthusiast, the world-improver, the dreamer, the eternally hopeful and eternally muddle-headed. Can the leopard change his spots? An occasional spasm of lucidity is all we may ever expect. Enlightened individuals crop up in the most unlikely places and epochs; enlightened groups of them are as common as a flock of white blackbirds. The world has grown not only older since Pericles; it has grown stupider.

The reader will find no suggestion of remedies in these pages. I am not the stuff of which reformers are made; rather than indulge in that variety of meddlesomeness I would sweep a crossing. Nine-tenths of the reformers of humanity have been mischief-makers or humbugs. I have no desire to be added to the list. A man who reforms himself has contributed his

full share towards the reformation of his neighbour.

Let Europe and Asia do what they please : good luck to them !

I observe, and pass on.

* *
*

HERE they are, then—just a few footnotes, a few *asides* that touch the fringe of a great problem : East or West ? The problem confronts every one of us and its solution is uncommonly easy. It is a matter of temperament ; it depends, to a large extent, upon whether a man likes to be flurried or not.

You can be flurried in the East nowadays, and to within an inch of your life. I am thinking of modern Turkey, which last year, and during a very brief visit, struck me as the most disagreeable place

I had ever been in. And I perceive that Mr. Harry A. Franck (*The Moslem Fringe*) has come to the same conclusion after a longer stay in the country. These poor devils have caught our European disease, and the symptoms in both cases are identical. A political gale, involving the usual varieties of cruelty and murder, has subsided into a heavy ground-swell of morality known as 'national regeneration' which, like other forms of regeneration, is accompanied by depressing phenomena: restrictions of liberty, police supervision, and all the bureaucratic inconveniences to which we Europeans are now accustomed. Mr. Franck has had a good dose of this legalized persecution; he seems to have passed a great deal of his time at police stations; he has studied their newly-made legislation and does not hesitate to call some of it 'quite insane.'

Will these young Turks be as straightforward as the old ones, as good-humoured and gentlemanly in their manners? I

doubt it, for such fits of self-consciousness *en masse* are apt to leave a scar. The official drilling they entail saps those individual virtues which a patriarchal upbringing used lovingly to inculcate. Government by bureaucracy has a familiar flavour in the West; a nation of Oriental bureaucrats is something new, and a sight to make the angels weep, or laugh.

* *
*

A SIGNIFICANT little fact emerges on page 337 of *Mother India* in regard to local epidemics like typhoid, namely, that the natives 'from long consumption of diluted sewage have naturally acquired a degree of immunity.' They have also grown fairly immune to their own poisons of the intellect which, imported into Europe by

people who ought to have known better, swept over our continent in a devastating epidemic of unreason called Christianity, from which we Europeans have not yet acquired immunity. This is a grave moral misdeed to be laid to the charge of Mother India.

Her scientific crimes are every bit as atrocious. Max Müller in 1873 was looking for an Indian inscription in which the cypher, the nought, an Indian invention, occurred for the first time. It would be, he says, among the most valuable monuments of antiquity, 'for from it would date in reality the beginning of true mathematical science, impossible without the nought—nay, the beginning of all the exact sciences to which we owe the discoveries of telescopes, steam engines, and electric telegraph.'

This means that the seed of plagues like Calvinism and the radio come from over there. Mother India has a good deal on her conscience. Old people, however, are

not troubled with a conscience to the extent of young ones; they have seen so much! And she is indeed old. At the time when she invented these tricks we Europeans had not yet begun to paint ourselves blue. That is a good stretch of years; she ought certainly to be dead and buried instead of hobbling about as she insists on doing. She is in her dotage, without a doubt, and terribly stiff in the joints; anybody would be, at her time of life; it may end in complete anchylosis — though I think not. She is also pig-headed and crusted and fixed in a groove; such is the curse of age. . . .

How about Europe? Is Europe grown up yet, and can it take care of itself? Not for a good many years to come. Europe is still a baby in its cot—rather a repulsive and fretful brat; all nerves. Moreover, it seems to be unhappy just now; it has been squealing for the last ten minutes and cannot tell us what it wants. Always

squealing! What is the matter this time? Smallpox?

Nothing so serious. It has only wetted its bed, as usual. No wonder it feels uncomfortable, poor little thing. Let us hope a kind friend will come forward with some violet powder and a change of linen, because Nurse, also as usual, is engaged in a chat with that policeman round the corner.

This makes me think that a change of nurse would likewise do no harm.

* *
*

THE age of miracles is over, but a man may still have a stroke of luck now and then. Such a one fell to my lot in February 1898, during my first visit to India. I was in the Delhi bazaar and trying to conclude a bargain, begun two days

earlier, for an Oriental dagger-hilt of lapis-lazuli. As is often the case, the ornamental inlaying of gold and precious stones had already been removed ; it was nevertheless a fine specimen of that particular stone and of that class of work.

Presently we reached a deadlock ; the jeweller refused to abate one single anna more. I was still hesitating, when another man at the back of the shop rose from his seat, took the thing out of the merchant's hand and examined it carefully. He was oldish-looking, dressed in European clothes, too clear-complexioned for a native and too sallow to be a European. Then he said to me :

'Really, I don't think he is asking too much.'

I should have cursed him for his interference, had the words not been spoken in a tone of quiet, gentlemanly conviction, and with the air of one who knows what he is talking about.

'Well, I hope you 're right,' I said, and,

still grumbling vigorously, paid for the article. He went on :

'In a few years' time things of this quality will fetch much more. You are also in luck just now because of the plague; prices are down. . . . Now would you like to look at a few more shops? I can make them show you what they don't show to everybody. Oh, I 've nothing to do,' he added, noticing my hesitation. 'Nothing whatever! It would be a pleasure.'

Walking along, and looking in at one or two jewellers' shops, we began to talk about precious stones, and I soon discovered that his knowledge of them was wide and deep ; he was not an ordinary expert. He extracted something wrapped in tissue paper out of his waistcoat pocket and said :

'You seem to be interested in gems. What do you think of this?'

A marvellous sapphire, without a flaw. In size it was not much larger than a

sparrow's egg, but its tint was the perfection of cornflower blue.

'Siamese,' he observed. 'And how do you like this—and this—and this? And *this*?'

Precious stones—the fellow was stuffed with them, and each the choicest of its kind. Among the rest, I remember to this day a canary-coloured diamond of about six carats, to obtain which I would have cut almost anybody's throat. I said:

'You must have five thousand pounds' worth on you.'

'A little more, I daresay.'

As we were separating he suggested that we should meet again, and told me his name. It was Jacob; he was born, he said, in the island of Prinkipo.

'That 's queer.'

'How so?' he asked.

'Last July I went a yachting cruise with a friend, Marion Crawford, who spoke a good deal about a person of your name

who was also fond of gems, and also born in Prinkipo.'

'Well, I am Mr. Isaacs.'

Crawford often told me that he had gone to India with no intention of becoming a writer. There he met Jacob, who made such an impression on him that, just for amusement, he wrote a sketch called 'Mr. Isaacs'; an uncle of his, reading the manuscript, insisted on having it published; thus began Crawford's prosperous career as novelist. This Anglo-Indian story created some sensation in 1882; it reads a little thin nowadays, and is streaked with that sententiousness and melodrama which mar a good deal of Crawford's work.

So far as I could see, there was not much likeness between the imaginary Isaacs and the authentic Jacob who was addressing me, save their love of stones and their affability. Jacob was the personification of kindness. He always had 'nothing whatever to do' except to show me the

intimate life of Delhi from every angle, and to talk about India past, present, and future. I feel sure that, thanks to him, I learnt as much in those few days as an ordinary tourist could have learnt in as many months, for up to that time my knowledge of India had been derived from a course of lectures on Indian history preparatory to passing a Civil Service examination, an examination from which that particular subject was excluded by the authorities at the last moment—to my considerable regret, as I then knew more about Holkar and Scindhia than I shall ever know again.

*
*

If you travel from the southermost tip of Ceylon to Darjeeling and Hardwar and Peshawur you will at least learn this

much: that India is a pretty big place—

And yet, how fond they are of little things and—as Marion Crawford notices in that book—of 'calling little things by big names'! They give you a mutton cutlet and call it a chop; they give you shrimps and call them prawns; they give you a guinea-fowl barely hatched and call it a quail; they give you limes that are smaller than peas. I once picked five of them, all on one branch and all of different tints; they made a charming buttonhole. And then, those microscopic knives and forks—

Something else soon dawns upon you: India is a gentleman's country. That does not sound remarkable. It is more than can be said of our continent. European servants . . . enough has been talked about them; the brutes are driving us from our homes into clubs and hotels and restaurants and out of Europe altogether, although I cannot help thinking, from the

peculiarly bitter complaints about English ones which are not recent but have gone on for centuries, that there must be something wrong with their mistresses. I have employed European servants of varying ages and sexes and nationalities, and of varying degrees of incapacity and drunkenness and insolence and thievishness. Not a few were passable ; the best of all was an Englishwoman. I think of Mrs. Partridge with regret ; she was both intelligent and devoted.

Of Sita Ram I think with more than regret ; his intelligence and devotion were not of this earth. He was the only servant to whom I never had to explain anything. He was noiselessness personified. A grey-haired old man, a man of an alien race—by what obscure but infallible instinct did he know exactly what I wanted, and when I wanted it ? He was always present if I required him ; always invisible if I felt like being alone. He slept on the outside of my door ; when I woke up at night, he

knew it; he woke up too. With a few passes he could cure my worst insomnia, and send me into a dreamless sleep. If any European can do that trick at a reasonable figure, let him step forward. We may come to terms.

One of many unaccountable traits was his affinity with fire. He handled red-hot embers without apparent discomfort and carried them from one room to another in his fingers; and it was startling to watch how, with two wizard breaths, he could charm a blaze into wooden logs of a hardness unknown in Europe, a hardness to break any knife which attempted to pierce or splinter them. How was it done? No white man need try to master this secret; it is beyond the range of European faculties. And how did he manage to conjure up in the open air, at a moment's notice, on an overturned flower-pot, a four-course dinner out of nothing—out of nothing? I am old and well stricken in years; I have witnessed many so-called mysteries,

but Sita Ram's improvised dinners were the nearest approach to magic I ever saw.

I think we have something to learn from Mother India.

I think we shall never learn it.

* *
*

His curries were lovely, and of infinite variety. Thirty-one years and six months have passed since those days, and it makes me feel like crying to know that I shall never taste them again.

Go to India, young man, and take Baedeker or Fergusson or the Mahabharata, according to your fancy; inspect the Elephanta Caves and all the rest, and please note this: in your old age the Taj Mahal and glittering Himalayas must mingle insensibly with other memories and lose their sharpness of outline, fading

away, at last, as a dream. The vision of curry will remain clear-cut to your dying breath. Curry is India's gift to mankind; her contribution to human happiness. Curry atones for all the fatuities of the 108 Upanishads. Go to India, young man, and may you find another Sita Ram! He was wonderful in his curries.

He was wonderful in his death. One day at tea-time he announced that his daughter had died, and that life had lost interest for him. Next morning he was dead himself. They told me he must have swallowed his tongue. It may be true; I tried to find out, but failed. Curiosity—a kind of affection, I like to think—drove me to the malodorous bazaar, where I was met by a conspiracy of silence. The native police vowed they had never heard his name. Then they obligingly made enquiries on my behalf. The enquiries lasted a week and led to nothing. Nobody could tell them where he had lived. No-

body had ever seen him. Nobody knew anything about him.

Illusion?

Illusion it might be, but for the fact that I possess to this day a small box of Cashmir work which he gave me.

* *
*

Go to the East, young man; leave behind you the frowsy and fidgety little hole called Europe. Savour the remedial effects of that other continent before you are caught in our humiliating machinery; before you are ticketed and labelled as to your monetary worth to a worthless 'community'; before you are taxed, and overtaxed, for the purpose of keeping alive thousands of people who ought to be dead.

Get out of Europe! Rectify your values

while there is still some flexibility in your mind, and learn to laugh at the flabby gibberings of our cultured classes and the comical bestiality of their inferiors, our nauseating politics and childish social ideals, our moral hypocrisy that breeds liars, the inquisitorial tyranny of our laws that breeds cowards, and certain absurd newspapers whose function consists in persuading us to attach importance to what is not worth thinking about. Get out of it !

Oriental life engenders self-respect and ease of soul. This is what makes sensible people home-sick for the East. This is what we Europeans lack and what we need more than anything else ; they are qualities so rare nowadays that most of us have forgotten what they mean.

Over-government is killing self-respect, and hustle is killing ease of soul.

* *
*

YET India is full of ills. The remedy? We must raise the educational level. Once her children have grasped the binomial theorem, all will be well. Their future careers are assured; in other words, a contented peasantry will be converted into discontented office-seekers. 'Indian Universities,' says Mr. Aldous Huxley, 'produce a swarm of graduates for whom there is nothing to do.' And everybody says the same.

How right was the poet Gray when he said that learning should not be encouraged, because it only draws fools from their obscurity! And how right was that American who told the author of *Mother India* that it was a crime to teach the natives to be clerks, lawyers and politicians before they had been taught to produce food!

In raising the educational level, what

are we really raising? A brood of cads. The cad is a product of education. You will not find him in Oriental countries—not until they have enjoyed our advantages of universal schooling. That is one reason why Hindus are divided into castes. They will have nothing to do with universal schooling, which claims to be based on the doctrine that all men are equal and therefore equally entitled to its benefits, although, as a matter of fact, it is based on something quite different. Hindus know better. They know that men are not equal, and that a certain number are by nature unteachable, because they lack the required outfit. The Western notion seems to be this: some dogs can learn tricks, therefore all dogs must learn them. Are we ever going to realize that we have our unteachables too, and that to keep them in schools is wasting not only *our* money but *their* time? Presumably not. The school-age is continually being raised. Soon we shall be doing sums when we

might be getting married. Under discipline all the time, and coddled like little girls ! The consequence is that England is full of well-groomed adolescents of twenty-five, with no more poise or self-reliance than a Newfoundland puppy.

I have lately gone through two volumes of a certain family history. Astonishing, how early the ancestors of this familybegan life, and what a zest they threw into it ! At fourteen they had their University degree or Army commission or whatever it was ; four years later they were married ; by twenty-five, as Popes or Ambassadors, they had already made provision for a fine progeny of bastards.

That is a well-spent youth.

* *
*

IF I were asked what Europe requires at this moment I should say it is men who can evolve notions independently of other folk, men who can think without thinking what they are expected to think, men who tend to diverge from the common rut and are able to contemplate with fresh eyes what is going on around them. Such men might see what is amiss, and might discern remedies.

These would be superior men, and somebody has said that all government is a conspiracy against the superior man. In compulsory education the State has forged an admirable weapon to this end, since it is the business of schooling to suppress such men and to crush down the race till we are all as alike as two peas. Germany before the War had doubtless the highest educational standard in Europe. What was the result? At a

critical moment she could produce not a single statesman of foresight or insight; these qualities had been ground out of her politicians by hard-and-dry school drilling in their youth. The decline in German depth and pliability of character, which Germans themselves observe, has coincided with the speeding-up of their school curriculum; and I think we shall perceive the same in England. We are perceiving it! Compulsory European schooling is based not on a desire for individual welfare, but on international fear and distrust.

* *
*

EDUCATION has been raised to a bad eminence, and one or two charges can be brought against it which contain more than the proverbial grain of truth. It is

a centripetal process; it creates a type instead of a character; in other words, it instils uniformity, which is an enemy of civilization. It is a governmental contrivance for inculcating nationalism, another enemy of civilization. None but a strong nature can profit by its good effects and defy the bad ones; none but a small percentage of children recover before middle age, when it is too late, from that withering strain of application. It frets away their finer edges and dries up the well-springs of individualism. It destroys their originality of outlook, their curiosity, their initiative, the directness of their mental vision. They learn to see with eyes, and to think with brains, which are not their own. Their impulses, their conversations—their dreams, I daresay—are standardized; and if not, a ten years' course of schooling has certainly done its best to attain that end. Education is a State-controlled manufactory of echoes.

The old Greeks did not share our views

on this head. They held that whoever craves for learning will find it without the help of school-boards, and that whoever is constructed on other lines should follow other pursuits. Men in those days were sifted as to their natural talents—they were allowed to sift themselves, and the result was a level of intelligence not to be achieved by modern methods.

The system has now become so fashionable that to abolish it may well be compared to putting back the hands of the clock. What if the clock is going backwards instead of forwards?

* *
*

IT has been argued that illiteracy should be suppressed because there is some connexion between it and criminality. Greater nonsense was never talked. No

criminal worth his salt can afford to be uneducated. Illiteracy is the privilege of the Chosen Few, even as learning should be. These people are never cads. They could not be cads if they tried ; they have not had our chances. Restful folk, full of mother-wit. There are far too few of them. Moreover, they know their business ; illiteracy makes a man observant. I have yet to meet an analphabetic who could be called a fool. Nor have I ever met a dishonest one ; cheating is risky, if you can neither read nor write.

I sometimes visit one of the few remaining illiterates here, and I always think he is one of the few remaining gentlemen. He has none of that pertness and superficiality which education produces among men of his class. He was put to work barefoot at the age of *six*—working from 6 A.M. to 8 P.M. ; is now seventy-five, and lives with his wife in a kind of Rowton House, where he cultivates a tiny patch of garden which has been allotted to his

two rooms. This man, you see at once, is superior to his 'educated' fellows. His dignified ease reminds me of certain Orientals I have known. There is spontaneity in his utterance; not a chain of clichés more or less laboriously strung together. That talk of his, clear-cut and original, is like a breath of fresh air in our education-tainted atmosphere, where everybody says exactly what you expect him to say. With this man, you never can tell what he is going to say, because you never can tell what he has been thinking. Had he been reading the daily paper or the last novel, you could tell at once. His brain has not been addled with such things, nor with chatter about them. He has employed it to better purpose and kept a cleaner edge to his wit; a kind of bloom.

A supply of men who have not inhaled that poison-gas of education which paralyses our nerve-centres of independent thought would be a national asset in times

of stress; a reservoir of sturdy sanity. It was an analogous consideration which led to the English system of trial by jury—the control of the expert by common sense.

I am not entering a plea for illiteracy—not every one possesses the needful qualifications—nor suggesting that our representatives abroad should be unable to sign their names, although, as a matter of fact, they seem in pre-examination days, in the days of patronage, to have been no less efficient and worthy to hold their posts than the skinny professors whom the Civil Service Commissioners now provide for us. I think, however, that Imperialism is an undiluted mischief, and that all its offspring are mischief. One of them is compulsory education. The chief result of such training on persons unfitted for it is that it begins by creating wants, and then proceeds to demonstrate that these wants are needs. Since these needs cannot always be gratified, it lies at the bottom of many varieties of discontent

and unhappiness. Discontent and unhappiness are evils. This is what the education-fetich has hitherto accomplished in Europe. For every evil remedied, it has implanted the germs of ten new ones.

* *
*

THERE are in India about 229,000,000 people who can neither read nor write. The peasants, living in 750,000 villages, belong to this class: those peasants who are liked by all that know them, and whom the author of *Mother India* calls 'simple, illiterate, peaceful, kindly,' and again 'dignified, interesting, enlisting people.' Not everybody has these rare and charming characteristics. When a man does possess them, and also knows his business as thoroughly as the Indian cultivator, he should be envied of his lot

and allowed to enjoy it in peace. That itch for interference! The Indian peasant is a grown-up person; he is no mental deficient; he knows what he wants. If he wants the benefits of education for his children, let him say so—although I dare-say he divines what it will mean. It will mean higher taxes. Governmental altruism, in India and out of it, always ends in heavier taxation.

Thirty-three thousand adult white illiterates are living in America, and American children, somehow or other, still come illiterate into the world. Compulsory education is supposed to be good enough for them. And yet, judging by what Messrs. Upton Sinclair, Mencken, and others have to tell us, the half-civilized American must be sufficiently alarming; the half-civilized Babu is probably worse; and when all the cultivators of India have learnt to despise their jobs and to seek new outlets for their energies, as the half-civilized English peasantry are doing at

this moment with deplorable economic results for the country—when they have learnt to consider themselves as good as anybody else because some fool has drilled them up to the standard of a grocer's assistant, then it will be time (as the Persians say) to put one's trust in God.

* *
*

Critics of Hindu illiteracy should not forget that British rule is largely responsible for it. By the Institutes of Manu, the parent was obliged to place his child at school in his fourth year. At the beginning of last century there were schools in every Indian village ; in sweeping away the village system we have simultaneously swept away the schools. John Bright complained in 1853 that while our Government had almost wholly

overthrown the universally existing native education, it had done nothing to supply the deficiency (E. Wood : *An Englishman defends Mother India*, p. 229). Ten years ago only one penny per head was spent on education in British-ruled India, whereas Russia was spending between sevenpence and eightpence (H. M. Hyndman : *The Awakening of Asia*, p. 218). 'One cannot fail to deplore the rapid decadence, probably more rapid than the official figures show, of independent educational institutions' (G. T. Garratt : *An Indian Commentary*, p. 78).

A native State, Baroda, is ahead of British-ruled India in this respect ; even as another such State, Mysore, has abolished the temple-girls—a measure which our administration will hesitate to adopt.

* *
*

THE pest of nationalism. . . .

It engendered, among other monsters, the Great War ; and this, in its turn, has produced an obnoxious little abortion which is making England the laughing-stock of the nations : Dora. So many things are forbidden by law that it would now save time to draw up a list of what is still allowed. I cull the following well-known case from the papers :

' In the early hours of yesterday morning 20 detectives, all wearing evening dress, with red poppies in their button-holes, raided the luxurious premises in Grafton Street of Chez Victor, one of the most exclusive supper- and dance-clubs in the West End of London. The officers arrived in five motor cars, and, in Indian file, passed up the steps of the club, deposited their hats and coats in the cloak-room, and marched upstairs to the ball-

room. A dance was in progress at the time, and the detectives seated themselves at the tables till it was over. Then they [some words illegible] and proceeded to take down the names of the 40 people who were there, nearly all of whom were titled folk. It is understood that among those present at the time were an M.P., a V.C., and a leading actress. The officers also took samples of the liquids in glasses on the tables, and, before leaving, interviewed the manager. Mr. Victor Perosino, the proprietor, was at a loss to account for a visit of this character. "Chez Victor has been in existence for about four years," he stated, "and we have never had any trouble before. The detectives found two or three glasses on the tables with a little champagne in them. Everything had been cleared away except those glasses, which my waiters had overlooked. But the champagne had been served before 12 o'clock. No wine was served after the legal time.

The police showed us every courtesy, and were as little trouble as possible." Chez Victor numbers royalty among its patrons, and it is the resort of many highly placed in Court, diplomatic, and political society.'

Has anything more futile ever occurred on earth?

Nearly all of them were titled folk. . . .

What fools they must have looked, these titled folk, V.C.'s and Parliamentarians!

And why do they put up with such nonsense?

They manage these things better, out East.

* *
*

MORE freak-legislation:

'Last Tuesday a woman shopkeeper sold a twopenny packet of cigarettes

" because she needed the money," and was fined the cost of the prosecution.'

' *Whatever we think of the law we have to administer it,* said the Mayor of Newark when fining a grocer five shillings yesterday for selling a loaf of bread at nine o'clock at night.'

Can cretinism go further?

Of course it can :

' On Saturday a Paddington confectioner was fined £5 for selling two-pennyworth of cough drops after hours. His defence was that he thought they were medicine.'

Babies. That is what any Oriental would call us.

' More than a score of East-End newsagents were yesterday fined sums ranging between 10s. and 40s. at Old Street Police Court for selling newspapers after 8 P.M.'

It is to be hoped that such rubbish may soon be a thing of the past, and that we shall have to look up the files of musty newspapers in order to believe that it

ever could have existed. Meanwhile it is significant to note that while other European countries have long ago abolished these restrictions, the Englishman remains too phlegmatic to get rid of them, although they are a disgrace to the Government which guaranteed their repeal, an injustice to many, and an annoyance to all.

Here is a pearl : the Secretary of the Athenæum Club writing to the papers to the effect that if a member, even the Prime Minister, asks for a glass of whisky-and-soda at 11.15 he will not be served.

What a pack of masochists !

* *
*

Glancing through the pages of *Mother India* one gains the conviction that the author's indictment of Hinduism is noth-

ing but an indictment of Christianity. That is the long and short of it. What else could we expect? East is East, and Christianity is Eastern. If Christ were to come to earth again, He would undoubtedly prefer life among the Hindus to life in England or America. More familiar and homelike. . . . And I question whether He would insist, even at this hour of the day, on the teaching of French or algebra. The Kingdom of Heaven lies not in that direction.

Christian poets, mediæval and modern, have hymned the charms of womanhood in moving verse ; what the old law-book of Manu says, or rather sings, about women and maidens has a refinement of beauty which is not surpassed in any European tongue. And Manu alone, of all ancient lawgivers, allows for the passionate nature of women and will not have them treated as frigid creatures : he knew the world ! Of the mother he says that

she 'exceedeth a thousand fathers in the right to reverence, and in the function of educator.' The scripturally prescribed course of an Indian woman's life is not more humiliating than that laid down in our own texts, and its practical working, despite such horrors as Sati—the authority for which is based on an altered text—has proved less calamitous. It is well to remember that Christ Himself was not overpolite to His Mother on a certain occasion, while Saint Peter and Saint Paul said things about women that were both unkind and unreasonable.

Now the extreme views of these two holy men may be impugned. I am inclined to think, at least, that Paul, being an epileptic, cannot have known much about women, and that Peter, as a married man, may have known more than was good for him. Be that as it may, it is easy to realize how much saner was the old Mosaic conception according to which it became the greatest disaster for a woman to die

without progeny, and dishonourable to remain unmarried and childless. 'God hath taken away my reproach,' said Rachel, when she bore her son. This is Hinduism, and there is a gulf between it and the later Christian teaching.

* *
*

THE mischief began with Paul. His doctrine was paraphrased by S. Augustine—who, by the way, tolerated concubinage—in words which afterwards became the canon of the Church: to wit, that a fruitful marriage is not to be compared in excellence to the purity of a virgin; that perpetual continence is preferable to the married condition, even if the begetting of children be its aim; that if one had no children one should render thanks to God;

and so forth. Even so Chrysostom, who calls women 'a foe to friendship, an unescapeable punishment, a necessary evil,' etc., tells us that virginity is a saintly state, and as superior to married life as Heaven is superior to earth—a statement which would have scandalized Moses. Other Fathers are no less explicit. S. Bernard says of women that their face is a burning wind and their voice the hissing of serpents; S. Jerome tells us that he who loves his wife to excess is an adulterer; he calls women the 'gate of Hell,' and, writing to a widow about to re-marry, quotes S. Peter's words in regard to the dog returning to its vomit and the sow that was washed going back to wallow in the mire.

Christianity of this—the official—type is incompatible with decent sex-relations.

The movement towards the degradation of womanhood went on in a delirious *crescendo*, and soon we have our schoolmen asking whether females be human beings

at all, or not rather monsters in human shape, and suchlike conundrums. Does the religious literature of India contain researches of this sort? It is not likely, but I cannot tell for certain. The casuists meanwhile were at work pursuing the enemy, with unimpeachable logic, into labyrinthine byways of nastiness where the most dirty-minded of modern lay-writers would fear to tread. Their labours, directed to transforming woman into a guinea-pig, have been conscientiously summed up in *Théologie Amoureuse des Peuples d'Occident: Morale Matrimoniale: par un ancien Chanoine.* It is written from a strictly Catholic point of view (published, I should guess, in the 'nineties). And yet —how strangely anti-Catholic in spirit! A sensible Pope like Pius the Second, one fancies, would have had small use for this kind of 'Theology.' As to Alexander the Sixth . . .

The book is not suitable for a school-prize. Its effect upon a newly married

couple must be depressing in the extreme, and I venture to recommend the Kama Sutra as a counter-irritant.

* *
*

IN the whole course of history, the most brutal enslaver of women has been Christianity. We have been told much about the low position of the female sex at Athens, but, as Mr. M'Cabe points out (*Sources of the Morality of the Gospels*, p. 103), Plato vindicated the equality of women two thousand years before any Christian perceived it. Adultery was punished with death at Athens, not out of a transcendental (Christian) regard for chastity, but because it broke in upon the mutual attachment of married people. Even in the most licentious periods of antiquity, and among the most licentious authors,

you will have difficulty in discovering anything which justifies adultery. Where would our Christian literature be without this peppery ingredient?

Apropos of literature, there is nothing like the *Malleus Maleficarum* in that of any country on earth. It was written not by some amateurish woman-hater in a fit of bad temper, but by two recognized teachers of Christian dogma at the command of a Pope (Apostolical Bull of Innocent VIII. issued on 9th December 1484, and addressed to the authors). A section of it, Part I, Question 6, might be called the misogynist's handbook. No creed save ours has engendered this pathological fear and loathing of the female sex.

One single Biblical phrase, 'Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live,' has led to the death by agonizing torture of unnumbered innocent old women; another one, 'that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ,' has condemned many hundred

thousand young ones to lifelong imprisonment—to tears and misery in the cells of convents. And if they slipped through that net, there were other cheerful texts, such as 'compel them to enter in,' lying in wait for them. Whoever wishes to refresh his memory in regard to these enormities need only glance into the Memoirs of Princess Henrietta Caracciolo, which were written as late as 1864.

So much for the enslaving of women by Hindus.

* *
*

As to the enslaving of men, Plato, and after him the Stoic moralists and lawyers, already censured slavery, which neither Christ nor any of His followers discovered to be wrong till twelve centuries later. And how about slavery among the Hindus? Megasthenes reports that no Indian can,

under any circumstances, be a slave; Arrian adds that they forbid even the employment of aliens as slaves. In this, as in every other department of social life, the ethics of the Hindus are as superior to those of Semitic Christians as are their achievements in art and philosophy, in literature and science.

One might do worse, in this connexion, than see what Ouida writes in her *Failure of Christianity*:

'. . . Even of death Christianity has made a terror which was unknown to the gay calmness of the Pagan and the stoical repose of the Indian. Never has death been the cause of such craven timidity as in the Christian world. . . .

'. . . Christianity has ever been the enemy of human love; it has for ever cursed and expelled and crucified the one passion which sweetens and smiles on human life, which makes the desert blossom as the rose, and which glorifies the common things and common ways of

earth. It made of this, the angel of life, a shape of sin and darkness, and bade the woman whose lips were warm with the first kisses of her lover believe herself accursed and ashamed. Even in the unions which it reluctantly permitted, it degraded and dwarfed the passion which it could not entirely exclude, and permitted it coarsely to exist for the mere necessity of procreation. The words of the Christian nuptial service expressly say so. Love, the winged god of the immortals, became, in the Christian creed, a thrice-damned and earth-bound devil, to be exorcised and loathed. This has been the greatest injury that Christianity has ever done to the human race. . . .'

If our attitude towards women has changed of late, the explanation is this: we have abandoned the precepts of our inspired teachers, and cut the cables that bound us to them.

LIKE the Hindus, we talk about our 'superfluous' women. I dislike that word I question whether women can be proved to be superfluous until you have abolished them, and in the present case the word is based on the assumption that each man requires only one mate. Why not fifty? I have watched in the old days the Turkish harim taking their pleasure out of doors; they were as happy as children and, in point of law, as free to leave their husbands as our wives are, if they have any cause for complaint against him. This is an economic problem; it depends upon how many women a man is able and willing to support, or, if you like, how many women care to club together in order to support one man. Seeing that a single male of our species is capable of fecundating any number of females, one might more reasonably talk about superfluous men.

Hindus deal with these economically over-numerous women by practising female infanticide (among unlettered classes) and polygamy—two straightforward attempts to tackle the problem.

We Europeans have improved on the Oriental system of infanticide. Save for a little amateurish overlying and an occasional fœtus down the lavatory pipe, the custom has grown obsolete. We have birth control and other tricks that get at the root of the matter. Their only drawback—a serious one—is that they destroy males and females indiscriminately.

And Oriental polygamy, carried on under Western conditions of life, would be a terrible drain on a man's income, and a great responsibility as well. Absurd, nevertheless, to suggest that our adult males are living monogamous lives; if one or two are doing so, it means that they lack either the moral grit or the physical outfit, or both. They are polygamists; but their polygamy is practised on in-

expensive lines and with a minimum of personal responsibility. Our European rule runs to the effect that a man's mistresses are to be kept by their husbands.

This is an advance on Eastern methods.

* *
*

On the other hand, our Divorce Courts, which make absolute about three thousand cases a year, reveal European life at a low level ; they lack the frankness and consistency of the East. An unlovely, farcical tangle, which involves elements of hypocrisy and dirty work on the part of everybody concerned, not excluding the judge. The sanctity of wedlock is prescribed both by our religion and by that of the Hindu, but we have cut the cables, as usual, whereas the Hindu still regards divorce as *at once monstrous and impossible.*

This public airing of soiled linen is vulgar, un-Asiatic.

Said Mr. Justice Hill : ' The law which this Court has to administer is full of inconsistencies, and is often very difficult to reconcile with common sense.'

So is the whole institution.

* *
*

THERE seems to be some confusion between Indian child-betrothal and Indian child-marriage, which are two different things. The former is a measure to hinder incontinence before marriage, and might advantageously be copied in Europe (as it used to be) if we attached the same importance as do the Hindus to a virginal state of body on the part of the bride ; that is, if we insisted on such a state. We dare not insist. We must buy the cat in the

bag. The cat is not always up to specified quality.

At Ahmedabad not long ago an injunction was applied for to prevent the marriage of a widower of 53—some said 55, while he maintained that his age was 49—with a girl of 15, on the ground of the disparity of their ages. Incredible to relate, the injunction was granted by the English district judge and, on appeal, upheld.

It may be that the girl did not want to marry ; that would put another complexion on the affair. If she was willing, then my sympathies go out to the widower. He might have obtained his heart's desire, had his legal adviser pointed out that in 1927, according to our Registrar-General, seventeen old Englishmen of over seventy married girls in their 'teens. A wedding described in the press as '77 marries 15' took place in the South of England a few months ago. It was the third marriage of the bridegroom, who is said

to have been for many years 'interested in child welfare.' So it appears, and I can only congratulate him on not living at Ahmedabad.

Despite the precocious physical development of Indians, the child-marriage business is overdone out there. These poor fellows are petrified in conservativeness; they wish to conform to the law which binds all mammals and lays it down that menstruation is indicative of sexual maturity. Girls therefore, like other mammals of their sex, can and should be married at the earliest date after reaching puberty. Now most mammals—take, for example, the domestic kitten—are mentally mature before they are sexually so. Not the man of to-day. The complex conditions which society has evolved demand so relatively high a standard of mentality that mental maturity in his case actually lags behind the attainment of the other. And mental maturity is now to be the test of the marriageable age.

For the rest, our English rule which allows a boy of fourteen to marry a girl of twelve compares unfavourably not only with other European countries but with some Oriental ones: with Turkey, for instance, where the marriageable age for both sexes is fixed at fifteen; or with China, which insists upon sixteen as the lowest age. In 1927, thirty-five of our English brides were only fifteen, and twelve bridegrooms only sixteen; and 58,000 persons were married under twenty-one.

Lord Buckmaster made some pertinent remarks the other day in the House of Lords:

'I wonder if your Lordships realize that, although child-marriages are permitted in non-Christian India, yet none the less, married or no, it is a criminal offence for a man to have relations with a girl under the age of thirteen years. In other words, all the time that we were making this disturbance about the condi-

tion of affairs in India, we had a condition of affairs here at home which in some respects was identical, and in one marked instance was worse. Surely the first thing we ought to do is to put our own house in order before we start arranging other people's.'

* *
*

As we have a fit of age-raising just now we might consider, I think, whether it would not be reasonable to raise the hanging age, which is at present fixed at sixteen. It is difficult to conceive in what circumstances a boy of sixteen can deserve death by hanging. Yet during the twenty-five years ending 1926, fifty-seven persons under 21 were sentenced to death, and twenty of them actually executed.

And while we are about it, we might

raise the age of criminality in general As matters stand, a child above seven who commits an offence against the law is a criminal. I gather from Mr. Brockway's *New Way with Crime* that a departmental Commission which lately reported on this imbecility has concluded that the age 'could now be safely raised to eight.'

Perhaps seven and a half would meet the case.

* *
*

WHILE Hindus like their brides underripe, a certain proportion of us prefer them in the dowager stage. How explain the fact that it is sometimes the bride who leads the blushing bridegroom to the altar —the bride well out of her 'teens? This incongruity is a ceaseless source of marvel

to me, though I can appreciate the lady's point of view. Have such men lost the wit to perceive the discrepancy of marrying women who are almost old enough, and always shrewd enough, to be their grandmothers? Or is it a sign of insufficient manliness that, instead of capturing young girls, they are captured by old ones?

Not a single union of this kind ever takes place among Orientals, nor could it take place among any men possessing a relic of the aesthetic sense, for if there is one thing uglier than an unclothed old or even middle-aged man, it is a woman at the same period of life.

Such dames are probably more experienced than younger ones and also more grateful, as Benjamin Franklin observed long ago. Their husbands, however, must find it difficult to instil any fresh notions into their heads, and that is surely one of the joys in store for the bridegroom. Uphill work, trying to teach

your grandmother to suck eggs. Uphill work!

Whence the hunted look peculiar to married men of this variety.

* *
*

I HAVE also a prejudice, not shared by everybody, against golden and silver weddings. If these observances are not Teutonic in their origin, they ought to be; they bear the impress of vulgar ostentatiousness. Such anniversaries should be celebrated in the strictest intimacy. Conjugal fidelity recorded on a tomb will pass, since nobody takes these inscriptions seriously; but it strikes me as questionable taste when two people suggest in public that they have slept together for fifty years, or what-

ever it is, like a brace of Wandaroo monkeys.

Besides, they haven't. . . .

* *
*

THERE is one feature peculiar to Indian married women which the author of *Mother India*, observant—viciously observant—as she is of such things, has overlooked. I refer to their singular custom of nursing boy-children at the breast till they are almost old enough to play polo. Whether the habit be good for the parent or not, it certainly strikes me that mother's milk is incongruous nourishment for youngsters who can digest mutton cutlets and jam tarts.

This little absurdity, if my American informant be correct, can be matched in

some wilder parts of the West. Overheard in Kentucky :

'Say, young man, what are you beating up your mother for? Put down that stick!'

'The damned old bitch—she 's trying to wean me.' . . .

* *
*

INDIANS keep a good number of their 'superfluous' women indoors. They are sometimes let out for hire, the young ones, and are known among Europeans as 'private girls,' earning a little money and giving satisfaction to a class of white men who might dread contact with professionals.

We do not put our superfluous women into the Zenana. We put them on the streets. I am not going into prostitution-

statistics. During the War, and on good —rainless and windless—nights, I often counted over thirty of them, free-lances all, to a measured hundred paces of Paris boulevard ; forty-eight was my record (unbelievable crocks, many of them). They have now a better breed, but fewer in numbers. The really high-class prostitute—in England, at least—tends to disappear. Her days are numbered. The lady is usurping her functions.

A certain class of Indian girls are put into temples for the use of the priests, and the Buddhist monks of Ceylon are not content with this system. These yellow-robed saints will have nothing to do with the pretty Singhalese ; they import their girl-friends direct from Japan.

* *
*

THERE has been some talk lately about the Devadasis owing, I daresay, to a chapter in another book by the author of *Mother India*. In every case, there seem to be two sides to this question as to their ill-treatment. A late Lieut.-Colonel in the R.A. Medical Corps writes : '. . . During my six years in India I must have visited many hundreds of temples. I spoke the language fairly fluently, and for a short time I was acting Governor of the jail, and had opportunities of seeing and hearing a good deal that tourists do not. Only on rare occasions did I ever see any dancing-girls in the temples. These Temple Maidens, or Devadasis, as they are called, appeared to be extremely happy and well cared for. . . .'

We do not put girls into temples for the use of the priests. We put them into brothels for the use of anybody who cares

to go there. It is nothing unusual, in low-class European establishments, for a girl to receive visits from twenty to thirty men a day ; indeed, it is usual.

I think I should prefer the Indian temple engagement. It sounds more restful.

* *
*

'THE number of still-births,' says the author of *Mother India* (p. 106), 'is heavy. Syphilis and gonorrhœa are among its main causes. . . .'

So they are everywhere.

The frequency of syphilis is a disgrace to Europe. I do not know Indian statistics of mortality (they probably do not exist), but I defy them to be more appalling than those of France, which are lying before me in the shape of a bundle of

recently printed reports. Here are some French figures that provide matter for thought :

40,000 miscarriages a year are due to syphilis.

20,000 children die from it every year between the sixth month of gestation and the third day after birth.

80,000 others die from it every year—including 36,000 child-victims between the ages of four days and fifteen years.

Syphilis is therefore responsible for 140,000 yearly deaths in France. If gonorrhœa be taken into account, 'the ravages of venereal disease are greater than those of tuberculosis,' which is responsible for 150,000 deaths a year.

Four million Frenchmen are suffering from it.

These figures are considered to be 'very certainly still below the reality.'

Is it to the credit of Europe that, in spite of all we knew about this disease, we should have waited until the last few years

before discarding haphazard methods and grappling systematically with it? During the War, in 1916, was noted an ominous rise which culminated in 1919, the worst year. This scared the medical profession and the public.

Better late than never. The French have now started a scientific crusade, attacking the enemy from every side—by the formation of societies to this end, by propaganda of many kinds, posters, films, theatrical representations, gratuitous dispensaries, ambulances, lectures by radio and otherwise, a campaign against patent medicines and quack doctors, revised regulations for prostitutes, distribution of leaflets and brochures, money-prizes for the best popular essays on the subject, newspaper publicity, sanitary control of immigrants, special educational courses, and other measures.

The results are on the whole satisfactory —not so satisfactory, however, as in Belgium, where syphilis has been reduced

in only four years to one-fifth of what it was before that time: a 'diminution foudroyante' which shows what can be done by concentrated effort, and for which 'propaganda' is said to be chiefly responsible.

There has been so serious an outbreak of venereal disease in Carnarvon among children under sixteen years of age that the County Health Committee are advocating the compulsory notification of such cases. I question whether the Ministry of Public Health would ever take a step of this kind. During the War, in a certain military hospital, the parents of infected men were notified of their condition, with the result that there were so many suicides among the patients that the number of the ward had to be changed, on account of its ill-repute. You may notify scarlet fever; who is going to notify venereal disease? People would sooner take their chance of being fined for not doing so. On the other hand, many of the methods of

Franco-Belgian propaganda are inconceivable in a God-fearing country like Wales.

Whoever wishes to abolish syphilis should begin by abolishing hypocrisy.

* *
*

So much for the superfluous—are they superfluous?—women of the lower classes. Their social superiors of the middle class can best be studied in places like Kensington High Street or Oxford Circus, where legions of marriageable but unmarried women block the pavements to such an extent that future town-planning will have to take this factor into account, and build special subways for those of us who have any business on hand. Sad to think how few of them are professionals. They would at least have a *raison d'être* in this

world, and be earning their own bread-and-margarine.

Or if they could be induced to emigrate! But that is not the ideal of those whom we could spare most easily. They prefer Oxford Circus. And yet a few shiploads would be a godsend in places like British East Africa, where they would have a good time with the young planters and Government clerks, who are nearly all unmarried and entitled by nature to a little female society, whether as wives or otherwise—I mean as honest housekeepers; especially in view of the twice-repeated confidential circular recommending Government employés to avoid all intercourse with native women.

Though something may be said for such instructions, they are a dead letter, if they exist at all, among the French and Dutch and Portuguese, who have not forgotten the organic needs of their colonial officials, and do not condemn them to celibacy at a period of life when they are least fitted for

it. Our youngsters out there are losing a disproportionate amount of health and happiness, considering the little they gain in prestige. Once you are accustomed to the proximity of these black fairies there is nothing to be said against them. They are ready for as much fun as you please, and no trouble whatever to keep. A liaison with such a one would be more amusing and unquestionably more instructive than with the average white girl, though I daresay we should tire of them sooner or later.

We tire of the white ones too.

And don't they tire of us. . . .

* *
*

NOT many years ago the German Reichstag by a great majority asked the Government to bring in a Bill legalizing in their

colonies marriages between whites and blacks. There is something to be said for such unions ; they have a political significance which is emphasized in *Shiva* by Mr. R. J. Minney. Speaking of the early days of the British occupation in India when they were common, he says that they ' resulted in a far greater understanding of native mentality and conditions than is possible from the detached viewpoint of the white home, where the black is only a menial and even the educated Indian is admitted on suffrance.' An understanding of native mentality is of more value than big battalions. They have, however, this drawback : the whites are sometimes inoculated with the mentality of the blacks, as Lord Dalhousie had occasion to discover.

The same state of affairs prevailed in the days of William Hickey, whose memoirs contain an exhilarating account of Anglo-Indian life in the eighteenth century. No opprobrium then attached to a man's

having a native concubine or wife, and Hickey himself, at first inconsolable for the loss of his darling Charlotte, takes to his heart later on a ' lovely Hindostanee girl,' who was ' respected and admired ' by all his friends. These friends included the Governor-General, the Chief Justice, the Commanding Military Officer, and all the *dessus du panier*, male and female.

Let him try it on, nowadays. . . .

* *
*

I SHOULD be vastly pleased to see a complete and definitive edition of these memoirs, which I have just been re-reading. So far they have appeared in slightly abbreviated form, because some parts were considered dull, and others, owing to freedom of language, unfit for publication. This unfitness, I fear, will prove a disappointment to those who hope to find in

the omitted portions what they find in the unexpurgated Pepys. Hickey's was a franker variety of amorousness, and his coarseness is simply that of Smollett. 'I vomited out of the coach window the whole way to the great entertainment of the foot-passengers.'

Whoever still believes in the immutability of racial characters, a theory that has some bearing on the problem of East and West, should read these memoirs in order to see how differently an Englishman near to us in point of time could think and behave. Were memoirs of this kind written to-day, they would doubtless contain—incidentally, at least—some description of the country or reflection on its inhabitants ; we might also expect to find literary or political allusions. There is little of the kind here. The book deals with social events happening to Hickey and his group, and with nothing else ; it glides smoothly along—no haste, no fretfulness, no snobbery, no erudition ; a

convivial document full of zest and yet quite leisurely. It reeks of wine and good cheer. Hickey relished life and, unlike the present generation, was not afraid of human nature.

He began boozing early. At the ripe age of seven, sitting on somebody's knee, he swallows his bumper of claret, declaring that he looks forward to the day when he may be able to drink two bottles. And Willie was not the 'pickle' of the family; his brother was worse. They were fond of each other, and their fraternal orgies grew to be so terrible that 'I came to the determination never again to join my brother in those tête-à-têtes.'

I suppose we should call him precocious nowadays. 'Many a bumper of champagne and claret have I drunk in the society of this set, at taverns and brothels, accompanied by the most lovely women of the Metropolis, and this before I had completed my fourteenth year'—and again: 'I told her the strength of my purse, and

proposed going to the play, which she consenting to, there was I a hopeful sprig of 13, stuck up in a green box, with a disreputable woman. From the theatre she took me home to supper, giving me lobsters and oysters, both of which she knew I was very fond of, and plenty of rum punch. . . .'

Hindu boys must look to their laurels.

Was he any the worse for these and other 'excesses'? On the contrary. After spending half his life under the then pestilential conditions of India, he died in England over eighty years of age.

* *
*

NUMBERS of them perished out there from fever, because they had no quinine, and bark was taken only empirically. They must have been a tough lot on the whole. Hickey gives us more than one glimpse of

Lord Lake and his almost unbelievable achievements at the age of sixty-five; there were others of his genus, and one marvels how they got through their tasks in the India of those days with no tinned provisions or condensed milk, no ice—they 'cooled' their claret, I imagine, by evaporation: the first ice was brought to Calcutta from America—no electric fans, no whisky-and-soda or light beer, no escape to the hills from the burning heats of summer when, to refresh themselves, they swilled quarts of madeira (port is never named). Now here is a little point. Hickey prided himself upon a connoisseurship of wine, and yet, whatever he drank, be it claret or burgundy or champagne or madeira, he describes as either good or bad, and there 's an end of it. I can discover no mention of any particular brands. When did our interest in such things begin?

Another little point. I observe no disparagement of native life or customs—

indeed, older travellers to the East and older residents there are altogether lacking in our tone of arrogance towards Orientals. When did our racial superiority over them begin to dawn on us? When our racial intelligence began to decline. The theatre is as good a test of general intelligence as any, and nobody, I think, will dare to assert that the mind of our present theatre-going public is as nimble and critical as it was in Hickey's day, or even much later.

And what I said on p. 25 about our doing sums in school when we might be getting married finds a commentary here. Hickey himself was appointed a midshipman before he could read or write; another boy of 14 is mate of a ship; another of 21 in command of one of the company's vessels; another of 18 commands a troop of Dragoons; another of 22 is senior officer of his regiment; another of the same age commands a frigate.

Were these lads incompetent? Far

from it, though their equipment might not always be adequate for modern needs.

* *
*

SPEAKING of education, certain of the letters sprinkled about these pages deserve a close study by reason both of their well-expressed language and of the fine feeling which underlies that language. Analogous letters written nowadays would not betray this genuine sympathy, this delicacy of touch. What is the use of education if, instead of producing a sensitive and cultured mind, it frets away—as I said before—our finer edges?

With all this gentlemanliness, the memoirs are pervaded by a refreshing air of corruptibility—a breath of earlier days, when Englishmen were still made of flesh and blood, and a few sparks of spontaneity glimmered under our puritan ashes. We

encounter various delightfully accommodating Customs Officers: one would like to shake hands with them. How smoothly the wheels went round! I confess that, with increasing experience, I have reached the conclusion that honesty is a matter of time and place. I am not pleading for dishonesty; as with illiteracy, not every one possesses the required qualifications. But I should say that an imaginative man can never be constitutionally honest, as some of us may rightly claim to be. The eighteenth century was more imaginative than ours. What is honesty? A time-saving contrivance. The eighteenth century was not pressed for time. The majority of modern people being dullards pressed for time, honesty is not only their best policy, but their only possible one.

Hickey, for the rest, seems to have been a man of singular rectitude. What he earned was devoted to social pleasures, with the result that while many of his friends grew rich out there—one of them,

not a merchant but a barrister, made £80,000 in a little over three years—he returned home relatively poor. There he died at a patriarchal age, after writing memoirs which are a veritable godsend. There are four volumes of them ; forty would not be too much.

Memoirs are being printed furiously just now—cheery accounts of globe-trottings and sports, with political gossip, an occasional glimpse of royalty, a little scandal, and a good story here and there. These things are records, not revelations of a personality. You cannot offer to others what you lack yourself, and their authors have no personality to reveal. There is also not much sense of spaciousness ; the present age, for all its cosmopolitan hustle, is curiously suburban in spirit. In short, nobody can give us a document on Hickey's lines ; we possess neither his outlook nor his material.

*

WHAT are they doing meanwhile in Oxford Circus, these thousands of potential mothers doomed to sterility? Flattening their noses against the windows of drapers' shops. What have they ever done? They have flattened their noses.

I should not be surprised to learn that some of them can cook a passable dinner, and that a good many have outgrown the chastity ideal of their grandmothers. Even if not, they can now do something still better than that. They can serve on juries; they can vote: over five million have been added to the register by the recent Act. It promises well.

Somebody has said that the spirit of revolution broods over the female sex. Let us hope that he, or she, was right; for in that case women will at last be in a position to counteract that fuddle-headed romancer, the male, whose veneration for

cast-iron principles, however obsolete and perverse, is ripe for a formidable shattering. Under these new conditions we shall, I trust, have more imagination in public affairs—call it flexibility or laxity if you like : no need to haggle about a word, so long as the thing itself comes about. That will mean more sympathy. Love of principles and lack of sympathy are not to be distinguished in their results. And lack of sympathy means lack of charity.

Some more charity would not be amiss. About fifteen thousand non-criminal debtors are locked up in England at this moment (this is an English speciality—almost). In 1926 the Courts of summary jurisdiction convicted 525,543 persons, 25,564 receiving terms of imprisonment without the option of a fine. And although everybody is agreed that prison life is harmful to persons under 21, yet the average sent there is 3000 a year ; in 1925-1926 twenty-one were sentenced to

penal servitude, the minimum term being three years. The other day a boy of 17 was sentenced to six months' hard labour ; another of 15 sent to prison for a month for stealing fourpence. How about the Probation Act ? And what is Jesus saying to all this ?

Something, maybe, about the deplorable consequences of a reverence for out-of-date principles. . . .

* *
*

THE idealistic male with his cult of principles is the curse of Europe. He will die for his principles ; no harm in that. He will persecute others for his principles, and this is what makes him such a nuisance. Let us thank our stars that women are congenitally unprincipled. Up to the present they have not had much chance of displaying this quality as public func-

tionaries. Now they have, and herein lies our hope. But for this fact, society might well go to pieces from sheer ossification and priggishness.

For your prig is a person with fixed principles, who can therefore see only one side of a question. He is no modern product; Roman history is full of such people —the Romans may be called a nation of prigs, and England is infested with them to such an extent that they poison the very air we breathe. Now there are more women in England than men. Nevertheless, there are fewer woman-prigs than man-prigs. How does this come about? Because preconceived theories lie less heavily on women; they find no difficulty in seeing two sides of a question. And if they sometimes see more sides than there actually are, as they are supposed to do—why, it is a fault in the right direction.

P.S. A man who calls women congenitally unprincipled may look out for

squalls. Let me shelter in good time behind the skirts of Mrs. Walter M. Gallichan, who calls women 'instinctive moral anarchists,' and of Madame Andreas-Salomi, who says that they are 'swayed, far more deeply than men, by a hidden contempt for what is traditionally accepted.'

One of these days it may be an outspoken contempt.

* *
*

If asked to say what principles are, I should reply that they are adaptations; guiding rules of conduct derived from our experience of ourselves and of our surroundings. This experience, as every one knows, is shifting all the time. A good deal has had the bottom knocked out of it during the last century. Many principles therefore have ceased to be adaptations, unless modified. They are survivals, an-

omalies. Our social machinery is clogged by what were once adaptations and are now anachronisms as useless and menacing as the vermiform appendix. They ought to be scrapped. They would be scrapped, but for the idealistic man-fool who is too lazy to take the trouble. Laziness is the hall-mark of idealism.

The French Revolution and Bonaparte gave us English such a scare as to the dangers of individualism that there followed a general tightening-up of principles; the late War has had a similar effect. We are living in an era of constriction. The mischief, however, is older than that. It is rooted in the codification-mania of the old Romans, and in their *pietas* (leave things as you find them) which suits our lymphatic temperament down to the ground.

Orientals are more fluid and more pliant. A 'precedent'—the Englishman's delight, because it saves him the trouble of confronting an emergency—is of no great account with them; they hold

that 'no law can meet individual cases, and that a regime of law is a regime of injustice.' I wonder, indeed, whether an authentic precedent has ever existed on earth, unless one disregards contributory elements of greater or less moment. Be that as it may, a precedent is a rule-of-thumb measure, and Orientals distrust such measures. As Mr. Townsend points out, they prefer to the inexorableness of our system, to our leaden order, a flexible and human will. They realize that every act of man is unique of its kind. They believe in expediency as opposed to abstract principles.

It is to be hoped that woman-voters will justify their existence by battering down a few obstructive principles which are responsible for an infinity of harm, and which the man-dreamer would not touch to save his life, unless they kick him into doing it. What trouble it has cost, hitherto, to obtain the repeal of some hopelessly senile exactment! These

women should expedite matters and make the country more inhabitable.

As for the others, the non-voters—a Zenana-life might have attractions for some of them. There they could talk *chiffons* day and night, and play with embroideries and jewelry, and eat as much fancy pastry as they like. There, too, they would find what not all of them can find in Oxford Circus.

* *
*

THE social superiors of this class of woman can be studied to advantage during the winter months on the French Riviera, where they abound—all of them rich, and most of them past middle age. A resident tells me that seven out of ten English visitors at this season are women. Certainly one of the features of the landscape down there is that horde of painted old dames,

double-chinned and encrusted with pearls, tearing up and down the country in high-priced cars. What are they doing? Driving about. What have they ever done? They have driven about.

One wonders what the upkeep of these restlessly-gadding parasites costs their respective males. And if they have money of their own, one wonders who was fool enough to give it them. One hopes, in every case, that they are being well trimmed by some friend or by their servants.

Into purdah? No. The old dears are having a lovely time of it. Besides, there is nothing, absolutely nothing, that purdah-life could teach them.

* *
*

WHEN all is said and done, an intelligent interest in food—how to prepare it and how to enjoy it—is no illusory sign of

civilization. Judged by this test, the French stand in the front rank of civilized people.

Another test. There appeared in Paris not long ago a collection of appreciative sketches by prominent writers which had for subject a colleague of theirs; the volume was dedicated to him; it was their publicly expressed 'Homage' to his merits. Homage books are known in England also, but I have no hesitation in saying that what is implied in the publication of this particular one demonstrates that France has reached a point of liberal culture to which England has not yet begun to aspire. Here, then, is a second and different touchstone of civilization.

This by way of preamble.

M. Louis Roubaud, in the interests of the *Quotidien*, wrote a series of articles about French reformatories for boys and girls; they came out afterwards in book form under the title *Enfants de Caïn*. If the material was printed in the *Quotidien* as

it stands in the book, that paper is to be congratulated on its courage. No English editor would have accepted it. As to the book itself—not one of our publishers would touch it unless a considerable number of entire pages were cut out. Not that there is anything revolting in what the author has to tell us. He merely adverts, with data, to certain features in the social life of these institutions, features to which an English writer would not dare to advert because he knows, firstly, that his readers cannot bear to look truth in the face, and, secondly, that if they could, his publisher would still refuse to print. I think it was Mr. Lowes Dickinson who said that 'an obstinate and familiar habit of the English is to get rid of facts they don't like by pretending that they don't exist.'

They tell me that Jacques Dhur's (or is it André de Lorde's) *Bagne d'Enfants* contains more vivid accounts of the sufferings of these children; I have not seen it.

Enfants de Caïn is quite disheartening enough, though not sensational on the lines of *Mother India.* Two things strike me as peculiarly lamentable: the large percentage of young inmates of these places who have not been convicted of any offence whatever and are none the less rotting there, and the incapacity of the 'unlettered' persons in charge of them. And the injustices . . . a boy of 14 was instigated by one of 25 to help in the theft of a bicycle; the instigator received fifteen days' imprisonment, and the other was landed for seven years in one of these Hells. The official callousness . . . the directress had applied for 'provisional liberty' for the best-behaved girl in the establishment who had been there three years without incurring any blame; the Ministry refused it. The cruelties . . . they have a strait-waistcoat punishment for girls; your hands are strapped from behind over your shoulders, you are thus bent double, and, in order to eat—there

being neither table nor chair—you must lie on your stomach on the floor and lap up your food like a dog. One girl died of suffocation under this torture ; according to the inquest it was a case of ordinary congestion, ' mais elle est bien morte camisolée.'

Accidents will happen. . . .

* *
*

SPEAKING of these children, M. Roubaud says :

' Ils sont nés : c'est leur crime. . . . Eysses et Clermont sont des paradoxales prisons où l'on enferme indifféremment les innocents et les coupables et d'où sortent des apaches et des filles publiques. . . . Il est intolérable que des enfants soient durement punis sans avoir rien fait ; il est plus odieux encore que sous prétexte de les

rééduquer on les pervertisse. . . . Je sais bien que les mots 'maisons correction-elles' ont été effacés sur les portes. Il faut maintenant raser les murs.'

And an enlightened Director of such an establishment told him :

'What our children suffer would be nothing if one saved them. But I can affirm, and have the proof of it, that all or nearly all finish their existence in Guyana [as convicts]. . . . What I have been able to see in this reformatory is unimaginable, and I should have been ashamed to stay so long in such a cloaca, had I not done my best to clean it up.'

These are abuses, but the French have at least the courage to expose them in a public newspaper.

It would be useless attempting to obtain analogous information concerning our English reformatories. You would no more hear the truth than you can hear the truth about our penitentiaries. You would be up against the usual brick wall.

Yet a little leaks out now and then, and that little is not to our credit. A defect of the English system is that such places are mostly under private management, with the result that 'there is a danger that children may be retained longer than is necessary, in order to retain the grant' (A. F. Brockway, *A New Way with Crime*, p. 73). A painful instance of this was recently exposed in *John Bull* in an article beginning 'If the Board of Control cannot be bent, it must be broken' (8th Dec. 1928). Indeed, that paper has done a public service in drawing attention to a variety of things that call for betterment in our English 'Homes'—*see*, for example, 3rd Nov. 1928; 24th Nov. 1928; 29th Dec. 1928; 9th March 1929.

It was with a certain purpose that I claimed for France just now the first place among civilized people. M. Roubaud's book is dated 1925. Exactly one hundred years earlier the New York 'House of Refuge' was founded by the local Society

for the reformation of Juvenile Delinquents. Seven years after that date were issued the seven annual reports of the Society with a variety of supplementary documents (*Documents of the New York House of Refuge.* New York, printed by Mahlon Day, 376 Pearl Street, 1832). Whoever reads this book will be convinced beyond all doubt that, as an experiment in humanitarian reform, the American system of a hundred years ago was superior, both in methods and results, to that of the most civilized European nation of to-day.

It is not a consoling reflection.

One-third of the marriages contracted in France are steriie. No wonder the French are crying about the depopulation of their country; they want more citizens. Why do they condemn to a life of misery and criminality so many of their children?

* *
*

Two features of French life contribute to fill these reformatories with undesirable—should I say undesired?—children. M. Roubaud probably knows all about it, but refers to the matter only once (p. 207) when he tells of a boy of 13 who was placed in such an institution by his mother in order that she might pass the holidays at a watering-place with her lover, undisturbed. My knowledge of such things may be slight, but it is first-hand; it was acquired in Paris during the War, when, circumstances compelling me to frequent a particular 'set,' I opened my eyes, and saw.

Firstly, stepmothers. Your Frenchman, like many brave people, has a pronounced streak of masochism in his nature. He relishes being ordered about by wife or mistress; you can hear him boasting of his obedience. Supposing such a man

loses his wife and has her children on his hands. Well, he mopes ; he might pine away altogether if not consoled with wife No. 2. This is the stepmother ; and whoever knows France will agree with me in saying that the French stepmother is unlike anything else on earth. The children of the first marriage are in her way ; she is tigerishly concentrated on her own offspring—more so than any English mother ; they take up a certain amount of her husband's time and affection, which annoys her ; lastly, she controls the family finances, and the idea of disbursing money on creatures not her own is more odious to a close-fisted Frenchwoman than to any other. She sets about discovering faults in them ; the man dare not disagree ; he discovers them too. Anything for peace ; the poor devil has never had a will of his own, where domestic affairs are concerned. He begins to neglect them ; she nags them into resistance. At last, convinced of the growing coldness of their

father who once behaved so differently, and driven to despair by their stepmother's systematic persecution, they escape from home into the streets — even those of decent families—where they are *ramassé*'d in due course by the police and sent, on the charge of undisciplined conduct, to some reformatory. This is what the stepmother had in mind from the beginning.

Secondly, the usual triangle ; that is to say, where the mother of a child has not only a husband but a lover as well. One such woman had a son of about 14 who began to take notice of her liaison with this man not his father and perhaps made some inconvenient remarks about him, as a boy naturally would do. She saw her love-affair imperilled, and it was not long before she had persuaded the boy's father to send him to one of these unspeakable institutions on the usual pretext. There he remained. A flabby father, you will say. So he was ; and

a *cocu* into the bargain, like many of them.

I could tell several such stories.

* *
*

WHEREVER there are enclosing walls, there are abuses behind them; and all that goes on behind those particular walls is misery. A case of suicide, a most determined case, managed to leak out some time ago owing to an indiscretion; otherwise it would have been hushed up. I should like to know (1) what percentage of children confined in these establishments has been landed there through the agency of stepmothers or of married women with lovers on their hands; (2) what percentage, if any, comes out 'reformed' in any sense of that word; and (3) what percentage of those in charge of them are retired

prison warders, the most brutal class of humanity.

Such children, whether boys or girls, would be happier and better cared for in Indian brothels. They would also not end their lives as convicts.

Needless to add that these *maisons de correction*, which are found throughout Europe and which ought to be wiped off the face of the earth, have not existed among Hindus in all the course of their long history.

Mohammedans, who consider that children, however obstreperous or perverse, are their parents' flesh and blood, would be horrified at such methods. (It is the same with Foundling Hospitals. Followers of Islam cannot understand our need of similar places.)

Orientals are able to control their offspring.

Why cannot Europeans?

*

THE appearance of books like M. Roubaud's and a more conscientious application of the law seems to have led to some improvement in these *maisons de correction.* This is reflected in a series of nineteen articles by M. Raymond de Nys entitled 'L'Enfance Maudite' and published in the *Petit Parisien* between the 22nd December 1927 and 23rd January 1928.

Much remains to be done before the system, if it is to be kept up at all, can be called satisfactory. There is, for example, the Petite Roquette establishment (soon, it appears, to be closed) full of unhappy children, but possessing neither water, nor electricity, nor heating, and whose 'filthy and damp walls exude misery and vice.' The concluding article summarizes the chief defects still existing, one of them being the inefficiency of those in charge. The old complaint! 'Il faudrait éduquer le personel de surveillance. . . .'

I have just spoken of the Director of one reformatory who told M. Roubaud that all or nearly all of the child-inmates ended their existence as convicts in Guyana. Well, whoever can digest strong fare might read the admirable description of Guyana convicts by M. Georges le Fèvre, which was written in the form of 26 articles for the Paris *Journal* (20th Dec. 1925–4th Feb. 1926). It is to be hoped that these articles will appear in book form like those of M. Roubaud : they are worth it. We learn that there are six thousand of these convicts (one-quarter of the whole population) rotting out there, and the whole system is riddled with cruelties and abuses and absurdities—a disgrace to Europe which calls for instant and wholesale revision.

If they do not manage these things better out East, they could certainly not manage them much worse.

*

APROPOS of France, what of the concierge system?

A pest.

I have no objection, in Paris cafés and so forth, to being supervised by the stony, argus-eyed female who sits enthroned night and day in some strategic position of control (does she ever eat or sleep?); no great objection, in a public convenience, to being escorted to my particular destination by some sinister-looking person of the other sex. *On s'y fait.*

Nothing will accustom me to that compound of slimy servility, police espionage, and blackmail, who withholds your letters, forgets messages entrusted to her, tells your friends you are out when you are in, and invents other exquisite methods of annoyance, unless her paw be periodically greased. Has any one ever written the life of the average concierge and related

the steps by which she has raised herself, often from the dregs, to a position where she can control the happiness of several households? The *Roman chez la Portière* is not to the point; but I think one or two of my French friends are in a position to write a little sketch entitled 'How my Concierge got her Job'—instructive, but hardly publishable (to which she, well informed as she is regarding their habits, could reply with a 'What his Concierge found out'—equally instructive and, I fear, equally unpublishable).

You will not encounter the concierge East of Suez.

No wonder Orientals, observing how twenty decent families are dominated and terrorized by a single disreputable female, come to the conclusion that Europe is growing, or has grown, into a lunatic asylum.

* *
*

IT is difficult to put one's finger on a single spot and say: Here is the difference between East and West. David Urquhart, whose books are full of shrewd reflections, observes of the Turkish villagers: 'though they might suffer from the irregular excesses of ephemeral governors, they had not to wither under the undying errors of legislators.' Elsewhere he elaborates this argument about the *intrusion of law.*

'. . . The difference between the tyranny of man and the tyranny of law is one of the most instructive lessons the East has to teach. The one is uncertain, and leaves to the oppressed chances and hopes of escaping it; it varies with the individual; and those who suffer, if not benefited, are, at least, consoled by the vengeance that, sooner or later, overtakes the guilty. The tyranny of law is a dead and immovable weight, that compresses at once the activity

of the limb and the energy of the mind ; leaves no hope of redress, no chance of escape ; is liable to no responsibility for its acts, or vengeance for its crimes.'

Tyrannies so different in their nature cannot but differ as to their results ; persistently applied, they mould the minds of men into dissimilar patterns. The inconstant pressure of a human will induces shiftiness, mobility, and an uncomplaining readiness to take the bad with the good ; the constant pressure of an inhuman machine is not favourable to the development of personality. We have seen the process at work in England. The Anglo-Saxon, before he became a slave to law, was more of an Oriental than he is to-day ; more mercurial in temperament, more flighty and tricky, but also more of an individual. Our sense of private dignity can survive the most oppressive man-despot ; the despotism of law corrodes it.

*

THE opening pages of *Mother India* are dedicated to a picturesque account of a visit to a temple of Kali. This goddess is worshipped chiefly by the lower classes, and in the temple a continuous slaughter of kids and other revolting ceremonials are proceeding in her honour—a gruesome spectacle calling for some pungent language, whose veracity has not been left unchallenged (*Father India*, p. 69). It was good journalism to start the book with this sanguinary description, this epitome of the baser aspects of Hinduism ; it arouses the reader's interest and makes him hope for similar horrors later on. He will not be disappointed.

Against these pages I had scrawled the enigmatical syllables Ath: East: Can any one guess what they stand for? I abandoned all hope of remembering, and only just now has it occurred to me that

they signify Athens: Easter. At that season, namely, there is a great slaughter of lambs and kids in the streets of Athens, and the worshippers are not confined to the lower classes. The beasts, as at Calcutta, are sacrificed in honour of a deity; the only difference is that in India their bodies are consumed by the priests and not by the populace, and that the bloodshed takes place within the precincts of a temple and not on the public roadways.

Squeamish persons are therefore not obliged, as at Athens, to witness the rite.

Squeamish tourists in Greece will do well to avoid the steamers plying between the Aegean islands and the capital just before Easter. These boats are loud with the bleating of lambs and kids torn from their mothers and bound for the slaughter in Athens. They are penned as closely as sardines, but in less regular order. So they roll and pitch about, often on the top of each other, and sometimes for two days.

A sailor comes round now and then to throw overboard those which have been trampled or suffocated to death.

Here is a job for the newly-founded Greek Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

* *
*

INDIAN gods are apt to be grotesque, and Kali is no exception to that rule. She is, on the other hand, too unnatural to inspire either reverence or fear or loathing. A goddess with four hands is no longer redoubtable, having overshot the mark and become a mere curiosity.

A little more tolerance on the subject of Eastern idols would do no harm. All religious symbols are absurd, but some are more pleasant to behold than others. I should like to ask any man who is neither

Hindu nor Christian whether a well-smeared lingam be not a less repulsive object than a crucified God or Man.

* *
*

INDIAN superstitions — we have heard enough about them.

How about European superstitions?

I cull the following from the press :

'The persistent use by the populace of pagan specifics against the Evil Eye is causing concern to certain leaders of the Church, who complain that "even among faithful observers of Christian practices this superstitious idea has not fully died out." Particular objection is raised to objects such as horse-shoes, horns, and sheaves of corn placed upon doorways, which contradict the Christian belief that "all goodness comes from God." Car-

dinal —— has approved a scheme whereby these will be replaced by " oriflammes bearing the name of the Saviour." '

The Cardinal in question must be at a loose end for something to do, and a thin-skinned old gentleman into the bargain, if he objects to the familar horse-shoe. He will also find it a tough job, trying to abolish the venerable horn-symbol which is older than history, animistic and ubiquitous, and, in the Cardinal's country, not only ' placed on doorways ' but sold in thousands by coral, mother-of-pearl, silver (and other metal) merchants, and attached to man and beast, and to vehicles as well. Macrobius, a sensible person, tells us that there is nothing so powerful as a horn to avert evil. He was a pagan, but the Cardinal can also find Scriptural authority for the use of this emblem. Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made him horns of iron, and presented them to the King of Israel as a charm to ensure his success if he went up to Ramoth-Gilead to battle.

I think the old gentleman has started at the wrong end, if he wishes to root superstitions out of his Church. Why not begin a little higher up in the establishment?

* *
*

HINDU bigotry, derided by many European travellers, can be matched in our continent; matched and beaten. It is less acrimonious than that, for example, of the Welsh. It does not break up family life. Savages like those depicted in Caradoc Evans' *My People*, savages living within a few hours of Charing Cross, cannot be found in the length and breadth of India.

Hindu polytheism fares no better. And yet, if one must have a creed, it is more logical than ours. A Great Being who sets the Cosmos in motion and then goes

to sleep: that will pass. One who remains awake and responsible for all that happens on earth is a monster. Even with the help of the Devil to explain away the worst of his tricks, he cuts an indifferent figure. Monotheism, a graceless and unreasonable belief, has its origin in laziness. A single God is an absurdity and a bore.

It would be an infringement of copyright if I printed here, as I should like to do, what I have elsewhere said on this subject (E. Hutton, *A Glimpse of Greece*, p. 147).

A system of polytheism such as we find in Homer can be evolved only among men who are really free, men of good health, of sensitive and alert minds; men who possess constructive imagination and a deep sympathy—a kind of masonic feeling—for the processes of nature. These are the qualifications; and we no longer have them. The Christian theory that polytheism points to a low state of culture is refuted by the life described in these

poems, which reveal an ethical outlook cleaner than our own; the morality, private and public, of these polytheists has extorted praise from all scholars, including the sanctimonious Mr. Gladstone. Their standard of female virtue, for example, contrasts favourably with what our monotheistic teachers have told us about women. And that is a crucial test. Gladstone cannot avoid making his usual reservation in favour of Christianity; he says, nevertheless, that 'it would be hard to discover any period of history, or country of the world, not being Christian, in which women stood so high as with the Greeks of the heroic age.'

* *
*

Roman Catholics have shaken off the nightmare of monotheism. Their Trinity is broken up, the Holy Ghost having

evaporated in the course of years, as spirits often do. Catholics have manufactured a Pantheon of their own where pagan deities are well represented; rather a sunless Council-chamber, but better than a single tyrant-god. They realize that one deity cannot decently be entrusted with all the dirty work he has to do. Like Jupiter, he requires lieutenants, demi-gods—saints and angels. To take only the Madonna: there are about one hundred varieties of this Magna Mater, local demi-goddesses, each with separate attributes according to her functions. Polytheism. . . .

It was the same in old India, which claims to have possessed only one Veda, one God to whom worship was addressed. Paramesvara or Brahma or Ishwara was the true and omnipotent One. This system having the inevitable drawbacks, he began to subdivide after the manner of other Supreme Beings. The Rig-Veda helped in the work of laying down the

attributes of the nature-gods, of classifying and standardizing them. Even so Homer 'arranged the generations of the gods.'

Poets are hostile to monotheism.

If we must have gods, let us have them by the score—it is the only way out of the difficulty. Let us have them numerous as in the streets of old Naples, where, according to Symmachus, it was easier to encounter a god than a man. The more the merrier. Then we shall know on whom to fix the blame, when anything disagreeable happens to us. At present, God being good, we are up a tree. The Southern peasant knows which saint is responsible, if his cow breaks her leg or swallows a billiard ball. How convenient, how reasonable !

Hanuman, the Divine Monkey, jumped from India to Ceylon.

Balaam's ass could talk Hebrew.

English people poke fun at Hanuman's exploit.

These are the same who haggle in Parliament as to transubstantiation.

Grown-up men, too. . . .

* *
*

How good it is, in the middle of such buffoonery, to throw your Parliamentary Debates or Cruden's Concordance into the waste-paper basket, and open a tale of the Arabian Nights, no matter where! Instantly your humour mellows ; you are transported into conditions where life was pleasanter for both rich and poor. The compilation has been deliberately devised for entertainment, but behind this artificial screen one divines a society which was compact, harmonious, and substantial. There are no false notes in Mohammedanism, no patches. It simplifies our existence, and scorns its calamities. Above

all, you have the joy of finding yourself among real men. This religion has not sapped our *amour-propre*. . . .

Or try Athenaeus, for a change. Another compilation! Open him where you please—

The Sybarites were not only luxurious; they were absurdly sensitive, and had such a dislike to work that the mere sight of manual labour, and even the mere thought of it, made them feel unwell. One day a citizen imprudently ventured outside the town walls, and there, to his horror, he saw a man ploughing a field. He felt as if 'all the bones in his body were broken,' but managed, nevertheless, to crawl back and consult a medical friend of his.

'Good God,' said the doctor, 'you—you saw a man working . . .'

The doctor had fainted away.

* *
*

ATHENAEUS has many such tales and is always diverting, whether he discourses of eels or harlots or pigs' trotters or towels or turnips or grammar or perfumery or fishmongers or cheesecakes or flutes. I daresay he was personally a dull dog, a bookworm, a collector of scraps. It is fortunate that these scraps have survived. They give us glimpses into a state of refinement such as no longer exists. In that Alexandrian conglomerate is embedded the residue of civilization.

Maybe the nearest approach to such a state of affairs could have been found in China up to a few years ago. And it strikes me as significant that men who speak most highly of Chinese life are precisely those whom one would expect to be most deeply convinced, by reason of their studies, of the superiority of Western tradition.

Mr. Lowes Dickinson has told us pretty clearly what he thinks in *Letters from John Chinaman.* In another book he says : ' The West talks of civilizing China. Would that China could civilize the West ! '

Mr. Bertrand Russell observes that ' when I went to China I went to teach ; but every day that I stayed I thought less of what I had to teach them and more of what I had to learn from them.' And elsewhere : ' The Chinese are gentle, urbane, seeking only justice and freedom. They have a civilization superior to ours in all that makes for human happiness. . . . I think they are the only people in the world who quite genuinely believe that wisdom is more precious than rubies.'

* *
*

A FRIEND, British householder, sends me the following :

'This may interest you. The Travel Association of Great Britain and Ireland, represented by English traders, tourist agencies, railway and steamship companies, hotel and theatre proprietors, and others, is anxious to increase the number of visitors, chiefly American, who come to England ; it wants to keep them here instead of letting them roam about the continent of Europe or further afield. The Government has lent its support to the movement (guaranteeing £5000 towards the funds next year) with Committees and suchlike, which has for its watchword : COME TO BRITAIN.

'Dear me !

'The preliminary puff should be drawn up on these lines :

'COME TO BRITAIN, where you will find :

'1. The worst climate in Europe.

'2. The most brutal and ferocious Customs-examination (the fingering of rich women's *lingerie* by the British working-class inspector is offensive to the last degree. I have seen nothing like it elsewhere. Is there not a tax on silk in other countries? Of course there is, but these apply their law in a gentlemanly manner).

'3. The most comfortless and expensive hotels.

'4. The worst cooking.

'5. The worst wagon-restaurants (Menu: a bowl of soup, half cold ; a clammy slice of cod, half cold ; a slice of foreign beef, half cold ; dried apple-tart and custard, warm ; Canadian cheddar ; chicory and acorns for coffee, warm).

'6. That you cannot get a drink when you want one, in part of the morning and the whole afternoon (a cheery place for Americans, who want a drink all the time, and deserve it).

'7. That you are not allowed to buy a cigar after 8 p.m.

'8. Or to drink at all after 11 p.m.

'9. That if you speak to a woman in the street you are run in.

'10. That if you walk in the Park after sunset you will be spied on and probably arrested.

'11. That if you stay six months—but nobody would be such a fool—you will pay 4/- income tax on every 20/-.

'12. That there are few trains on Sundays (a large place like Whitby is cut off from London on that day); no theatres on Sunday (should appeal to Continental visitors); museums open only in the afternoons; shops shut on Sundays and on one week-day afternoon, including post-offices; and everything more expensive than anywhere else.

'When I return to England from abroad, I always feel as if I were going back to school.

'I forgot to say that they had a meeting

of the COME TO BRITAIN movement the other day, at which lovely prospects were opened up. Lord Reading, however, urged that different kinds of prohibitions should be abolished, so that the life of the tourist could be made easier. Just note his words. He said : *Do not prevent the foreigner spending his money at restaurants and theatres as soon as he arrives by detaining him while he tries to master all the regulations he must observe in order to make his stay safe.*

'In order to make his stay *safe*. . . .

'In short : COME TO BRITAIN, where—apart from the filthy climate—you will be bored to death by lack of amusement, poisoned by bad food, officially persecuted, and commercially fleeced.'

. . . If this be correct, Americans may prefer a trip to the East.

* *
*

My friend refers to the Dover Customs examination, and to-day's paper very appositely contains the following note :

'A renewed attack on alleged British methods of examining French visitors to England is made to-night by the Paris *Soir*, and, in the course of a fiery denunciation, a demand is made for reprisals on English people entering France.

'The paper, referring to the "odious examination to which French people are still subjected entering England," says that it was generally believed that the practice had ceased, but this is not the case.

'The Customs officials at English ports, it alleges, chooses (*sic*) whom they like for this inspection, and reference is made to French girls of 15 and 16, going to England to complete their studies, being submitted to "outrageous examination."

'Witnesses can be produced in support of these statements, continues the Paris *Soir*, which says that the only way to put an end to the scandal is for English people entering France to be made to undergo a similar examination.'

They sometimes are. . . .

A few days ago, as we were coming out of the Ventimiglia (French) Customs office, I saw a venerable old Englishman's pocket rifled by one of these ruffians, who drew therefrom a handkerchief and one or two more valueless articles. Doubtless a Corsican savage, like so many of them. The French authorities seem to be unaware of the discredit they bring on themselves by entrusting such positions to Corsicans. If no Frenchmen are available, why not employ Senegalese natives, and have done with it?

And here we are, in every part of Europe, putting up with similar outrages at every hour of the day or night—the passport nuisance, and all the rest of them.

Nobody raises a hand, or even a voice, to batter down these indignities. We suffer ; we are grateful if our lives be spared. What lovely material, if one wanted to breed a race of helots !

Gobineau was right when he said that ' there is no doubt that slavery sometimes has a legitimate basis, and we are almost justified in laying down that in this case it results quite as much from the consent of the slave as from the moral and physical predominance of the master.'

The author of *Mother India* has a clever chapter on ' Indian *Slave-Mentality*.'

How about our own slave-mentality ?

* *
*

THERE are such things as bedside books, and one of them is Wallace's *Malay Archipelago*. Glancing into it the other evening,

I rediscovered the following noteworthy passage :

'This motley, ignorant, bloodthirsty, thievish population [he is speaking of one of the Aru Islands] live here without the shadow of a Government, with no police, no courts, and no lawyers ; yet they do not cut each other's throats ; do not plunder each other day and night ; do not fall into the anarchy such a state of things might be supposed to lead to. It is very extraordinary ! It puts strange thoughts into one's head about the mountain-load of government under which people exist in Europe, and suggests the idea that we may be overgoverned. Think of the hundred Acts of Parliament annually enacted to prevent us, the people of England, from cutting each other's throats, or from doing to our neighbours as we would *not* be done by. Think of the thousands of lawyers and barristers whose whole lives are spent in telling us what the hundred Acts of Parliament mean, and one would be led

to infer that if Dobbo has too little law, England has too much. . . . Trade is the magic that keeps all at peace, and unites these discordant elements into a well-behaved community.'

These Oriental ruffians, it appears, can do without laws and yet live peaceably, owing to trade. There is trade here also. Due allowance made for our more complex social structure, was it necessary that since 1911 seventeen different National Insurance Acts should have been passed? The Prime Minister recently told the House of Commons that in the last three years five thousand Statutory Rules and Orders, possessing the force of law, have been issued. Were all of them necessary? Perhaps yes—in the sense that their object was to bolster up or modify preceding ones, half of which need never have been issued at all. A vast system of buttresses, buttressing each other into infinity. . . .

Mother India has had a fair dose of such extravagances. During the first ten years

of the present century twenty-five thousand new laws have been inscribed on her Statute Book (H. M. Hyndman: *The Awakening of Asia*, p. 207) in order to govern men who for untold ages have governed themselves without any written legislation whatever, save of the religious kind.

* *
*

ONE would like to know how much of an Englishman's time and energy is consumed in trying to circumvent regulations which ought not to exist. Says the *Saturday Review*: 'It is rare, these days, to find a respectable suburban paterfamilias who does not land himself in a police-court twice a year.' Parliamentary meddlesomeness has become an obsession. And then, the muddlesomeness of all those unnecessary local bodies. . . .

Mr. Clive Bell, speaking of this frenzy for legislation, observes that an ordinary Englishman is, on the whole, less free than a Roman slave in the time of Hadrian. He attributes this state of affairs largely to the activities of elderly and embittered virgins ; nor should I be surprised to learn that there is a correlation between sexlessness and repressive legislation, and that many of the discomforts of life in England are due to eunuchs of one kind or another.

I suspect none the less that a considerable number of these elderly virgins are middle-aged men, equally sexless and therefore equally devoid of tolerance, but more mulish than any woman has the strength to be. I do not question what the spinster would call her good intentions ; I question her staying-power. That is why, when it comes to imbecility, nobody can beat a male.

* *
*

HERE is an instance of that official interference in a man's private affairs which, to an Oriental mind, is unbelievable :

We all know what a dog-kennel is—a worthless wooden structure which can be broken to pieces in less than five minutes. Not long ago a friend of mine was putting up such a contrivance (they are bought ready made ; you have only to fit the pieces together) on part of his own English property bought with good money, to wit, in his back garden. Shortly afterwards the District Surveyor called to say : was my friend aware that he had rendered himself liable to a penalty? There ensued a lengthy and lively correspondence with the Borough Council, which, taking into consideration the fact that the kennel was erected in ignorance of that special by-law, or whatever the contemptible regulation calls itself, condoned the offence

on the understanding that a regular licence would be taken out, price five shillings.

A characteristic detail : the licence to erect a dog-kennel in your back garden expires after five years, but can be renewed provided the authorities see no objection.

De minimis non curat lex. . . .

If that surveyor had approached one of my old Turkish acquaintances with his remarks, the kennel would have been cracked over his head. And if we followed his example, this particular nuisance would soon be abated.

* *
*

GOVERNED to death. . . .

The *Nation* draws attention to the inquisitorial methods of Government departments which insist on Civil servants disclosing how they pass their time outside

the office. I should like to have the text of this order ; it is humiliating to the last degree. Soon they will be wanting to know the yearly amount of their employés' washing bills.

Having been a Civil servant myself, I feel no great sympathy for those who refuse to bolt out of that treadmill ; let us hope, at all events, that they will put up a stand against such a piece of insolence. The underlying idea is no doubt that in their spare time some ten per cent. of them—it cannot be more—may have an occupation which, on being revealed, will enable the Treasury to rake in a little more income tax ; so the *Nation* thinks, adding that ' the income-tax inquisition is now so pitiless and intolerable that decent citizens have almost reached the point of sympathizing with evaders.' I understand that some decent citizens have reached that point long, long ago.

A trifle, but symptomatic of the general trend of things.

We once had a remedy against such abuses in the *Truth* of Labouchere. He would have ferreted out the origins of this new order, nailed down the idiot who drew it up, and asked him what he meant by it. How he used to make the Government departments tremble! An exposure in *Truth* was the only thing they dreaded. Private complaints were shelved or evaded; as to questions in Parliament —they revelled in them, as they do to this day. Labby was the wild-beast tamer. He has left no successor of sufficient authority, sufficient wit, and sufficient courage.

There were Government departments and thousands of Civil servants under Kublai Khan, whose immense realm was administered as efficiently as the British Empire. It may be that he also encouraged this prying system, but I doubt it. Must we go to Toledo to find its counterpart? No; because there, once you subscribed to certain opinions, you were left in peace. In England, in Europe

generally, you are harried from pillar to post by perpetually changing bureaucratic ordinances.

* *
*

OFFICIALDOM :

'Because his front identification-plate had letters and numbers which were one and a half inches longer than the prescribed size, F— D—, motor driver, of Walmer Road, Kensington, was fined 5/- at Tower Bridge Court yesterday.

'Mr. Tassell said he could not see what objection there could be to the letters being too large, though there was some to their being too small.'

Now how would this be :

'His Worship Tassa Lal, observing that there was a limit to this kind of thing, ordered Mr. D—'s accuser to pay him five

hundred rupees as compensation for frivolous prosecution, and to receive fifty strokes of the bastinado for wasting the Court's time on matters which constitute no complaint.'

That might discourage some of them.

* *
*

OFFICIALDOM :

'Mrs. A— G—, an Englishwoman who married an alien, was bound over at Lambeth Police Court on Saturday on a summons for failing to notify her change of address under the Alien Regulations. She stated that she was born of British parents, had never been out of England, and had not lived with her husband for eight years.'

London must be a cheery place for Englishwomen with non-English husbands

—a poor substitute, maybe, but better than nothing. What else are some of them to procure, seeing that there are not enough Englishmen to go round?

'At Enfield last week Mr. L— A— was summoned for keeping a dog without having a licence. He found the dog in a starved condition, took it home and fed it. He then reported his find to the police, to be rewarded for his kindness by receiving a summons next day.'

Mr. Fowler Wright (*Police and Public*, p. 135) remarks that *at least nine-tenths of the summonses which are issued at the instigation of the police are public nuisances, vexatious and needless.* Mr. Wright's little volume was banned in advance by the railway bookstalls.

* *
*

RIBALD persons used to say: Wake up, Britain!

Easier said than done. The Anglo-Saxon is hard to wake up, being phlegmatic and self-righteous to such a degree that the only thing which will really wake him up is brute force. Sad, but true. We have seen it lately in two cases. If women had not taken to smashing windows and other acts of violence they would never have been emancipated; their arguments would have been shelved, as they always had been, out of sheer laziness. And the Irish, after centuries of wobbling and half-measures, at last grasped the truth. They took to arson and murder in good style; they scared the Anglo-Saxon and obtained what they would have obtained ages ago, had they realized that their best hope lay in shattering the inertia of Westmi ster. Those who suffer under the harassing re-

strictions of life in England might make a note of the fact that intimidation, not speechifying, will rouse the Parliamentarians out of their post-prandial coma.

The complacency of the English has been wounded lately in three sensitive spots : we have had infraction of naval discipline, police corruption, and malpractices at the F.O. Something, after all, seems to be rotten in the state of Denmark.

Now Mr. Garratt knows his India. What he writes is worth pondering. Perhaps Britain may yet wake up, or be wakened up, to the fact that 'Indian civilization is healthy, spiritual, and in every way admirable. Any corruption is due first to Moslem and subsequently to British aggression. Western civilization, lacking all spiritual significance, is rotten at the core. . . . In twenty years' time Indian politicians may be looking to Turkey or Persia for models of efficient

administration for an Asiatic people living under Oriental conditions. . . . A return to the paternal justice administered in many Indian states is unthinkable, but it is a matter for consideration whether the present system, already so very bad, can get any worse.'

P.S. A critic, reviewing Mr. Woolacott's *India on Trial*, says of the native that 'People who cannot read or write are *ipso facto* incapable of governing themselves on representative European lines.' That is perfectly correct. Why should Indians be expected to govern themselves on our lines? I feel sure they prefer Oriental methods, entailing the inevitable amount of instability and insecurity, to the provincial stagnation which English rule is imposing on them. The critic adds: 'The political interest of those who cannot read cannot even be aroused.' Perfectly correct, once more; and so much the better. There is already

too much political interest among Indians. Why arouse more?

* *
*

IT stands to reason that this state of affairs is produced not by lack of talent or goodwill, but by our adherence to the Roman principle of an inflexible administration on more or less European lines.

Indeed, whoever knows the climate and other discomforts of India cannot be too emphatic in praise of our Civil Service, and it does one good to hear what authoritative and dispassionate non-English observers have to say on the subject. A Frenchman, J. Barthélémy Saint-Hilaire, writes: 'Vainly we seek in history for anything like this, and even the greatest of all nations, the Romans, showed no such example of humanity and devotion in a

great cause.' The Austrian Baron von Hubner says of our Indian Civil servants that as regards culture, technical knowledge, statesmanlike qualities and spotless integrity they are surpassed by no bureaucracy on earth, adding that 'even when we take the pessimist's point of view, we cannot deny that British India offers a spectacle which is without parallel in the world's history.'

Among others there is also the testimony of a Swiss which, provoked as it was in an accidental manner, is of special value.

I happened to be in India during the famine of 1900, and shall not soon forget what I saw. The sufferers looked as if they had been dug up from their graves, being reduced to such a state of emaciation that one asked oneself how a breath of life could still pervade these motionless anatomical exhibits. There, on the spot, I was able to convince myself of the efforts made by our Civil staff to alleviate the misery, and also to compare them with the

system adopted in a Native State. In England, meanwhile, this visitation was made the pretext for an attack in Parliament on the injustice and inefficiency of British rule in India. The *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, a journal which ought to have known better, printed some of this and other fustian in its correspondence columns, and this in its turn led to the publication of a remarkable counter-attack of 93 pages by a Swiss gentleman, who demolished both the false reasoning and the deliberate misstatements of that newspaper correspondence (*Die Hungersnot in Indien und die britisch-indische Regierung*, von Aug. F. Amman; Frauenfeld, J. Huber, 1901).

This succinct and lucid brochure gives a bird's-eye view, so to speak, of British activities in India, and deserves, even at this hour of the day, to be translated out of the German. I note that the author agrees with others (p. 32) in finding that, apart from public calamities like plague

or famine, 'the lot of the so-called "ordinary man" in India is far happier than that of his European colleague.'

* *
*

SOMEWHERE in the Coelo-Syrian plain stands a tall and lonely column, the column of Ya'at. We walked there one evening, and my companion assured me that it was erected by the Crusaders, years and years ago.

That was a modern yarn, I said; anybody could see from the construction of the thing. . . . Impossible to convince him! He was a Syrian; he knew all about his country. The Crusaders passed that very way, consequently they built it.

They may well have passed that way on their long overland trip from Cologne to Jerusalem, and to ascertain whether or no

they built this particular column is of less interest than to ascertain how they contrived to get here at all without a single passport between them. How was that feat accomplished? A short time ago I followed more or less the same overland track from Europe as far as Damascus, and even for that distance no less than five visas were required. The expense incurred in procuring this trashy stamp, though considerable, is nothing when compared to the loss of time. But for the good offices of a friend in authority, I might have spent the better part of a week hanging around the consulates of five disreputable little 'Powers,' at the mercy of their unwashed employés. If the brutes would at least take a bribe, and get through with their work! Alas, incorruptibility is the fetich of the half-civilized.

The amenities of life in Europe. . . .

Is the visa-plague ever going to end?

Those who recall the ease of pre-passport days, and who like to live with as

little vexation as possible, will view with concern this particular development of the labelling-disease of European Governments. You can live without friends, without wife or children or money or tobacco ; you can live without a shirt, without a reputation ; you cannot live without a document establishing your servitude to bureaucracy. A man's passport or *carte d'identité* is beginning to be of greater consequence than his person, and for a good reason. It makes him authentic. If Mr. Jones, the European, cannot produce a passport, he is a solar myth.

Such is the official point of view, and the shortest way of demonstrating its fallacy would be a punch in the ribs from Mr. Jones.

May it come soon, and often. . . .

* *
*

IT will be long in coming.

Mr. Jones is well broken in. He is a devitalized creature. The official herd is too strong for him. It has insinuated into his mind that a passport consoles him for many ills; he must cleave to it, else he may find himself landed in prison. Such is the bureaucratic system. It invents a dilemma, and then, by means of the passport-talisman, shows him a way out of it. All Mr. Jones has to do is to pay, pay, pay—in order to keep the animals at their desks.

Ten to one, he is a bureaucrat himself. That being so, the system must be upheld and extended whenever possible. Officials will soon outnumber the population, and no wonder they fight to keep the machinery going. They live by it. Where a man's income is, there will his heart be also.

The passport-nuisance, as it now exists, was unknown before the War. It is part of the ignoble tangle in which we have thereby embroiled ourselves. A vast deal of such governmental interference has not even this justification, being sheer meddlesomeness, costly to the nation and obnoxious to the individual. Mr. Clive Bell has dealt with this subject, and his analysis of the meddler's psychology ('those who cannot express themselves except by interfering with others') is a sound one. I should now like to read a psychological study of his victims, of those who make the meddler possible, the passive dirt-eaters who love being ill-treated in the name of law and order.

Of the two mentalities, I prefer the meddler's.

He is at least active.

* *
*

I HAVE visited American missionary stations in South India, meddlesome concerns which are discouraged in certain other British dominions, and where they show you an up-to-date operating-room but forget to offer you a whisky-and-soda for luncheon (one must know India, to realize fully what that means). They cannot be called successful, and even of the most successful missionary out there it has been rightly said that he 'produces a hybrid caste, not quite European, not quite Indian, with the originality killed out of them, with self-reliance weakened, with all mental aspirations wrenched violently in a direction which is not their own.' These converts are apt to be unreliable; indeed, the inferiority of the Oriental Christian, whether convert or not, is proverbial, and those who really know the East, like Layard, have testified to it in clear language.

A commendable form of meddlesomeness is that of a Howard or Shaftesbury. One cannot blame Christianity for originating the most discommendable form—that which occupies itself with other people's spiritual well-being. It started, so far as we are concerned, with Pythagoras, though the Christians, once they began to exist, soon claimed it as a speciality of their own invention. They brought it to a fine state of perfection here, in India. At Goa, the metropolis of Christian India, where every form of vice, except drunkenness, was practised by both sexes, and where slaves were sold by auction in the main street, the burnings of heretics to the glory of God were so incessant that the local tribunal of the Inquisition was not long in earning a sinister renown as the most pitiless in Christendom, which implied a good deal.

Compare this Christian meddlesomeness with that of the Brahmin. No nation was ever so priest-ridden as the Indian,

yet 'the same people were allowed to indulge in the most unrestrained freedom of thought, and in the schools of their philosophy the very names of their gods were never mentioned. Their existence was neither denied nor asserted' (Max Müller).

* *
*

PASSPORT-ANNOYANCES notwithstanding, it has become part of my programme to escape Eastwards now and then, if only for a couple of weeks, out of this murk. I do not mean the murk of 280 tons of solid matter which are deposited yearly from the sky on every square mile of London; I mean another kind of murk. One returns refreshed and readjusted—ready to face the devil once more.

Who is the devil?

That air of pointless preoccupation. It hangs about like influenza, infecting the sanest and most self-possessed of us. You encounter it in every walk of life and every grade of society : complications and glumness, with feverish streaks in between ; in a word, fluster. There is as much grace and dignity in a European existence just now as there is in a fat bourgeoise running after an omnibus. The Americanization of life on this continent may have contributed its share ; it has infused a note of impermanence. Gregarious and homeless, fearing solitude as never before, our European is losing his idiosyncrasy. Hustle is his opiate, his refuge from self.

We seem to be side-tracked—victims of catchwords and indecorous social habits ; we have lost our bearings in the search after gladness, if gladness be what we are seeking. And what else should an intelligent man seek ? Intelligence . . . how about our European variety ? Cleverness, yes ; but intelligence ? I have lost faith

in it since the Great War, and after. A continent which can make such an exhibition of itself is not to be taken seriously.

* *
*

I THINK there was more life, or at least more living, in the Yellow Book period. There was certainly more laughter. We were ready to laugh at anything, even at our comic papers. What has happened to them—to *Fun*, and *Judy*, and *Moonshine*, and *Pick-Me-Up*, and *Ally Sloper* of 99 Shoe Lane? Asphyxiated in the murk. . . .

No great loss but, once more, symptomatic.

In Meredith Townsend's *Asia and Europe* there is a suggestive chapter on the charm of Asia for Asiatics. It contains the reflections of Vefyk Pasha, at one time Turkish Minister in Paris, who summar-

izes neatly the Oriental point of view. I quote just the beginning and the end :

'What I complain of is the mode of life. I am oppressed not by the official duties—they are easy, Turkey has few affairs—but by the social ones. I have had to write fifteen notes this morning, all about trifles. . . . My liberal friends here complain of the want of political liberty. What I complain of is the want of social liberty ; it is far more important. Few people suffer from the despotism of a Government, and those suffer only occasionally. But this social despotism, this despotism of salons, this code of arbitrary little règlements, observances, prohibitions, and exigencies, affects everybody, and every day, and every hour.'

The Oriental, of whatever standing, is too much of a democrat not to resent this social pressure impinging on his freedom of action. He has no regard for the snobbery which underlies it.

Hindus come in for some hard words in

Mother India and elsewhere. One thing can nevertheless be said for them : they have not lost their blitheness. They know what leisure means. I suppose our inability to be alone and our restlessness of mind is a diluted form of that of the true neurasthenic, whose existence as a stable and independent unit has become a burden to him. (A charming modern disease ! Neurasthenia turns a man into the wrong kind of woman.) Far too many excellent people are rushing about needlessly, groaning under a load of duties to be performed and puzzling how to avoid them. When a duty ceases to be a pleasure, then it ceases to exist. I recommend this maxim to those who would like to be masters of their own lives.

Hindus are not afflicted with the fidgets. Neither are these Syrians, whether Arabs or Christians. They do not imagine, like Europeans, that they are driving a machine because they happen to be tangled up in its works. It does one good to watch

them sitting on the grass in merry groups under their apricots and walnuts, laughing and chatting and playing games, and nibbling, from time to time, at a fresh lettuce leaf—local substitute for a glass of beer.

The simple life?

Orientals are not simple folk. They know how to take their ease.

* *
*

THEY have another enviable quality: they adapt themselves to reverses of fortune. They bend. In circumstances where a European can think of nothing more sensible than to commit suicide, they find no difficulty in maintaining their equanimity.

The other day an Englishman was found dying with a sponge soaked in poison tied over his mouth, and in his pocket a piece

of paper, on which were written the words: 'The law is an ass. I suppose it will think this is murder.'

Verdict: suicide while of unsound mind.

It is a speciality of English law to regard suicide as a crime. The impertinence! Man being master of his life—it will soon be the only thing he can call his own—suicide is his inalienable right; and it is in accordance with the meddlesome spirit of our legislation that it should endeavour to deprive him of this right, and in accordance with our ingrained hypocrisy to invent that ignoble fiction of an unsound mind.

If you attempt suicide you are a criminal: if you succeed you are a lunatic. I should like to know whether this dictum has ever deterred a would-be suicide from his purpose. Were all the suicides of antiquity of unsound mind? Must one be mad, in order to perform the most solemn act of which humanity is capable?

Some ancients, like Cicero and Plotinus,

were of opinion that it was not good to destroy oneself under the influence of any kind of passion from which the soul suffers. This is a doctrine which permits of discussion ; it is not our doctrine. We regard the matter from another angle. Christian morality, which suggests that a man's life is given him on trust, lies at the bottom of English legal ruling.

It lies at the bottom of a deal of rubbish. Our whole legislation is poisoned at the roots. Where are the roots? In the ethics of the Bible. I once wrote that 'Theology has left the Mark of the Beast upon our Statute Book.' It reeks of Semitism. The theologian's hoof is everywhere discernible, and we can hardly congratulate ourselves, as white men, on being at the mercy of theories which were elaborated ages ago to suit the convenience of tawny Israelites.

Has the world not changed since then?

*

CONSIDERING how long ago Genesis and the rest of them were written, those theories were not discreditable to their authors. They are discreditable to ourselves ; and it would be a commendable task to draw up a list of still existing anomalies in our European legal usage whose sole *raison d'être* is some text in those tribal ordinances of long ago. Even the most preposterous of them, like that concerning witches—how slow they are to die!

'And surely your blood of your lives will I require ; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man. . . . If an ox gore a man or a woman, that they die : then the ox shall be surely stoned, and his flesh shall not be eaten ; but the owner of the ox shall be quit. . . .'

The last beast-trial based on this injunction took place during the lifetime of some of us, in the year 1864, when a sow,

which had bitten off the ears of a child, was solemnly condemned to death, its flesh being thrown to the dogs.

In point of place, France was the centre of such practices; in point of time, the fifteenth century. The first French trial of an accused animal occurred in 1283, the last in 1845; and the sentences are often motivated by phrases like 'en détestation et horreur du dit cas' or 'pour la cruauté et férocité commise.'

It must not be supposed that these affairs were a mockery. They were conducted before the secular courts, with judges, prosecuting and defending counsel; and the criminal, if condemned to death, was sentenced with all the formality of law, which laid down the manner of execution—whether by hanging, burying alive, stoning, burning, or decapitation—and which saw to it that the order was carried out by the usual public functionary and at the usual spot, whereto the condemned beast was dragged like any human being.

Lighter punishments were inflicted for lighter offences. In the seventeenth century a dog was sentenced in Austria to a term of imprisonment; a French pig, which had mauled the arms and face of a child, paid for the crime by the loss of its snout and one leg. In very mild cases (a Sardinian speciality) the animal was deprived of one ear. The sentences did not always err on the side of lenity. Thus a cock was condemned to be burnt at Basle in 1474 for the peccadillo of laying an egg.

Mosaic Law, the 'Will of the Bible,' was invoked in justification of such proceedings.

Some instances verge on the incredible. In 1479 the destructive larvae of the cockchafer were cited, and actually produced in considerable numbers, before the Court of Berne, which granted them a legal representative in the person of a well-known advocate of Freiburg. In Spain, offending animals were often banished to a remote island; elsewhere a tract of land

was allotted to them under the condition that they were not to stray from it.

It is not surprising to learn that the very first of these trials, in 1283, was already condemned on grounds of common sense by Philippe de Beaumanoir, a writer, and that other opponents, laymen and theologians, cropped up continuously during the centuries. What is surprising is that they persisted none the less and found capable defenders, such as the famous *Malleolus* (Felix Hemmerlin of Zürich) and the Burgundian jurist Chasseneus. Their last official champion was Samuel Stryckins in 1704. The tenacity of nonsense!

We may laugh at these punishments inflicted upon unreasoning beasts of the earth in the name of the Bible. Yet our law-book is saturated with mischievous rules drawn from the same source which call not for laughter but for the reverse. One thinks, for example, of the ferocious sentences meted out to rustic half-wits for indulging in the bucolic sin of 'bestiality'

—a fragment, and not the most noxious one, of our legacy from those pastoral goat-keepers and Jahveh-worshippers.

* *
*

THE dawn of history is not the dawn of the human race, as our grandparents were taught to believe. Only last week, so to say, have we discovered our body to be a perambulating museum of oddities not only useless but liable to give a deal of trouble—functional relics which before the dawn of history must have served some purpose. There they are; you may sometimes cut them away, but never argue them away. Though the Jews knew nothing about them, no doctor of to-day would hesitate to recognize their significance.

A reasonable jurisprudence will take

account, and not only empirically, of corresponding mental survivals, obscure but uncontrollable impulses which refuse to fit themselves into to-day's categories. The Jews knew nothing about them. Nor did the men who compiled our Statute Book, seeing that it was elaborated on the assumption that mankind was only about four thousand years old—in which case, these promptings from our unexplored pre-history would be non-existent. There they are, nevertheless, dating from several hundred thousand years before Moses was found in the bulrushes, and not to be argued away ; you might as well argue away your pylorus. Scientists may investigate their origin and development ; lawgivers should recognize their existence and frame enactments accordingly.

If judges were lawgivers and not dispensers of law this could be done. They find themselves blocked, unfortunately, by some ludicrous Act passed by a handful of vote-hunting politicians—blocked, al-

though any single one of them possesses a keener insight into humanity than fifty of these same politicians rolled into one. Acts sit tight, while social conditions change and our knowledge of man's nature moves forwards ; the discrepancy between law and reason is often acute.

'The time has come,' said Lord Buckmaster not long ago, 'for a complete revision of our penal laws. . . .'

I have elsewhere ventured to observe that the most enlightened of legislators will hesitate to engraft the fruits of modern psychological research upon the tree of law, lest the scion prove too vigorous for the aged vegetable. The experiment of grafting common sense here and there might now be risked, since that complete revision of our penal laws, however desiderable, is not likely to take place before Doomsday.

* *
*

THERE reached me not long ago the luxurious translation of Nietzsche's *Antichrist* published by the Fanfrolico Press of London. He ought to be alive to see it ; and to see a popular fourpenny edition as well. The book was written during that blissful period of well-being which preceded his breakdown.

Five words have arrested my attention : 'our wretched little planet, Earth . . .'

It is long since I studied Nietzsche, but, speaking wholly from memory, I should say that this passage is unique in his writings. In all those volumes devoted to the patching-up of mankind he took them at their own valuation and judged them from their own point of view ; the planets, even our Earth, were not consulted. Such is the way of lyrical thinkers : to deduce rules for the guidance of human creatures without enquiring by what laws those

creatures came to be human at all. It is doubtless difficult, and he found it difficult, to yield gracefully to our beliefs and institutions if we fail to take account of unavoidable limitations—the physical conditions under which we have painfully grown and survived, and that driving-force of our own dim past which each of us carries within him.

Nietzsche hints at these things more than once; for instance, when he says that at the roots of our being lies something unteachable, 'the granite of a spiritual destiny, of predetermined judgments and answers'; he hints at them; but to regard mankind frankly as a solar product never occurred to him.

Mankind is nothing else.

* *
*

He was in contact with the biological movement of his day, yet the shattering import of what these men discovered seems to have escaped him altogether. Herbert Spencer has a 'tea-grocer's philosophy.' I confess to detecting in Spencer, for all his prodigious apparatus, a note of complacency and even smugness; I can imagine how a phrase like 'those who have never entered upon scientific pursuits are blind to most of the poetry by which they are surrounded' must have maddened the poetic Nietzsche. And Darwin is a 'mediocre Englishman.' The fact is, Nietzsche could not bear to be told that he was descended from something like a monkey. Man was the measure of his universe. This anthropocentric attitude, which comes naturally to metaphysicians of average calibre, is remarkable in Nietzsche, who was so austere, so superior to all of them in ruthless integrity. A man with

his passion for communing with nature, with his reverence for the 'terrible beauty of solitude,' might have realized, one thinks, that the universe would be an indifferent concern, if man were its measure.

The Poles I have known were anthropocentric to a marked degree; much more so than Englishmen. I cannot guess the reason, unless it be a remnant of that eighteenth-century French veneer which still distinguishes them among Europeans, and which the French themselves have worn off long ago. (Copernicus, a Pole and the least anthropocentric of humans, died before the veneer was laid on.) Nietzsche was proud of the Polish blood of the Nietzkys in his veins: can it be a drop of that? Whatever the reason, his disparagement of men who brought order into our conceptions of human development is a queer feudal trait, and vitiates his cosmic outlook here and there.

*

THE business of life is to enjoy oneself; everything else is a mockery. Nietzsche's ideal of enjoyment was to indulge with enviable zest in the all-too-human pastime of trying to make the crab walk straight. He threw himself into this task, as Dr. Oscar Levy somewhere says, with the noble rage of a Hebrew prophet. Seriously concerned with the spiritual welfare of mankind, he took their little eccentricities to heart and cursed them roundly, and rightly. His explosions have made a clearing in our jungle of unreason; one of those bare, sporadic patches where the sun can penetrate to earth, and where a gentleman can take his pleasure.

Sporadic, and temporary; for now the clearing is being overgrown once more. Such is the way of jungles. Obscurantism, anaemia of thought, are more prevalent than in Nietzsche's day, and our

standardization of low intellectual values proceeds so relentlessly that a European possessing but a fraction of his courage and originality will hereafter be classified not as a contributor to enlightenment but as a freak, a throw-back. Such is the way of man.

This suggests that a smattering of palæontology, and a glance at Sirius now and then, would have helped to steady Nietzsche's views in regard to creatures whose capacity for assimilating knowledge is so limited, and who, whatever their capacity, would be polished off the face of this earth by a few additional degrees of heat or cold.

* *
*

ACCORDING to the privilege of disinterested and strenuous thinkers, Nietzsche changed his mind now and then. He changed it

in regard to the Code of Manu. In an earlier work he said it was 'founded on a holy lie . . . everywhere the lie was copied, and thus Arian influence corrupted the world.' In this *Antichrist* he finds that it is 'replete with noble values' and has 'come into being like a good law-book.'

Manu's Tables have been spoken of as an invention of the priests. You might as well call Aristotle's *Poetics* an invention. These things are not inventions ; they are deductions. The principle of caste is founded on the fact that men are not equal. One may suspect that Manu was further aware of the biological truth that particular talents are prone to run in families, and that he therefore elaborated his system inductively : if in families, why not in allied family-groups forming themselves by persistive selection and intermarriage into corporations or guilds of musicians, doctors, servants and so forth ? In pursuit of this ideal he grew a little

pig-headed; such is the way of all law-givers, not excluding Moses and Jesus Christ.

Though there is no hint in the Veda of the caste-system, which would seem to be rooted in differences of racial colour, it is a matter of experience that men fall naturally into castes. Even in England, where our very faces betray the impurity of our breeding, we can dispense with neither the word nor the thing. Caste-feeling underlies every form of refinement; it is a man's best prophylactic against that mass-feeling which would make a cypher of him. Manu's deduction is both logical and practical. No doubt such things are sometimes threatened with what looks like arterio-sclerosis, as was the case with the caste-system on the advent of Buddhism; or even with sudden death: is there anything more logical and practical than Free Trade? Parliamentary government sounds logical and practical, yet ours is menaced with senile decay if not down-

right liquefaction, the Party System having been brought to such a pitch that no Member can call his soul his own. It has become a farce.

Caste is no farce. It rests on firmer foundations than anything which the Western world has hitherto devised.

* *
*

OUR own ancients give us glimpses into the beneficent operation of Manu's laws. On three occasions does Megasthenes note the inviolability of the Indian cultivator caste ; he tells us that men of this class, being regarded as public benefactors, are protected from all injury, and that even when war is raging around them, those engaged in agriculture remain unmolested at their tasks.

In war, moreover, ' they never ravage

an enemy's land with fire, nor cut down its trees [compare this with what happened during the last European war] . . . theft is almost unheard of; they neither put out money at usury nor know how to borrow; truth and virtue they hold alike in esteem. Hence they accord no special privileges to the old unless they possess superior wisdom [compare this with our superannuated dodderers in authority]. . . . These things indicate that they possess sound, sober sense.' Marco Polo tells us that the Brahmins are 'the best and most honourable merchants that can be found. No consideration whatever can induce them to speak an untruth, even though their lives should depend upon it.'

Not fear of the law, but the fear of losing caste, was responsible for this state of affairs.

The toughest opponents of Alexander the Great were the Indians under Poros, and the Greeks were loud in their praises of these people; never in their eight years

of constant warfare had they met with such skilled and gallant soldiers, who, moreover, surpassed in stature and bearing all the other races of Asia. These were Hindus; Mohammedanism had not yet been invented. It was Hindus again—Mahrattas, Sikhs, and our own Sepoys—who gave most trouble to the British. The author of *Mother India* has a marked belief in the warlike qualities of Mohammedans.

Diodorus Siculus gives us a hint how this selection of the fittest came about. 'Hence Alexander led his army to the cities belonging to Sophites, which were governed by most excellent laws; among the rest they strictly observe this—To value their beauty and comely proportion above all other things; and therefore they carefully examine every part of the child when it is in the cradle, and such as are sound and perfect in every limb and member, and likely to be strong and comely, they nurse and bring up; but

such as are lame and deficient, and of a weak habit of body, they kill, as not worth the rearing. They have the same regard to their marriages ; for without any regard to portion, or any other advantages, they only mind the beauty of the person and the health and strength of their bodies.'

How convenient we should have found it lately to possess a warrior caste ! Instead of that, we sent into the trenches thousands who were unsuited for this profession by temperament, antecedents and physique ; thousands who had counterbalancing aptitudes of the highest utility. What we have lost by the sacrifice of valuable persons unfitted for war—artists, teachers, thinkers, bankers, scholars, officials, inventors—cannot be repaired in a short generation.

A Warrior Caste would have avoided the wastage.

* *
*

As to the millions of Untouchables (some of them are very touchable)—we have them in Europe also, and I wish they were differentiated from others, and officially ear-marked, as they are in India. Of the two varieties I prefer the Indian one.

Haeckel, that dry professor who writes as if he had discovered Veligama in Ceylon, thus describes one of its inhabitants :

' It really seemed as though I should be pursued by the familiar aspects of classical antiquity from the first moment of my arrival at my idyllic home. For, as Socrates [the rest-house keeper] led me up the steps into the open central hall of the rest-house, I saw before me, with uplifted arms in an attitude of prayer, a beautiful naked, brown figure, which could be nothing else than the famous statue of the " Youth Adoring." How surprised I was when the graceful bronze statue sud-

denly came to life, and dropping his arms fell on his knees, and after raising his black eyes imploringly to my face bowed his handsome face so low that his long black hair fell on the floor! Socrates informed me that this boy was a Pariah, a member of the lowest caste, the Rodiyas, who had lost his parents at an early age, so he had taken pity on him. He was told off to my exclusive service, had nothing to do the livelong day but to obey my wishes, and was a good boy, sure to do his duty punctually. In answer to the question what I was to call my new body-servant, the old man informed me that his name was Gamameda (from Gama, a village, and Meda—middle). Of course, I immediately thought of Ganymede, for the favourite of Jove himself could not have been more finely made, or have had limbs more beautifully proportioned and moulded. . . .

'. . . Among the many beautiful figures which move in the foreground of my

memories of the paradise of Ceylon, Ganymede remains one of my dearest favourites. Not only did he fulfil his duties with the greatest attention and conscientiousness, but he developed a personal attachment and devotion to me which touched me deeply. The poor boy, as a miserable outcast of the Rodiya caste, had been from his birth the object of the deepest contempt to his fellow-men, and subjected to every sort of brutality and ill-treatment. With the single exception of old Socrates, who was not too gentle with him either, no one perhaps had ever cared for him in any way. . . . After this the grateful Ganymede followed me like a shadow, and tried to read my wishes in my eyes. Hardly was I out of bed in the morning when he was standing before me with a freshly-opened cocoa-nut, out of which he poured and offered me a cool morning draught of the milk. At dinner he never took his eyes off me, and always knew beforehand what I should want.

'. . . On my return to Veligama I had to face one of the hardest duties I had to fulfil during the whole of my stay in Ceylon : to tear myself away from this lovely spot of earth, where I had spent six of the happiest and most interesting weeks of my life. . . . Hardest of all was the parting from my faithful Ganymede ; the poor lad wept bitterly, and implored me to take him with me to Europe. In vain had I assured him many times before that it was impossible, and told him of our chill climate and dull skies. He clung to my knees and declared that he would follow me unhesitatingly wherever I might take him. I was at last almost obliged to use force to free myself from his embrace. . . .'

Europe would be more inhabitable, if servants of this kind were to be found on the books of our registry offices.

* *
*

MANU lived ages ago, and the ground-plan of his statutes remains unchanged save in those parts where the native has been driven into contact with Occidental institutions. The result : the average Hindu is happier than the average European. His birth-rate—he is supposed to grow impotent between twenty-five and thirty—is higher than ours ; he has individuality, he has repose. 'The Indians,' says Tavernier, 'do everything with great circumspection and patience, and when they see any one who acts with precipitation, or becomes angry, they gaze at him without saying anything, and smile as at a madman.' All Asiatics, according to another writer, 'attribute to almost all Englishmen atrocious manners, chiefly because Englishmen are so impatient of loss of time.'

How about Europe? Europe may be heading for Colney Hatch. This impatience or strenuousness is the White

Man's characteristic, and his curse. It is converting him into a harassed automaton, the slave of machines and unhealthy legislation.

I see no urgent cause for alarm in the fact that sanatoria spring up like mushrooms over-night; that suicides due to nerve-strain are increasingly frequent where they should not be increasingly frequent, namely, among the well-to-do classes; that Manchester, for example, spends £160,000 a year on lunacy, and that out of 607 patients in one local asylum 335 were there as a result of mental anxiety, worry, and overwork (they ought to be ashamed of themselves); that the number of our known mental deficients shows a steady augmentation of 2000 a year. This last is a contemptible little figure, not worth talking about. At this rate we can go on for ever, and Colney Hatch remains a dream.

The dream might be realized if we had another three or four wars on the scale of

the last (a not unthinkable eventuality), particularly if we allowed ourselves no centuries in which to recuperate between two of them. This, likely enough, is how we should act, since each succeeding cataclysm will leave us more empty-headed than the last ; more ready, therefore, to begin again without weighing the consequences. Such a course could not but end in bringing us to the incandescent, moonstruck stage ; and thereafter we may anticipate a great calm—no more hysteria, no more nervous wrecks, no more sanatoria. By the time we reach, if we ever do, the age of Mother India, some pious Hindu, travelling westwards to observe the condition of our crazy Kindergarten, will discover the last European among the ruins of strange machinery, hugging his passport-talisman and dribbling at the mouth, in a state of mellow dementia.

* *
*

In speaking of our 'mental survivals and anachronisms—obscure but uncontrollable impulses which refuse to fit themselves into to-day's categories,' and of the 'driving-force of our dim past,' I did not mean to imply that these prehistoric traits were necessarily of a destructive kind. I meant that they were different from ours, different; even as Cro-Magnon art reveals an outlook so different from ours that it will not fit itself into any category established by our schools. There it is, charming and different, a standard to itself.

The social standards of so gifted a race cannot be inferred from the relics they have left behind them. They were certainly different from ours, and, judging by the analogy of races still surviving on a similar cultural level, we may conclude that an ethical code had been hacked out which gave satisfaction and which also

allowed of leisure, for otherwise the art-yearning would have been suffocated in its cradle. We think of them as savages, yet they cannot have known the savagery on a grand scale and sanctioned by authority which was practised up to a short time ago in Europe. We may suppose that they had no acquaintance with a Grand Inquisitor nor with his puritan imitators. This is lucky, else the Altamira paintings might have been covered with a coat of whitewash.

Of these promptings of our past some are now discouraged by society, others fostered. The ancient Europeans, for example, must have set value on freedom, and possessed opportunities for self-expression such as no longer fall to our lot. I take it that each liked to be master in his own cave. This hankering after personal liberty, a prehistoric trait, is becoming unintelligible to our generation. We think it odd that men should dislike being controlled down to the most in-

timate action of their lives, and why must they be masters in their own house? In point of fact, they are nothing of the kind; the District Visitor will see to that. Yet the trait persists — a survival and an anachronism; and under its obscure impulse a man may find himself committing some infringement of the code—they are easy to commit, since new ones are invented every day—for which a police inspector is delighted to run him in. The safeguarding of society is the inspector's pretext; love of man-hunting his basic instinct. Man-hunting, another relic of past ages, is encouraged by society and organized into a trade. Man-hunting is the inspector's Neanderthal trait. Had he not possessed it to the exclusion of others, he would have chosen some different career. So those who fail to have inherited one primeval characteristic may be found to have inherited another.

Opportunities for self-expression, for unauthorized pleasure however innocuous,

are growing rarer from day to day. Love of freedom has been clipped and pruned in all its ramifications ; what is allowed to-day will probably be forbidden by to-morrow. The inroads of the Legislature upon a peaceful and self-respecting population have been revealed by writers such as E. S. P. Haynes : 'We have lost the freedom of the Catholic tradition and preserved only its taboos, which again have been intolerably perverted by Calvin and his puritan successors.'

The law is at work ; like the keystone of the Indian arch, it 'never sleeps.' It does not content itself with classifying and punishing crime. It invents crime. Our Statute Book is growing into a sinister contrivance for the protection and conservation of fools.

* *
*

A SINISTER contrivance for the protection of fools. . . .

Do you belong to the S.P.S.G.?

Here is a case for the S.P.S.G.: a man complaining to a London magistrate because a woman persistently 'waved kisses at him.' Had the Society existed in those days, he need not have gone to that expense and trouble.

The association, founded in 1940, has done good work; it deserves to be encouraged. The Society for the Protection of Sensitive Gentlemen, by supplying each member with the escort of one of its discreet but efficient policewomen, has at last made it possible for good-looking fathers of families, when walking down Piccadilly, to discard the veil in which they had been obliged to shroud their features for fear of being 'annoyed' with ambiguous proposals by some enterprising fellow-creature.

The accosting nuisance must have assumed redoubtable dimensions to lead to the formation of such a society. Or have we lost the faculty of taking care of ourselves? In my day we found it quite easy to tell an importuner, male or female, to go to Hell. And they went. Now we are supposed to be 'persons aggrieved,' and the importuners are hauled before a magistrate and harassed by fines and imprisonments to the number of several thousands a year.

The law invents a crime, and then spends its morning collecting fines to swell the revenue. Even so the Church used to invent sins, in order to fill its coffers.

The *Saturday Review* observes that 'much of the coldness between police and people that has been so noticeable of late is due not to the methods of investigating crime but to the multiplication of the occasions of collision between the police and decent, honest citizens.' Says the Chairman of the Glamorganshire Quarter Sessions:

'Legislation, by-laws and regulations have enormously increased the work of the police, and impaired their popularity.' It is enough to make any one unpopular, being obliged by law to run in every second person you see in the street. No fun, being a policeman.

No fun, either, being a police magistrate —intelligent gentlemen and yet often, how often, hopelessly puzzled how to reconcile two irreconcilables; how to steer a middle course, that is, between reason and the law of the land. They dole out their fines with Olympian impartiality to the poor devils of importuners, who must content themselves with the reflection that they are getting what is known as justice. No doubt they are getting justice.

Who wants it?

Justice is too good for some people, and not good enough for the rest.

* *
*

ALL the happenings, of which the importuning-nuisance is only one, and all the fly-blown legislation which has grown up around them, would be laughed out of existence among a race which still possessed a shred of manliness or of humour. An epidemic of smallpox in Gloucester (was it Gloucester?) is supposed to be a serious matter, to judge by the newspapers. Another epidemic, the de-masculinization of the whole of England, strikes me as a more serious one, although the papers have nothing to say about it.

Funk lies at the bottom of this state of things—girlish funk, that would have tickled our ancestors to death. It was unknown in antiquity; it is unknown in the East. What a pity Fielding and Smollett are no longer alive! They would have relished it. And Queen Elizabeth—how she would have laughed

at this spoon-fed generation calling themselves Englishmen! . . .

* *
*

IT was Nietzsche's joy to unmask the soul of the Christian. As Mr. Edward Garnett says: 'His special instinct for tearing off the idealistic veils which hide the religious nature in its use of human suffering as a means of attaining worldly power, makes Nietzsche the great specialist on the arts of priestcraft. . . . He lives in literature as the most powerful antagonist of the Christian soul.'

I wish another Nietzsche could be found to unmask the soul of the prude, of those who consider themselves 'persons aggrieved' when a stranger of the other sex wishes them good evening in the streets, of those who are responsible for

the fussy legislation on matters pertaining to the sexes under which we are all suffering.

Note the ignorance of the prude : the accoster must be ' of the other sex.' Little he knows of what goes on in the streets ! Is there no accosting between man and man, or between woman and woman ? And why should I be upset and entitled to take action when a woman accosts me, and not when a man does ? In leaving open this chink, I fear the prude is encouraging us to indulge in what he calls unnatural vice. I also fear he has never seen a lady. No lady is ever ' aggrieved ' when a man addresses her with some shy and stupid remark about the weather ; she is either amused or flattered or bored ; and she can put him straight, if she wishes, without uttering a word. The technical term ' person aggrieved ' is the prude's device for begging the question.

Catholic authorities like S. Thomas and S. Alfonso di Liguori have dealt as severely

with sexual irregularities as any puritan. Their books, however, are in Latin and addressed to priests for use in the confessional; their activities did not take the form of law-making and public prosecutions. Catholic countries contain no prudes, and their inhabitants know nothing of our obsession with this kind of morality, which they regard as an unhealthy fad. It is a Lutheran trait, the result of repressed or misdirected sexual impulses. We have too much sex on the brain, and too little of it elsewhere. I cannot visualize the soul of a prude; it must be something in the nature of a cesspool. These are they who 'made themselves eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake.' And we are at the mercy of such incomplete creatures.

Orientals would have difficulty in understanding their point of view.

It would be interesting, during some legal proceeding based on these new enactments, if the clean-minded accuser

could be forced by hypnotism or otherwise to give the Court a glimpse into the workings of his imagination, to reveal his inhibitions, and set forth something of his own habits of life.

That case would have to be heard *in camera*.

* *
*

HERE is a deputation of the Hampstead branch of the Women's Freedom League informing the Assistant Commissioner of Police that at least fifty policewomen are required to patrol Hampstead Heath, on account of the dangers to which children and young people are exposed when walking alone. Fifty is a goodly number of guardians for so relatively small an area. No doubt children should be protected; but so should the ratepayer. In the

interests of public economy the number of policewomen should be cut down as low as possible. The thing can be done, if we are prepared to sacrifice a little natural beauty. Destroy those shrubs and alluring bosky thickets—the gorse may be left undisturbed, as its spiky needles are not propitious to sporting with Amaryllis in the shade—and twenty-five policewomen, stationed at elevated points and armed with field-glasses, might be found sufficient, especially if they could be taught some simple code whereby they could signal to each other the Presence of Vice.

One is inclined to ask why those fifty women were not patrolling the Heath formerly. May I suggest an answer? Because their services were not required. In other words, I am prepared to believe that assaults on young people are more common than they used to be. It is the inevitable result of our recent puritanical legislation.

In my day these menacing restrictions did not exist. Piccadilly and the Strand were happy hunting-grounds; dozens of rooms and hotels stood at your disposal; blackmail of men by men or by women, as compared with to-day, was in its infancy; so was blackmail of women by the police: there was no danger for either sex of being hauled up for solicitation 'so as to constitute a nuisance'; for keeping apartments for improper purposes; for seducing what might turn out to be a technical minor; for 'insulting behaviour' and those other spooks which the prude's imagination has conjured up. We were terrified at the consequences of our innocent diversions not from the legal, but from the medical point of view. Here is a national danger whose existence the prude refuses to recognize, with results which are more disastrous to England than all the rapes that have occurred since Magna Charta.

The Golden Age of which I spoke is

now past, and if Hampstead Heath is worse than it was, the fault lies with those who try to drive out nature with a fork. In my time there were no 'Perils of the Heath.' Young people might play about there all day long, provided old ones might play about there at night without having a lantern flashed in their faces by some prying policeman.

* *
*

REPRESSION of sexual impulses takes queer forms (the prude's mentality is one of them), and a timid but sound man, knowing the risk he runs in accosting even a prostitute, if she happens to be temporarily unwell and therefore disposed to take on the air of an 'aggrieved person' —such a man, I say, may be tempted to indulge in something which seems to pre-

clude that risk, and often, for all I know, actually does preclude it.

By the prude's love of interfering with harmless pleasure, nature was driven from the Strand into that insanitary Hyde Park, of which the editor of an English weekly writes that its 'evil reputation is solely due to the police administration which had obtained there of late years, and in particular to the employment of plain-clothes "spies" in the evening'— and of which the Chief of Police himself said that he would be shy of going alone there after dark, and would not venture to sit down. From Hyde Park nature is apparently being driven to Hampstead Heath, and soon Wimbledon Common and Richmond Park will require their two or three regiments of policewomen.

Viewed in the light of an open-air movement, and a step in the direction of a healthy country life, there is something to be said for the prude's exertions.

Our grandchildren, poor dears, will

have to wander still further afield in order to avoid those lanterns — to Savernake Forest, the slopes of Snowdon or the purple Grampians. It is to be hoped, for the honour of Scotland, that Arthur's Seat may remain till the Day of Judgment in the condition in which Providence obviously meant it to remain—that is to say, unpatrolled ; else Edinburgh will become what London is rapidly becoming : uninhabitable for such men of normal habits as cannot afford to take a room at the Ritz.

Fifty policewomen patrolling Hampstead Heath. . . . Asiatics are apt to be grave folk. If you want to make them laugh, tell them that.

P.S. It is the same in America. The author of *Father India*, quoting from the American Judge Lindsey, tells us that the puritanical abolition of red-light districts in New York has been responsible for undermining the morals of 'good girls.' With the breaking-up of those centres of

prostitution, young men took to school-girls, ' a thing they had seldom done in the past,' and with deplorable results. ' There are at least 50,000 girls in New York living with men who are not their husbands ' —thanks to the prude's interference.

A gem of Western puritanism may be found in the pages of Mr. Mencken's *Americana* :

Amelia Moser, eighteen, was arrested yesterday by Lieutenants Timothy Hickey and Milton Macmullen of the Detective Bureau, charged with *being in danger of falling into vice.*

' A new crime,' says Mr. Mencken. . . .

* *
*

WHOEVER wishes to see the prude at work in the privacy of his closet should purchase for the sum of one shilling the

February 1929 number of *Close Up* (24 Devonshire St., W.C. 1). It deals largely with the censorship of the cinema in Europe, and reproduces an astonishing document : a list of what is prohibited to be shown on the screen in England.

There is a film censorship in nearly all European countries, but no institution like ours, whose decisions entail the forbidding of almost everything which might attract people who are interested in the development of this art. By these rules a number of important films which are shown elsewhere are absolutely banned in England ; among them, I am told, are the following : Potemkin, Joyless Street, Dawn, Ten Days, Tragedy of the Street, Nature and Love (a castrated version was shown in England under the title Cosmos), The Passion of Jeanne d'Arc, Nju, Mechanics of the Brain, Dr. Knock, For the Term of His Natural Life, The Life of Martin Luther, and the majority of Russian films, which, from a technical

point of view, are as important as any—are, in fact, a new form of art.

A pleasant place, England, where you have to go abroad in order to see a good film. France, I believe, is not much better, so far as political films are concerned.

Speaking of these fantastic restrictions, the Editor says: 'The list, which I am going to quote later, not without blushes, is so indecent that if it came from any but a recognized public society for protecting people's morals, this issue of *Close Up* would be burnt by the common hangman, without a doubt.'

While resisting the temptation to quote from it, I warmly recommend readers to study the list as bearing on the question of our national de-masculinization. There is also a succulent little article by Mr. Robert Herring entitled *Pruritannia rules the Slaves*, well worth reading. It has already been proved, over and over again, that our standard as to what constitutes

decency in literature and art is different from that of every other country.

For the rest, this film-nonsense, like the unnecessary banning of a number of books —one of my own, printed for the American public exactly as I wrote it, had to be 'toned down' for British consumption— this film nonsense is not a disease; it is only a symptom. I take it the prude must have had great fun, indulging his imagination with forbidden cinema incidents like 'women promiscuously taking up men,' or 'improper exhibition of feminine underclothing,' or 'scenes indicating that a criminal assault on a woman has just been perpetrated' (note that *just*).

A psychologist would probably suggest that, in the arrangement of spicy commandments like these, the prude finds his substitute for that gratification of the senses which ordinary mortals seek on Hampstead Heath.

*

OUR Statute Book is growing into a sinister contrivance for the conservation of fools. It is saturated with the delusion that men must be protected not only against each other, but against themselves.

One may leave to Major Leonard Darwin the task of showing what it entails to provide for those legions of paupers, insane or diseased persons, who, insured or subsidized by the State, are lowering our standard of fitness as irrevocably as night follows day. They are being 'protected against themselves' and invited to breed like rabbits at the expense of the sound and the sane. It is an established fact that paupers breed more rapidly than the classes above them. In England we build 165,000 new houses every year, and yet, in London alone, there are said to be 130,000 persons living in insanitary dens. An ex-Mayor of Manchester has lately

written a book on *How to Abolish the Slums*. I have not read it, but can suggest a solution of the problem that would cost not a halfpenny: stop this breeding. And the point to notice is this, that the breeding would stop automatically were it not officially encouraged. Now, with the pauper vote, these dregs will have become the master of the ratepayer and a factor which can decide elections and control our fates. Some judicious remarks on this head will be found in Mr. C. W. Armstrong's *Survival of the Unfittest*.

Here are a few facts culled from the press:

In June 1928 there were 883,000 persons living on poor relief as opposed to 372,600 in June 1914.

One out of seven people in Bermondsey is in receipt of relief.

The Chairman of the Greenwich Board of Guardians asked: 'Why should these people bring children into the world for the Guardians to maintain?' He was

referring to a family of father, mother, and fourteen children, all but one of whom had been continually in receipt of outdoor relief.

According to the Board of Control the number of officially known defectives has increased during the last six years from 25,470 to 61,522.

They cost us £8,000,000 a year. Although new institutions for them are being built as fast as possible, there are still 40,000 for whom there is no room.

The estimated total expenditure on poor relief in England and Wales in 1927-28 was £39,250,000.

Major Darwin tells us that 'philanthropists ought to learn that by their efforts they may be continually helping to defeat the very aims which they have in view.' Private philanthropy directed towards such ends is bad enough. Public philanthropy, which forces us to contribute to the upkeep of this scum, demonstrates how the intelligent and prudent

members of the community are penalized for their superiority by an enactment of yesterday's date.

They manage these things better, out East.

* *
*

TAKE, for instance, the case of Indian beggars.

That prehistoric Hindu religion — it countenances beggary, with the result that nearly six million loafers (exclusive of saints, fakirs and other ascetics) are at this moment being kept alive by public charity. These picturesque folk may well envy their *confrères* in London, where the income of private charities alone amounts to five million pounds a year.

'The Brahmanic code commends renunciation of active life and the taking

up of a life of contemplation and beggary as the proper terminal half of man's earthly existence' (*Mother India*, p. 360).

So does the Christian code, except that it does not commend such a course; it ordains it, and not only for the 'terminal half' of life. Indian beggars are carrying out our New Testamentary injunctions; they are the stuff of which Saint Francis of Assisi was made; they are the ideal which Jesus held up to posterity. If we have no beggars of this species among us—our 12,000 vagrants on the roads are hardly worth mentioning, though their numbers show a steady and hopeful increase—it demonstrates, once again, that we have abandoned the precepts of our religious teachers, and cut the cables that bound us to them.

* *
*

IT should not be forgotten that Indian mendicants have a status different from ours, and profess a different point of view. They are not shy or shifty; they never skulk in corners nor approach you in a shamefaced fashion with some piteous story. Poverty is no disgrace in the East. These men belong to a recognized confraternity which confers *esprit de corps*; they take pride in their calling as does any other professional. A begging Brahmin is no less dignified than a European reigning sovereign; far from appealing to your compassion, he suggests that you are lucky in having this chance to show whether you are religiously-minded or not. And all such people are quite unofficial; nobody need give them alms; let them starve! Our beggars have an authorized standing and must be fed out of your and my pockets. Whoever refuses to contribute

to their upkeep is sent to prison. Hundreds of millions are spent on doles and relief.

In 1900 there were 933,450 paupers who cost us £13,802,378. That is bad enough; yet note the ominous increase. Two years later their numbers had swelled to 1,702,097, costing us £45,247,010. This does not include the swarm of mental deficients and wrecks of all kinds who are under Governmental care.

Which is absurder: beggar-nuisance or dole-nuisance?

Which is costlier?

Which is the graver menace to posterity?

* *
*

To-day's paper describes the last stage in a trial for blackmail, and I note that this case could not have arisen save for the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, under

one of whose provisions it comes. This Act seems to be responsible for a considerable increase in blackmail, which, as Mr. Justice McCardie said not long ago, 'has sapped and wrecked many a home, and driven many a man and woman to suicide.' By repressing one variety of crime, it encourages another. The same might be said about our laws on gambling, street-betting, licensing and so forth. They create crime. They lead to blackmail of another kind—police-blackmail, and consequent police-corruption. They have produced the *agent provocateur*, so un-English a phenomenon, and yet so common in England. . . .

The ancients, albeit their natural promptings were nowise different from ours, knew as little about blackmail in sexual matters as do the Orientals of to-day. There is no legal term for it in Greek or Roman jurisprudence, despite the Roman mania for manufacturing laws. Yet cases must have occurred, there and

elsewhere. I do not know when the word itself cropped up. The crime came under the heading of 'conspiracy,' and London blackmailers used to be known as trappers (*Tricks of the Town Laid Open*, 1747, where, in Letter XIV, the 'Art of Trapping' is described, though the word blackmail never occurs).

Even now, owing to different legislation, the character of blackmail is milder in Latin countries than with us. Among Anglo-Saxon and Teutonic races are to be found its most terrifying features, which lose half their virulence in those instances where the operator has at his disposal not the leverage of law, as with us, but only that of public opinion.

Here is a pest from which Orientals are exempt, and to which the most upright Englishman is exposed, with consequences that are often disastrous for him, and sometimes tragic. Hook-worm may be a nuisance, but it does not account for 'broken careers, shipwrecked lives, disap-

pearances, interrupted marriages, inexplicable money-embarrassments, murders, and suicides by hundreds.' These words are quoted from a writer who knows as much about the theory and practice of blackmail on both sides of the Atlantic as is good for any one to know, and who, speaking of our own legislation on this subject, says that 'the law, on the present ignorant, unscientific, Jewish-Christian basis, is too often a lamentable injury and menace to the best elements of society.'

The above-named Act also contains certain regulations on the subject of the so-called third sex which seem to have been specially designed to suit the convenience of the blackmailer. And, apart from that, they are a mixture of childishness and ferocity.

They manage these things better, out East.

P.S. Thinking that I might have overshot the mark in saying that there was no term for blackmail in Greek or Roman

jurisprudence, I applied to a learned friend, who writes :

'My information is, like yours, that there is no specific term for it in Ancient Law. Intimidation appears to have been regarded rather lightly, to judge from *e.g.* Justinian, *Inst.* iv. 6. 27: "The action on intimidation also differs from the others . . . in that it contains in its very nature an implied condition that the defendant is entitled to acquittal if, on being so ordered by the judge, he restores to the plaintiff the property of which the latter has been deprived." The technical term was *actio de eo quod metus causa factum sit.* Clearly there is here no conception of the grave offence of blackmail; the action seems framed for the case of testamentary dispositions made under intimidation. I should have thought, however, that a person like de Zulueta could have settled the question off-hand.'

*

THE Sacco-Vanzetti business was an exhibition of long-protracted savagery such as could never have been witnessed in the East, apart from the fact that the two men, who suffered the death penalty after suffering for seven years more than the agony of death, were possibly innocent. Judged by this episode, Occidental methods of slaying are far more atrocious than those of Jenghis Khan and King Thebaw — or rather his wife — of happy memory.

And the offensive publicity. . . . The case, in fact, was tried in the press before it was decided by the courts.

In England, too, there is something ghoulish in the newspaper comments on such occasions, and certainly our procedure in the matter of the death-sentence and all that follows after has a flavour of solemn coarseness for which there is not

the least justification, and which gives a fine chance to enterprising reporters. It seems to me that even a criminal, and especially a condemned one, should be treated with urbanity; the State owes this duty both to him and to itself. Is he?

One would like to think that Mr. J. M. Robertson was wrong in saying that Christian cruelty has been as much viler than pagan, culture for culture, as the modern Christian environment is uglier than the Athenian. He was referring to the circumstances which attended the execution of Socrates, also a condemned felon—an event concerning which Professor Mahaffy remarks that 'there is I think in all Greek literature no scene which ought to make us more ashamed of our boasted Christian culture'; and then, after describing the death, proceeds to compare the humane and kindly treatment which was accorded to this criminal in his last moments with the 'gauntness and horror of our modern

executions, as detailed to us with morbid satisfaction by the daily newspapers.'

These are at bottom not questions of sentimentality. They are questions of intelligence. Shall I put my opinion bluntly? We have lost the intelligence which is the basis of gentlemanly feeling. A two thousand years' course of 'believing the impossible' cannot but debase the general standard of intelligence. And race-sentiments adapt themselves to these changed conditions, with the result that our emotional fibres are hardened—vulgarized; a process which, from the legal point of view, was illustrated during the God-fearing nineteenth century, when some of the most fiendish refinements of cruelty were inscribed in our Statute Book (*see* George Ives' *History of Penal Methods*, 1914).

Among the factors which contribute to this element of ungraciousness must be included a section of the press. It pulls downwards. Appealing to the prejudices

and impulses of the commoner sort, because this ensures the largest circulation, it pollutes still further that mentality of theirs, which is already nothing to boast of.

* *
*

HERE comes, most opportunely and to my great satisfaction, Mr. Charles Duff's *Handbook on Hanging*. One can see at a glance that it has a noble pedigree, for under that mask of effortless impromptu may be discerned the familiar features of the *Short Way with Dissenters*. I have not the pleasure of the author's acquaintance, but I hope he will not deprive me of the joy of reading his projected *Anthology of Hanging*, for which a place is already reserved in my library.

The book describes itself as 'all very proper to be read and kept in every

family.' I agree, and had I the power I should see to it that a copy was deposited on the breakfast-table of every citizen in England. It is full of delectable information, such as that (1) it took one hour and eleven minutes to hang a man in Canada in 1919; and that (2) dislocation of the neck is the ideal aimed at, but—says a surgeon witness of these entertainments—out of all his post-mortem findings, this has proved rather an exception, while in the majority of instances the cause of death was strangulation and asphyxia; and that (3) English prison governors are forbidden to time executions with a stop-watch, and, should an inquisitive coroner or jury afterwards press for details, are bound by explicit Home Office instructions to hedge on the subject; and that (4) the late Chief Baron Kelly gave evidence before a Royal Commission that, in the course of some forty years, there were twenty-two persons sentenced to death who were afterwards proved to have been innocent of the crime

for which they were sentenced; and that (5) among other cases of bungled hangings was that of Patrick Harnet, whose head was all but torn from the body, remaining attached thereto only by a small piece of skin at the back of the neck.

The book contains many of these appetizing details, but what bears on my present subject are the statistics printed on page 80, showing the relative amount of publicity given in newspapers to a recent murder trial and to the death of a great man, Thomas Hardy. This page deserves a careful perusal. It names the newspapers concerned, and gives in inches the space devoted to a description of the two respective events. A well-known English daily, for example, consecrated 624 inches to the first and 96 to the second; while a Sunday paper gave 312 to the former and 30 to the latter.

This is 'pulling downwards.'

It is outside the scope of Mr. Duff's booklet to allude to the rewards offered

by the press for the detection of criminals, but not outside the scope of those who contrast Eastern barbarism with its counterpart in the West. Man-hunting by newspaper is the lowest level to which humanity has yet sunk.

* *
*

THE newspaper and the crank, as custodians of public right and wrong, have begun to step into the shoes of the priest, with a little unnecessary noise. And the press in its moral mood is even more edifying than the crank. Not long ago a well-known personality was involved in a mild scandal. Why not let him take the consequences, without those inane comments on the part of the press which were supposed to echo its readers' sentiments? Moral indignation is the property of the

crowd. No individual cares tuppence what his neighbour does, provided he be not hurt thereby. Mass-conscience is a newspaper-manufactured article —all make-believe and playing to the gallery.

We know who patronizes the gallery.

This arbitrary mass-conscience, unknown in Asia, is a modern product. Certain states of mind peculiar to groups have a *raison d'être*—the civic conscience, the class and religious conscience, and so forth. Mass-conscience differs from these in that it (1) conforms to no standard, and (2) admits of no tribunal of appeal. All it does is to generate a noxious gas called public opinion. Public opinion is a public nuisance. A public-opinion lunatic is one who has no opinion of his own.

The press to-day tells us what to think and what to do ; it selects our politicians and concocts our morals. To-morrow it will come out with a different menu, whereas that old priest was at least con-

sistent in his bias. Irresponsible, yes; but I should not call it chaotic, since chaos presupposes the existence of particles, however disordered. Mass-conscience is amorphous, gelatinous.

There are many forms of bad government. Our present system of government via the Civil Service is not all that could be desired. We are heading for a worse form: government by newspaper.

* *
*

APROPOS of newspapers, we have a complaint in *Mother India* (p. 35) about the indecent advertisements which appear in some Indian-owned ones. We need not travel East in order to find such things. With the laudable object of preventing my French from growing rusty, an American lady friend occasionally sends me a batch

of fashionable Parisian journals, such as *Le Sourire*, *Gens Qui Rient*, *Paris-Flirt*, *L'Humeur*, *Frou-Frou*, and other high-class literature.

The jokes are apt to be monotonous, and even the advertisements, which used to be both amusing and instructive, have lost much of their raciness lately (the 'Decay of Paris' would require a volume to itself). Of their kind, however, they are better than anything that can be found in England, and now and then one comes across a jewel. I wish I had the courage to print a few of them here.

* *
*

Cows . . . how did I come to overlook them? For among the most suggestive chapters in *Mother India* are those which deal with cattle. We know that this beast

is sacred to the Hindus ; I doubt whether we all know to what a crazy state of affairs this sanctity has led. I shall not summarize the argument beyond quoting from Mr. Gandhi (p. 236), who says that ' our cattle-worship has resolved itself into an ignorant fanaticism. The fact that we have more cattle than we can support is a matter for urgent treatment.' This overstocking of the land by half-starved cattle in the name of religion throws a sidelight on what one might call the inanity of Hinduism.

Why keep these cows ?

How about Europe ? Have we any corresponding inanity ?

Having been something of a dog-fancier long ago—I know even now the points of a Willoughby pug (an extinct breed, very likely) as well as most people—I find it painful to invent anything to the discredit of a certain old friend of man, especially as it is sure to get me into trouble with certain old friends of my own. . . . We

learn that there are three million dogs in England alone (? or Great Britain), all but a small fraction being useless for any purpose whatever.

Why keep these dogs?

The Indian cattle can draw carts; they are eatable—so far as the hump is concerned; they devour what is not fit for human consumption, to wit, grass (and what grass!), as well as old bones, newspapers, and every other kind of offal; they are therefore of public utility as scavengers. Our 3,000,000 dogs consume nutritious material that would maintain many hundred poor families; they do not draw carts; and their flesh is considered to be uneatable. Moreover, if you squeeze an Indian cow long and hard enough you will produce a few drops of milk, which is said to be good for children and invalids. Our dogs produce nothing but fleas and bad smells and a choice assortment of microbes in mouth and elsewhere, some of which

can, and do, bring death to human beings.

Which is absurder: cow-cult or dog-cult?

* *
*

THE dung of Indian cattle constitutes an important local fuel; the acrid odour of burning *uplas*, hanging about the still atmosphere, is the *Leitmotif* of an Indian sunrise; it pervades the vast country from one end to the other. The excrements of our dogs serve no end save to encumber the pavements to the disgust of foot-passengers. Many foreigners have remarked the peculiar downcast look in the eyes of Londoners walking about their streets; they attribute it to a kind of insular bashfulness or modesty. 'These English must be a shy race,' they say.

That earthward glance has a more practical origin. Londoners are concerned for their boots. It has been suggested that dogs be taught to use the roadways for their purposes. In vain. *Gentlemen prefer blondes.* Dogs prefer pavements.

P.S. Here are by-laws issued by the Royal Borough of Kensington and by that of Hampstead, which have made the fouling of footways by dogs an offence liable to a penalty not exceeding forty shillings. Five offenders, all ladies, have been convicted and fined by the former; three by the latter. That makes eight; a humble beginning. When eighty thousand have been fined, that downcast look of the Cockney will begin to disappear.

* *
*

THIS cattle-crowding cannot have existed at all times and places. Bernier tells us that 'it was on account of the scarcity of cattle that *Jehan-Guire*, at the request of the *Brahmens*, issued an edict to forbid the killing of beasts of pasture for a certain number of years; and not long since they presented a similar petition to *Aureng-Zebe*, offering him a considerable sum of money to ensure his compliance. They urged that the neglected and ruinous condition of many tracts of country during the last fifty or sixty years was attributable to the paucity and dearness of oxen.'

Here, then, we have a case of under-crowding.

The land would support many more cattle if the fodder were of richer quality. And the fodder would be of richer quality if the dung were not taken up and used as fuel. This robs the soil of manure, as

has been pointed out by several Anglo-Indian writers.

The 'Sin of the Salvation Army' (*Mother India*, pp. 202-212) consists in taking over grazing-grounds which the English Government presented to that body. Anybody else would have taken them too. '. . . the cow's hunger [is] one of the evil effects of British rule. And British rule is indeed largely responsible for the present disastrous condition [of cattle].' There is truth in that. It must not be forgotten, however, that British restrictions on grazing-grounds have been made in the interest of forest lands, on which the rainfall and climate, and consequently the prosperity, of India depends. Those in charge of cattle complain of such things, and not only in India, because they fail to see the ulterior benefits which the Government has in view (J. Coatman, *India in 1927-28*, p. 119).

*

YOUR pious Hindu is an enigma to some people. The same man who covers his lamp with wire netting in order that mosquitoes and suchlike small deer may not singe their wings, and who refuses to use worm-eaten wood for burning his dead lest it should still harbour living things—this sensitive creature occasionally goes out in his bullock-cart. The beast is slow (they are not all of the trotting variety), and to quicken its pace he twists its tail till the caudal vertebrae are dislocated. Disgusting! He has another exquisite dodge: he keeps open a festering sore in its hindquarters, just one, and always the same from the cradle to the grave, and into this he thoughtfully prods the point of his stick from time to time. It is enough to make anybody trot faster.

Such practices can be matched in the south of Europe, and in the centre as well.

Englishmen think nothing of rabbiting with ferrets; and rabbit-snaring is still more atrocious. An endless enquiry. . . .

Suffering dogs which in Europe would be put out of their pain are in India allowed, or rather obliged, to linger on. It is not right to take their lives. Such is the Hindu code; it is observed to the letter (also by the sect of the Holy Rollers in America), and Mr. Gandhi has lately got into hot water with his people and 'sent a thrill of horror through the Hindu world' for advocating the killing of animals under certain conditions (*Times of India*, 7th, 13th, 20th October 1928). We should not forget that this religion, in spite of such anomalies, has conferred incalculable benefits on the animal creation, benefits unknown in the Western world at any time of our existence there as human beings. You may help a beast to live; you may not help it to die. Merciful feeling was the origin of that command. The Turks are likewise decent-minded in

such matters. I have seen a Turk at Broussa spreading out a rug in the dusty road for a pariah-bitch that was about to pup. Catch any European doing that. . . .

And observe our Western inconsistency. We put dying dogs and horses out of their pain ; when it is proposed, as it frequently has been, to apply the same principle to men under the same conditions, the project is vetoed by faddists, even if the sufferer himself be in its favour. Euthanasia is good enough for a poodle ; not for us. Do dogs suffer more acutely than men?

This taboo, like that on suicide, has its roots in the pestilential theory that life is given us on trust. Would it be uncharitable to hope that reactionaries who are responsible for causing so much unnecessary pain to their fellow-creatures may have a thoroughly good dose of it themselves, when their own time for departure draws nigh ?

*

THOUGH one or two passages might be cited, there are in the Bible relatively few injunctions about kindness to animals. The Jews, including Christ, were too narrow-minded to bother their heads about the bodily welfare of beasts of the earth. Their mania for the supernatural made them unduly concerned with the spiritual welfare of their own species, and if we have now attained to a certain standard of decent behaviour towards living creatures other than mankind, it is because we have evolved this standard out of our own hearts, not out of theirs. We have evolved it in defiance of our religious teachers.

So, when it was proposed to found in Italy a society for the prevention of cruelty to animals, the Pope's official reply to Lord Odo Russell was that 'such an association could not be sanctioned by the Holy See,

being founded on a theological error, to wit, that Christians owed any duties to animals.'

Christians owe no duties to animals. This is authoritative and plain speaking, and in glaring contrast to the Hindu code.

* *
*

Our belief in the universality of British kindness towards a favourite animal, the horse, receives something of a shock when we learn that under the single heading of 'working horses in an unfit state' the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has obtained, during the last ten years, no fewer than 16,612 convictions. Pretty constant cruelty, too; since, in spite of all the Society's efforts, the difference between 1918 and 1928 is only 226 cases.

In regard to the traffic in the export of horses for butchery abroad, this is what was going on last year :

' It is a pitiful sight to see our old horses packed into slow-going foreign trains, waiting, hungry and thirsty, for death in a foreign abattoir, killed, often cruelly, by foreign butchers.

' Even when they are humanely killed at last, they have to endure long wretchedness before death. And once they are sold for butchery their suffering is not considered. They are only regarded as so much meat.

' At Vaugirard, the Paris abattoir, the terrified horses are driven with whips into slaughter-sheds, where they stand on floors slippery with blood, and knock against freshly-flayed hanging carcases. They are hobbled so that they may fall at the first blow, knocked on the head with a hammer, and the knife is often plunged into their breast while they are still struggling.

'It is an extraordinary thing that nearly every man and woman you meet has a sincere regard for horses, and considers this traffic an abomination. Yet it goes on.'

* *
*

HOSPITALS for oxen and other sick animals have existed in India time out of mind, and the author of *Mother India* points out some sad abuses in them—how the beasts are allowed to starve to death there, and so forth. We do not send ailing animals to a hospital; we send them to the knacker, and the evils which she castigates are to be found in certain European hospitals for human beings. This is what I wrote some years ago:

'The scandals that occasionally arise in connexion with that saintly institution,

the Foundling Hospital at Naples, are enough to make humanity shudder. Of 856 children under its motherly care during 1895, 853 "died" in the course of that one year—only three survived; a wholesale massacre. These 853 children were carried forward in the books as still living, and the institution, which has a yearly revenue of over 600,000 francs (about £24,000 at the then rate) was debited with their maintenance, while 42 doctors (instead of the prescribed number of 19) continued to draw salaries for their services to these innocents, that had meanwhile been starved and tortured to death. The official report on these horrors ends with the words: "There is no reason to think that these facts are peculiar to the year 1895." (See *Corriere di Napoli*, 23rd May 1897.)

If these facts do not fall under the rubric of cruelty to animals, they may be studied in connexion with what has been written about infanticide in India.

P.S. I am not suggesting that animals are never treated in English hospitals. Here are two cases that prove the contrary :

'Viscountess ——'s pet monkey has gone into a nursing home for a rest cure, at a fee of fifteen guineas a week.'

Clever animals go to the hospital of their own accord :

'Suffering from conjunctivitis, a cat walked into the casualty department of the Sheffield Royal Hospital, and was attended by the House Surgeon.'

* *
*

ANIMAL cult in England, though more localized, is carried to absurder lengths. Among the advertisements in a vegetarian journal is one of a firm manufacturing non-animal shoes with balata soles,

non-animal suit-cases 'strongly resembling dark-brown leather,' non-animal cricket-balls and straps—everything non-animal, in fact. I should like to hear this dealer's customers playing on a non-animal violin.

Perhaps they are not musical.

Here we have also a recommendation to profit by a non-animal jeweller who deals in *vegetarian cutlery*, and sells neither leather, bone, nor ivory goods.

Hindus were never such idiots. Arrian (chapter xvi.) tells us that 'the Indians wear also earrings of ivory.'

* *
*

In speaking of Indian cow-products I forgot to mention the local butter. This chalky-white substance—it is not arti-

ficially coloured—will strike you at first as a fearsome product; it is, at all events, authentic. And when clarified into ghee it forms a national and highly nutritious condiment. The ghee produced out there suffices not only for the natives; returns show that in 1891, for example, two hundred thousand rupees' worth was exported from India to foreign countries. Indian cows are therefore not useless; they can produce butter. Can ours?

It is an instructive commentary on our European state of mind and on the activities of the Society of Nations and other public bodies that (in spite of half a million laws and by-laws safeguarding our welfare) the employment of butter, whose nutritive value is of the highest, should have given place to that of margarine, which has no such value, and which any one can manufacture out of whale-blubber or any other grease that comes to hand.

The motion that this abominable mess should be distinguished by a special tint —last hope of those who would like to be able to give their families something wholesome and fit to eat—was defeated in Parliament, and this is what the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* now says: 'As regards the fats used in its manufacture there does not exist any legal restriction, and as long as the fat is in a state fit for human consumption the manufacturer can make whatever mixture he pleases,' and (article 'Adulteration') it goes on to point out how the adulterer can defeat all efforts at detection, as he knows what tests are going to be applied, and can always add some substance to confuse the reaction.

A savoury state of affairs. . . .

The smell alone of a margarine factory should suffice to deter anybody from touching such filth with the point of his stick. Yet here we are, devouring by the ton a noisome concoction which

any low-class Oriental would thank you for not setting on his table.

* *
*

MR. WILLIAMS-ELLIS is not altogether *vox clamantis in deserto*. There are three or four others who see eye to eye with him, and have written books to say so. Yet he has done well to publish *England and the Octopus*, which shows up the needless vulgarization of English scenery that is now taking place. It is also good to listen to an Archbishop now and then, when it is not a question of Prayer Book revision. His Grace of Canterbury asked not long ago: 'Can a civic sense of beauty survive the progress of a civilization which is making a desert of the past and a dust-heap of the future?' He may have been thinking of the road

from London to Canterbury, and remembering what it looked like thirty years ago.

Or any other road. . . .

It is difficult to picture to oneself the restful dignity of our towns and villages before they were defaced by that flaring eruption of advertisements. Now, having ruined our entire landscape with these abominations, we are making a terrible fuss over tram tickets lying about. 'One of the most serious eyesores is caused by the huge number of tramway and omnibus tickets thrown down by the public on alighting. The problem of how to remedy this evil has occupied the attention of the traffic authorities for many years. . . . Various suggestions have been put forward to cure the nuisance.' . . .

The photographs at the end of *England and the Octopus* are social documents; they prove that we are losing the intelligence which lies at the root of good

taste. What is good taste save applied intelligence?

How apply what we do not possess?

* *
*

It is the same in other European countries. Vulgarity, human or otherwise, confronts you.

Go to the East, and you will forget such things. These people with their gracious movements and gestures, the delicate tints and lines of their garments, contrast amazingly with the caricatures of humanity one sees in Europe. They suggest repose; we suggest the reverse. A white man among a crowd of Orientals is an awe-inspiring apparition. To judge by his furtive little eyes, his protruding ears, grotesque hands and general ungainliness —many of them have not yet learnt to

walk properly—one would say he was God's first attempt at man-making ; one would say that the garments he was wearing were his own first attempt at clothing himself, did we not know that men dressed with much better taste in bygone days.

They did a good many things with better taste ; big things and little ones. Some time ago I had the privilege of glancing over a collection of British war-medals. For downright ugliness they take some beating. Place them, if you dare, beside what was minted in antiquity. Can the best European pottery, Sèvres or Dresden or what you please, be compared to the best Oriental ? Even in trifles like postage stamps and national flags the Eastern races display more artistry. Oriental rugs—there is mystery and music in them. . . .

These and other details will penetrate to the understanding of him who visits India ; they will stimulate his sense of

beauty and make him realize the fundamental bad taste of Europe.

Says one who knew the East : 'En aucune chose je n'ai jamais aperçu la vulgarité en Asie.'

* *
*

GOBINEAU could not truthfully say that of present-day India, for the deplorable fact is that we are importing our bad taste into the country as fast as we can. You have only to land at Bombay, and Gothic monstrosities stare you in the face. Let us listen to Mr. Garratt :

'It is a painful thought that the craft of the Hindu builder and sculptor could flourish under the most puritanical Moslem Government, but has degenerated at the first contact with the West ; that it survived the iconoclast Aurungzeb but

wilted under the touch of the Public Works Department.'

Mr. Townsend also lamented 'that pause in the application of art-knowledge, from architecture down to metal-work and pottery, which has been synchronous with our rule in India,' saying that 'Anglo-Indians doubt whether Indians have the capacity to be architects, though they built Benares; or engineers, though they dug the artificial lakes of Tanjore; or poets, though the people sit for hours or days listening to rhapsodists as they recite poems which move them as Tennyson certainly does not move our common people.'

Foreign industrialism has invaded all branches of native domestic arts, and blighted most of them. The country is used as a dumping-ground for shoddy wares, for aniline dyes from Germany (to the ruin of indigenous carpets), and other trumpery from Japan and elsewhere. An ounce of fact: in 1922-23 the importa-

tion of artificial silk was 225 lbs.; in 1926-27 it reached the figure of 5776 lbs. Indian bazaars are now full of exotic gimcrack whose advent, I am told, is unavoidable. 'Unavoidable' strikes me as too uncompromising a term; death is unavoidable, not the importation of this trash.

* *
*

WHEN the traveller hears the mina singing at his window, when he watches the peacocks in the woods, the kingfishers over the water, the kites and eagles gliding overhead, when he spies the monkeys at Mahintale or among the rosy timber of Mount Abu, then he will think what Europe might still be, and is not; he will understand that there is such a thing as leaving wild creatures alone — particularly if he happens to live among Catholic

races, who extirpate all living things save their own lice and bed-bugs. This feeling grows upon the dullest European in the East (I have watched the process); he finds himself possessed of a sense of which he was unaware.

European landscapes are often charming but nearly always dead—dead as a door-nail; there is no movement in them, no sudden flash of colour, no surprise.

In Ceylon you may have a surprise, for there lives a beast which the natives call cabaragoya, half-way between lizard and crocodile, two yards long; it calls up suggestions of primeval days. The first cabaragoya you encounter on a jungle path gives you something of a start, and, although they are sufficiently confiding, and are even encouraged to settle down near rest-houses, it is not advisable to take liberties with them. Were this animal to-day as plentiful in France as it is in Ceylon, would a single one of them be alive at the end of a month? Not long

ago a certain Continental royalty went on a sporting expedition to East Africa, with a view to making a collection of specimens of the local fauna for museum purposes. It was not a collection; it was a hecatomb. The museum was a pretext to enable him to indulge a barbarian taste for slaughter.

'The world,' says a writer on Tahiti,—'the world was a great and beautiful museum once, full of beautiful things, all of different kinds. Then Europeans, growing hungry for new foods, new places to live in, new places to sell goods in, new folk to teach their religion to, went round with sticks and broke all the precious things on the shelves of the world.'

This lust of extermination is not a pretty trait.

And the same with the wonderful human fauna of the Pacific. Whoever reads *Isles of Illusion* will learn how European missionaries are 'very largely responsible for the wiping out of hundreds

of villages'; he will learn how 'the horrible octopus of missionary-cum-trader-cum-official has spread his tentacles everywhere.' The White Man creeps over these regions like some foul skin disease, eating away the bloom of their features. Or glance into another book of the Pacific: *Mr. Fortune's Maggot.* This is not only an original story—a missionary who ends in carving an idol for a native—but, for those who care to read between the lines, a disheartening indictment of Europeanism.

Why does one belong to such a race, so sad and yet so ferocious?

* *
*

THAT discomfort, that European stomach-ache from which all of us are suffering, that moral constipation, has been traced

to a variety of sources. I become more and more convinced, with increasing years, that the roots of the mischief lie far back, in the Roman point of view. The shoddiness of our ideals—the shoddiness of all our ideals social and political—is a heritage from those unimaginative Roundheads, with their ingrained vulgarity, their imperialism, their pernicious doctrine of the *raison d'État*, and the welcome they gave, as vulgarians naturally would give, to imported pinchbeck like Christianity.

We have not yet recovered from those thousand years during which we hacked and burnt each other in honour of that creed ; we have to thank the Romans for the Thirty Years War, the Spanish Inquisition, and other interludes which have coarsened our mental fibre to this day, and blunted our apperception of finer issues. No religion is worth fighting about. The displacement of Buddhism by Hinduism was on a grander scale than anything in Christendom, and yet, I

believe, a bloodless proceeding. Buddhism, by the way, is about 600 years older than Christianity. Nevertheless, its history contains 'not a single instance of those religious persecutions which loom so largely in the history of the Christian Church' (Rhys Davids). And the Romans, by accepting Christianity, paved the way for our cult of those fetid 'masses' whom, in accordance with New Testamentary injunctions, we are now breeding as carefully as if they were Pekinese spaniels, and who, in return, have imposed on us by law their own fatuous and degrading aspirations. These are our two social legacies from the Romans.

The political ones are likewise two. Firstly: that tiresome standardizing mania of theirs destroyed the more delicate tissues in the national character of people subject—however superior intellectually—to themselves; the crass monotony of Roman theories of life and government, of their very architecture—however

ill-adapted to local conditions of race or climate—settled upon the whole world like a frost, that chilled all indigenous and divergent blossoming. Everything stereotyped and conventionalized! Needless to say, we have followed their example in those regions over which we have cast the net of our own administrative system. Secondly: the state-idolatry of the Romans, their toga-tomfoolery, has converted European races into a pack of mongrels snarling at each other.

Newspaper editors find it a profitable business to stimulate these nationalistic promptings, and to dwell on the catchword of patriotism. Safely ensconced behind their desks, they exhort our youngsters to die for their country. Who dies for his country nowadays? Half a dozen decrepit field-marshals; nobody else. No European country is worth dying for. What next! Our youngsters get blown to pieces, because they are kicked into the trenches. They are kicked into the

trenches, because we have absorbed the *civis romanus* jargon of those self-inflated *parvenus*.

There are enthusiasts who clamour for an international language. International common sense would be more to the point.

* *
*

HERE are about a hundred footnotes. There may be no end to things of this kind, but there is a limit. I think the limit has been reached.

Printed in Great Britain by T and A CONSTABLE LTD.
at the University Press, Edinburgh