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THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

THE WARNING OF THE PROPHET

But it is evident that instead of diminishing the mechanistic character of life and labour in common, that nationalisation, even when it is licit, is rather in danger of further accentuating it, and that, in consequence, the advantage which nationalisation brings to the profit of a true community, such as you understand it, is very much to be judged with care.—*Pope Pius XII, to the Semaine Sociale of Strasbourg, 10th July, 1946.*

ALL-TIME LOW

Fifteen months after fighting ceased in Europe, bread and other flour-products were rationed in this country.

The scale of the ration was rather more than the average consumption as stated by Government spokesmen. This circumstance has led to much speculation on the real motive for the introduction of rationing. The only safe statement is that whatever the motive it was not the obvious one. There seem to be two possibilities. Either the Government wished to test the public reaction, if any, to the most unpopular step taken by any Government in the past century. Or the prospects are even grimmer than we are allowed to know. In support of the second hypothesis is the sinister insistence on changing bread coupons for points at the food offices. This would enable the authorities to assess the possibility of further reduction in the ration.

EMPTY GRANARIES

It is clear, of course, that stocks of wheat and flour had been reduced to a dangerously low level. Two comments are receiving wide currency. One is that a great deal of bread and flour was being bought for poultry feed, and that the Government, after encouraging domestic poultry-keeping, wanted badly to suppress this practice. It is true, of course, that in most urban minds, keeping fowl does not involve any anxiety about their feed. That comes from fairyland, as we said in our last issue. If the present crisis makes more people realise that food has to be grown as well as eaten, it will not have been without its advantage.

AND EMPTY MINDS

The other comment, which is not being contradicted by the Government, is that when foreign countries in need were asked what wheat they required, they included, naturally and rightly, feed for stock. Our rulers, of exclusively urban mentality, passed these figures, and when committed to them found there was not enough left for our own stock. So stock-feeding had to be discouraged, here alone in all Europe.

THE SECRET PEOPLE GROWLS

Whatever be the truth, it does not appear at the moment of writing that bread rationing will continue. It may well be removed by the time these notes appear. Anyone who knows anything about dogs is well aware that a special kind of growl always precedes action. That growl has now been heard, and whatever the motives for imposition, it will now be removed. *Now They know,* as a citizen said recently. As we go to press, there is every sign that the Minister of Food is losing his head.

It may be we shall rise the last
as Frenchmen rose the first,
Our wrath come after Russia's
wrath, and our wrath be the worst.

AND STARTS TO ACT

Nothing in modern times is more gratifying than the way families have taken forcible possession of Government huts—unless it is the frightened way the official bullies have rushed to accept the position.

A CAVEAT

This organ has no party politics. And it would not wish to go on record as censuring only the present Government. The others were no better. We may recall here, for purposes of rectification, the late Mr. Neville Chamberlain's famous speech at Kettering in 1937. He made the speech because his Government was being urged to encourage maximum food production in England in view of the coming war. He said (we quote from memory): "*We are being urged to do this. But nice fools we should look if there were no war.*"

MINOR ADDENDUM

Remarkable unanimity and extent must be recorded for the statements that confectioners' shops, for the first time, are now showing their choicer cakes in the window instead of keeping them under the counter. We believe these statements to be not without their element of truth, although this result was certainly not foreseen by the authorities.

OIL

We have warned our readers several times that the next danger, both here and in America, is that farmers will be bulldozed into growing crops for fuel and plastics. Or at least that ordinary crops will be so used. A conference was held in London by the N.F.U. on 12th June last at which "the production of oil both for industrial and edible purposes" was a capital feature. Last May, the F.A.O. conference in Washington was openly apprehensive about the industrial use of food in America.

TROUBLED WATERS

Beer has already been reduced to an ineffective condition by the machinations of the big brewers and the tax-imposers. The recent developments, which make both real beer and spirits practically unobtainable, bring up a new point. This is the sinister teetotal influence on the Government. It is by no means confined to the members of one party. We could all name prominent and wealthy families which have spent their lives making Christian drink inaccessible to the poor, and which seem to have abandoned the defence of capitalism in favour of a conviction that they are the people who will be called upon to run the new servile state.

STORMS AND SCYTHES

The recent heavy storms, which we must all regret, have had the unexpected result of making it clear that laid corn can be harvested only with the scythe. Fortunately for all of us, there are still plenty of men who can use this essential tool. Another twenty years of mechanisation would make this process impossible.

We hope that the disaster will end the ridiculous claim that the great machines have been imposed on farming in England solely because of our unfortunate climate. That legend at least has now been killed for good.

AD ASTRA PER ARDUA

The somewhat painful conversion of the Ministry of Agriculture continues. Its Weekly News Service for 2nd August (No. 361) says of the *take-all* disease in wheat: "The best method of control . . . is to give the land a rest from any grain crop." Later in the same issue it advances a somewhat timid recommendation to use a horse rather than a tractor for certain harvesting operations.

On the other hand, the Minister said in the House on 24th June, in reply to a pointed question about compulsory orders to grow wheat on exhausted or unsuitable land, that instructions given to County Committees excluded such orders. No question of compensation should therefore arise. *Oh yeah?*

FULL OF TONGUES

It is rumoured strongly that Potatoes are also to be rationed. If this prove true, we recommend readers to draw the attention of their members to the fact that, before the war, potatoes grown at home were 97% of our total requirements. Twice the pre-war acreage is now being grown, so that we ought to be growing nearly twice as many as we should want in the piping times of peace.

ROOT OF ALL EVIL

It would be improper for us to comment largely on the present contest on prices between the N.F.U. and the Ministry. We need only repeat here that we have said for

some time that apart from the large mechanised farmers, nobody was intended to make any money from the land. The farmers have made a bad mistake in accepting "subsidies" instead of insisting on actual production costs as would any other producer. The practice gives a false impression to the citizens. What is the use of betraying the land as being an *industry*, if you omit the first principle of industrialism?

THE MANAGERS

By W.P.W.

COPIES of Burnham's "Managerial Revolution" are now flooding the bookstalls in the cheap "Penguin" form. This is interesting from two points of view, first because this is one of the most important books since Marx's "Capital," secondly because Burnham is the first writer that I know of who openly advocates the inevitability of the Servile State. Also his influence is being felt already—I found his phraseology used twice in the current "Times Literary Supplement."

Burnham is an ex-Trotskyist Communist and published his book in America in 1941. Based on an analysis of trends in Russia, Hitler's Germany and Roosevelt's "New Deal," it sets out in a cold and impartial manner to examine what Socialism actually means in practice. Once his thesis is stated it seems obvious enough, but we have all made the same mistake which Burnham corrects, for we have all thought that Socialism would mean the rule of the political bureaucrats. This will not be so, of course—the political bureaucrats in a Socialist or Managerial society will merely be the servants of the great managers of nationalised industry and agriculture. It is they who will have all power. They will form an oligarchy besides the power of which that of the feudal aristocracy and the Whig landlords will pale into insignificance. The managers will be all-powerful because no one will control them—not Parliament, because in a Socialist State power passes from Parliament to the bureaux over which the managers have absolute control.

There are two immediate conclusions:

1.—The thesis explains the pronounced pro-Communist tendency in the best people. They see their world doomed, and are looking forward, not unreasonably, to getting into control in the new world. This, and this only, explains, the attitude exemplified in the policy of the ultra-Conservative party and such newspapers as *The Times*.

2.—The thesis assumes the continuance of mass-production and urban standards. A rural distributist reaction would destroy the managerial power as a matter of course.

Human nature being what it is, the managers, once they have consolidated their political power, will immediately direct the lion's share of the national income into their own pockets. (This, Burnham points out, has already taken place in Russia, where the managers, though forming only 12% of the population, pocket half the national income; and Hitlerian Germany was being rapidly assimilated to the Russian model). In fact, the managers will be the owners of everything and everybody, not individually but as a class, after the manner of the temple priesthoods of ancient Egypt. Now one comes to think of it, this trend has been prophesied for a long time, for the managerial oligarchy which governs a Socialist State can be equated with Nietzsche's "Supermen," Aldous Huxley's "Alphas," and the boss-class of Wellsian nightmares.* And naturally the managers will rapidly harden into a caste, for they will take good care that their children are placed in managerial positions.

Burnham despises Capitalism, which he regards as an outworn and already broken system, dismisses Distributism as impracticable, and equates Socialism with the Managerial State, which he thinks of as inevitable. The Managerial State is the Servile State; therefore Burnham is advocating the inevitability of the Servile State. And his influence is growing and tremendous.

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* Re-read Wells's "When The Sleeper Awakes" and it will be seen that the prophet is describing not a Capitalist but a Socialist or Managerial society, for his boss-class consists of the managers of great State industries.

THE MORAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR FOOD AND FAMINE

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO INDIA

By K. L. KENRICK

NOT everyone will agree with the statement that in the last resort the responsibility for my food rests with myself alone. I will try to defend it by the method of apologue.

Looking back into the dim and distant past I seem to see myself, or at least my ancestors, as leading a peasant life. By some crude form of primitive justice I have been assigned a piece of land which I will call my food-patch. At that time and under those conditions the solution of my food-problem was as simple as the problem itself. There was I; there was the land. Tillage—food; no tillage—no food. If no food, there was no mysterious and mythical "they" who should have foreseen something which they did not foresee, or to have organised better something which they did not organise at all.

The next recollection I have is more like a vision or a dream. How much reality there is in it I do not know. But I seem to recall walking along a lonely road on a rather dark night, and being set upon from behind by four, five, or six men—how many exactly I could not tell. They did not kill me, but they battered me severely and took from me everything of value that I had, including my food-patch, which, by the freak of a dream, I was carrying with me. When I recovered from my wounds, I determined to spend the rest of my life trying to identify my assailants. How I lived without my food-patch during that time I do not know—this is the record of a dream. I cannot claim that my researches have resulted in a complete and accurate identification, but I give the results here as far as they go. The oldest of them apparently was a Feudal Baron, the second a Tudor King, the third a Member of the Parliament that passed the largest number of Acts for the Enclosure of Common Lands, the fourth was an Industrialist, the fifth a Moneylender or Financier, and the last, and in many ways the most interesting, was a Planner. The last was interesting because he was the only one of whom I can definitely say that I saw his face. The others kept mainly behind me, but he definitely came to my front, and although the light was bad, I believe I could recognise him if I saw him again. He had a lean intellectual look and a distinctly plausible manner in that he certainly tried to restrain the ferocity of the others and to persuade me that he was really my friend and that he was doing me a great favour in relieving me of my property. But I believe I caught a glimpse, at the far away back of his eyes, and deeply embedded in his lips, of a real profound cunning. He it was who went through my pockets last of all to make sure there was nothing left. That was how I came to see him face to face.

But how do I reconcile my dream with the statement that I am responsible for my own food? How can I produce my own food if my food-patch has been taken from me by force? The answer is that I am afraid I was on that lonely road on a dark night on no legitimate errand. Perhaps I had got tired of the toil and moil of ploughing and sowing and reaping my food-patch. Perhaps I had sold my land for cash and was on my way to spend it on riotous living in the nearest city. Perhaps I was in search of a "higher standard of living." But I have a strong persistent feeling that I need not have been quite such a fool as I was. And stranger still, I feel that even now it is not too late for me to baulk the brigands and regain my heritage. In other words, I am still responsible for my own food. I can go into the fields this harvest to help the farmers to get in the crops. But I shall not go—I am too lazy, too indifferent, too apathetic. If I starve, it will be because I deserve it. There are millions of peasants, scattered all over the world, who have had

more sense than I have had, and to whom the threat of famine means nothing at all. But there is not a single one of them to whom I can go, either directly or through the Circumlocution Office, and say to him, "*You* are responsible for *my* food." I have "conquered nature" by discovering atomic energy, but I am a beggar on the face of the earth. It would not even be common justice for me to put the blame on the Minister of Food, but if it were, what would that avail me? What am I to the Minister of Food, or he to me? I have been warned in these very columns of what was coming, and what have I done about it? Nothing. What right have I to demand that a mere Cabinet Minister should prove himself a wiser man than I am myself?

"This may be all very well for the civilised world," I hear someone say, "but what about the Indian peasant who has never deserted his land?" Never having been to India myself, I am compelled to accept the testimony of someone who has. I choose one who has been Professor in the University of Rangoon and Reader in Economic Geography in the University of London. After saying that "the position of agriculture in India is far from satisfactory," he proceeds: "Broadly speaking, the erstwhile agricultural organisation of India has been thrown severely out of gear by the universal march of progress—or, to avoid wounding susceptibilities, let us say the universal economic changes" (Dudley Stamp, *Asia*, 1929, p. 222). In other words, we are responsible for some portion of India's distress, and by we I do not mean the British Raj; I mean myself as a person always clamouring for more industrialism, more civilisation, more planning, and a "higher standard of living." The whole impact of Western civilisation on the Eastern half of the human race has been disastrous. We have taken our own famine to India.

It is admittedly heartbreaking to read any book on Indian peasant farming. All sorts of suggestions spring to the mind, but—'ware planning! It is so easy to denounce planning and to become a planner oneself almost unconsciously. I have heard missionaries say that they have "no patience with Indian famines." They say that India is full of food which the peasant will not eat. They say that there is one head of cattle to every two human beings in India, but that as food these do not count, either for beef or for milk. Of the hundreds of varieties of rice grown in India, it is said that many peasants will eat only the particular kind which grows on their own land. "Hurrah! All honour to them! May I be the last ever to want to 'plan' them into being different and more reasonable creatures! I want to see them conformed to God's will, but to *my* will never, never!" There is a famine in Madras, and the Government rushes down thousands of tons of wheat from the Punjab and the Upper Ganges valley. The inhabitants of Madras refuse to touch it, and die in their thousands within sight of the loaded railway trucks. Why? Let us suppose that some kind friends were to send us in this country, to relieve our famine, shiploads of soya beans, olive oil, and horseflesh, all, I believe, highly nutritious food. How should we get on? How many of us would be alive at the end of three months? Perhaps the Indian peasant, if he knows anything about us at all, thinks that we live on offal. Why, to explain these things, do we invent such big, clumsy words as ignorance, superstition, fanaticism, conservatism, caste, religious prejudice, all of which imply a measure of censure, and give the impression that we know a good deal more about the mentality of the Indian peasant than we do? Why not say that the Indian peasant is fastidious in his eating and leave it at that with no further theorizing?

If a country is excessively choice and dainty in its food, does it imply that the country is poor or rich? Who decides whether India is a rich or a poor country? We may and must loathe and detest the religions of the Indian peasant, and even weep over them and revile them, but we cannot withhold our admiration for the Indian peasant himself. With no incentive but his foul gods and goddesses he yet shows a patience, a fortitude, and a submission to incessant toil and suffering which no European can think of without a shudder. He has never tried to exploit or dominate or even intimidate other peoples; he has never been an aggressor; he did not invent the atomic bomb. If we were looking for natural virtues only, and if there were no supernatural virtues, where could we find

THE OFFICIAL ATTITUDE

them better exemplified than in the Indian peasant? And what about the Indian wealth which this toil and industry have accumulated? Compared with our own cattle, the cattle of India are poor screws, but this does make it possible for Indian wealth in cattle to be equitably distributed throughout the mass of the population instead of being concentrated in a few pedigree herds. And what about the sum-total of this wealth? It must be fabulous. I make no pretence to define the mysterious word "wealth," but if we take one conventional human idea of it as being something expressed in the regal splendour of gold and silver and silks and jewels, what country can rival India? The economists say that the "absorption" of gold and silver by India is unparalleled by any country in the world. And this gold is not buried in the vaults of one bank, but scattered broadcast over the surface of the land. How does this compare with the paper credit of civilised countries? If we are determined to theorise, we might say that India is a wealthy country indeed, but that she has sacrificed all her wealth to her abominable gods and goddesses and kept only the barest necessities for herself. Would that we could say the same thing about ourselves—that we are indeed a wealthy country, but that we have sacrificed all our wealth to our God, and kept too little for ourselves!

Dear reader, do not, I ask you, try to read between my lines. Do not accuse me of holding opinions which I have not here expressed. It is safe for a writer to take for granted that every one of his readers has a better brain than himself. I have tried to give you the facts, on which you can form your own opinion. If my facts are wrong, I apologise. But please do not say that I have tried to thrust my own opinions down your throat.

A SCEPTIC ENQUIRES

(A continuation of the review of "Chemicals, Humus and the Soil" by Donald P. Hopkins)

By H. R. BROADBENT

TO return to the annual loss of 143-lbs. of nitrogen from the F.Y.M. plot. This loss is compared with that from two plots, on one of which the dose is minerals plus 86-lbs. nitrogen in the form of sulphate of ammonia, and on the other superphosphate, sulphate of potash and sulphate of ammonia (86-lbs. nitrogen).

From each of these plots the author calculates an annual loss of 51-lbs. nitrogen. The author appreciated that someone might notice the greater supply of nitrogen to the F.Y.M. plot, on which the rate is about 200-lbs. per annum, and suggest that a higher loss might be expected from "the larger doses" with "more excess to be leached away." He explains, however, that the planners of the experiment gave more nitrogen to the F.Y.M. plot because it was "largely in a complex inactive form." The nitrogen to the other two plots was in an active form. "At any rate," he continues, "the crops yielded are comparable with only a shade of advantage to the natural manure."

This "shade of advantage" can be measured by the author's figures of nitrogen yield for the three plots.

Artificials (1) (86-lbs. Nitrogen)	Crop—46-lb. Nit'n	
„ (2) (86-lbs. Nitrogen)	„ 44-lb. „	
F.Y.M..... (200-lb. Nitrogen)	„ 50-lb. „	
F.Y.M. crop above artificials (1)	= 8.7%	
„ „ „ „ (2)	= 13.6%	

A layman with these percentages before him might think the shadow of the advantage a moderately deep one, but leave it unquestioned. He would, however, be unaware of other conditions. The author in another place mentioned the law of diminishing returns, but has not been informed of its application to the case he quotes. During the earlier years of the tests there were plots on Broadbalk supplied with sulphate of ammonia to a lesser and greater degree than later. The table below, taken from Technical Communication No. 40 of the Imperial Bureau of Soil Science, sets out the average yields of each of these plots during the period 1852—1863. Two lines have been added to the original table setting out the relative yields of the plots, taking that with 86-lbs. Nitrogen as 100. It should be remembered in considering the results that about 70% of the nitrogen in the crop is in the grain, and there should therefore be a slight bias in the total yield percentages towards the grain figure.

YIELDS OF WHEAT FROM FULL MINERALS AND VARYING DOSES OF NITROGEN, AVERAGE 12 YEARS 1852-63

Dose of Nitrogen per acre		None	21.5-lbs.	43-lbs.	86-lbs.	129-lbs.	172-lbs.
Grain—Bushels		18.4	22.0	28.3	36.3	38.0	38.2
Total Produce—lbs.		3054	3700	4783	6487	7097	7577
Relative Yields	Grain				100	104.7	105.2
	Total Produce				100	109.4	116.8

It will be seen that the percentage increase in yield at the beginning of the author's period was not proportional to the increase in nitrogen dose. For instance, when the dose was raised from 86 to 129, i.e., by 50%, the rise in total yield was only 9.4%, and the part mainly responsible for the rise was the straw, which contains about a third of the total nitrogen in the crop. The relative importance of the percentage increase of yield

which appears from the comparison made by the author between artificial and F.Y.M. will be appreciated.

The results from the plots with 21.5-lbs. and 172-lbs. nitrogen were only available for a short period, but the experiments with the other doses continued. The relative increases with different doses of N.P.K. varied in the course of years. The average yield for the plots concerned during the 30 years 1892-1921 are shown in the table below.

	Comparison Average Yields (1892-1921) 2B taken at 100	
	Grain	Total Produce
Plot 2B— F.Y.M. - - - - (200-lbs.)	100	83.6
„ 7 — Minerals and Nitrogen - (86-lbs.)	84.4	81.5
„ 13 — P. K. and Nitrogen - (86-lbs.)	82.3	103.1
„ 8 — Minerals and Nitrogen - (129-lbs.)	101.5	100

The results from Broadbalk are given in Technical Communication No. 40 in 10 year averages. The results above have not been carried beyond 1921 because the next decennial period includes the preliminary fallowing which preceded the new experiment, commencing in 1931. The thirty years above also include fallowing years, but not of such duration.

It would seem that if comparisons with "shades" of difference are to be made, they should be between the F.Y.M. plot and the N.P.K. plot receiving 129-lbs. nitrogen. It will be noted that this plot receives "minerals" with its nitrogen. Sir Daniel Hall states that "by minerals is understood at Rothamsted the phosphoric acid, potash, magnesia, soda and other constituents left as ash when the plant is burnt, but not any manure containing nitrogen." This note applies also to plot 7. Plot 13 is N.P.K. in the author's sense receiving nitrogen, superphosphate and sulphate of potash. They all receive the benefit of ploughed-in stubble and weeds.

It is, of course, not possible to say whether a comparison should be made in this form. It is contended that "similar sized crops were obtained *only* when 200-lbs. of nitrogen as manure were applied against 86-lbs. of nitrogen in soluble fertiliser form." (Reviewer's italics). Quite apart from the inaccuracy of this statement as shown above, no grounds can be found for the implication that tests were made with varying quantities of F.Y.M. There is no data at Rothamsted on the effect of varying the amount of F.Y.M. We have already seen that the laws limiting the yield on the F.Y.M. plot are different from those on the plots dosed with artificials. We only know their effect in one case on Broadbalk, that on Plot 2.

This comparison of the yields from F.Y.M. and N.P.K. suffering from different troubles, indigestion and leaching, confined to one crop and incorrectly related as to plot yields, is used as a general measure of relative effectiveness. The ratio of N.P.K. to F.Y.M. is given as two to one. As corroborating evidence the author quotes the experiment on the continuous cropping of corn (maize) and oats at the Ohio Agricultural Experimental Station.

The table below appears on p. 96.

	Average Yields 1894—8	Average Yields 1931—5	Organic* Matter 1935
	bushels/acre	bushels/acre	
CONTINUOUS CORN			
No manure or fertiliser	26.3	6.5	37
5 tons (metric) F.Y.M.	43.1	30.0	53
N.P.K., 500-lbs.	44.5	28.9	35
CONTINUOUS OATS			
No manure or fertiliser	28.2	14.2	64
5 tons (metric) F.Y.M.	34.8	34.6	97
N.P.K., 500-lbs.	48.8	38.8	91

* Original organic matter 100

The author says that "For both crops the lesser quantities of chemical nutrients have given better results than those of manure—*for the first five years* (author's italics). But the pull upon organic matter has been much heavier for corn than for oats; and as the tests proceeded the yield differences reduced and with corn the better result was eventually from the manure. *Nevertheless* (my italics) we can still draw the same conclusion—that chemical nutrients are more effective, unit for unit, than the same amounts supplied in manure; with the qualification that this greater effectiveness depends upon an adequate and simultaneous maintenance of the organic matter level."

The figures given by the author for the nitrogen supplied in the experiment are:—

From 5 tons (metric) F.Y.M.
"assuming average value for the manure" - - - 60 pounds.
From 500 pounds N.P.K. - 50 pounds.

The Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin No. 381, in describing the experiment, reports that the original estimate for the quantity of F.Y.M. to be used was based on supplying the same quantity of nitrogen as the artificial, i.e., 50 pounds, but "this estimate was too high." From analyses of similar manure the estimate of nitrogen content is given as about 7½-lb. per ton (metric), "a lower composition than was assumed in planning the experiment." In considering the table of yields therefore, one must bear in mind, not the author's ratio of nitrogen supply—

FYM = 60
NPK = 50

but that of the Experimental Station conducting the experiment—

FYM = 37½
NPK = 50

It would appear to be unnecessary to emphasise the degree of difference between the comparisons.

The author is at pains to convince us of the accuracy of the figures used in his balance sheet. "The measurements and calculations" he says, "in these tests (Broadbalk field experiments) are all so simple in kind that they can hardly be distrusted or devalued. They are simply matters of sampling and analysis and multiplication by the total weights involved." Here speaks the chemist. But he is unaware of two things. The first is that no sampling or analysis of the F.Y.M. used on Plot 2B was made for at least 37 of the 40 year period he extracts from the experiment. The second is that sampling of the soil is no easy task. As witness we may compare the figures used by the author for the nitrogen in the first 9-ins. of the F.Y.M. plot with the results given as percentages in Technical Communication No. 40.

First 9-ins. of Soil	1865	1914	Percentage Rise
Author's Figures—Nitrogen lb/acre	4,850	5,590	15
Technical Communication No. 40—% Nitrogen	0.167	0.251	50

The percentage rise should be of the same order. Is the difference between the author's figures too low or between No. 40's figures too high? It is probable that both of these are inaccurate and that the truth lies somewhere between. The matter is evidently not so simple.

The second organic "loss from arable land," derived by the author, is "Rich soil—68-lbs. per acre per year." Referring to the origin of this figure in chapter 5, we find that it is a case of prairie land cropped without regard for the maintenance of fertility. It is an example of what the author described as a heedless cropping of "rich virgin soils with fertility slowly built up during many centuries." "Erosion," he says, "is simply a polite word for the final stage of the felony." What place should this felony have in the consideration of loss from arable land?

The author, when he derives the loss from the F.Y.M. plot on Broadbalk field, prefaces his calculation with the remarks that "we cannot use the figures as a general argument, for it would be illogical to build up a universal deduction from a particular case. Also what can happen under continuous cropping may be much worse than what happens under rotation cropping." He starts off with good intentions; but when the figure appears again its only herald is "Going back to the data in chapter 5 for the leaching loss, we have research figures measuring this loss for arable land as follows: . . . ." And

again, "the Rothamsted measurements covering seventy years showed that over two units of F.Y.M. nitrogen were needed to give the same effectiveness as one unit of chemical nitrogen—and the leaching loss where this was done was 143-lbs. per year against only 51 for the more economical fertiliser supply."

So these experiments which have now become pathological cases, together with an example of the worst type of the misuse of land, become the datum line from which the "conservative estimate of 40-lbs. nitrogen leaching loss" per acre is measured.

This strange piece of argument does not end there. When the 40-lbs. per acre per annum "leaching loss" has thus been produced as a "conservative" figure, it threads its way up to the climax of millions of tons of compost. Throughout the book there is a succession of "generous" estimates in favour of the humus school. He is "overfair," take figures "well on the low side" in one case and the "higher rather than the lower" estimate if it goes against his case. In fact, he is so much "more than fair," so disarming that we may be inclined to wonder whether this generosity of his is of the kind that takes half-a-crown out of your pocket when you are not looking, and hands you back a shilling in the glare of publicity. We had better look at this 40-lbs. per acre average loss and see what he does with it.

First the figure is applied to "about 7 million of our 9.25 million acres," that is, to the arable land excluding rotation leys. The nitrogen loss at the rate of 40 lbs. per acre per year is therefore calculated to be 125,000 tons. The crops take 200,000 tons. There is a gain from rain and azotobacter, he says, of 105,000 tons, giving a net deficit of—

200,000 + 125,000 − 105,000 = 220,000 tons.

Note that this loss of 40-lbs. per acre is now used as the *average* loss of both manured *and unmanured* arable land.

In 1934 there was a total mixed stock, excluding sheep, of roughly 10.9 million, which would produce with allowances 25,000,000 tons of manure. (There is a misprint here. The figure is given of 150 to 180 tons of F.Y.M. per year per *150* head of mixed stock. This should read per *50* head of mixed stock).

From the manure, exercising "our generous instincts," he estimates a gain of 150,000 tons of total nitrogen. "But," he goes on, "this nitrogen is not all active nitrogen—and the loss we are trying to balance is of the active soluble kind." He quotes Broadbalk and "therefore," he concludes, "we must cut the F.Y.M. figure at least in half to express it *in terms of effectiveness*. The rest will either add itself to the soil's complex store or be leached out when its conversion into active form is delayed until after crop-harvesting." He thinks that "Those who agree that everything that is 'natural' is efficient and who regard F.Y.M. as 'natural' will certainly not like this step in our budgeting." Leaving on one side for a moment the attack on 'natural' actions, there is quite sufficient for any accountant to object to. In fact, anyone who produced a balance sheet of this character at an annual general meeting would have a most uncomfortable time, for what the author does is to allow for his "leaching loss" twice over.

NITROGEN

Author's Balance Sheet for 1934

TO BE FOUND	TONS
Crops - - - - - - -	200,000
Loss at "conservative" figure of 40-lbs./acre on 7 million acres	125,000
F.Y.M. "to the soil's complex store or leached out"—half 150,000 -	75,000
	400,000

AVAILABLE	TONS
Rain + Azotobacter - - -	105,000
F.Y.M. - - - - - - -	150,000
Artificials - - - - - - -	50,000
Deficit - - - - - - -	95,000
	400,000

The loss of 125,000 tons based as it is on an "*average* loss" figure contains the "leaching loss." That in the 75,000 tons is a repetition.

Note again that the "conservative" loss of 40-lbs. per acre is used as the *average* loss of both manured *and unmanured* arable land.

It is difficult to find "generosity" in this sort of calculation.

The complete absence of regard for rotation is a further key to the absurdity of the balance sheet. The author treats nitrogen going "to the soil's complex store" in exactly the same fashion as nitrogen lost in "leaching." It appears in the balance sheet as a loss. Not only does he make no allowance for the residual effects of F.Y.M., but he dis-

regards also that from the clover or other leguminous ley. He introduces the gain from azotobacter in the leys and pasture, but nothing from the other nitrogen-fixing bacteria.

Again, when he makes his balance sheet for the making of compost manures, he, for some reason not stated, not only omits any contribution from the residual effect of any clover ley and compost and farm yard manures, but also the gains from rain and azotobacter which appeared in his F.Y.M. balance sheet. So the supply of compost manures is saddled with the extra task of carrying 105,000 tons of nitrogen materially provided by other means.

This, with the author's percentage and allowance for effectiveness, has forced up the provision of finished compost by 34,500,000 tons.

It must be rare to find figures on so serious a matter so frivolously treated.

Mr. Hopkins is not the only offender in disregarding the residual effects of F.Y.M. He quotes Colonel Pollitt's book "Britain Can Feed Herself," claiming that his own demands are moderate compared with those of Colonel Pollitt. That is true, but only because he is working with the 1934 crop demands, whereas the higher figures are for a stepped-up production. Fundamentally the error is the same. Colonel Pollitt, who also is or was a research scientist and is likewise concerned in a firm producing artificial manures, leads his argument to a final conclusion which presents a bill to the farming community of £79,000,000 a year for sulphate of ammonia alone. His treatment of F.Y.M. is even more curt than Mr. Hopkins. He estimates, evidently on very similar factors to Mr. Hopkins, a nitrogen content in the F.Y.M. of 798,000 tons per annum, "but," he says, "it is unlikely that more than 25 per cent. of the nitrogen will be effective in the soil, so that 600,000 tons of nitrogen will have to be found from other sources to make good this loss." He reckons that three-quarters of the nitrogen in the manure is lost and must be made good by sulphate of ammonia. Roughly £70,000,000 of the total annual bill of £79,000,000 for sulphate of ammonia is to be spent on covering this ineffectiveness of F.Y.M. If indeed his figures of ineffectiveness were correct, which they are not, could it not be argued that some of the £70,000,000 might be spent at the farm on increasing the effectiveness of the F.Y.M. rather than on the purchase of sulphate of ammonia? Colonel Pollitt lumps together, as Mr. Hopkins does, the loss by "leaching" with the banking of nitrogen in "the soil's complex stores." Both think in terms of an annual balance sheet, rather than a rotation balance sheet. The author of this book appreciates that the plants draw on the banked nutrients, but he says "it is impossible to decide how much of the removal of nutrients is balanced by the flow of active N, P & K from the soil's own inherent stock." Because he considers it impossible, he omits it and says "the sanest assumption is . . . that we must put back into the soil (or at any rate try to) as much as we take away." Of course we must. But in a rotation there is a carry-over of the nutrients to subsequent years, and the correct crop in the rotation makes use of the stored food. The chemist, particularly if he is concerned with artificials, tends to think in terms of the annual budget because in the case of artificial nitrogen, whether nitrate of soda or sulphate of ammonia, there is, according to Technical Communication No. 40, for all practical purposes no nutrient left in the soil in the year after dosing.

It is a factory attitude, an attitude remote from the land, this balance sheet of a year; this splendid isolation of a single year. Has no one lived before me? Am I the last man?

Balance in a rotation is fundamental to the whole problem of the soil's fertility. It is the opinion of Dr. H. G. Sanders that the freedom of cropping which came with and was caused by the introduction of artificial manures and, later, of mechanical power, has been no unmixed blessing to the tenant farmer (Min. of Agric. Bull. No. 85). The relaxation from the discipline of a rotation has brought temptation with it to depart from the good rules of husbandry. The economic position of farming in this country has not assisted a man to resist the temptation. There have been two orthodox voices heard on this question of rotations and the maintenance of humus. The author quotes an authority as saying that "No agricultural expert who knew anything about his job, however, would ever advise farmers to use artificials only. . ." And yet in the 1938 Rothamsted Report we are told that a study is being made of the

diseases which occur when wheat is continuously grown on light land "with a view to finding some method of control. If this can be done, continuous or very frequent wheat growing with suitable artificial fertilisers, but without farmyard manure, should become possible on a wide scale."

We are to have a new Advisory service. What will be its channel? Where will be its source?

The author would have it that the idea of humus manures and artificials being complementary is no new one, but has always been advocated by the "orthodox." In a well-known text book on soils and manures we were told in the earlier editions that "Organic matter cannot be regarded as necessary for plant nutrition however desirable it may be from the point of view of soil management." Organic matter was considered to be a "lifebelt" to retain moisture, and this opinion is still held in this country by quite an influential body of opinion. They do not look, as the author does, to F.Y.M. or other organic materials for nutrients. As for possible bridges for proteins through organic material the evidence in this matter is dismissed as worthless. The latest (1940) edition of the book just mentioned contains no reference throughout its pages to mycorrhiza. It is in this edition that there is, however, a partial change in the phrasing concerning organic humus manures.

Nevertheless the impression is given that we must put up with these "lifebelts" so as to have a soil which we can dose with artificials. (The word "dose" in connection with artificials has not been invented for this review. It is well hallowed by use in technical papers). The Parliamentary Committee cited by the author referred to artificials as being supplementary. The use of the term "complementary" in referring to organic and artificial manures is of very recent origin, and can now be linked with "lifebelts." The relationship of mutual help which it is intended it shall convey is very one-sided and apparently unnecessary.

It would seem that a truer picture of the nitrogen problem which is set for the farmer, the layman, is this. We are provided with at least three natural methods of supply, two by bacteria and the third through rain, mist, snow and hail. What methods must be used to conserve these natural supplies? What rotations and methods of cultivations will reduce our wastages?

If the problem of nitrogen supply is approached from an angle which takes it for granted that a loss of nitrogen is necessarily a leached loss, one makes a balance sheet of one year only, and, ignoring the residual effects of previous years, there will be a tendency to fill any gap in the nitrogen cycle with a chemical. If, on the other hand, the problem is considered to be one of conservation, not only of the nitrogen present in the crops taken and consumed, but present also in the soil, the main angle of research will change. It is not generally appreciated that Lawes and Gilbert, at the start of the Rothamsted experiments, were not particularly interested in the soil and took no analyses until 1865. It was not originally intended that the experiments on Broadbalk for instance should continue for more than a few years. The application of 14 tons per acre of dung produced a soil condition in which the bacteria were of the type described by the author as fifth-column causing "little loss except in water-logged or otherwise non-aerated conditions." The problem then is not one in which nitrogen lost by leaching is to be replaced by other nitrogen, which in its turn is only 50% effective, but the discovery of natural soil conditions in which active nitrogen becomes available at the right time for each plant in the rotation, and inactive nitrogen conserved for future use. If one may venture a definition on a difficult subject, it is suggested that by natural soil conditions is meant the conditions in which the soil content includes only those materials, organic and inorganic, which are normally found in a fertile soil. This excludes, for instance, nitrate of soda which is found in a natural state, but not in a naturally fertile soil. It excludes sulphate of ammonia. It does not exclude the natural mined minerals found in the same form, but to a less degree in a fertile soil. A soil can be built up "artificially" of natural materials. Elliott did this in his Clifton Park system by means of deep rooted plants in his leys, in Sir Albert Howard's imagery, the mineral pumps in the mineral cycle. Every terraced hill in which the soil has been brought from below is in that sense "artificial."

There have been many strange distortions of the words natural and artificial. It has indeed been suggested that harvesting is not natural; yet a proportion of fruits and herbage is always harvested in nature by animals. It is as part of the animal world that we must consider ourselves in this respect, and if, for other reasons, our practice in the return of wastes must be somewhat different, nevertheless this should not prevent us from observing and following the ultimate natural disposal. And so it would appear in other respects. In the rotation we are following the mixed cropping of nature to some degree. The practice is more highly developed in China, where commercial farming is less in control. We are perhaps only at the beginning of high farming in this country. The preponderating part of research has been to find artificial manures to replace organic. Up to 1928 there was not, to my knowledge, a single rotation experiment at Rothamsted using farmyard manure. The reaction between plant and plant is practically unknown. The control of the nitrogen cycle is in an elementary form. Plant types to suit different depths and varieties of soil are still in most cases to come.

Which way will the new Advisory Service lead us? Shall we find the older research, bounded by a chemist's outlook, still dominating, or is the biologist, the biochemist, to intrude, correct and control the new issues? Shall we find that industrialism, thinking in terms of an annual budget and a form of production in which multiplication of machines means a temporary increase in the rate of production, has still not appreciated that food is not produced in that way and must be thought of as the yield of a period, a cycle stretching perhaps over many years?

This is not the place to argue fully the best means of deciding the direction of research. One can see the danger of ad hoc grants from industrial concerns in which the scientist must find his loyalties divided and much of his work futile. If research at an experimental station is at the mercy of the "generosity" of the firms whose interest is commercial, no matter how great the integrity of the personnel, there must be, if only subconsciously, an inclination to favour the donor. The author has illustrated the danger of State control, for in that case the aims of political power may outweigh scientific facts and the pronouncement of an official attitude involve the prestige of the state, particularly if there be but one voice. It may be that through some body such as the National Farmers' Union who, representing as they do, the laymen immediately concerned, should be the judge of this or that direction of agricultural research. Such a control would not preclude government advice or direction, but might give to the whole body of research an intimacy with reality which is otherwise lost and has been the desire of all current research directors.

It is a pity that the author, before writing this book, had not read "Farming and Gardening for Health or Disease," for in the latter his other arguments, appendages to his main theme, moons of his world of unreality, are in the main answered. Where they are still to be resolved, they may wait. It is, for the time, sufficient for us that we find the core rotten.

If the author be permitted to—

(1) Initiate the argument with a false picture of the soil wastages in the tests from which the basic figures are derived;

(2) Make an inaccurate and, in view of the first mistake, unwarranted comparison between F.Y.M. and artificials;

(3) Use as a "conservative" loss a figure without basis;

(4) Give an estimate for the nitrogen content in the F.Y.M., used in a comparative test, 60% higher than the official figure;

(5) Produce a balance sheet in which in derogating F.Y.M. the wastage loss appears twice and no allowance is made for the residual value of either F.Y.M. or clover leys;

(6) Decide that in calculating the compost manures required, he should not only make no allowance for the residual effects of the F.Y.M. and leguminous leys, but also neglect any rain or *azoto bacter* gain allowed in case (5);

then a figure may finally appear which is "very high."

But will he produce a new rotation balance sheet, with a loss in drainage and de-nitrification which he can prove for a soil in a healthy state and with full rotations, with allowances for rain and *azotobacter* and the residual effects of organic manures and leys? He will find that not only will his demands for compost manures shrink to a manageable figure, but the fertility of our land can be expected to rise with proper care of our wastes and without the need for artificial manures.

We must be grateful to the author for providing an opportunity for finding out the background against which the artificial manure industry imagines it works. The book should be read for this. It is a charming, disarming, good-humoured presentation of a case. Any censure is therefore the more difficult. It must, however, be said that the matter is unworthy of its frame.

ORDER OF BATTLE: XXVII

ON PULLING ONE'S SOCKS UP

AT this present moment, the world, and England in particular, is filled with two kinds of people. There are those who are riding on the crest of a wave of whose origin and destination they are unaware. And there are those who are lolling on what they think are the sidelines, but who will be duly engulfed as soon as the flood level has risen a little.

Neither attitude is human. For if there is one truth which is always valid it is that human events should be directed by human will, and not be driven before a malign fate. Fate, as Alfred said in times as perilous as these, is a word which has no meaning for Christian men.

These words are addressed primarily to the lollers, who include the bulk of the returned fighting men who have saved us. They are the only men with youth enough and strength enough to direct events. Certainly there is every excuse for them. They are entitled to their period of rest after the greatest exertions in our history. But it is not a physical exhaustion of which we speak. It is mental apathy and mental emptiness.

It has all happened before. After the war of 1914-1918, few saw that things could never be the same again. The world was divided by a sham fight between those who had imposed the industrial basis on Christian civilisation and wished that basis restored in all fulness: and those who sponsored a reaction formed and developed within the very terms of that industrial basis. That is, the war was between two aspects of the same thing, and it threatens to be so again.

The small number of Distributists proposed the only possible real alternative. It was based on Christian values, and accepted the spirit of the times which realised those values, without seeking to be tied to their details. They worked and fought almost alone for the whole period between the wars. Ignored by the populace whom they lacked the means to inform, and by the authorities who failed to realise that the end of an age and of their own essential principles was upon them, the Distributists fought for twenty years, and went down in the general cataclysm.

As Herbert Agar has said: *Tawney said that at a time like this a nation makes a decision even when it refuses to decide. This is what we did in the years after 1918. The whole Western World, working in unity for once, made the decision not to decide. Thereby we let bad enough alone; we pretended that the institutions of society were working well; we denied that there was need to overhaul them in the light of principles, or to discuss principles at all. The result was ten years of triviality, followed by ten years of collapse, followed by the world-wide civil war of to-day.—("A Time for Greatness," pp. 8-9).*

That war continues. And it is still the position that Distributism, the only social teaching of the Church, is the only remedy. We have no Chestertons and no Bellocs. But at least we have the whole mass of what they and others wrote. And we have the same position and the whole people to save.

Unless we are to plunge into the abyss, the only remedy, becoming clearer with every day, must be fought for and applied by our young men.

Principles, as Mr. Agar has said, are uncomfortable. But when society is collapsing

round us only right principles will save us and restore a world fit for Christian men and women.

These lines are to urge ACTION. All the principles are there, but we need men and women to apply them.

The writer's health, age and lack of national publicity permit him only one step. He is prepared to put anxious men and women in touch with one another by convenient districts, if they will send a line and express their willingness to act. This step should be taken at once.

There are now no national leaders, but many national memories, and all the necessary statements of necessary principles. The New Distributist Movement will have to start from the bottom in small local groups. As it is so obviously the only valid alternative to the modern servile industrialism, it should succeed, and should succeed fairly quickly. Audacity is the only new requirement.

If this is not done now, the last poor chance of restorng a Christian world will go down in blood and ruin not more than twenty years hence.

A Time for Greatness. That is a great phrase. Let us put it in more homely terms. Now is the time for pulling one's socks up, when we should awake from sleep and sloth, and now attest that they whom we call fathers did beget us.

On another page will be found a first draft of hints for action.

DISTRIBUTISM

A DRAFT FOR ACTION

The paragraphs which follow are put forward as a draft only. The present writer is not entitled to do more: nor is he entitled to do less. It is in that sense only that they are advanced here.

1.—Distributism, including the principles and action of the Land Movement, is the only real alternative to the modern despair. As such, it is to be advanced at once by all men and women of good will, in the hope and conviction that it will be seen to be the only alternative by an increasing number of the citizens.

2.—That the moment is more than ripe is proved by the fact that many enquirers speak as though nothing had been worked out hitherto. Editors, Catholic and secular, who know better, are not correcting them.

3.—The Social Teaching of the Catholic Church is based on the Natural Law. The Natural Law is the property of all men, and especially of all Christian men. Therefore, although the Catholic Church is entitled to all credit for having maintained the Natural Law, Distributism is the prop erty of all men in their capacity as human persons, and no restrictions are allowable or contemplated.

4.—In particular, nothing must be advanced as essential to Distributism on which Distributists may reasonably disagree. Such subjects as Spain, the Monarchy, and so on, must not be allowed to intrude on the new Distributism as they destroyed the old. The conception and words Right and Left are socially ridiculous and have no meaning or relevance for Distributism.

5.—The full content of Distributism has not been stated hitherto in convenient form, although it may have to be attempted soon. There can be no doubt, however, of the main angle of attack. The works detailed in *We Take Our Stand* (S.S. Peter & Paul, 1944) provide a working basis. In particular, *The Outline of Sanity*, by G. K. Chesterton (Methuen), and *The Sun of Justice* by H. Robbins (Heath Cranton), may be indicated as containing the essential framework.

6.—As no lead may be expected from national leaders, the only way to start will be by means of local groups. These will expand and federate as circumstances dictate. The Editor of *The Cross and The Plough* is prepared to put individual applicants in touch with one another by districts, and to ask a particular person to initiate a first meeting.

7.—Two or three such persons can begin a local group as effectively as a larger number. We are dealing with the only social hope of the world, and the only emotion to be barred is despair.

8.—It would seem essential that control should not be centralised as in the past. Distributist Groups will no doubt find it necessary to federate in a Distributist Federation.

It is of crucial importance that this process should be federal and not centralised. Details can be indicated in due course on request.

9.—The essential principles can be indicated briefly. The world's main disease is the concentration of Power. The real remedy is therefore the diffusion of Power. Any expedient which tends to diffuse Power is in accord with Distributism. Any centralising expedient is against it.

10.—Lord Acton said, in one of the world's great phrases: All Power corrupts: absolute Power corrupts absolutely. Distributism holds that since Power is based ultimately on Productive Property, the diffusion of Productive Property is the main and essential concern of Distributism.

11.—As the first need of man is to eat, the first need of Distributism is small farms instead of large. This is also the main need for balancing the realm of England, and making her truly independent of the Money and other Foreign Powers.

12.—But, as man is a social animal, these farms must be in communities, and must be rounded by adequate supplies of Craftsmen and Small Workshops.

13.—Independently of this logical approach, much can be done by encouraging small workshops and small trades and businesses in any area. Big Business, whether in large concerns or in Chain Stores, must be frozen out by a simple act of will.

14.—These points are enough to give direction and weight to any beginning. Developments will wait on Federation. Do not be afraid to talk. It is by talking that action emerges.

15.—The future is in the hands of the younger men and women. It is they who will see the end of Industrialism, and bequeath to their children the beginnings of the Distributist State.

16.—It must be borne always in mind that there are two aspects of Distributism. There is Distributism itself, which in any case will not be achieved for a generation; and there is the Road to Distributism. Many expedients of the Road will not be charac teristic of Distributism. The only essential point is that while the Road may differ in details from the Goal, it must not contradict it in principle.

Thus: Road Transport will be relatively unnecessary in full Distributism: but any man who buys and operates a motor lorry now is to be applauded because he is demonstrating personal independence and adding to the examples of diffused Productive Property. On the other hand, Paper Shares in a Motor Factory are irrelevant to the problem and to its solution. Because a Paper Share is not Productive Property and the evils of Mass-Production are not diminished by the diffusion of such Shares.

CLOVEN HOOVES

The *Food and Agricultural Organisation* meets in Copenhagen on 3rd September. On the whole the delegates are agriculturally inexperienced. They will have some difficulty in resisting the strong and interested pressure for mechanisation which we have been expecting for some time.

It will have before it a scheme sponsored by (of all origins) the Trade Relations Research Bureau. It seeks to mechanise the agriculture of all countries, and wants £300,000,000 to produce 600,000 tractors and other machines.

The *Daily Telegraph* knows no better than to boost this project under the title *Growing More*. We want to make two points quite clear, for the umpteenth time.

1.—There is no relation between mechanisation and *growing more*. There is a relation between mechanisation and *growing less*.

Mechanisation does not mean more food per acre; it means only more output per man employed. This is not the present or the human need.

2.—There could be no clearer proof than this of how industrialism is prepared to pull down everything in its fall. The only interest of the Trade Reelations Bureau is trade.

By the time these notes appear, readers will know whether or not F.A.O. has fallen for this naive proposal.

THE VOICE OF THE MISSIONS

(Extracts from an address delivered at the Gregorian University, Rome, on 18th October, 1945, by the Most Reverend Leone Nigris, Archbishop of Filippi, International Secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith)

THE Missions! They represent the work of the Twelve Apostles prolongated over a span of nineteen centuries. Their neophytes have the fervid freshness of the primitive Christians. Their customs are redolent of the kindly fraternalism of the agapae. Their youthful history is studded with the gems of martyrdom. They are the surgings of a healthful bloodstream which keeps the Church perpetually young. They are the new troops of the Kingdom of God, growing steadily in numbers and training diligently, who some day perhaps will be able to say to the older Christian peoples who evangelised them, but then became sterile from the deadening effects of a rampant industrial civilisation: "reform or perish!"

. . . . . .

Must I develop a point I have already hinted at, namely, that our civilisation is on the decline? There is to-day too great an infatuation with mechanical civilisation. And in the resulting confusion as regards spiritual values, we see the demon of destruction and death exulting as never before, and the poison of pleasure-seeking wearing down individuals and whole peoples. The religion of many people has a bright surface, but is hollow inside; and so we have those who lack firmness of will and who in the conflict of tendencies do not know how to choose properly and so drift along with the times; and so we have likewise people without conscience and character who actually believe they can reconcile their pagan lives and their faith.

Mankind is of the earth, too earthy, and needs perhaps a bath in primitive simplicity to clear its mental horizon, and a fresh and vigorous surge of whole-hearted religion as lived by new converts so as to prepare it for new achievements. Who knows but in a more or less proximate to-morrow Divine Providence will humble the arrogant folly of the civilised peoples of to-day by means of the regenerated peoples of the Mission countries; in other words, their pupils become their masters.

. . . . . .

It is just such enlightened optimism that animated our Supreme Pontiff gloriously reigning when he declared on June 4th, 1944, in his admirable address to the members of the Superior Council of the Pontifical Mission-Aid Associations, in a tone that now seemed prophetic: "If we had to suggest a motto to characterise the Catholic Mission Movement of the sixteenth century we could hardly find a more expressive one than the sublime words of St. Paul (Rom. 11, 33): 'O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are his judgments, and how unsearchable his ways!' However, the hidden designs of Providence disclose themselves little by little and become manifest to one who sets himself to ponder the interplay of human events under the all-wise and omnipotent hand of God, in such a way that it is possible for us to arrive at an idea of what the future has in store from a consideration of the teachings of the past. It is for that very reason that we nourish the confident hope that the present century which, being born in pride and arrogance, brought down on itself delusion upon delusion, ruin upon ruin, will yet reap a rich harvest in the field of Catholic Missions, where the good seed has been sown for centuries with prolonged toil and amid tears."

Mechanical civilisation, having become the handmaid of egoism, clouded the human horizon with an apocalyptic destruction of men and things. Christian civilisation, on the other hand, inspired by a love which spends itself in the service of God and of neighbour, is a power creative in every field. To-morrow as yesterday. Which of these will gain the mastery, a mastery none the less certain in the end though it may be slow and contested? Undoubtedly it will be love, the love which conquers all things and of which the noblest promulgator is the missioner. This is the beacon that lights up the future of the Missions with visions of triumph.

THE TWO STANDARDS

IN the Middle Ages, the considerable rapacity of the State was held in check by the Christian principles of the Canon Law, enunciated and insisted on by the Church. These were the chief and sometimes the only check.

As is well known, the Rich espoused the Reformation not because of their religious beliefs—for on the whole they were pious atheists—but because the destruction of the Canon Law removed the main hindrances to Usury, Foreclosure and the general concentration of Property.

In modern times the poor were *surrendered, isolated and helpless*, to the rapacity of the State, not less considerable than it was, and extending now to the Middle Classes. During this period there has been only one check on the State. The Judges and lawyers tended to deserve well of us. They did not, indeed, hold up the Canon Law, but they upheld its child, the Common Law of the Realm, against the extremes of administrative Roman Law set up and applied by the State. They worked in the tradition of better times, and whittled down the mass of Statutory Rules and Orders by whatever means came to hand.

They are to-day the chief and sometimes the sole refuge against the Rule of Bureaucracy. That is, they seek to serve Justice rather than Expediency.

So much it is necessary to say to introduce one of the most important judgments of modern times.

Mr. G. M. Odlum worked and owned a large farm of over 700 acres in Wiltshire. In 1942 he sold it to Mr. R. S. Hudson—then and for some years later Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Odlum had had considerable friction with his County War Agricultural Committee from 1939 onwards, but had carried out faithfully all their orders to plough and sow.

In 1943 there appeared in the Press a statement: "This farm was taken over last summer by Mr. Hudson, and was in very poor condition, but is now showing excellent crops." With some difficulty, the statement was traced to a document issued by the County Committee. It had actually been written by a Mr. W. T. Price, Chief Executive Officer to the Committee, but responsibility was acknowledged by the Chairman, Mr. R. Stratton, against whom Mr. Odlum began proceedings for libel.

The case was heard before Mr. Justice Atkinson, who summed up at great length, and who awarded Mr. Odlum £500 and costs without stay of execution, against the libel complained of. The learned Judge dealt very severely indeed with the contentions and practices, not only of the County Committee, but of the Ministry of Agriculture. An official of the latter declined to release a great deal of the mass of documentation, because it *would be injurious to the public interest*. His Lordship commented with great severity on this attitude towards a case where a citizen's repute was alone concerned, if we exclude the highly improper use of the authority of a Minister who owned the farm in question.

Mr. Odlum's veracity and reliability were expressly upheld, and His Lordship said of Mr. Price, in the course of a lengthy analysis of his evidence: "(he) has satisfied me that he was giving a lot of untrue evidence, and that he was acting in a most malicious manner as regards the plaintiff."

His Lordship also brought out in his judgment a mass of work done for Mr. Hudson, by various State authorities, but largely refused to Mr. Odlum.

Mr. Odlum has deserved well of the citizens, as well as defending his own good name, by persisting in this action. We should like to print Mr. Justice Atkinson's judgment in full, but space forbids. We can do no more here than draw attention to it, and to add that the overbearing and totalitarian attitude of many County Committees is being commented on unfavourably all over the country. The present Minister will be well advised to cut their claws, and the claws of his own Ministry, and to cut them good.

We hold a limited number of copies of the full text of the judgment. They will be sent to the first applicants who enclose one penny postage.

The damages are being paid out of public funds by us, the people of England. The Ministry indemnified the defendant in advance of the ruling and comment of His Majesty's Judge.

THE WAR MEMORIAL DIFFICULTY

We are approaching, if we have not reached, the point where all minds will be exercised by the almost insuperable problem of what we are to do, this time, about a Memorial of the Great War.

Every village, as is well known, has one already. It occupies, frequently, the only possible site. It refers, as a rule, to *The War to End War*, and in any case to *The Great War*. It was not contemplated that another would be necessary before the lettering needed so much as a recutting. But then, it was not contemplated that England would be ruled during that awkward intermission by the sort of people who did rule England.

We are happy to be first in the field with the only possible solution. It has the added merit of making possible the adaptation of existing memorials with no more than a partial re-chiselling. It is true that the lovely English names at the sides and base must disappear. They can be replaced by others—less lovely, less English even—but not less apt.

We must commemorate our dead by celebrating, not the terminals of the period, but its impressive centre. We must make the stone live again for the heroes of 1919 to 1939. It goes without saying that in the event of future wars only dates will need to be added. Space can be left for them.

There can be little doubt that the inscription which follows would not only be best calculated to make the period immortal, but that its terms would command the general assent. We offer it accordingly to a grateful country.

TO THE UNDYING MEMORY
OF ALL THE
FINANCIERS
INDUSTRIALISTS
PLANNERS
BUREAUCRATS
AND
POLITICIANS
WHO
LIVED AND MOVED
AND
HAD THEIR BOODLE
DURING THE YEARS 1919—1939.
THIS MONUMENT IS ERECTED BY AN
UNFORGETFUL COUNTRY
THEY LIVED THAT WE
MIGHT DIE

THE EXPORT DRIVE

Readers will have seen in the daily press how splendidly the export drive is going; of the surge of motor-cars to Patagonia, of the swoop of tinned herrings to Western Australia, of the flood of biscuits to Bermuda. But we are yet far from the figure of 379.28% above the pre-war export level which Professor Blank has calculated as essential to our survival.

It is with pleasure, therefore, that we can give exclusive news of a great forward step, shortly to be made.

A new and hitherto untapped market has been discovered in the Antarctic. As most people know, this vast tract of the world is thickly populated with penguins. What has only recently been realised is the intense suffering borne by these creatures from their cold, not to say frozen feet, in the eternal ice and snow.

Here, then, is a market crying out to be supplied, and we are most happily in a position to supply it. The Government has two million pairs of surplus gum-boots, which, thanks to the invention of an ingenious new machine, can be readily cut down and adapted for penguins. A new factory is to be built for this purpose, which, it is calculated, will employ 2,000 ex-Service men and women for at least five years.

This new crusade for footwear for penguins is one that will touch the heart of every animal-loving Briton. No longer will this vast area of unalleviated pain go untouched; and if our children have for a little longer to go without their gum-boots, that is a sacrifice which the parents, in our more temperate climate, will gladly make.

It must further be added that no exchange of currency is involved. We shall require neither dollars nor sterling; the ships taking out the gum-boots will return with full loads of the finest ice, so expensive to produce in this country, thus making available greatly increased supplies of ice-cream for the masses.

So many, indeed, are the manifest advantages flowing out in every direction from this plan, that it can only be regarded as providential. —A.C.C.