

CURRENT MAGAZINES

The Genoa Conference, Mr. Lloyd George at Work:—Mr. Herbert Sidebotham in the August *Atlantic*.

Musings without Method:—The August *Blackwood's*.

Mr. Lloyd George and the Conservative Party:—Mr. J. St. Loe Strachey in the *Spectator*.

British Personalities:—Mr. E. T. Raymond in the August and September *Atlantic*.

France's Part:—Mr. Sisley Huddleston in the August *Atlantic*.

A Pre-Election Survey:—Mr. Harold Hodge in the August *Nineteenth Century*.

SHAKESPEARE makes Cassius say of Julius Caesar, "Why, man, he doth bestride the world like a Colossus." The career of Mr. Lloyd George, like no other in living memory, enables us to realize that this feat is still possible. Any real study of contemporary movements must centre around the British Prime Minister, and the recent magazine articles are, in their more significant parts, little more than an attempt to interpret what he has done or to forecast what he will do next. They are by no means written in a spirit of reverence for Mr. Lloyd George; some of them, perhaps most, are the very reverse. But the fascination of that indescribable figure is upon them all.

Mr. Sidebotham, who was a press representative at Genoa, asks why that city of all places should have been selected for a great European Conference. It is a beautiful seaport, but an uncomfortable spot for delegates to stay, for it does not shine in hotel accommodation. The big men of the conference were provided with palatial villas, but the mere writers had to look out for themselves. Yet there was a special propriety of a non-material sort in the choice of Genoa. It is the birthplace of Mazzini, that great apostle of small nationalities. It is situated in that northern part of Italy, whose engineering and shipbuilding trades have felt the sting of unemployment, and where in consequence it might be expected that the quest for economic truth would just now be intense. Mr. Sidebotham compares the spirit of the place to that of Manchester. And, among the many other reasons which might have induced America to send delegates, it might have been remembered that Christopher Columbus was born in Genoa.

This reporter tells us that beyond doubt Mr. Lloyd George was there looked upon as the "Man of Destiny," and that the opening session had not been in progress half an hour before he had it under control. If he could have been "in every part of the field at once, and also at the other end of the telegraph where M. Poincaré is intrenched", the success of the conference would have been assured. Mr. Sidebotham's picture of that Hall is exceedingly vivid. We almost imagine we can see those deputies in groups, with conflicting parties each intent on some economic point of its own. No man could be in every part of that economic field at once, for the battle—as Mr. Sidebotham warns us—was on a wide front, and in its confused infighting might be fitly compared to the warfare that set in after the Marne. A representative of one of the smaller Powers remarked about Mr. Lloyd George: "The rest are *officemen*, civil servants more or less competent. He is the Man and the Idea of this Conference."

The Idea for which he stood was that of the unity of Europe. He had no "fixed principles", as the phrase goes; that is, he had no principles so fixed that they could not be adjusted to changing circumstance, so long as the one ideal of bringing together the nations was preserved. Mr. Sidebotham reminds us that—however hard it may be to conceive a break-up of the civilization under which we have been reared—it is in fact true that Europe is on the brink of a miserable relapse into the Middle Ages. His successive efforts to avoid this, in the very changeful circumstances within which he had to act during the last few years, supply the key to the Premier's apparent inconsistency. Thus it is the same man who now pleads for a more lenient view of Reparations and who set his hand to the Treaty of Versailles; it is the same who spent a hundred millions sterling on expeditions against Russia and who now recognises those rulers of Russia against whom he fought! At the time of the Versailles Treaty he dared not risk a rupture with France. And it was the foolish tactics of the official Liberals which forced Mr. Lloyd George to work with the Conservatives. But he has not really changed in ideals. "No, his ideals now are no sudden conversion, dictated by party convenience; they are the old grain, showing again as the grime of war is cleansed away."

Mr. Sidebotham is sure that the British Premier made new friends at Genoa, and that he changed suspicion into confidence. This article was written before the conference was at an end, and no doubt the writer would now desire to revise some of his guesses and predictions. Undoubtedly there has been much disappointment regarding the issue. Men now speak of "the Genoa fiasco."

The chief interest of the article lies in the picture it gives of Mr. Lloyd George in his struggle for a reconstructed Europe against the fierce opposition and unmanageable spite of the French. The European confusion is horrible:—

Only one man on this side is working to make sense of it all. Whatever his faults may have been, there is no hope for Europe at present but in him. Who is Poincaré that he should loll in his easy-chair in Paris, with a telephone receiver at his ear, and damn the Conference people for standing up? The present state of Europe will not get better of itself—indeed, one may well despair of the future of Europe—if the half-baked economics and the puerile politics of revenge for which the present rulers of France stand are to prevail.

THERE is always much diversion to be got out of *Blackwood's*, and in the August issue its old enterprise of tearing Mr. Lloyd George to pieces is taken up afresh with a zest that time cannot wear out and disappointment cannot damp down. The indefatigable writer of "Musings without Method" will not listen even to Lord Birkenhead's plea that the Prime Minister is a bulwark against insurgent Labour. Lord Birkenhead, he tells us, is a demagogue, though one recalls how in years gone by the same authority bestowed benediction on the policy of F. E. Smith. The patriot of "Musings without Method" can see in a possible Labour government no greater risk to the peace and security of the realm than is found in the present infamous Coalition! For he assures us that the Labour men would be far more honest and far less cunning, that they could not cower more abjectly before assassins, and that they could show no keener sympathy with rebellion. He asks, "Do you think Labour's sympathy with Bolshevism could be more openly unashamed than Mr. Lloyd George's?" One is rather appalled to learn that the oracle of *Blackwood's* would prefer to be ruled by Messrs. Seddon and Stanton, rather than by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.

The sins of the Government which just now disgust him most are four: (1) the scandal of Ireland, (2) the purchase of honours, (3) the proposed alteration of the House of Lords, (4) the scheme to provide a "national home" for the Jews. We are reminded how one can no longer rely upon British citizenship to ensure that those who possess that once high privilege shall not be outraged with impunity. "At this moment any miscreant, whom it amuses to rob or to assassinate an English citizen, may work his will in Ireland without let or hindrance." The utmost to be hoped for is that in

such an event "representations" will be made by English Ministers who approach the Provisional Government of the Irish Free State, cap in hand, and offer protests that will no doubt be thrown into the waste-paper basket! *Blackwood's* will not indeed put all the blame for this upon Mr. Lloyd George. We learn that Mr. Asquith led the way, by that policy of inaction which bore its bitter fruit in the rising of 1916. In older and better days Ministers "took their duties gravely", and did not feel that what was expected of them was no more than "a fierce clinging to office and the emoluments of office." But the Asquith method, which a Coalition enslaved to Mr. Lloyd George has carried on, has impressed upon Sinn Fein that Great Britain will gladly endure anything and everything at rebel hands. Nor can the British public be aroused to "a proper appreciation of the prevailing anarchy." It is enfranchised, and apathetic. The writer recalls how in ancient Athens there was a way of inflicting condign punishment on Ministers who sacrificed all principle to expediency. They could be "ostracised" from the city for ten years. The ostracism of Mr. Lloyd George would appeal mightily to this critic as a device for social reconstruction.

A further vice of the Prime Minister is declared to be his systematic corruption of the Upper House. It seems that he sends thither his own friends in droves. They pay cash down to the party funds, and thus "there now sit upon the benches of what was once a distinguished chamber a mob of men whose one merit has been a sinister generosity." The cash they pay is used for "such enterprises as the manufacturing of a muddled opinion, the vile thing known as propaganda, and the sending down of carpet-baggers to innocent constituencies, which might deserve better treatment." Mr. Lloyd George, we are told, has been lavish in bestowing titles upon the proprietors of newspapers,—"the short cut known to demagogues of establishing a reptile press." There should be an enquiry into this whole business, and steps should be taken to remove from the Prime Minister the temptation of recommending for peerages men rich and useful to himself.

But even this, according to *Blackwood's*, does not fill up the cup of Mr. Lloyd George's iniquity. The atrabilious article which I am summarizing passes from an anti-Irish and an anti-Coalition mood into a mood of ferocious anti-Semitism. The writer opens the vials of his wrath upon the Jews, to whom "in a careless moment of untrammelled fancy" we promised Palestine for a national home. As if the Jews wanted a national home! Like the cuckoo, they prefer the nests of others, already built. They make profit out of their

wanderings; the money—which is their national obsession—can be most readily got from the accumulated hoards of others. With a dislike to labour, they have a turn for living on other people's labours. The few "Zionists" who have sought a refuge in Palestine are for the most part Bolsheviks who seek to escape from the doom that impends upon them. Who ever saw a prosperous Hebrew packing his trunk to leave Paris or London or Berlin for the sandy deserts of the Holy Land?

And have not the Arabs at least as good a right as the Bolshevik Jews to a "national home"? We promised to them that they should have self-government. Are the Moslems and Christians, who constitute 93 per cent of the total population of Palestine, to be forced under the rule of some thousands of unwelcome guests? In the ways of cunning finance the Arabs will be beaten hollow by the Jews. They will be rendered helots in their own house, by statesmen that used to believe in the self-determining rights of peoples. Moreover, the Holy Places of Palestine will be profaned by the race whose very name recalls the Crucifixion.

Such is the strain in which *Blackwood's* now gives a lead to public sentiment. There is much comment which one might offer, but we are dealing with a grandmother among Reviews, and of grandmothers it is not always fitting to say just what one thinks.

THERE used to be dignity and restraint too about *The Spectator*, but the opening of one of its recent editorials seems designed—like the practice of the fat boy in *Pickwick*—to make one's flesh creep:—

Things are moving in the underworld of politics—strange and ominous things. In all probability, when their significance becomes apparent and the world learns what has happened, it will be too late to avoid the consequences which they will bring in their train, or to turn them and modify them to good purposes.

The reader may be relieved to learn that this means nothing more horrible than a prediction of Mr. Lloyd George's coming announcement that he has turned Conservative. As the *Spectator* is practically Conservative itself, one may be surprised at its alarm. But the alarm is very real. The editor fears, and perhaps with good cause, that whatever party Mr. Lloyd George joins will not have made him a convert to its programme, for the Prime Minister will transform every programme to his own purposes.

The signs of this imminent tragedy are read in the columns of the Government press. It seems that the Lloyd George organs

have—all of a sudden—changed their note. They used to preach coalition. Now they preach the need for a homogeneous and compact party. This creed, so long associated with the “Die-Hards”, and so long branded by the Prime Minister himself as outworn partisan fanaticism, is being insisted upon by its former enemies, and for that reason its former exponents are asking what can possibly be “in the air”. The *Spectator* always knows what is in the air. Mr. Lloyd George, we learn, is anxious for an appeal to the country at the earliest moment which promises him a personal triumph. As soon as he has had a clear month of smooth sea and fairly bright sky, as soon as he can present the appearance for even a short time of having “successfully poured oil upon the troubled waters of the world”, he will launch a General Election. Let the Irish Provisional Government win its victory over the Irregulars, and the Reparations problem be glossed over, and the dilemma of the Allied debts get a temporary quietus, and an excuse be obtained for reducing taxes. That will be the psychological moment to issue writs for next parliament.

But, the *Spectator* points out, the only voters upon whom Mr. Lloyd George can rely are the Unionist voters, and they are for the time being out of temper with him:—

They have just begun to see that for the past four years the Prime Minister has been sucking the blood of the Unionist Party, with the result that the Party, instead of being, as it ought to be, strong, united, and loyal to its leaders, is split and rent like Caesar’s garment.

It appears that all sorts of anti-Constitutional and anti-Economic policies have been imposed upon the Coalition by the autocratic Premier, in order to placate the Liberal wing. And it has turned out that this Liberal wing, though fairly strong in the House of Commons, is a phantom in the country.

Mr. Lloyd George, we read, knows this very well himself. To use his own phrase, he has “explored every avenue” with great thoroughness. So, since the Coalition Liberals have no electoral value, he has turned to look elsewhere for a robust following that he can lead. The “Wee Frees” will have none of him. Nor will Labour accept him at any price:—

The further the deputies went down that avenue, the more they found every tree covered with notices “Nothing Doing.”

So a Prime Minister, who is not scrupulous about what party he leads, so long as he leads a party that can be made to win, is forced to fall back upon the Conservatives.

He has devoted private friends among the prominent Conservatives who will serve under him anywhere, if only he will accept their party label. Lord Balfour, Mr. Bonar Law, Lord Curzon will be excellent lieutenants. Rather than become politically doomed, what would the Prime Minister do? The *Spectator* knows:—

Unless we have misread his character and the whole of his political past, what he would be certain to do would be to accept the inevitable. His next move would be to do what we believe he is doing, namely, to prompt the newspapers which support him to write about a homogeneous Party behind a homogeneous Cabinet being the true foundation of political power.

So the editor looks for some grumblings, followed by abject submissions, among Mr. Lloyd George's followers. The control of the party war chest will accomplish much. There will be "business in Peerages, Baronetages, Knighthoods conducted as usual during alterations." Then will emerge a definitely Conservative phalanx led by the arch magician.

Take this view, propounded by Mr. Strachey, for what it is worth. For some time back the *Spectator* has been writing about Mr. Lloyd George in a strain of mingled rage and terror. It plainly desires above all else to keep his overwhelming influence on the side of orderly government, but it no less plainly believes that the Prime Minister is not to be trusted one inch beyond the point at which his personal ambition will be served. Sometimes it proposes schemes for tying him down to a definite formula and a definite programme. But the thought returns that this enterprise is of the riskiest. In truth the spectacle of the *Spectator* making fetters for Mr. Lloyd George is of the sort that contributes to the gaiety of nations. The fetters are likely in the end to be rivetted on other limbs. But the business has another side, which casts its humorous aspect into the shade. One reads the British magazines just now with a sombre sense of disappointment. It is painful to know that in the old country political controversy is so clouded with suspicion. One is cheered to read such abrupt dismissals of the whole recriminatory campaign as that by Lord Balfour. Speaking of Mr. Lloyd George he said:—

He is one of the greatest men in the history of the world.
What is the use of abusing him?

MR. E. T. RAYMOND is among the best photographers of the political scene at Westminster, and his special gift is for the portrayal of outstanding men. He has given us many such por-

traits, but as the scene changes from year to year not a few of his characters have to be re-drawn again and again. In the *Atlantic Monthly* he has sketched Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. Asquith, Lord Grey, and the various leaders of Labour, as they appear to him at the present stage of their changeful careers. The sketches are incidentally illuminating in reference to many a problem of the hour. And, whatever we may think about their wisdom, their wit at least is undeniable.

The present parliamentary Opposition, we are told, lives not upon its own strength, but upon the successive blunders of the Government. Mr. Raymond has unearthed a fable in "the Japanese Aesop" about a poor farmer who one day had the luck to find a hare that had stunned itself by colliding with the stump of a tree. The farmer decided to work no more, but to plant tree-stumps and watch for hares running against them. But his luck never recurred. So it is with the opponents of Mr. Lloyd George, who are perpetually on the look out for the Premier's accidents and misadventures. They do not find it necessary even to set traps, for fortune has favoured them, and criticism is easy:—

There is scarcely an error of commission or omission which the Prime Minister and his colleagues have failed to perpetrate during the last three years. Their record is nothing so simple as doing the things which they ought not to have done and leaving undone the things they ought to have done. There are few things that they have done that they have not also come to undo, and they have done most things to which, at some time or other, they have declared no pressure should compel them.

One would suppose that a Government with such a record would be an easy prey to its enemies. But—according to Mr. Raymond—the feebleness of the Opposition is such that the Premier can escape no matter how gross are his faults. "Inconsistency" has ceased to be a charge of any importance against the Government in office. "Resignation on a question of principle is now almost unknown." One Minister, we are told,—Dr. Addison—resigned because his policy had been reversed. This proceeding, which used to be so common, was looked on as almost impertinent. People thought him "presumptuous to indulge a delicacy not practised by his betters."

Mr. Raymond does not think that this spirit of opportunism arises from any exceptional greed of office in the present race of Ministers. He explains it as the outcome of a vastly increased desire to "do things", so that inconsistency arises less because leaders are now unscrupulous than because they aim at effecting

far more than contented an earlier generation. They make more mistakes because they have a more spacious ideal of what they ought to do. England, this critic says, expects far more government than she used to expect or to desire. Time was when the average British citizen felt like saying to his Government:—

Take your salaries, concoct your jobs, talk your nonsense, break every commandment of God and Lindley Murray, but spare us one thing: do not govern us.

But the average British citizen no longer desires thus to be left alone, and Ministers are making a feverish attempt to meet his demand. "They are all consumed with a raging desire to do things, or (if they can think of nothing to do) to undo something that has already been done—the more solid, the better." Hence the enormous multiplication of new bills about matters that were once left to individual effort. A Minister gets an idea; "in a month it becomes a Bill; in three months an Act; and in twelve, a Repeal Bill."

The British public, our writer goes on to say, watches this philanthropic fury, listens in "wide-eyed bovine astonishment" while plans for its benefit are explained. But the public has already been many times enlightened about the value of these plans, and the Coalition which proposed them has become unpopular. Mr. Raymond sees in Mr. Lloyd George himself a considerable change within the last few years. He can still rise to a special emergency, "but he has no longer the zest, the gay courage, and the boundless self-confidence, which once distinguished him." His situation and mood are like those of Mr. Balfour in 1906 just before his great defeat.

But defeat is now warded off by the general disbelief in any better alternative if the present Ministry should be turned out. There is no faith in the titular Opposition leader. Falling back upon another Japanese illustration, Mr. Raymond likens Mr. Asquith to the Japanese Napoleon who after he was dead was mounted on his charger, plated in habiliments of war, and shown at the head of his army in the hope that his traditional prestige might keep up morale among the troops even after his spirit had departed. But the trick was a failure, and Mr. Raymond thinks the Independent Liberals would have fared better if they had put a living sergeant-major at their head, than by trying to parade the defunct dignity of Mr. Asquith. He quotes as a token of this "life-in-death" a little incident which he himself witnessed. Mr. Asquith was addressing the Cobden Club. Few of those present were under seventy years old, and the chairman was over eighty. "Every argument, allusion, and form of speech belonged to the golden age

of Queen Victoria." Sir John Simon, we are told is just "a younger, smaller, more acrid, and less majestic Asquith." "There is often a rough justice in nicknames, and those who know Sir John Simon best call him 'Foxy'." Lord Grey, who used to be so highly praised, has fallen under an unjust depreciation. He has no charm or witchery of speech. He belongs to that order of men whom everyone respects but nobody idolizes. As a popular leader he suffers under the disadvantage of being a peer. Lord Robert Cecil, in trying to recommend him for office, stated the matter very quaintly:—

Perhaps I may be allowed to put it like this. I do not know of any other man who differs so completely both in his qualities and his defects from the Prime Minister, and I am quite sure that the people of this country require in their statesmen that characteristic above all others at the present time.

MR. Sisley Huddleston believes himself to be a true friend of France, and exercises a friend's privilege of candour. He tells the French that whereas three years ago they had friends even among their enemies, they have to-day enemies even among their friends. A tremendous change of opinion has swept all the shores of the Atlantic, and now one Power is regarded as obstructing the way to a reasonable settlement of the world's affairs. The charge is not just the old one of Imperialism or Militarism. It is the charge of selfishness. Other nations have learned co-operation. The French are at least believed to be jealously guarding an interest of their own which takes no account of the rest of the world.

We are reminded that they live in a country more self-sufficing than most others. Half the population is engaged in agriculture, and—unlike the practice in others days—it is rural France that now dictates policy to Paris. In politics the peasant is very conservative, just as in his farming methods he is not given to change. Thus, whatever be the compromising mood of others, the French peasant demands that Germany shall pay to the last farthing, and can see no need of renewed relations with an outlandish Russia. Geographically, England is insular while France is continental. But in a deeper sense this contrast reverses the truth:—

France can wrap herself, if she pleases, as in a cloak, and ignore the outside world. For England, dependent upon industry, upon foreign markets, upon the widest possible diffusion of her commerce, every closed door is a disaster, every outlawed country is a lost customer.

The specific reproach against French statesmen, to which Mr. Huddleston refers, is that they remain so obdurate in demanding the

last item of reparations from Germany, although for the re-establishment of Europe that debt will have in some degree to be remitted. The strength of France's claim lies in the fact that she simply stands where she stood in 1919, and requires the payment of what by the Treaty was assured to her. "She continues to point to her ruined North, her unbuckled budgets; and she states with some truth that the alternatives for her are German payments and French bankruptcy." M. Loucheur says that France cannot acquit her liabilities to America unless Germany first pays her. In Mr. Huddleston's view this is the plain truth, and the tragedy of the case lies in the fact that Mr. Lloyd George—whom France at present specially distrusts—is speaking the plain truth also. To carry out the Treaty of Versailles is impossible; yet a signatory to that instrument may well complain of having been "betrayed" if its terms are not held binding. Was Mr. Lloyd George then frankly wrong in his policy of 1919, as writers like Mr. J. M. Keynes have been proclaiming upon the housetops? No doubt he was. But it does not very much trouble Mr. Lloyd George to have this inconsistency demonstrated against him.

Mr. Huddleston sees much ground for sympathy with the French. They suffered to a terrible extent from invasion. They know that the Germans are just biding the time for revenge. They believe that upon the Teutonic mind concessions have no soothing effect. They disbelieve the whole story about a coming day when feuds will be set aside, and trust only in keeping their powder dry. Already the Germans have made an alliance with Russia, and French statesmen feel by no means sure of either British or American support in another Armageddon:—

What can we do but take care to get our own blow in first? If we allow the Russo-German menace to develop, then we are lost! Better seize at once the Ruhr, which is an arsenal of Germany, from which flows the economic life-blood of Germany.

On this account, Mr. Huddleston implores British publicists not to turn upon France so savagely as they are doing just now, for those who so short a time back promised the payments cannot in fairness rail at the unreasonableness of a people that still expects to receive them, and that must be admitted to have good ground for alarm if they are not exacted. His view seems to be that Mr. Lloyd George at Versailles had no option but to promise that which it was impossible to fulfil! And for the moment at least there is very general support for going back upon his bargain. The late Lord Northcliffe took up the cudgels for France with great energy;

but that powerful journalist, Mr. J. L. Garvin, "beggared the dictionary" in his search for abusive epithets to hurl at our old ally. A most competent London observer has written to Mr. Huddleston that to-day "A row with France is the best card in the whole of Lloyd George's bag of electoral tricks." All the same, this critic feels that the break-up of the Entente would be a fearful disaster. He cries out for America to come back into the world settlement, no longer passing by on the other side, or just surveying the chaos from across the Atlantic:—

It seems to me that a great flaming gulf lies ahead of us, and that we shall escape it only if France too realizes in time her solidarity with the rest of the world, and the rest of the world realizes its solidarity with France.

The whole tenor of the article is against "splendid isolation." That way lies, not safety, but ruin.

A NOTE of pessimism is sounded by Mr. Harold Hodge in the August *Nineteenth Century*. His article begins with the expression of a doubt whether in politics it is not a fact that ignorance is bliss and folly lies in being wise. Not one voter in ten or in a hundred has either time or equipment for thinking out his own political faith, and if he were not satisfied with something far less than this "the whole machine of representative government would break." The average voter needs the "party crutch," but just now is trying to dispense with it, and trying in vain. Moreover, the old party lines are no longer there. The war was not an interruption, but a permanent diversion of the course of European life. Criticism in parliament is not the effective thing it once was. Mr. Hodge quotes with approval Captain Elliot's likening of it to "banging one another about with bladders." There is a maximum of noise and fury, but nobody is hurt and nothing is done.

British Liberalism, we are told, has ceased to be a Church, and is now only a creed. Its old time strength has passed into the Labour group. The rump serving under Mr. Asquith is trying fruitlessly to live upon the name of its chief. The Unionists, again, have given up all that their name once symbolized, all that constituted the justification of their parliamentary existence. They have become the willing agents of a policy which they came into being in parliament to resist. Thus of the two historic parties one has committed suicide, and the other is dying with the slow decay of old age. What will become of the individual members? Mr. Hodge thinks that the

average Liberals will join Labour, while the average Tories have just lost their way, and each of them must "make a track out of the wood for himself."

It is for these wandering Conservatives that Mr. Hodge seems most concerned. Their support of Mr. Lloyd George during the last few years has, he thinks, been a grim experience for them, and they are completely disillusioned. His language about the Premier could hardly be surpassed for bitterness. Mr. Hodge arraigns the whole Irish policy, and finds that—on any assumption we can make to explain it—Mr. Lloyd George stands condemned:—

Either way he is proved to be unfit to carry on the government of any country. Either he is contemptibly incapable or he is profoundly immoral, not to speak of the possibility of both.

His critic goes on to denounce the Russian adventure. "Mr. Lloyd George never shrinks from touching the unclean thing, whether in Ireland or Russia. Maybe he thinks his touch will make it clean, but experience so far hardly favours the theory."

The so-called "Die-Hards" are commended to us as honest, clean, straight-forward. But while their virtues are those of the heart, their defects are those of the head. "How can anyone have confidence in them as constructive men of affairs?" The Labour Party is growing, and seems to have more convictions than any other group. Mr. Hodge does not very greatly fear its succession to power, for he thinks that responsibility would sober it, and deprecates as unwise the talk of a general combination against Labour. But alarm revisits his mind when he recalls how Labour leaders have associated themselves with views on foreign policy, imperial development, the Army and Navy, Ireland, with which no Tory and few Conservatives can sympathise. The idea of a Centre Party in some form haunts Mr. Hodge, and he looks wistfully towards Mr. Winston Churchill as a possible chieftain. "He is the only man in the front rank whom our Imperialist who is a social reformer can follow." But then, Mr. Churchill is hampered by his own past!

Thus the article ends, as it began, in gloom. Mr. Hodge belongs to that rather numerous class of critics who furiously denounce the men with no fixed programme, and show no less furiously that no fixed programme is possible. I have summarized these articles to show the tempest of abuse amid which Mr. Lloyd George has just now to steer his way. Can we wonder that the weary Titan sometimes threatens to lay down his load? Or that this

threat is generally enough to still the voice of rancour, and to bring back to line those who fear lest a worse thing should befall them by a change? For, in their heart of hearts, men know that the tempest is Mr. Lloyd George's native element. Quieter times may render possible an experiment in other leadership. But, by friends and enemies alike, he alone is trusted to ride the whirlwind and direct the storm.

H. L. S.