

Voice of Michael

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subdivided, and so we get the tinkers, tailors, farmers, cobblers, bankers, and so forth, of the world. Why cannot the civilised nations of the world so regard themselves and get on with the job, instead of watching with jealous, distrustful eyes the work and movements of their neighbours? We are still suffering acutely from the mischievous interruption in the closely knit international relationships which existed, delicate as the gossamer threads of a cobweb, prior to the Great War.

The League of Nations and other important Pacific formations are attempting to keep the world to-day on an even keel. They can all achieve nothing without being backed by a sense of mutual dependance. No longer can Great Britain say "As an island we are safe!" Instead of the Island making for safety, there is the danger that it may prove a trap. Do not let us think that this plea for sane internationalism means the entire submersion of national ideals; on the contrary, the plea is for the national outlook to be supplemented—not supplanted.

The world to-day is in a hopeless mess! Theories for its disentanglement are as plentiful, and about as useful, as weeds in a badly kept lawn. The call for action in great crises of the past has been to men who by birth, education, training or nature, are already great. To-day we live in a democratic era, and the responsibility for the future lies with the common man. Will he rise to the occasion so that succeeding generations will call him blessed, or will they say sorrowfully, when reviewing the history of the 20th Century:

"They knew not the time of their visitation."

Russia's Five Year Plan

DR. G. H. SCHOLEFIELD, Librarian to Parliament, placed listeners under a further debt of gratitude for the very informative and solid nature of his talk last Wednesday evening.

The doctor, in response to the appreciation which marked his earlier discussion of Russia, amplified details about her Five Year Plan and its principal inspiration, Joseph Stalin. A native of Georgia, four times committed to Siberia, and four times an escapee therefrom, a devotee of Lenin and the recipient of his mantle on his death, this man is now the driving force of Russia's Five Year Plan. Will that plan win out? That is the question which is of major importance to the world to-day. Uncompromising Communism is Stalin's aim. After expropriating the land of the aristocracy after the revolution, he continued his campaign by depriving over three millions of Kulaks (as the better-class peasants are known) of their property.

Three years ago 13 per cent. of all produce came from the farms of Kulaks. Last year only 24 per cent. came from that source. The former owners have been robbed of their lands and banished into mass slavery.

With timber, wood, coal and petrol Russia is seeking the mass exploitation of primary products. In those fields a certain success would seem to have been attained, as the product is amenable to

mass treatment. In dairying, and those forms of agriculture requiring more intelligence, equal success has not been won, nor would seem to be likely to be won, for the intelligence of the peasant is at fault. Similarly in the factories the same factors of ignorant and non-tractable workers seem to be limiting success. Russia showed herself to be able to build the factories and to equip them with the most modern machines, but machinery is no good without human control, and in the human factor Russia has so far proved deficient. Her workers, ignorant and slothful, have proved bad material for mass factory effort.

In spite of the deficiencies that have been pointed out, Russia's experiment constitutes unquestionably one of the most interesting efforts in the field of human government ever witnessed. The effect upon the huge population of that country will be followed with intense interest throughout the world, and lessons, either of an affirmative or a negative character, may be learned that will definitely affect the whole course of future civilisation.

Dr. Scholefield concluded a very meaty 20 minutes by giving a list of books of value. Among these were: "The Five Year Plan," by G. T. Drinko; "Broken Earth," "Humanity Uprooted," and "Red Bread," by Maurice Hindus; "The Economic Life of Soviet Russia," by Dr. Calvin Hoover; "The Soviet Five Year Plan," by H. R. Knickerbocker; and, in the fiction field, "Cement," by F. Gladkov; "Bruski," by Panferov, and "Without Cherry Blossom," and "Three Pairs of Silk Stockings," by P. Romanof.

Health and the Citizen

A RECENT talk by Dr. Hughes, of the Health Department, should prove valuable if it quickens our thoughts to the responsibility resting on every citizen in the effort to maintain national good health. As the speaker pointed out, without citizens there can be no nation; without healthy citizens the nation is decadent. From a purely economic viewpoint, the unhealthy citizen is either non-productive or, at least, produces at a value well below par. Prevention being better than cure, it behoves every one of us to take the simple steps outlined by the Doctor, which will prevent, or at least check the spread of disease.

Two of the principal causes of ill-health and mortality in the Dominion are heart disease and cancer. The former is frequently the result of avoidable overstrain, while cancer often develops as a result of some perfectly simple cause, such as the tongue brushing over an uneven tooth.

In all cases of infectious diseases the plentiful use of a good disinfectant, immediate isolation of the patient, and prompt notification of the Health Department may prevent much unnecessary suffering and loss. For the rest, greater attention to personal hygiene, care by employees in certain trades (printers, and those coming into daily contact with lead), the abatement of dust and smoke, the increasing use of open-air schools, and so forth, will all be rewarded by a greater measure of national health.

It would seem that the members of the medical profession are not quite unanimous as to the advisability of



Drama in New Zealand.

MISS ELIZABETH BLAKE, writing from Home to a friend in Wellington, advises that she has already seen the secretary of the British Drama League in connection with her campaign for the development of drama in New Zealand. She received a cordial welcome, and has been asked to speak at the Autumn Conference at Hurl and make an appeal on behalf of drama in the Dominions, with special reference to New Zealand. She is hopeful that she may find a producer of the right calibre to come out to the Dominion for, possibly, two years. Miss Blake has also seen the chief organiser

After Two Years

She is all so slight
And tender and white
As a May morning.
She walks without hood
At dusk. It is good
To hear her sing.

It is God's will
That I shall love her still
As He loves Mary.
And night and day
I will go forth to pray
That she love me.

She is as gold,
Lovely, and far more cold.
Do thou pray with me,
For if I win grace
To kiss twice her face
God has done well to me.
—Richard Aldington.

of the women's institutes, and found her most friendly and anxious to help. It is her intention to attend a school for producers in August and undertake other coaching as well in London in the coming winter. The development of drama in Britain is proceeding apace, and wherever Miss Blake went she advises that she saw clever posters advertising plays of Shakespeare and worth-while moderns, these plays being given by amateurs in tiny villages and small towns as well as big towns.

A Comment.

FROM London, Cordella writes characteristically: "Bernard Shaw is still going strong, and has once more vigorously denounced the Labour Go-

building up national health to a point which makes it more immune from disease, or, alternatively widening their knowledge as to the best method of fighting disease after its appearance. From the viewpoint of the average layman there can surely be but one reply—keep the disease germs strictly at bay. Incidentally, do not forget that both the fly and the rat are two of the greatest germ carriers in the world. Show mercy on neither!

vernment for not allowing Trotsky into England. It is absurd, isn't it? A Labour Government taking such a ridiculous attitude, too! Have you read Trotsky's book, 'The Rise and Fall of a Dictator'? It is fascinating. And so are all Trotsky's articles in the 'Manchester Guardian'."

O Paradise!

A MINIATURE house, made to a scale of two-fifths the size of an ordinary house, will be presented to Princess Elizabeth when she reaches her sixth birthday next year. The Duchess of York has given her approval to the gift, but its existence will be kept secret and as a surprise for the Princess. The house is to be shown at the Ideal Home Exhibition at Cardiff, and the Building Trade Exhibition at Swansea, and then redecorated for its royal owner. It is in no sense a doll's house. Small children can move comfortably in it because it is made to fit them, but grown-ups will not be able to get inside the door. There are six rooms, completely furnished; miniature stairs leading from the ground to the first floor. Pictures by well-known artists hang on the walls, there is a kitchen and scullery, with electricity and running water throughout the house. What a rapturous playground!

Street Scenes.

FROM Dunedin comes the following from one possessed of seeing eye and understanding heart:—

In George Street, swept by icy blast from snow-crowned hill closing round the town, I meet the Rev. —, looking ill, haggard of eye, and thin as a rake. "Busy morning," he says in passing. "Ninety grown-ups and 60 children for food and clothing." "You need a woollen scarf yourself," I say severely. "Never wrap up," he says in his hoarse, tired voice. "Get a cold if I do," and hurries away to another of multitudinous good deeds. . . .

Then comes a man selling furniture polish. "Tin, lady! Only 1/-." I buy two. "How are things?" I ask. "Pretty good," he replies. "I tramped the North Island, but down here (the hills bad for me heart. But I'm much better now that I go without dinner five days a week." Goes off cheerily. . . .

Scene: Attic overlooking slum. I and my "little dressmaker" confer on bringing last year's suit up to date. Up rickety stairs comes hero of the piece. "Put your sign up, miss?" he suggests. Permission accorded, exit whistling with some conviction. "Out of work," I'm told. "Won't take charity. Cleans my window" (shining crystal-clear in cutting atmosphere of sunshine after hail). "He'd do anything for a sprat." "Sprat?" I query. "Sixpence," she tells me. "He's very thin," I remark with misgiving. "Doesn't get enough to eat," she replies sadly. "Where does he live?" I ask. "Anywhere!" she says. "There may be heaven, there must be hell!"

Meantime there is our earth here—
well!"