

HELPING YOU to KEEP POSTED

Your Somebody Else—

ONE of the most persistent instincts in humanity, according to Samuel McChord Crothers, a writer in the Atlantic, is the desire to be somebody else. It is rooted, he thinks, in the nature of things, and explained by the fact that every man can remember the time when he was somebody else. "What we call personal identity is a very changeable thing, as all of us realize when we look over old photographs and read old letters."

Dr. Crothers believes that the fact that every man desires to be somebody else throws light upon many of the aberrations of artists and literary men. Painters, dramatists, musicians, poets and novelists are just as human, Dr. Crothers observes, as housemaids and railway managers and barbers. A musician wants to be a painter and use his violin as if it was a brush. A painter wants to be a musician and paint symphonies. A prose-writer gets tired of writing prose and wants to be a poet. You go to the theatre with the simple-minded Shakespearean idea that the play's the thing. But the playwright wants to be a pathologist. You discover that you have dropped into a grewsome clinic. Or you take up a novel expecting it to be a work of fiction, and you find that the novelist wants to be your spiritual adviser.

The conclusion that Dr. Crothers draws is that "you do not know a man until you know his lost Atlantis, and his Utopia for which he still hopes to set sail." We are told further:

"As civilization advances and work becomes more specialized, it becomes impossible for any one to find free and full development for all his natural powers in any recognized occupation. What then becomes of the other selves? The answer must be that playgrounds must be provided for them outside the confines of daily business. As work becomes more engrossing and narrowing, the need is more urgent for recognized and carefully guarded periods of leisure.

"The old Hebrew sage declared, 'Wisdom cometh from the opportunity of leisure.' It does not mean that a wise man must belong to what we call the leisure classes. It means that if one has only a little free time at his disposal, he must use that time for the refreshment of his hidden selves. If he cannot have a Sabbath rest of twenty-four hours, he must learn to sanctify little Sabbaths, it may be of ten minutes' length. In them he shall do no manner of work. It is not enough that the self that works and receives wages shall be recognized and protected; the world must be made safe for our other selves. Does not the Declaration of Independence say that every man has an inalienable right to the pursuit of happiness?"

Chesterton on Advertising Art—

IN his latest collection of essays, G. K. Chesterton writes of a new kind of Utopia—the kind that hard-headed business men and Capitalists are going to establish for themselves if they ever get a chance. That they will get a chance and that they may accomplish their aims is Chesterton's haunting fear. "We must hit Capitalism and hit it hard," he says, "for the plain and definite reason that it is growing stronger."

Taking up one after another certain aspects and departments of modern life, Chesterton describes what he thinks they will be like in "this paradise of plutocrats, this Utopia of gold and brass in which the great story of England seems so likely to end." He proposes to say what he thinks "our new masters, the mere millionaires," will do with certain human interests and institutions, such as art, science,

jurisprudence or religion—"unless we strike soon enough to prevent them." And he starts with the arts.

Most people, he observes, have seen a picture called "Bubbles," painted by Sir John Millais and used for the advertisement of a celebrated soap. This he holds up as an awful example. The first effect of the triumph of Capitalism will be that there will be no more art that might not just as well be advertisement.

I do not necessarily mean that there will be no good art; much of it might be, much of it already is, very good art. You may put it, if you please, in the form that there has been a vast improvement in advertisements. Certainly there would be nothing surprising if the head of a negro advertizing Somebody's Blacking nowadays were finished with as careful and subtle colors as one of the old and superstitious painters would have wasted on the negro king who brought gifts to Christ. But the improvement of advertisements is the degradation of artists. It is their degradation for this clear and vital reason: that the artist will work, not only to please the rich, but only to increase their riches; which is a considerable step lower. After all, it was as a human being that a pope took pleasure in a cartoon by Raphael or a prince took pleasure in a statuette of Cellini. The prince paid for the statuette; but he did not expect the statuette to pay him. It is my impression that no cake of soap can be found anywhere in the cartoons which the Pope ordered of Raphael. And no one who knows the small-minded cynicism of our plutocracy, its secrecy, its gambling spirit, its contempt of conscience, can doubt that the artist advertiser will often be assisting enterprises over which he will have no moral control, and of which he could feel no moral approval. He will be working to spread quack medicines, queer investments; and will work for Marconi instead of Medici.

—Too Many Stores, Says Armour

ANY charge against the packers as being responsible for or as unduly profiting by the high prices of meat is not supported by the facts, says J. Ogden Armour, in Colliers. It is the stock-raiser, and incidentally the retailer who is benefiting more than the packer. It is his opinion, in this connection, that "before the price of meat and of other food products as well can be materially reduced, there will have to be a far-reaching change in the demands made by the public upon the retail trade. The retail dealer is the last link in the long chain extending from the farm to the table, and, while he does nothing other than act as a distributor, he is compelled to charge in the neighborhood of twenty per cent. of the price of each article or each pound of meat in order to cover the cost of doing business." Nevertheless, we are surprised to read that "the great majority of retailers are the victims of high prices rather than beneficiaries thereof." Armour believes that the great bulk of the retailers will welcome a change in the present expensive method of retailing that will enable them materially to reduce their cost of doing business.

In the first place, there are too many stores. It is obvious that if there were only a third as many as now exist, each one would do about three times the volume of business it is now doing, and a huge amount of overhead and fixed expense would be cut off, making it possible to sell goods on a much smaller margin than is now the case. Those merchants who are now doing a legitimate business should be aided, but I believe the public has the same right to limit the number of stores as a means for reducing prices as it has to limit the number of saloons as a means for combating the liquor evil. . . . Neither can the retailers reduce overhead expenses while the customers demand four or five

deliveries a day and extra fine wrapping paper and colored string and all that sort of thing. In the days when prices were low deliveries were a matter of once a day or maybe only twice a week.

If the people of to-day would but adopt the cash-and-carry system of purchasing instead of clinging to the credit and delivery plan, it would be a boon to both dealer and consumer.

—Did Luther Cause the War

THAT "the revolt of the sixteenth century led inevitably to the dread catastrophe of the twentieth; the religious upheaval, started under the apostate Luther, sowed the seeds from which developed the pan-European conflict," is the charge made by a writer in "The Sacred Heart Review."

"The fifteen centuries prior to Luther's revolt were characterized by the gradual assimilation of the doctrine of universal brotherhood and by the rapid sequence to events calculated to establish permanently the gospel of arbitration. The nations gradually turned to the Church to settle the difficulties in which they were involved.

"She was the great peace tribunal of the world to which men appealed not merely because they deemed it expedient, but because prompted by a sense of duty. Her authority was respected, her orders were obeyed, and her pronouncements accepted by both the sovereign and his subjects. This was because society recognized that the Church, with the Pope at the head, was from God, and because the varied relations of public and private life were colored and controlled by religion.

"There were wars, it is true, in some of which even spiritual leaders engaged. There were differences between nations and disputes about national rights; but back of all this was an ever-growing tendency to appeal to Christ's Vicar for arbitration, a tendency fostered by the teaching that nations should constitute a united family under the fatherhood of the Pope. These fifteen centuries were marked by the gradual triumph of authority over force as the controlling influence in society.

"The work of these centuries, however, was destroyed by the Reformation. The unity of faith which alone could secure a united world was broken. The Pope's authority was overthrown by the pride of self-seeking men who could brook no restraint. Civil rulers made themselves supreme. The masses assumed toward their sovereigns the same rebellious attitude these had taken toward the Church."

Opposed to the views projected in the Roman Catholic paper, Bishop Edwin H. Hughes, in an address before the Boston Methodist Social Union, declared that Luther "was the colossal champion of those very principles of democracy for which America and her allies are now contending.

"It does not state the case too sweepingly when it is declared that he was the premier founder of democracy. It is true that his principle was applied mainly to the church. He dealt the divine rights of popes and priests a terrible blow. But the moral logic and moral conviction that led him to deliver that blow could not possibly stop in any one realm. The same arguments that he used against papal autocracy could be employed with slight changes of phraseology against royal autocracy in the state. If there is to be no pope in Rome for free Christians, neither can there be any pope in Potsdam for free citizens. In the presence of Luther's essential conviction members of a Reichstag are in as much peril as are the cardinals of the Curia."