

other pleasing ennoblements. Let all who look forward to such a consolidation of the Empire take heart. The little band of bony-minded Imperialists at the University can warm themselves with the reviving heat of this antidote to December 20.

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The model of our leading daily is the "Spectator," an English weekly written for elderly clergymen. "The Anarchists in German pay," says the latter paper, "are still in possession of Petrograd." The style and the subject-matter are familiar, though one suspects that the English paper errs more through guile than ignorance. Our own journalists may be treated with charity because they are generally ignorant of anything but the gossip of their own suburbs. The spectacle of a hitherto obscure person like M. Trotsky more than holding his own in debate with Count Czernin, reputed to be the subtlest mind in diplomatic Europe, is something that has never been dreamed of in the "Argus" philosophy. We could forgive these journalists their naive and bucolic comments if they really gave us the news. But the news forwarded over the cables at great expense is apparently prepared by gentlemen of the same intellectual calibre as our own journalists.

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The striking poem contributed by Mr. Furnley Maurice to the last issue of this paper is well worth critical attention. It is something to have given triumph almost the dignity of defeat. Perhaps the achievement is minimised by the way triumph, in fact, proved to have as little effect as defeat. But Mr. Furnley Maurice needs a word of admonition. He is always trembling on the brink of very fine poetry, and then rescuing himself at the last moment with a whimsical shudder. It is to be hoped that one day he will surrender to his first inspiration and take the plunge. One effect of this hesitation is metrical irregularities. To write half-a-dozen verses in a certain metre, and then vary it in the seventh for the convenience of a phrase, is generally a sign of weakness. There are other irregularities in this poem that are inexplicable, and the meaning of one verse is rendered obscure. It is as if Mr. Furnley Maurice had neglected to prune some of his longer lines and had made up for it by pruning the best part of a verse.

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The suppression of the "Worker's Life," a newspaper printed in Russia, and edited by the new Russian consul, is one of the most serious acts of the present Government. Is there no educated opinion that will press home on the very provincial men who control our affairs what a gross blunder they have made in this matter? We may have need of the friendship of Russia in the near future, and this piece of hobbledehoy politics may be remembered against us. A section of the advanced Labour and Socialist parties is talking about sending a delegate to Russia, but apparently they have made no protest against this gross insult to the Russian people in our midst! As for the University . . . !

S.H.D.

### VIOLENCE AND IDEAS AND PATIENCE.

The philosophic democrat must oppose the use of violence in the class struggle, for the simple reason that violence is not expedient. If democracy is to win the Social War, it must make war in the territory of the enemy and use its own native method of combat, and that method is an intellectual one. It must be founded entirely upon the enlightenment of the working classes by education and organisation. Hard and general propaganda work in this direction is the only sphere of activity the reformer can expect definite and permanent results from. This idea has been expressed with wearisome monotony by writers towards reform, and it is at once the most elementary and the most vital idea in all social philosophy.

Having by hook or by crook, and often by sheer political accident, gained a certain proportion of social liberty in Australia, it is the worker's duty to himself and his children to extend and make permanent that achievement—but he must be careful of the means he uses, and he must consider deeply the alternative claims of Violence and Ideas.

Success in the struggle for freedom was bound to be blocked sooner or later by Capital and vested interests. Recent affairs have given Capital its opportunity, and not only have the plutocrats slammed the door on the prospect of further reform, but they have succeeded in depriving the worker of a definite and real proportion of the liberty he formerly enjoyed.

Now the question is, by what means is the democrat to combat this reactionary movement? There is only patience and propaganda—nothing more. Parliament has failed, and always will fail. Revolution and Violence have failed, and always will fail. Parliament will fail because, whatever real usefulness it ever possessed has been undermined by party intrigue, vote hunting and lack of a real objective. Revolution will fail because it does not express the will of a people, but only gives a public demonstration of their spirit. A Revolution is an actual statement of their condition of mind made by an exasperated people. It is a sort of plaintive appeal to the thinkers. It asks to be told what to do next, and it never gets further than that until the magnetism of leadership brings it toward its own unspoken goal, and it is rarely the right leader gets in at the right moment. In so far as a revolution expresses the spirit and feeling of a country, it is excellent; but a revolution has no will, no really conscious aim, it never knows what it wants. Look at Russia. What did the mob demand of Louis XVI. when they met in the Palace? Nothing. Neither knew what they wanted, nor were they sure even of the principle or the impulse they represented. Incongruity faced incongruity.

Another very serious objection to revolution as such is that, in the long run, or more likely in the short run, it involves the use of physical violence. Putting aside for the moment the question as to whether physical violence in social reform is morally right or wrong, it should be said once and for all that the adoption of such a doctrine is not to be permitted, because by the adoption of those means the army of social reform will never be successful.

Democrats are fighting capital politically and socially. The tactics and strategy of the combat are no sealed book; they are common to all, although, naturally, the balance of the power is on the stronger side. There is brain against brain, measure against measure, protest against protest, idea against idea, vote against vote. The basis of the political and social fight is brain and ideas, rather flimsy brain and somewhat wild ideas also—but brain and ideas any way. And what will be the basis from which the social contest is fought out if it is carried on under the principle of sheer physical violence? It means that the war is carried into the worker's own territory by the enemy, and it is there fought out under the enemy's own terms and conditions.

The Capitalist has too much of his own way now. He will have it all his own way if the struggle becomes purely a military one. Organised violence can only make the struggle military in character; violence must contend with violence, or, unfortunately for the proletariat, professional violence with amateur. It means that sheer destitution is contending with sheer wealth. What is the essence of violence in its present-day sense? Wealth and munitions. What will make it worth while for the masses of men on the side of the democratic movement (for no national ideal has ever converted an entire nation) to guard the mansions and prerogatives of the great? Wealth. What will provide them with ready-made ideals and machine guns and 16-inch Howitzers? Wealth. At the time of the Jamieson and the capitalistic soldiers received about one guinea per day. During the French Revolution half Paris was lying horizontal, inert, and uninterested. Organised capital would readily awake some interest in these drones by offers of good wages and good machine guns and secure barricades. This army of drones, which, while the battle was purely a battle of ideas, would have remained neutral, will be called into action to slaughter their fellow-drones of the rabble. For a revolution is always a rabble—its very idea of independence and freedom makes it that, while the drone party, stiffened by the regular soldiery, would be supported by scientific organisation and modern equipment, which are capitalistic instruments pure and simple.

An army does not fight for vague principles. It goes for immediate and definite interests, true or false according to the prevailing fashion, and, although you may discover the isolated martyr ready and willing to risk his life in ideal causes, you cannot organise an army of men who will take a similar risk for a distant and indefinite objective like social deliverance. Besides, war is war. Whether it be civil or an international affair, all ideas of decency and honour and justice and humanity must be sunk for the time, even if by a stretch of imagination we could picture the proletariat army victorious, it would be a barren victory if they arrived at their perfect state only to leave those principles on the battlefield, or, if they had remembered to bring them on, having forgotten their use.

The English Revolution is positive proof of the effectiveness of a purely military revolution. But that was a very small affair, managed by one man against a will. Could democracy to-day, trust a soldier leader? Cromwell got

in first. But modern issues are not so simple, and there is a different national temperament to control.

Pitted against the perfectly efficient capitalistic and military machine already equipped and aware of its duties, before the idea of a democratic military force was thought of amongst the revolutionaries, what chance would the workers' battalions have of success? Then, if the syndicalist can imagine opposition to be non-existent owing to the perfect conversion of the nation, army and all, to the syndicalistic principles then, why talk violence at all?

The democratic right to challenge Governments is admitted by those governments. The right of the people to demand attention to wrongs and reasons is admitted also. The fact that the democratic movement does not get an effect proportionate to the requirement in the use of these privileges is due to its own fault and lack of organisation.

To ask that the fight be carried on by actual violence and destruction is to invite annihilation, because the European War has proved that military power, which is violence in its perfect state, is merely a matter of wealth. Violence is bought at so much a ton. Wealth supplies the means, and what means has the Labourite or the Syndicalist at his hand that could be used to destroy this military opposition he has called up against himself by his own rash behaviour? Yet here we have the half-naked employee of a South Melbourne fire-kindler factory waving a secondhand broomstick and bawling violence?

Brains and ideas and hard work will win, but violence invites disaster. Keep the war in the intellectual sphere and democracy has its chance, but, if the Syndicalists make definite military war upon the Capitalists, the Capitalist will make definite military war upon them, and by these methods wealth must win. Of course, you might sneak a few nasty knocks on the plutocrat, but—that brings us on to the moral aspect of sabotage.

Organised military action is against acknowledged democratic principle. The sly injury that sabotage may inflict is the effort of unreasoning spite, and, so far as social progress is concerned, it is not only wrong, but it is unwise. Of course, you can put sand in the journals of engines and tar on the satin dresses of Duchesses, but it would be better for the cause if men of the character required to perform such duties were on the other side. The encouragement of such practices might make trouble afterwards in the perfect state, for the same reason that modern warfare between capitalists and working class would mean an utter loss of the senses of humanity and honour, and common decency. There is no reason why the vandal should not wreak his small vengeance on the new state if, under the new regime, he felt angry at some moment. No regime is ever going to satisfy everybody, nor even everyone of the persons who worked to bring it about. A rotten principle is a rotten principle whether it be adopted by saint or devil, and no evil means justifies any end whatever at any time. To begin with, there is no end to anything, and there is also a danger of your "means" coming home to roost in the model state alongside your "end."

Shift the capitalist usurper with hired assassins, and, when your object is achieved, you have either to slaughter the assassin or submit to blackmail.

Even though you repudiate your "means," or take him by the throat and strangle him, you might become afflicted with an awkward memory, and the resultant anxiety might upset your enjoyment of a new Jerusalem.

Violence is merely a type of youthful impatience. The only true course is education, organisation, hard propaganda work, and patience. No great work can be achieved without patience, and it is more difficult to be patient than to fight. So wheel out Sorel.

FURNLEY MAURICE.

Our next issue will contain an article on Sorel's Philosophy of Violence, by Mr. Guido Baracchi.

### INDEX EXPURGATORIUS.\*

This neatly-printed little brochure supplies a long-felt want. It is, so far as we know, the first attempt on the part of the civil authorities to emulate the example of the ecclesiastical powers, and to supply, for the guidance of the faithful, a list of prohibited works. Judged as a first attempt, the work before us is an almost unqualified success. Some omissions indeed we have noted, but these will doubtless be remedied in later editions. The design of the work being to prevent the spread of heterodox opinions concerning imperialism, capitalism, and the war, we should have liked to see such dangerous works as the Bible, or at least the New Testament, included in the list of prohibited works. There can be no doubt that certain passages in this widely-circulated work are calculated to give grave offence to the simple and unlearned, and even, if unchecked, to undermine their faith in the fundamental tenets of Capitalist morality. We would suggest, therefore, that in the next edition of his work Senator Millen should turn his attention to this important matter, and either indicate the pernicious passages, or, better still, publish an authoritative edition of the Bible, with the objectionable passages carefully deleted. The editing of such a work ought not to be beyond the talent and industry of the Censor's Department. We would suggest at the same time a careful examination of those classics of English literature which are now being scattered broadcast in cheap editions. It is well known with what care and with what excellent results this department of Government was carried out in Russia until quite recently. We see no reason to doubt that our Australian censorship is capable of the same vigilance and public spirit as the Russian, and the educational facilities of Australia, enabling every boy and girl to read, lay upon our rulers a heavy

burden of responsibility. It is their duty to see that the blessing of education does not become a curse.

But we have no desire to stress the note of unfavourable criticism. On the contrary, we wish to express our deep appreciation of the wide research, varied learning, and general acumen displayed by Senator Millen and his collaborators—for we cannot believe that this brochure represents the Herculean labours of one man. The compilation of a list of 230 books, published in a dozen different countries, and in a score of different languages, is no light task, even when it is a labour of love. We are glad to note that more than half the works in the index are published in foreign languages. The fact may be taken as a gratifying indication that there is, in the very idiom of our mother tongue, something uncongenial to the spirit of rebellion and sedition, and that these poisonous ideas have to be conveyed in other languages than that of Britishers. But this fact, though it reduces, by no means removes the evil effect produced by such writings in communities like our own, whose members are noted for their linguistic capacity. Therefore we are very glad to find on Senator Millen's list that scurrilous and seditious work "Zulum Zulum, Gore Shahi Zulum," which we fear has already found its way into too many Australian homes. Scarcely less mischief, we believe, has been wrought by the "Uus Hm" and the "Svoboda," the former containing the insidious propaganda of the Estonian Society, the latter craftily insinuating its poison through the medium of the Ukrainian tongue. The far-reaching vigilance of the censorship has at last, we are delighted to see, put a stop to the steady stream of sedition which has been pouring into our working-class suburbs through the Bulgarian paper, "Rabotnicheska Prosdeta." If there is anything to regret in the action of the department, it is the generous reluctance which has prevented speedier action being taken in regard to some of the papers now on the list. For instance, we have it on good authority that the lamentable increase in the "No" vote in Victoria recently was due mainly to the influence of two papers—one the "Philippine Weekly," published at Manila, the other a work on "Motor Boating," published in New York. Both these works have been very properly prohibited. But is it too late? Again, there is every reason to believe that the strike in N.S.W. last year was fomented by the vehemence with which the class struggle is preached in such widely-circulated periodicals as "Kung Wo Po," of Canton, and "El Dia Grafico," of Barcelona. Again we ask, would not prevention have been better than cure?

Senator Millen's brochure, at any rate, comes not a day too late. When the history of the war comes to be written, many reputations will be made, and many destroyed. Not till that time comes will our children know what Australia owes to the intellectual guardians, who, at the sacrifice of leisure and comfort, dedicated their splendid powers to the task of preserving unsullied the blameless page of Australian thought. We look forward confidently to the speedy appearance of a second and enlarged edition of a work which will be welcome to every right-thinking person.

F.S.

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