

# Freedom

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## NOTES.

### The General Strike.

The General Strike marks a definite turning-point in the industrial and political history of this country. No one who kept his eyes and ears open could fail to notice the class antagonism shown in the struggle, and few would now deny the existence of the class war. It was the Haves versus the Have-Nots. There were many exceptions, but those who came out in opposition to the workers were drawn mainly from the commercial, the professional, and the aristocratic classes. The City and the West End mobilised at once and put themselves and their motor cars and anything else useful at the disposal of the Government. The Press, of course, was hostile, and magistrates dealt out vindictive sentences to everyone brought before them for assisting the strike by speech or print. The privileged class were so determined on forcing the unconditional surrender of the General Council that when the Archbishop of Canterbury, acting on behalf of all the Christian Churches, issued a statement asking for an immediate resumption of negotiations, the Government refused to broadcast it. When Winston Churchill was asked in the House why it was not published in the *British Gazette*, he replied contemptuously that he had not read it. Their attitude to the Archbishop and others was: "You keep out of the ring. We are going to give these fellows a damned good hiding." On the other side, the workers were solid, and their magnificent gesture on behalf of the miners was an expression of their determination not to see their fellow-workers driven back to the mines on the owners' terms. They have seen now the blunt, brutal fact that the whole power of the Government was ranged on the side of the possessing class and against the working class. The General Strike was not revolutionary—it was led by some of the most moderate and law-abiding leaders in the Trade Union movement—but we are certain that when the next General Strike comes the aims of the workers will have strong revolutionary tendencies, and will not be confined merely to wages. They have had their eyes opened since May 3.

### Challenging the Constitution.

The General Council of the Trades Union Congress was very much perturbed because it was told that in calling the General Strike it was challenging the Constitution, and on the front page of the *British Worker* was printed in bold type: "The General Council does not challenge the Constitution." This seems to suggest that it would be committing sacrilege if the charge were true; but we see no reason why a body of men representing the working class should be ashamed to challenge the Constitution—if they are strong enough. For, after all, what is the Constitution? The dictionary defines the word "Constitution" as "the established form of government in a state or kingdom." Exactly. And the established form of government in this country was built up without the workers having a voice in the matter. It has been shaped and moulded through the centuries by a comparatively small class which has seized all the natural resources of the country as their private property, and every law on the Statute Book was designed to defend their privileged position. Every reform brought forward with a view to giving other people a voice in the affairs of the country was opposed tooth and nail by this class in power, and even when reforms have been carried they have been used to bolster up the privileges of the dominant class. The buttresses of the Constitution are the Church, the great public schools, the Army and Navy, and the learned professions, all the higher offices in which are almost monopolised by members of this select group, which is determined to uphold the present system, which brings them wealth and luxury at the expense of the rest of

the community. Why should we regard their Constitution as something sacred? Whenever the workers make a serious attempt to abolish slavery they must necessarily challenge the Constitution, which is rooted in their slavery, and could not exist in a society based on equality and free access to the means of life. These people do not respect the Constitution themselves. When the Home Rule Act was passed, strictly in accordance with the Constitution, they supported Ulster in resisting the operation of the Act with armed force, threatened to lynch the Government and to hang Ministers on lamp-posts in Downing Street, and caused a mutiny in the Army. The Constitution bogey may scare Labour leaders, but it is only a bogey.

### The High Wages Stunt.

At the present moment, when we are in the midst of a big fight over wages, there is a boom in the idea that American prosperity is due to high wages. Many articles have been written on the matter, and a delegation of mechanics was sent across to investigate. An American professor of political economy, Mr. T. N. Carver, has just written a book on "The Present Economic Revolution in the United States," in which he supports the theory to a certain extent. He quotes a Labour leader as saying that out of 25,000 million dollars paid each year in wages 6,000 millions are saved and added to the capital fund. The professor, however, thinks there is another factor in the universal prosperity. He says: "All these things are being added unto us precisely because we are seeking the Kingdom of God and His righteousness." Strange that no one ever thought of that before. But our American exchanges tell another tale. A six months' strike in the coalfields has been followed by a big strike of textile workers. The Weekly Bulletin of the Catholic Welfare Conference says: "City wage workers produce an enormous amount of goods, but do not get enough money back to buy their share of the goods; possibly half of them do not even receive a living wage. Most salaried workers are in a similar position." In an article in the *Los Angeles Times*, entitled "Counterfeit Wages," the writer says: "A pay envelope may say on the outside, 'John Smith, Forty Dollars,' but when Smith tries to exchange his forty dollars for commodities in a market of rapidly rising prices, he is in trouble. Over a stretch of months he finds himself trying to meet skyrocketing prices with stationary wages. Sooner or later Smith realises that he is being paid in counterfeit wages." We thought there was a catch in it somewhere. So high wages will not solve our problems.

### Russian Communists and Equality.

At the last Congress of the Russian Communist Party, Kalinin, the President of the Socialist Republic, said:—

"Can we go to the peasants and speak to them of equality? No, we cannot, because the peasants would then demand equality with the workers. This is contrary to the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. Can we remind the workers of equality? That too we cannot do, and for the following reasons. A Communist and a non-partisan worker are engaged on the same job; the Communist is paid according to the sixth, the worker according to the third wage scale. The moment we declare for equality the non-partisan worker would at once demand that he receive equal pay with the Communist. Is this thinkable, comrades? Of course it is not. Can we even have equality among all Communists? That too cannot be done, because even among us Communists there are different posts, different pay, and different rights."

Verily the worst enemy of Soviet Russia could not show up the domination of a small sect over the mass of workers and peasants as Kalinin showed it in this speech.

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## "WHEN I AM DEAD."

(Conclusion.)

Spiritualists tell us that in most cases those who have "passed over" are vastly happier than they were in mortal life, and in the same breath they tell us those spirits are ever present with those they loved on earth. How can they be happier knowing those they have left are made *unhappier* by their departure, and in many cases, as when the breadwinner is taken, actually suffering material privation?

We return here to the important question of memory survival. Spiritualists are satisfied this exists after death. But what of those states we have nearly all experienced when consciousness does not exist? We do not all, every night of our lives, dream in sleep, nor always when under an anesthetic. And there are many instances of complete lapse of consciousness over long periods, as in concussion cases for example. Even if we take the most extreme case and argue from the fakir with plugged nostrils and his "return to life" after several days' interment, this does not prove that he has achieved anything more than a trance condition with which most members of the medical profession are perfectly familiar.

Theosophists offer as a solution to this difficulty the theory of "astral travelling"; but if it be true that we leave our body when rendered unconscious, why is it that we retain no recollection of our "travelling"? Because these Re-incarnationists even go so far as to describe places visited on the "astral plane," so that we are forced to ask ourselves the question: "Why do we not when non-conscious realise that we are conscious?" Whatever else the principle may be capable of expressing, it certainly is not capable of expressing philosophic thought.

Consciousness can only exist through the functioning of the brain; in other words, mind can only operate through matter.

It would be interesting here to know what scientific authority Father Knox has for his statement that "the intellectual processes as such have no specific counterpart in the material organisation of the brain." Has Father Knox ever compared the physical brain of a thinker with that of a man who has not exercised his mental powers? Has he noted the difference in the convolutions of the two?

If, as we maintain, the brain, which is the organ of the mind, does not operate under the circumstances I have mentioned, is it conceivable that the mind will function when its organ is finally put out of action by death? And this, of course, is assuming a differentiation between mind and brain; if we take the more limited view that brain *is* mind (and no one has yet proved that it is *not*), the case for astral travelling falls at once.

There are some here who will fall back on the subconscious mind, and claim survival after death for *that*. But if we are not aware of the functioning of this "organ" in our conscious state, can it possibly be said to convey anything to us after death? When in those lapses from consciousness which I have instanced we are not aware of existence, if the subconscious mind is really operating throughout, does this bring us even one step nearer the realisation of any life after death?

At any rate, if such a thing be true it is a very different matter from that conception of individualised consciousness or retention of personality in which the majority of contributors have expressed belief. I feel sorry, as others doubtless do, that no psychologist was invited to help us on this point in the *Daily Express*.

Thought is only relative; it can only exist at all in relation to some object of a positive nature. You can, for instance, only think of Nothingness (if you can think of it at all) in relation to Something, and that Something cannot be an abstraction. When the poet "saw Eternity the other night" he saw it as a "great ring of endless light," and Light, as Sir Oliver Lodge and other eminent scientists have shown, has a positive character. So has Ether, the very last content to which matter has yet been resolved. That is why our conception of God has for so long been a personal one. If we push the matter further, we know that the idea of a Trinity, which is so common to many religions, arose through the inability of man (possibly because he was living in a three-dimensional condition) to limit his thought to the Dual Principle. Further back still, the Dual Principle originated in an earlier attempt to overcome the philosophical difficulty in conceiving of a Supreme Consciousness which existed by itself.

Now, if it were possible to imagine a person devoid of all the

human senses, could that being be said to have any existence at all? We can only conceive of Life (which is the most absolute conception we are capable of holding) in relation to matter: it is only because we have seen the operation of such force *objectively* that we know it exists, and therefore I venture to suggest that a being devoid of all senses would be incapable of thought at all, and thus of existence. Thought, of course, prompts desire and emotion; but a man lacking all senses would be incapable of these even.

When we have the answer to this problem I think we shall be at any rate one step nearer the solution of the Riddle of the Universe.

There are people who argue from a sort of pantheistic standpoint. They will ask you to observe how with the spring the flowers return to blossom, and give promise of unceasing life. Yes, but the *same* flowers do not return (unless of the perennial order, and even these have their allotted span). Such people prove no more than the man does who, when you tell him you do not believe in Immortality, tells you to look at the heavens on a starlit night! Instead of concluding from Nature that individual consciousness, still less anything resembling the "shadow of a substance," exists after death, I should have thought Nature's teaching would have had just the opposite effect. Nature is very wasteful; she does not spare even the fittest in her cataclysmic moments, and, judged on evidential values, the finality of existence would seem a more logical conclusion than the idea of Immortality.

Christian Scientists attempt to solve the seemingly "eternal" problem by a negation. But I think they do little more than "jump" the difficulty. Matter, they say, is a delusion; Mind is the only reality. But why stop here? Why not say Mind is a delusion too, and are you any nearer revelation then? If you are justified in saying your five senses delude you, equally are you justified in saying that the mind, which it is not conceivable could exist in the absence of all those senses, is also a delusion. "All is illusion," says the Oriental thinker of to-day and yesterday, and has the Christian Scientist made any advance on this?

I have not argued from the standpoint of any "orthodox" religion, because, if I may say so with all respect to minds immeasurably greater than my own, there does not appear to be in them, any more than in the least complex of faiths, any evidence to warrant the assumption of a life to come. The Catholic view has been expounded by Father Knox, who, in common with Calvinists and Plymouth Brethren, holds the doctrine of the Elect. One moment he speaks of the glory of heaven, and the next of eternal suffering for certain souls, "born in sin," we must remember, and yet punished for sinning! To many of us, however, the thought of any "heaven" would be impossible so long as one single soul—let alone several—were doomed to eternal damnation.

Every teacher of religion has ultimately to resort to an act of faith, and that, of course, can never constitute proof.

It remains the strangest puzzle of all human ones—the why and the wherefore of our being. We know not whence we come nor whither we go. If it be true that we have had pre-existence, and that we also have a life before us, why are we unable to look behind us or to see in front of us? Possessing powers of reason and of intellect, why are we ignorant of the most vital of all problems, the Purpose of Life? If a purpose there be in this sorry scheme of things, why have not the heart-searchings of man down the ages been answered and his destiny made evident to him? Revealed Religion has told us practically nothing of a future life, and no one religion has ever been manifested to all men at any one given time, so far as we know.

So that man has set up altars to the Unknown God, and his trust in an Infinite Power for Good and Life Eternal has been little short of a human miracle. Struggling against the fearful odds we do, maintaining what seems an uneven battle with life, there are yet those who would talk to us of Divine chastisement and a future state of suffering! If we are, as they tell us, "born in sin," why are we to be punished in an after-life for sinning?

Most of us to-day, I think, have all we can do to maintain our life here and now, and in the face of so much adversity the most astonishing thing is the love, the charity, and the self-sacrifice one sees everywhere. In a universe full of tragedy and inequality, the best things in it would seem to be ourselves, not any supernatural beings or powers, who, supposedly omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, remain deaf to the pleading and plight of mortals. And for the reason that, so far as we know, life is continuous, if only in the form of those elements upon which human life depends, and to

which the human body at death returns, it is indeed worth while to "do good and be good." Inability to believe in a life after death (as a continuation of earth consciousness) need never alter our ethical standard of conduct or of values.

Is there any higher "creed" than the will to do unto your neighbour as unto yourself, without the slightest hope of any reward in a hereafter, and through no fear of some future punishment if you do otherwise?

It may be argued that the views I have expressed in this article do not constitute a creed at all, that to call their synthesis a creed is a contradiction in terms—a mere negation, in fact; but I think to many the belief in a life here and here only is as vital to those who are prepared to accept nothing more as the faith is of those people who are convinced of a life after death. What can be more real than the life around us? St. Paul may have told us it is but the shadow of reality, but there are some grounds for supposing his thorn in the flesh was an epileptic condition which, of course, at times produces a state of mental abnormality.

I feel, with numbers of others, that the kindest hope we can entertain for humanity is that of annihilation. Hard though it may be to conceive of non-consciousness (only because we have experienced the opposite), it is nothing more than expressing the sincere hope that the end may be as the beginning—that we shall be no more conscious after death than we were before birth.

Happiness for All for Ever (which to my mind is as good a definition of "heaven" as any other) is obviously impossible so long as human identity remains a fact. The man who has loved with the same intensity a plurality of women, and the woman who has loved equally well several men, would be bound to cause pain to some in a future state of existence just as on earth, and Christ's answer to the Sadducees did little more than beg the question, unfortunately.

If, then, Eternal Happiness is not possible for all, Absolute Extinction is surely the kindest hope we may entertain. If this view destroys the Happiness of Heaven, at least it removes the Horrors of Hell. And I sincerely believe that I am expressing the earnest wish of thousands when I say I believe that "when I am dead I am dead."

M. MITCHELL.

## TUCKER AND PROUDHON.

The editor asks me to answer attacks made repeatedly by the *Equitist* (Phoenix, Arizona), principally because that paper declares no "explanation of simple principles and facts is to be found in Anarchist literature," and calls on us to brush up our knowledge of Proudhon's teachings, "instead of blindly following Tucker's faulty presentation of them." Let me say then that Tucker put himself to the labour of translating Proudhon's voluminous works; that for years he made a speciality of expounding them in his paper, *Liberty*; and that, whether you agree with him or not, he is the master of a magnificently lucid style, and as an interpreter of Proudhon is probably unequalled. I am confident my opinion will be endorsed by those who know.

On page 6 of his "Instead of a Book" Tucker showed that Karl Marx, Warren, and Proudhon based their teachings on the principle laid down by Adam Smith, viz., that labour is the true measure of price; and that (these are Tucker's own words) "the only way to secure to labour the enjoyment of its entire product, or natural wage, is to strike down monopoly." At this point the trio parted ways. Marx thought that the end desired could be reached only by the creation of one all-inclusive monopoly—the State. Warren and Proudhon, on the other hand, found it impossible to believe that, in Tucker's words, "the remedy for monopolies is monopoly." Marxist Socialism, therefore, envisages a society in which all the means of production and distribution, all social activities, and consequently all right to labour, shall be monopolised by the supreme Dictator, the State. Anarchism as taught by Proudhon, on the other hand, holds that the way to abolish monopoly is to abolish it, and that this can be done only by depriving the monopolist of the special privileges the State confers on him; by throwing open to the free and equal use of all men the sources of production, thus enabling them to employ themselves; and by allowing them, as free producers, to form their own arrangements for the exchange of what they have produced. In other words, Socialism as taught by Marx would make the State the universal master. Anarchism, on the other hand, hopes to bring about a condition in which all men will

be masters of themselves. Socialism looks on the State as the universal philanthropist whose powers should be increased indefinitely, while Anarchism would abolish it as the creator and upholder of those special privileges that, crowning the few with wealth and power, of necessity condemn the mass to poverty and helplessness. Obviously the difference is enormous.

All this is elementary, but has to be explained unceasingly; and only because a reply to Mr. Brokaw gives me the opportunity of explaining it do I assent to the editor's request. Mr. Brokaw, as it seems to me, has devised what he conceives to be a cure-all, viz., a monetary unit which, if adopted, would bring it about that "each hour of adult human work (in exchange transfers) should command an hour of human work in return." By this he expects to run out of business capitalism, land monopoly, and all those other forms of special privilege that bar the road to individual freedom.

To me—and I wish to say it with all the politeness possible—that is absurd, and its absurdity becomes more manifest when I examine Mr. Brokaw's style. He has invented a jargon which must be almost unintelligible to his readers; but unfortunately many think that what they cannot understand must be extraordinarily clever. He tells his readers, for example, that we do not know the difference between "appropriation and exchange"; that "the result unit is a unit of appropriation, not a unit of exchange"; that I myself "confuse rent with value," not understanding that "value is the power with which rent is taken," and so forth. As to which last, according to my simple mind, rent is taken, and is able to be taken, because certain people have been allowed to fence in valuable territory to which others must have access. Any military man could tell Mr. Brokaw that, for the main object of wars is to seize territory for the use of which the conquered thenceforth pays tribute to the conqueror. If I had the space I could quote upon that head no less a personage than Bismarck.

Mr. Brokaw declares that "Proudhon proposed the issue of checks based on labor, whereas Tucker proposed (with Greene) to base them on gold and land." Such a statement takes my breath away. Month after month, and year after year, Tucker was attacking the monopoly conferred on gold by Governments, and was suggesting that under conditions of equal freedom workers would form mutual banks, which would issue to them currency in proportion to the value of *all* their products. Tucker seeks to give *all* labour products their true exchange value, and thinks this possible only by such free exchange arrangements as the producers make. I have space for only one quotation. On page 226 of "Instead of a Book" we find him in controversy with a Mr. Fisher, and he writes: "Let me ask my opponent one question. Does the law of England allow citizens to form a bank for the issue of paper money against *any* property that they may see fit to accept as security?" That one short quotation will be sufficient.

It is unfortunate that there has been so little study of the money question, because the financier, who owes his power to special privileges granted by the State, is getting all the world into his clutches and may yet drown it in blood. For my part, however, I am not a blind worshipper of Proudhon or Tucker, my conviction being that escape from the net of class-made laws in which we now lie helpless will come only after numberless experiments, heroic efforts, and that intensity of suffering which alone seems capable of rousing the mass to thought and action. As I see it, Socialism already has failed, while Anarchism, regarded as the doctrine of the free Individual, has hardly yet begun to try.

WM. C. OWEN.

## International Anti-Militarist Congress.

The International Anti-Militarist Congress announced in our last issue is now definitely fixed for August 1, in Vienna. Several important subjects for discussion are on the agenda. Resolutions and suggestions are invited from affiliated organisations. A substantial sum must be in hand by the middle of July, and the Treasurer of the Anti-Militarist Bureau requests that money be sent to him at once. Address: M. Stevens, v. Helt Stocadestraat 8, Amsterdam, Holland. All organisations intending to take part in the Congress should send particulars to J. Giesen, Secretary of the I.A.M.B., Blauwkapel, Holland.

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## The General Strike.

The first General Strike in Great Britain has been fought and lost. That it failed was not the fault of the workers but of those whom they chose to lead them into battle.

The Coal Commission's report recommended "a temporary sacrifice by the men in the industry other than the worst paid"; but the vital point was that this sacrifice was to depend upon "such measures of reorganisation as will secure to the industry a new lease of prosperity leading to higher wages." Instead of making an attempt at reorganisation, the mineowners concentrated on a reduction of wages or an increase of hours. The Miners' Federation said they would not agree to either—in the words of A. J. Cook, their secretary: "Not a cent off, not a second on." As the mineowners persisted in their attitude, the miners put their case before the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, who said that the Trade Union movement "would stand firmly and unitedly against any attempt further to degrade the standard of life in the coalfields." The mineowners then gave notice of new and greatly reduced wage scales after April 30, when the Government subsidy would end. Interminable negotiations took place between the opposing parties, in which the Government also took a hand; but no agreement was reached.

On April 29 a special Conference of the executive councils of all the Unions affiliated to the Trades Union Congress was held, and the *Daily Herald* said that "the speeches and the whole tone of the Conference left no doubt that the whole movement stands behind the miners in their resistance to the mineowners' attack." The next day the miners ceased work throughout the country. On May 1 the General Council of the Trades Union Congress declared a General Strike to take effect at midnight on May 3, Mr. Bevin, in making the announcement, saying that "even if every penny and every asset goes" they were prepared to do this "rather than see the miners driven down like slaves." That was the keynote, the real object of the General Strike—to protect the miners against any attempt further to degrade their standard of life.

The Government broke off negotiations with the General Council on the excuse that the printers had prevented the production of the *Daily Mail*, and the struggle began.

The workers' response to the call was a magnificent example of solidarity. Over three million men folded arms. Railways, factories, mills, buses, trams, newspapers—all stopped. Only an insignificant few remained at work. The Government brought into action its long-prepared plans and mobilised all its forces. Troops were moved into various districts, the Brigade of Guards camping in Hyde Park and Victoria Park. Armoured cars and tanks were brought into London, and all the special constables called up, volunteers being recruited everywhere. The strikers remained firm. The Government organ, the *British Gazette*, under the control of Winston Churchill, poured out poison gas day after day. Lord Balfour said the strike was "an attempt at revolution," Sir John Simon said it was illegal, and all the wealthy class agreed it was a crime against Society. They turned out in plus fours and jazz jerseys, and drove—and ruined—trains and trams and buses and lorries, and had a very exciting time. The strikers were much amused.

Behind the scenes, however, some of their leaders who had got cold feet were trying to find an excuse for calling off the strike. The Privy Councillors did not like being called Bolsheviks. On the first day, during a debate in the House of Commons, J. H. Thomas, the spokesman of the General Council, said the strike was "merely a plain, economic, industrial dispute," and not revolutionary. "In case of a challenge to the Constitution," he added, "God help us unless the Government of the day win." The next day Mr. Baldwin

obliged by issuing an appeal to the nation, which commenced by saying: "Constitutional Government is being attacked." On May 9 Thomas said: "I have never been in favour of the principle of the General Strike," which the *British Gazette* printed in large type in subsequent issues. As a Privy Councillor he played his part well.

On the 11th rumours were published of unofficial negotiations. The next day the engineers and shipbuilders were called out in the morning, and at 1.30 in the afternoon the General Council called off the strike unconditionally, as demanded by the Government. In explanation, they said they had reached the conclusion that, as a result of a number of conversations with Sir Herbert Samuel, "a satisfactory basis of settlement in the mining industry can now be reached." The terms of settlement provided for reductions of wages, but not before reorganisation was definitely adopted. It was hinted that though these terms were unofficial, the Government was favourable and would adopt them. When the strikers had returned to work Mr. Baldwin published his own plan, which threw over the Samuel Memorandum, and provides for reductions of wages at once and compulsory arbitration.

When the strike was called off the Miners' Federation issued a statement to the press in which they said their representatives had not been consulted about Sir Herbert Samuel's terms and they rejected the proposals, "which they believe their fellow Trade Unionists are assisting them to resist." The *British Worker*, the organ of the General Council, suppressed this statement. It was too damning. They had abandoned the miners, who are now left to fight the Government and the mineowners by themselves.

The solidarity of the workers has once again been shattered by their leaders.

## MacDonald Stays Away.

In the *New Leader* of April 2 its editor, Mr. H. N. Brailsford, takes Mr. Ramsay MacDonald sternly to task. Mr. MacDonald has had the temerity to doubt whether Socialism is "going to come by the legal declaration of a nominal minimum wage," and to write in the *Socialist Review* that "the I.L.P. should think twice before it committed itself to meaningless but disastrous slogans, and before it hung a millstone round its neck in the shape of an ill-digested scheme of a minimum wage." To these dispiriting remarks Mr. Brailsford naturally objects, the Living Wage Bill being the patent he is boosting industriously under the attractive title of "Socialism in Our Time." His name and reputation now depend on the success of that campaign. By it the fortune of his paper and his own political career will be decided. He is, therefore, at the point where it behoves him to put his best foot forward, and at the Independent Labour Party's annual Conference at Easter he had the satisfaction of inducing it to swallow his special nostrum. Incidentally it may be remarked that Mr. MacDonald did not attend the Conference. No reasons were given.

Everything it is possible to say in favour of this cure-all is certain to have been said by Mr. Brailsford, who has an appetite for research and knows how to wield a pen. In the article already referred to he marshalled his arguments, and by it we should be able to judge the practicability or impracticability of the scheme to which the Independent Labour Party has now committed itself. From that standpoint alone we examine it. For the personal success of Mr. Brailsford or his party we care nothing, our one concern being as to whether the measure advocated is likely to bring Socialism in Our Time. If it did, we should have at least the excitement of watching a most disturbing experiment and recording a world-shaking event.

The plan of campaign has been marked out carefully, and Mr. Brailsford's first requirement is that "an inquiry should be held to ascertain what minimum wage a civilised standard of life requires, and to relate it to the national income." It might be remarked, and not unreasonably, that the gods alone could say how long such an inquiry would take, at what results it would arrive, and what furious controversies it would arouse. However, for the sake of argument, we will assume that the inquiry gets itself finished during the lifetime of the youngest member of the I.L.P., and that its verdict is accepted unanimously. What comes then? "The next step," we are told, "would be to pass a general Bill, conferring large powers upon a suitably constituted authority, to deal with trades which pay less than this Living Wage." From this we infer that, according to

Mr. Brailsford's calculations, wages in some occupations are already up to the level likely to be fixed by the Commission; and it appears probable that in others an actual reduction would be ordered. There would be a row. However, for that due preparation has been made, the comforting assurance being tendered that "the Authority would presumably name a date, varying with the circumstances of each trade, after which the wages must be paid," and that "with the more conservative and individualistic industries it would have to use its coercive powers."

In the same issue of the *New Leader*, and under the heading "Families and Wages," Mr. Brailsford discusses his remedy's probable cost, and he opines that there will have to be a flat rate allowance of 5s. a week for every new addition to the worker's family. The expense of this he puts at £125,000,000 annually; and although such a trifle could hardly be expected to disturb him, at this point he seems to have been assailed with doubt, for he remarks:—

"A genuine Living Wage can be won only by the reorganisation of industry after industry. That will not be an easy process, even in some advanced and highly developed trades. In the case of farming it will take many years, and will demand heroic will and the utmost ingenuity in planning. And there are other low-grade trades, sweated trades, trades which possess at present no vestige of organisation, cases more difficult even than agriculture. The slowness and difficulty of the task is not a reason for refusing to undertake it. On the contrary, it is a challenge to our courage. But it is a very cogent reason for adopting this swift and direct method of raising the incomes of the worst-paid workers in the years of their greatest need."

To describe this method as "swift and direct" appears to us not a little humorous.

All these politicians look on the great social problem, with which the entire world is now in agonising labour, as a thing of words, to be settled smugly by the edict of some legislative authority. Unhappily, it is otherwise. Unfortunately, this tremendous riddle of the Sphinx can be solved only by digging down to realities and facing facts. If they had at their command all the combined eloquence that for generations has echoed vainly through the halls of Westminster, Mr. Brailsford and his followers could not hope to square the circle or bring it about that, in a country owned from shore to shore by a numerically insignificant handful of monopolists, the mass of British workers could be other than the wage-slaves they are to-day. By no such a thimble-rigging hocus-pocus as their Parliamentary representatives are now proposing can these workers lift themselves by their bootstraps and get out of the quicksands now engulfing them. And if such a measure as is now proposed were practicable, to what would it amount? Not to an abolition of the wage system, but to giving it a new anchorage from which it would be almost impossible to tear it. It would enthrone more securely than ever the boss, though it might trick him out with a new name. It would fix, perhaps for generations, the position of the wage-worker as a wage-worker; and in so "fixing" his position it would strip him of such rags of freedom as he now retains. To protest against the Living Wage decreed by Authority would be treason, and from the rebel every one of the benefits by which the State now professes to shield him against starvation would be instantly withdrawn. No striker would get a penny of insurance. No one who dared to throw up his job would ever get another. There might, it is true, be an equality, but it would be the equality of men chained down to one dead level; while far above them, released from all further fear of labour disturbances, would reign, in a tranquility they never yet have known, those for whom the vast masses of the disinherited would still be compelled to toil.

Happily, the proposals of these State-maniacs are impossible. Life demands as the first essential to its continuance that elasticity which enables it to adapt itself to ever-changing circumstances, and to force the capitalist system into the rigid mould designed by these party sectarians would be to smother it to death. It is to be remembered, however, that when Mr. Brailsford began to advocate the Living Wage it was with the express recommendation that under the capitalist system it would necessarily be unworkable, and that the attempt to bring it into operation would cause a universal dislocation and thereby clear the way for Socialism.

For that there might be something to be said, and indeed we think it the only argument to be advanced. However, that is not at all what the Socialists are after. Of all men they are least anxious for the ushering in of chaos. Their entire propaganda is for

regulation, control, the orderly step-by-step methods of Parliamentarism. The present proposal is, therefore, not merely impracticable but degradingly dishonest. They do not mean it. They are humbugging a necessarily ignorant and easily deluded public, and under the pretence of offering an immediate remedy they have elaborated a scheme which, as they must know full well, would keep any legislative body busy for a generation. Their ambition is to be in control of that legislative body, and for that fancied mess of pottage they are now willing to sell out Labour's birthright and tie its hands for years to come. We congratulate Mr. MacDonald on his good sense in staying away.

W. C. O.

## A NEW LIFE OF WILLIAM GODWIN.\*

It is extremely pleasant to see the Godwin materials contained in C. Kegan Paul's volumes of 1876 combined with the results of a further fifty years' intensive literary research, mainly in the English Jacobin, Coleridge, and Shelley domains contiguous to Godwin's own personality, which, whilst connected with ever so many of his contemporaries, always remained in an isolation of varying degrees, and certainly in the fullest possible independence. This is done skilfully in the new Life before us, which will now form the basis of further Godwin studies. For it is eminently biographical, and will not pretend to be at the same time an exhaustive examination of Godwin's ideas. This is the task of those to whom these ideas are nearer and dearer than to anybody, the Anarchists, who recognise the "Enquiry concerning the Principles of Political Justice, and its Influence on General Virtue and Happiness," of 1793 (2 vols., xiii, 21, 895 pages), as the first book now preserved which arrives at full Anarchist conclusions, and who are greatly interested in the way the author reaches these conclusions, in the sources from which his intellect was formed, and also in the modifications which later experience may have introduced into the views so very carefully and competently formulated in the large book. This is a very special task for which the present biography offers much material and some starting points, but which the author, who cannot be supposed to have any special libertarian sympathies, almost purposely left aside. In fact, while grateful for every serious study of the early history of freedom, the harshest criticism which I feel inclined to express on this book is its lack of proportion, which leaves the uninitiated reader without a true idea of the purport and importance of "Political Justice," whilst acquainting him very fully with the causes and details of Godwin's later decline. This may be welcome to the Shelley students, but they ought to learn more of the Godwin of 1793 whose ideas first drew Shelley towards him.

Thus, this book would be well supplemented by another volume, "The Ideas of William Godwin," retracing their origin and sources, their full bloom in 1793, and the exact circumstances of what was either their decline or their further evolution, a distinction which it is very essential to make. Then only will the Life be fully understood. Meanwhile a perusal of the original "Political Justice" will be a most interesting task for modern libertarian thinkers who would examine Godwin's reasoning by the light of our present experience. May another, a modern "Political Justice," some day originate from such studies; it is high time to co-ordinate the experience and the sincere and fearless reasoning of our time, as Godwin did that of the generous eighteenth century; but circumstances probably are not favourable to-day.

Mr. Brown's book collects some of the elements which combined to shape Godwin's mentality up to 1791: the early love for freedom kindled by the heroic periods of ancient Greek and Roman history; the habits of reasoning out a matter, first exercised on religion; the tenets of an extreme and isolated sect, the Sandemanians, who also held some social views concerning property; the French atheist reasoners, d'Holbach and Helvétius; strong views on education; the liberal and radical political criticism of the period between the American and the French revolutions, 1776 and 1789; and then the overwhelming influence of the French Revolution as its aspect was in 1789-90. These factors built up Godwin's lifelong belief in freedom, reasoning, and education, and his criticism of existing institutions and beliefs.

We cannot yet prove this in detail, but probably his strong reasoning, which led to the utter destruction of his religious belief

\* "The Life of William Godwin." By Ford K. Brown. 16s. London: J. M. Dent and Sons.

and made him consider the idea of an "intelligent creator and governor of the universe" as "the most irrational and ridiculous anthropomorphism" (1800; p. 180), this dissection, emptying out, and abandoning of the God fiction led him to dissect equally the fiction of Government, that of Property, of Marriage, and all that, as the traditional limits put on political criticism (changing kingdoms into republics, but going no further), on social criticism (giving charity instead of free access to the means of life), and on moral matters (bowing down to custom or arbitrary rules, secular and religious), could not satisfy his keen and uncorrupted reasoning power.

As to the means of achieving the aims of thorough political, social, and moral freedom, a combination which implies full Anarchism, Godwin, when composing his book in 1791-92 and afterwards, was the most consequent believer in education. He must have recognised two types of Revolution, one like the American struggle for independence and the French Revolution of 1789-90, when the great majority of a people was unanimous in taking a step forward—this, the result of their own insight and initiative, he approved of and admired. And the other type—when a minority tries to impose its will, which can only be done and maintained by authoritarian means—this he always disapproved. Consequently he was indifferent to the dictatorial turn taken by events in France after 1792, when the Committees ruled supreme, then others, until Bonaparte became sole dictator. It also alienated his sympathies from the English Jacobins of the period, Thelwall and others, who adopted these authoritarian tactics. His friends, the educationists, or Perfectionists, as they were called, were in a minority in the English militant ranks of those years—the present struggle between Anarchists and Bolsheviks being fought out then under other names.

Burke's miserable "Reflections on the Revolution in France" (November, 1790) was replied to first by Mary Wollstonecraft (later on Godwin's wife), then by many others, and in March, 1791, by Thomas Paine's "Rights of Man"; but these replies did not give full satisfaction to Godwin's more critical and deeper-furrowing mind, and this led to the plan of "Political Justice," May, 1791, which, after arrangements made with the publisher securing Godwin's maintenance for some time, was slowly composed by him from the summer of 1791 to the end of 1792, discussed with his friends during this period, and thus produced under exceptionally favourable conditions. It came out in February, 1793, and had a prodigious vogue. Its reasoning was so clear and faultless that for years those who instinctively hated it found no arguments with which to assail it.

When the Scottish Jacobin sympathisers, Thomas Muir and Thomas Fyssh Palmer, were transported, Godwin spoke up for them; he also supported Joseph Gerrald as a prisoner; and when the popular leaders Thomas Hardy, Horne Tooke, and Thelwall were on trial for their lives in the autumn of 1794 Godwin at the last moment, by a striking letter to the *Morning Chronicle*, "Cursory Strictures on the Charge delivered by Lord Chief Justice Eyre to the Grand Jury," exposed the judicial tactics of "constructive murder," and powerfully contributed to the acquittal of the accused, the London Corresponding Society members, and thus averting the general repression which was to follow the expected convictions in these test cases.

Thus he did his share of good work, but he would not bow before the authoritarian spirit of Thelwall and others, and from that time was deserted by their adherents, the bulk of the Bolsheviks, as I might say.

Society and the Government then anticipated another modern achievement—they introduced literary Fascism in 1797, publishing abuse of every kind in the *Anti-Jacobin Review*; and many temporary admirers of the Revolution, including Southey, Coleridge, and Wordsworth, returned to the patriotic and religious and moral sanctity fold. For several years Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft, dead already in 1797, were the most insulted and abused people in England. Godwin, thus the common prey of Bolsheviks and Fascists, made a last dignified reply in 1801 and then became silent, though he did hard literary work and remained intellectually active until his death in 1836, aged eighty.

This hunting down of Godwin is described impressively by Mr. Brown. The action of a powerful mind which could have advanced the cause of intellectual emancipation for so very many years was thus paralysed; a man dangerous to society was disposed of somehow, as Shelley, Byron, and others were also disposed of.

The problem remains whether some modifications of Godwin's

ideas, openly stated by him, represent a decline resulting from the situation in which he was placed after 1801, or whether he was not actuated by an insight into certain defects of his method. He had relied entirely upon reason; he later inclined to admit the importance of feelings. This I take to be a humanisation of his views, as a closer approach to real life. If so, it would have been not an attenuation but a widening and deepening of his work; for Anarchism is the more perfect the nearer it is to real life, the further from abstraction. There are as many Anarchisms as there are lives, for life is Anarchy; it claims to be self guided and wishes to determine for itself the degree of social co-operation and interdependence and of individual action and relative independence for which it feels fitted.

It is a great pity that Godwin's work was thus cut short; it is another unfortunate accident that Shelley, who read "Political Justice" at seventeen in school, no longer found the Godwin of 1793 when he became so closely allied to him after 1812. But Godwin did a surprising amount of good work, and Mr. Brown's book, dealing mainly with his personal friends and correspondents, has not exhausted the sphere of his wider influence, another subject worth closer scrutiny.

One would like to see some of the author's details substantiated. Was there really a pirated edition of "Political Justice" published in Scotland (p. 58), as there was in Dublin and in Philadelphia. Also, who besides the London Corresponding Society (p. 338) reprinted sections of the book in pamphlet form in London (p. 59)? Bibliographical details such as these will always be welcome, for if Godwin's literary personality belongs to the wide circle of students of English letters and art, everything connected with "Political Justice" should be the particular domain of students of Anarchist history. All the advanced books of that period seem to have been reprinted in Philadelphia; the persons who directed these publications there, their reception in American circles, etc., all this is also worth studying. There is a Thomas Paine literature diving into such questions, as the Shelley literature in England keeps an eye open for Godwin. These are useful starting points for Godwin studies, which, in spite of Mr. Brown's valuable and scholarly book, have hardly yet begun.

M. N.

## DEATH OF WILLIAM BARKER.

We regret to announce the passing of our old friend and comrade William Barker, of Lowestoft, who died on March 12. Born and brought up in a country village 77 years ago, with all the orthodox ideas of that time, such as "Fear God and honour the Queen," he was launched upon the world at an early age to get a living. After suffering all the trials and hardships of the workers here, he went to America. He was not long, however, in discovering that the conditions of the workers there were little better than at home. During his stay he became acquainted with the Chicago Anarchists, who opened his eyes to the injustices of the present system of society, and their martyrdom made him a bitter enemy of the governing class. From that time he took a profound interest in the social question, and soon became a fervent and persistent propagandist.

When he returned to England he tried to get a living in Lowestoft, but his activities soon became known and he had to try elsewhere, this time at Brighton, where he carried on a vigorous propaganda almost single-handed. In the "nineties" he moved to London, and spoke in Hyde Park and elsewhere almost daily. Later on he started a newspaper business at Gorleston, but his denunciation of the Boer War landed him in hot water again and he had to put up the shutters. His final move was to Lowestoft again, where he eked out an existence as an outside porter at the railway station. Here he carried on his propaganda as long as his vitality lasted, always endeavouring to inspire individual initiative and to destroy faith in would-be leaders, whether parsons or politicians. That attitude is fully justified now, when we behold Labour leaders rubbing shoulders with the class that will use any and every means to oppose a reorganisation of society. Up to the last he took a keen interest in current events and thought he could see a faint glimmer of the dawn of a better day. We tender our sympathy to Mrs. Barker and family in their bereavement.

G. LAWRENCE.

## ANARCHISM VERSUS SOCIALISM.

By WM. C. OWEN.

32 pages, with Wrapper. Price, Threepence.

## DOLLAR DIPLOMACY.

Are you one of those innocents who imagine that the capitalist system is played out, and that we have merely to squat on our haunches and watch it collapse? In that case you need an eye-opener, and it would be hard to pick a better one than "Dollar Diplomacy: a Study in American Imperialism."\* There you may behold the tiger in the first flush of vigorous youth, insatiable of appetite; the tireless hunter who employs every weapon to bring down his game. Where it is tame and stupid he coaxes it with fine words into his net. Where it is wide awake and full of fight he shoots it down remorselessly. In one way or another he gets it; and apparently the most successful experts at this business, during the last quarter of a century, have been the Americans. They came into the business late but quickly mastered it, having the experience of the older craftsmen for a guide. No sentimental traditions unnerved them. The lure of the Almighty Dollar had taken them to the United States, and, with an unparalleled growth of opportunities, the lure proved more irresistible than ever.

It may be well to consider for a moment how extraordinary has been that growth. The population of the United States, estimated to-day at 110,000,000, is six times greater than a century ago. Her wealth has increased eight-fold within the last fifty years, and her manufacturing industries, which in 1850 were represented in the tables of the statisticians by a mere dot, are now depicted by a lofty column that stands for more than sixty billion dollars. Prior to this century her energies were devoted almost exclusively to the development of her own domain, which is about as large as Europe. To-day her financial influence is a factor with which the proudest Empires are compelled to reckon. Thus, in 1903 we find President Roosevelt proclaiming that the United States had become a great Asiatic Power; for, said he: "The extension of the area of our domain has been immense; the extension in the area of our influence even greater." With the conclusion of the Russo-Japanese War of 1905, American railway kings, bankers, and financiers were wrestling with Russia and Japan, backed respectively by France and Britain, for the control of Manchuria.

All this was rendered possible by a vast expansion of State power, the Government co-operating energetically with railway kings and oil kings, bankers and financiers, for the conquest of territory and the capture of markets. With this went necessarily a constant increase of militarism and the military spirit, because even the most avowedly democratic Government rests on force, and as economic conquests multiply and scatter more guardians are needed. We find President Taft, therefore, explaining in his inaugural address of March 4, 1909, that it will be necessary for the country to hold its own in the international controversies arising in the Orient, and adding: "She will not be able to do so, however, if it is understood that she never intends to back up her assertion of right and her defence of her interest by anything but mere verbal protest and diplomatic note." He might just as well have said outright that America's power depended in the last resort on her ability to kill; but that is not the way in which diplomatists and statesmen talk.

Militarism is self-evidently inherent in and inseparable from such a system, for you cannot go about the world seizing countries and taking possession—whether by "peaceful permeation" or otherwise—of whatever seems likely to prove profitable in the future without at the same time developing armed forces to defend your plunder. To me that seems obvious, and to me, therefore, the agitation for the abolition of Militarism, unaccompanied by any efforts to overthrow the most invasive system that human ingenuity has yet devised, appears futile.

This book is packed with facts, drawn from Governmental data that defy contradiction, and compiled with scrupulous care by two distinguished writers who had the assistance of others well known in the literary and scientific world. It traces the military evolution of the United States, which may be said to have begun with the Spanish-American War of 1898; and in its pages one follows step by step the working of the great forces responsible for that evolution, and the methods by which they attained that end. The urge was lust for money, as conferring power over one's fellow-creatures. The pressure was supplied by the great financial, industrial, and landed powers of the United States, which for years had been a hotbed of Governmentally-created Special Privilege. The method employed by

the special interests was that of taking the Government into partnership with them, for without that they would have been helpless. With Government, the tax-gatherer, for partner, they controlled the public purse; and with it, as the arbiter of war and peace, they had the masses everywhere at their mercy. As President Taft remarked, in the passage already quoted, Governments must be ready to back up with armed force their claims, and the same holds good of the invasive interests allied with the governing machine. Were they not able to rely on the coercive forces at the disposal of the governing machine, the masses could unseat them at any moment. As it is, they are firmly in the saddle, and the horse himself supplies the whip and spur, the bit and bridle, by which they master him.

Until I read this book I had little conception of the part played by Washington, on behalf of American oil interests, in the making and unmaking of Mexican Presidents. I had only a very limited vision of the wealth wrung by the great American Trusts from Cuba, the Philippines, and other invaluable territory wrested from Spain. I had read much of the brutal military rule exercised in the annexed islands of the Caribbean Sea, but I had not understood their military value as keys to the Panama Canal, one of the world's two great international seaways, which the American Government guards as her own private property. For years I had recognised the increasing invasiveness of American policies, but I had not realised the success attained, or the frightful outrage on human liberties and happiness that success involved.

This book stirs thought, and thought of the virile type that grapples with the problems of the present. Life is not a pious abstraction, in defence of which we are called on to sacrifice individual happiness to the supposed welfare of some ecclesiastical or political hierarchy whose well-rewarded role it is to preach submission to the authority of God and State. Life is the one actual fact we know, and every instinct within us, and all Nature's voices outside of us, thunder incessantly into our ears that we should live it to the fullest. Why should we fling ourselves fanatically into the jaws of the modern Moloch, and lay ourselves meekly on the altar of self-sacrifice, because a handful of money-crazed monopolists and power-intoxicated officials command us? Herein, as I at least conceive, is to be found the source of all the troubles of an age stuffed full with physical and mental torture; an age that has thought nothing of exterminating whole races—as the Americans exterminated the North American Indians—and slaying millions in internecine wars, in order that it might appease the appetite of the ruling class. And the one redeeming feature is that here and there the mass is revolting against this Moloch-worship; is squirming uneasily beneath the yoke; is shaking off the fumes of tradition and superstition, and awakening to the consciousness that its true business is to live for itself, and not for the glorification and enrichment of the governing power.

The United States has much trouble coming to her from Mexico and Cuba, from the Philippines and all the vast Latin-American area she is endeavouring to subdue to the ambitions of her dominant plutocracy; just as Great Britain and all the warring Powers have thrust their hands into a hornet's nest through scrambling for the spoils of Africa and Asia. The hornets have stings, and the social question is not going to be solved so easily as Socialists and Communists imagine, nor as agreeably as Pacifists dream.

The great question is as to the side likely to be taken by the masses in the upheavals of the future. Will they place their hands in that of the governing authorities, and on their bended knees vow loyalty to those in power? Will they be, as of old, for "peace at any price," and rest satisfied with filling their bellies from the masters' table, getting here some trifling rise in wages and there some little shortening of hours? If so, nothing will have been accomplished, and there will remain the basic fact that instead of becoming masters of themselves they will still be the helots of the Caesars they themselves enthroned. If they could know the records that this book, like many others of its class, displays, they might escape that fate. As it appears to me, therefore, it is the business of the revolutionary few to study those records and explain them to the unknowing many. If you yourself cannot afford to buy the book, get your library to order it.

W. C. O.

### The Road to Freedom.

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\* "Dollar Diplomacy." By Scott Nearing and Joseph Freeman. \$2.50. New York: B. W. Huebsch and the Viking Press.

## THE BOLSHEVIK MYTH.\*

We are pleased to see that an English publisher has brought out an edition of Alexander Berkman's book on the Russian Revolution. It was first published in New York, and reviewed in *FREEDOM* in June, 1925; but another short notice will not be out of place.

When he and others were deported from the United States to Russia in December, 1919, Berkman joyfully accepted this opportunity of working for the Revolution, which he had welcomed with rapture when it first broke out. On his arrival his reputation as a revolutionist ensured him a warm reception, and he was able to travel round and see things for himself. His knowledge of the language was invaluable. He had interviews with all the leading Bolsheviks—Lenin, Trotsky, Zinoviev, and others—and talked with many workers and peasants. He soon noticed things which seemed to him contrary to the spirit of the Revolution, but he excused them as unavoidable in such a gigantic upheaval. Later on, however, he realised the folly of centralising the control of everything in the hands of the Communist Party, as it crippled local initiative and damped down the revolutionary spirit of the workers and peasants, who resented the constant supervision of Communist officials. The intolerance and brutality of the Tcheka, who persecuted everyone who did not agree with the methods of the Bolsheviks, made him very angry. He endeavoured to secure the release of imprisoned Anarchists and other revolutionists, but met with a refusal everywhere. They were either counter-revolutionaries or bandits, he was told.

In July, 1920, he went to the Ukraine as chairman of a Commission to collect material for the Museum of the Revolution, and was free to make inquiries of everyone, whether officials, workers, or peasants. The things he saw and heard on this journey completely disillusioned him. He found that the domineering methods of the officials sent from Moscow had killed all enthusiasm for the Revolution, the cruelties of the Tcheka exceeding those of the Tsarist secret police. Distrust and suspicion reigned everywhere; no one felt safe.

On his return to Moscow he found that the persecution of the Anarchists had been intensified. Seeing he could make no impression on the Tcheka, he wrote direct to Lenin, setting forth the reasons—revolutionary, ethical, and utilitarian—for the release of the politicals in the interests of the common cause. He received no reply.

In February, 1921, he went to Petrograd, and was there when the Kronstadt rebellion took place. The soldiers and sailors supported the demands of the Petrograd workers for better food and clothing, and also for freely elected Soviets. Instead of negotiating with them, Trotsky bombarded Kronstadt and massacred 14,000 in the name of the Revolution.

Alexander Berkman's story carries conviction to the reader. We seem to feel the atmosphere of suspicion created by the terrorism of the Tcheka, and the strangle-hold of the Bolsheviks on the life of the people is brought home to us vividly. "The Revolution is dead," he writes; "its spirit cries in the wilderness. . . . The Bolshevik myth must be destroyed." His book will help to destroy it.

## TO THE DISINHERITED.

We wish that copies of this pamphlet by Wm. C. Owen\* could be placed in the hands of the millions of workers who ceased work in support of the miners. They would then recognise how futile are all their efforts to materially improve their condition so long as they have not free access to the land. Without that they are helpless and dependent on their masters for their daily bread; and the author says he has written this pamphlet "with the deliberate intention of making the disinherited disgusted with themselves for enduring the conditions existing in this country; of getting them to understand, if possible, that the life of a Lazarus crawling at the feet of Dives is a life not worth living." The helplessness of the masses fills the author with indignation and a fierce hatred of the present system, and he scorns the idea that any amount of patching can make the system tolerable to men and women who value freedom and personal dignity.

Our friend Wm. C. Owen has written with force and in a most convincing manner, and we hope his pamphlet will have a very wide circulation. Single copies can be obtained from *FREEDOM* Office (2½d. post-free); orders for a quantity should be sent to the publishers.

\* "The Bolshevik Myth (Diary 1920-1922)." By Alexander Berkman. 18s. London: Hutchinson and Co.

\* "Set My People Free!" By Wm. C. Owen. 2d. London: Commonwealth Land Party, 43 Chancery Lane, W.C. 2.

## TO OUR READERS.

Owing to financial difficulties we were unable to publish an April issue. This number was to have been printed in the first week of this month, but the strike stopped it. Fresh matter was necessary after the strike, causing further delay. Our next issue will appear during the first week in July.

Our financial position is causing us much anxiety. For some time we have been struggling to keep the paper going, hoping for the tide to turn. Now we are compelled to appeal to you to help us. Money is urgently required, but what is even more necessary is that the circulation of *FREEDOM* should be increased. Circulation is the vital factor in the problem. Some can help with money, while others can help the circulation; but we hope all will do their best. Cheques, money orders, and postal orders should be made payable to *Freedom Press*. As Kipling said in the *British Gazette*, "What stands if *FREEDOM* fall?"

### "Freedom" Guarantee Fund.

The following sums have been received to date (May 15) since our last issue:—G. Teltsch 4s., J. Ferguson 2s. 6d., E. C. R. 6d., T. S. 10s., G. M. 11s. 3d., A. Hazeland 2s. 6d., H. Compton 5s., G. P. 4s., L. G. Wolfe £2, G. W. Tindale 2s. 6d., C. Sewell 2s. 6d., B. W. 1s. 6d., N. B. Ells 12s., M. A. Cohn £4, E. Richmond 10s., A. D. Moore 5s., C. Hansen 4s. 2d., A. Pritchard 4s., Blanco 10s., Frank 5s.

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