

Freedom

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NOTES.

The Naval Conference.

This Conference, originally called for the purpose of the limitation of the navies of Great Britain, the United States, and Japan, has been a perfect farce so far—though it may have a tragic ending. Instead of discussing as to how few ships each country should have, the question now is as to how many they shall be allowed. The whole of the meetings have been occupied by acrimonious discussions, and the press in each of the three countries has been publishing insinuations as to the honesty and sincerity of the other fellows. Each one says he merely wants security, and it looks as though they all want security against each other. The talk has been about big cruisers and small cruisers, cruisers for defence and cruisers for offence, small submarines and large submarines, global tonnage, 8in. guns and 6in. guns, and the naval experts on each side have flatly contradicted the naval experts on the other side. The Anglo-Saxon friendship so much in the air since 1918 has vanished at the first touch of reality, and now John Bull is flirting again with the Mikado, whom he threw over so unkindly at the Washington Conference. The struggle between the nations has now shifted to the East, and the next World War will be fought in the Pacific. British statesmen take long views and seldom allow sentiment to influence them, and, believing as they do in naval power, an alliance with Japan to safeguard their present and future possessions in the East would be quite natural. The Mediterranean is not a very safe place for battleships in these days of submarines, so to avoid the possibility of interruption of communications they intend to keep a fleet in being in the East, with Singapore as a self-contained base. But will the people of Great Britain stand for all this? you ask perhaps. Well, if their dividends are in danger they will stand for anything. As for those who do not draw dividends, they don't count. They only do the fighting, and most of them seem to like it.

The Reform of the Lords.

What a fearful hubbub there was when the Government put forward their proposals for the Reform of the House of Lords. The Labour Party, of course, denounced them. That was to be expected, as they were designed to keep a check on any revolutionary proposals they may put forward if and when they get into office again. But the most powerful opposition came from some of their most consistent supporters. Mr. J. L. Garvin, the long-winded editor of the *Observer*, fairly raged at them. In an article headed "Doomed," he analysed the proposals and said the Government were mad if they intended to introduce their proposals in the form of a Bill, as it meant they would be swept from office at the next Election, and the first attempt of the reformed House of Lords to hinder popular legislation would lead to a Revolution—or words to that effect. The hereditary principle was out of date and the people would not tolerate hereditary Peers being the dominant section in the reformed House. But when we have read the criticisms of all the politicians we find a strong point of agreement among them. They all agree we must have a Second Chamber and they all agree it must be reformed—that is, strengthened. They all fear real revolutionary changes, although we do not believe any real revolutionary change can come through Parliament. It will be in spite of Parliament if it is revolutionary. A reformed House of Lords will have one feature which belongs to the present one—it will safeguard the rights of the propertied class against the dispossessed. That was its essential purpose, and was ever the purpose of a Second Chamber—the maintenance of Special Privilege. They may call it a Senate and Labour leaders and Socialists may become Senators, but the more it is changed the more it will be the same. So the present hubbub is merely a storm in a teacup, and should have no interest for the workers.

The Revolt in Vienna.

The sudden and serious outbreak of rioting which took place in Vienna on July 15 is a sign that the temper of the workers had been rising for some time and only wanted a spark to set it alight. The aggressive methods of the Fascists or Monarchists had been resented for some time, and when three Fascists shot down two Socialists from a window in Schatendorf, in Burgenland, last January, anger rose to boiling point, and only subsided when the three men were arrested and put on trial for murder. The Fascists have always had influential supporters in governing circles, and it is evident that pressure was brought to bear on the judges who conducted the trial, with the result that the Fascists were acquitted, although there was no doubt as to their guilt. When the acquittal became known a mass demonstration of protest was organised before the Ministry of Justice. It is said that the demonstrators were quite peaceful until the police rode in amongst them. The workers attacked the police and drove them away, and then wreaked their vengeance on the Ministry of Justice. Legal documents, correspondence, books, furniture, and many other things were thrown out of the windows and burnt, and the building set on fire. The police, having been armed, returned and fired on the crowd, with the result that about 80 were killed and hundreds wounded. A general strike of 24 hours was ordered, and every industry, trains, trams, and all postal and telegraph services stopped dead. The resignation of the Chancellor and the Chief of Police was demanded, but was refused, the Government having got the upper hand again. The usual nonsense has been talked in the press about the revolt being engineered by Moscow, but it is evident that it was merely an outbreak of popular indignation at the acquittal of the three Fascists and had no revolutionary significance. The workers of Vienna simply took the matter into their own hands for once and ignored their leaders, who have now restored order and discipline.

"The Reckless Young Devils."

Lord Thomson, who was Secretary of State for Air in the Labour Government, was speaking at the London Labour Women's Summer School, at Guildford, on July 15, and thought it an opportune occasion to give his opinion on the work of the Ministry of which he had charge in 1924. He was very enthusiastic about the "reckless young devils" between the ages of 15 and 16 recruited for the Royal Air Force, and said "they would break their necks on the road if they did not do it in aeroplanes." This must have been very cheerful news to any mothers of aviators who were present. He was also very anxious about our "dangerously small" Army, but thought we had at least ten years of peace before us and hoped we would turn those years to good account. He evidently looks forward to an increase of the Army. In the meantime he believes "the highest function of the Air Ministry is the development of civil aviation." Sir Leo Chiozza Money, who is a Liberal, has other opinions on the matter, which he expresses very forcibly in a letter to the *Sunday Times* of June 19. Dealing with this question of the boys who are burnt in military aeroplanes, he writes: "For what purpose do the boys perish? . . . The main purpose is to bomb civilian populations out of their wits. Aviation means war on non-combatants; war on old men, boys, girls, women, and infants in arms. It is the nearest thing to Hell which has yet been practically invented. That gallant boys should be burned to death in peace is mournful enough. That they should be burnt in learning how to do revolting things is surely the limit of unreason." Labour voters may well wonder why Lord Thomson should have been selected as Secretary for Air by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald. Does the Labour Party agree with his views on the "reckless young devils" and the value of their work? In any case, we should certainly expect it to repudiate his views on our "dangerously small" Army, which always seems large enough for aggression abroad when profits are in danger.

The Tenth Anniversary of the Russian Revolution.

It is only a few months now to the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution. Great preparations are being made by the Communist Party and Government of Russia for the celebration of the important event. Numerous committees are at work to make the day the most memorable in the annals of Soviet Russia, and to demonstrate to the country and to the world at large the achievements of the first decade of Bolshevik rule.

There is no doubt that the October Revolution was the most significant social upheaval known in human history. It broke all the moulds of established society—not merely political forms, as was the case in previous revolutions, but the very economic foundations that support human slavery and oppression.

The spiritual achievements of the Revolution are tremendous, their ultimate effects immeasurable. It sounded the liberation of a million-headed people that for centuries had been held in bondage. It opened vistas of a new civilisation of human dignity, brotherhood, and freedom. And it lit the torch of hope and aspiration for all the peoples of the world.

A decade is but a short span in the life of a country. It would be near-sighted and unfair to judge the potentialities of new Russia by her actual achievements within the past ten years. But the essential characteristics of Russian life since the Revolution may serve as an indication of the dominant spirit and tendencies of the country.

This is not the place for a detailed review of the first decade of Soviet Russia, or even for an approximate estimate of her achievements during that period. It is the fundamental nature and trend of Russian development during the past ten years that are significant, and they are sufficient to clarify the present situation.

The purpose of the October Revolution was to revalue outlived social conceptions, to free man from his spiritual and physical bondage, to release the creative energies of the people, and to establish conditions of human dignity and brotherhood. Is present-day Russia even in the smallest degree an approach to that purpose? Is it imaginably even on the road toward that end?

It is enough to state the essential factors of Russian life to-day to supply the answer. What are those fundamental factors? What are the essential features that characterise to-day in Russia and prepare her to-morrow?

Politically: The most absolute despotism, the exclusive rule of an all-powerful political party that ruthlessly suppresses every symptom of disagreement and non-conformity.

Economically: Capitalism, State and private, with all its attendant attributes of exploitation, degradation, and subjection of the toilers.

Educationally: The apotheosis of the ruling political party, its leaders, and the State as omniscient and infallible; the intensification of the spirit of authority and blind obedience; the cultivation of militarist discipline and party chauvinism; the rearing of fanatical subjects whose wills are crippled and minds warped by the elimination of all freedom of speech and the suppression of all but party doctrines and information.

Socially: A condition of terror, with the dominant political party as the sole arbiter of all action, thought, and behaviour; a régime that cultivates the basest qualities of man by rousing fear, insecurity, hypocrisy, and debasement.

These are the vital elements of life under the Bolsheviks. What boots it that Russia has "succeeded" in inducing international capital to exploit her natural resources—and her workers at the same time? Was a great revolution, with all its inevitable bloodshed and suffering, necessary merely to advance Russian development along the lines of American industrialism? Was the Revolution fought to establish modern capitalism in Russia?

It is unspeakably indecent to celebrate these "achievements" of Bolshevik rule in the name of the October Revolution. It is the greatest crime against the spirit of liberty and humanity to rejoice in the betrayal of the Revolution by the Communist Party.

The anniversary of the Revolution can be celebrated only by a revival of the spirit that is now being crushed by the Bolshevik Government. It can be celebrated only by fore-swearing tyranny and terror, and by returning to the people the fruits of the Revolution: their liberties and self-determination. In short, by the Bolshevik masters getting off the people's back.

The first step on this road is the absolute abolition of the system of suppression and persecution, and the immediate and unconditional liberation of the political prisoners. Not a fake liberation of the men and women suffering for opinion's sake, not an "administrative" liberation that will leave the prison doors open for their forced return under some new Tcheka pretext. But an actual liberation guaranteed by the elimination of the least semblance of political persecution. Thus only can the great October Revolution be fittingly commemorated in spirit and in deed.

Will that be done? Hardly. Certainly not till the Russian people themselves compel the Government to do so. Meanwhile thousands of politicals are rotting in the dungeons of the Tcheka or drag out their miserable existence in the hell-hole of the Solovetsky Islands, in the prisons, concentration camps, and exile in the most forsaken regions of the Arctic zone of Northern Russia and Siberia.

It would seem that it were sufficient merely to mention such a terrible state of affairs in an allegedly "revolutionary" country to rouse the indignation of every fair-minded man and woman, and to awaken the conscience of humanity to a liberating deed. But the cries of the victims tortured in Bolshevik prisons and "isolators" remain unheard. Their far-off voices are drowned in the triumphant clamour of the apologists for the terrorism and tyranny of Communist Fascism. Where is the George Kennan to light the torch of fearless truth in Darkest Russia of to-day?

The political martyrs in Russia and Siberia need your moral as well as material aid. The Relief Fund of the International Working Men's Association is exerting its utmost efforts to help. For that help we depend upon you, friends and sympathisers, for without your active support of this worthy cause the imprisoned and exiled politicals in Russia would be doomed to perish from cold and hunger. The allowance that the exiled receive from the Bolshevik Government is actually about one-fifth of what it was under the Romanov régime. In the Turukhan District (North-Western Siberia), for instance, the politicals used to receive under the Tsar 15 roubles per month for their support. To-day they get only 6 roubles and 25 kopecks, while the purchasing value of the rouble is now only about one-third of pre-war days. The Tsar was certainly none too generous to the revolutionists. But to-day they are practically condemned to death from hunger. Consider then how vital is your help!

Summer is a very critical time in the work of relief, because during the hot months activities in our movement usually fall off, and our Fund receives but few contributions. We therefore suggest to the various Red Cross and Aid Societies on whose co-operation we depend, as well as to all friends and comrades, to exert themselves to enable us to assist our prisoners and exiles in Russia. Picnics, entertainments, and similar affairs would prove a source of income in behalf of the politicals.

Our Relief Fund, which has two sections—one in Paris, the other in Berlin—is intended specially for the benefit of Anarchists and Anarcho-Syndicalists imprisoned or exiled in Russia. We make absolutely no distinctions, giving aid to all imprisoned or exiled Anarchists, to whatever school or group they may belong. In cases where the contributor requests us to divide his donation among other political parties his instructions are carried out, of course, as shown by the financial accounts in our Bulletin. Emma Goldman, for instance, generally collects at her lectures for the political prisoners of all parties, and funds thus collected and received by us are divided according to the directions of the contributors, local groups, etc.

May those who read these lines take the urgent need of the situation to heart and *remember the men and women suffering for their idealism in Russian prisons and exile.*

ALEXANDER BERKMAN.

For the Secretariat of the Relief Fund of the I.W.M.A.
Address contributions to: A. Bergmann, 120, Rue Tahère,
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The Beauty of Sex.

The article by Grant Allen in the April-May number of *FREEDOM* has left very peculiar feelings in my mind, one of admiration for the poetical and eloquent form in which he expresses his ideas, and another of revolt against the underlying tendency. His interpretation of the rôle of Sex in Nature and Art seems to me rather an exaggeration than a true representation of the facts. This kind of reasoning may appeal to some, but common human understanding with a liking for logic does not agree with generalising valuable and legitimate natural and human instincts into an all-dominating and pervading power. Might we not with the same right generalise every other powerful instinct, as that of hunger, self-assertion, will to live, liberty? From this generalising tendency to a rigid theory is not a long step, and we have for every branch of science as well as art theories to every taste; but even the best ones have hardly a longer existence than from two to three generations.

It is attractive to trace all that is lovely, all that touches our senses agreeably, to the selecting power of sexual instinct, leaving the ugly and uncomfortable to other unexplained forces. All life and all civilised society, reflected most truly in the magic mirror of Art, has its existence, by a combination or correlation of very different phenomena, harmonised in an unknown way by natural surroundings or some individual directing power. All life is a compromise, in which sexual instinct has its undisputed place; but natural phenomena are not explained by a single agent of force or instinct. It is quite true that water is frozen by cold; but that is not a satisfactory explanation for the physicist, who asks why a house, a tree, or he himself is not also frozen.

The productive forces and the economic structure of society have a great influence on political thought and also on the mind and its idealistic transposition into Art; but to make such phenomena the omnipotent material and spiritual dictator, as the Marxists have done, is erroneous and foolish. It is inexact to say that the changes of natural organs are the result, the sole result, of sexual selection; and it is the same with man and his psychological disposition. I do not believe that any theory exists which attributes man's like or dislike for natural beauty to sexual feeling, except that of Freud, which is rather a dangerous caricature of psychology.

But if sexual feeling is not the dictatorial power of Nature, it is certainly that of Art, being the most genuine expression of human passion. If we consider great literature we cannot deny the all-pervading rôle of sexual feeling that inspired it. There is a running thread of sexual glorification from the mythological figures of the *Odyssey* to the tales of Boccaccio, the epic poems of Ariosto and Tasso, and the fantastic but ingenious tales of Rabelais and the last of our modern aesthetes. I admire them just as much as those who see that in these literary creations with the glorification of sexual love other themes go hand in hand. But modern literature has created new types of art. Novels and stories with a pronounced love character are more and more banished to second-class literature. Modern literature deals with problems, and the instinct of love, if it appears, is treated as a problem. The inventive power of the artist creates always new ones, and to-day social problems take the place formerly occupied by that of sex. High-class literary productions in which sexual feeling is restricted form, of course, still an unconvincing number, but they exist.

In modern literature we find some admirable specimens of the neutral type I mentioned. "Le Feu," by Henry Barbusse, will satisfy many literary tastes, as also some writings of Romhin Rolland. "Pelle, the Conqueror," by the Dane, Andersen Nexø, is probably the most perfect incarnation of the social type we find in Russian literature. Dostoyevsky is too deep and profound a thinker to waste time and genius in sketching love adventures. Where they appear in his novels they are saturated with a philosophy that has neutralised and sublimed what may be dangerous or common in them. And Tolstoy? Everyone knows his later struggle against everything that has its source in sex feeling. Out of his almost fanatical negation of this natural instinct in man he created his admirable short stories. His last work in *belles lettres*, the "Kreuzer Sonata," is a complete condemnation of sexual intercourse. Whether we agree with his views or not, we must acknowledge his artistic presentation of them. In the stories of the great naturalist, Maxim Gorki, we very seldom find the problem of love; his ragged, filthy beggars and outlaws have seldom the chance to love. But these stories leave a powerful impression in our mind. I had almost forgotten the great poet Verhaeren. Are his poesies less poesies because he uses love problems or love relations sparingly, like a prudent painter uses his bright colours? There is an indefinable charm in

every line produced by his poetical genius, whether he glorifies human work, industry, and accomplishment, or unveils to us the dim mystery of the human eye.

In painting we have the two great spheres of landscape and still-life, which are almost neutral to all sex feeling. As regards our modern painting that represents the human body, I know that it is entirely indebted to the fertile and lucrative theme of sex beauty, especially French painting; but I may mention here one that has left the trodden path of tradition, and still reached a most considerable rank among modern painters. I mean Ferdinand Hodler, who died in 1918. For one of his powerful inspired pictures I would give a score by many others.

I do not want to belittle the great artistic creations of the past that give expression to sex beauty. I am no Tolstoyar in that sense; I do not cherish his extreme anti-sexual ideas. What I want to lay stress upon is that this feeling cannot be the all-dominating force compared to which all other life manifestations are only of minor importance. On the contrary, it seems to me that our time, with its more ripened and more serious intellect, demands a comprehensive expression of life in its fullest extent. In other words, Art has an educational as well as an idealistic sense.

H. BRINER.

THE GREAT ILLUSION.

Writing in *John Bull* under the heading "Medicine for Murder," Mr. Norman Angell, the author of "The Great Illusion," argues in favour of an international society or Government, based upon a more definite and binding commitment to the Covenant of the League of Nations—namely, that all the other nations should combine against an aggressor who starts trouble. In support of his argument he says:—

"The basis of all organised society as we have known it among human beings is the readiness of the community to defend the weak against the strong—that is, to ensure to the weak their rights under the law."

But what rights have the weak under the law? Did the weak make the law? Of course not. The laws have been made by the strong to protect their privileges, and a very short study of the history of Government would have convinced Mr. Angell of that. Is there a Government in the world that ever considers the interests of the workers, who are the weak, against the interests of their exploiters? The Governments of Great Britain, for instance, have always protected the land grabber, the financier, the capitalist, and passed laws to legalise all their robberies down the ages. In fact, the Government has always been composed of these people or their representatives. In the early days of the Industrial Revolution in this country the Government for years obstructed every attempt to bring some relief to the sufferings of the children employed in mine and factory at an age when their own children had hardly left the nursery.

Mr. Angell is a member of the Labour Party, which complains day in and day out that the Government never does anything for the workers but is always passing laws or juggling with the taxes in favour of the wealthy and the strong.

The League of Nations was formed by the victorious Allied Powers to share out the plunder among themselves and to keep in subjection the nations they had conquered. Its Council, with Germany now included, is a body that has refused to act in any dispute between one of themselves and a weak nation. To-day the Powers on the Council settle their disputes among themselves by secret diplomacy, and the Assembly of the League is only allowed to discuss questions which have no importance. It is natural that this should happen, because the strong are in power and they will not tolerate that the weak should dictate to them what they should or should not do.

All the basic laws on the Statute Book are class laws, made by a strong and dominant class. They have been passed to control those they exploited, and the only right the workers—the weak and dominated class—have under the law is the right to be robbed and exploited until they gain sufficient knowledge and strength to overthrow and shatter the power of their rulers.

What we have said here should be known to Mr. Angell as it is known to everyone who has studied the history of Governments. The weak have no rights under the law. That they have rights is an illusion shared by many workers besides Mr. Angell, but at least the workers might be excused their ignorance owing to the sentimental nonsense preached by the Labour Party to which Mr. Angell belongs. Their emancipation is far off if they never read anything more enlightening than his article in *John Bull*.

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Is Capitalism Dying?

Everywhere, and perhaps more particularly in this country, discontent is increasing; and by no possibility could it be otherwise. The economic condition of our masses is appalling, and never have they felt so keenly the insecurity of their position. This makes for a recklessness from which hitherto our workers have been singularly free. On the other hand, never did the rich flaunt their wealth so insolently; all which is chronicled exultingly by the daily press and discussed with bitterness by the impoverished. Brooding on these contrasts men grow mad, and when madness sets in anything may happen.

Moreover, Man is not merely a stomach. The poor have feelings, and never were those feelings outraged more brutally than they are to-day. Men loathe the spy and the informer, and the poor are being spied on and informed against at every turn; they are being policed and regulated as Englishmen never were before, and all this is generating a mass of hatred that is the more dangerous because it is accumulating slowly, and dare not express itself openly, as yet.

Quite evidently the existing system is working with increasing friction, and this means that its proper destination is the scrap-heap; but we shall not get rid of it until we have made up our minds definitely that it must go. So far as we can see, the propaganda conducted by the Trade Unions, the Socialists, and their bolder and more outspoken comrades, the Communists, is not well directed toward that end, inasmuch as for the most part it seeks to patch up the present system. Now, Capitalism is far too powerful to succumb to any such half-hearted and kid-gloved attacks. Unintelligent riots against it also amount to nothing; for, however furiously the branches of a tree may wave beneath a passing storm, so long as its roots remain intact, it flourishes.

The Socialists assure us constantly that Capitalism is on its last legs, but is it really so? Capitalism is in possession, which is nine points of the law, the tenth being "Get it if you can." It is in possession on a scale impossible to former generations, for it now traverses the earth from pole to pole, estimates carefully the future value of whatever districts it proposes to annex, and reduces to its own private ownership all natural resources that have either a present or prospective worth. This is the rock on which Capitalism rests, and until that rock is torn from beneath its feet the capitalist system will and must remain unshaken.

To realise this is to step out of the blind trails that lead us nowhere and is to clear the road for a great and practical advance, which, as I believe, is now in active preparation. Russia and Mexico have not solved the land question, but they have understood the necessity of solving it, and that in itself is a great gain. The Chinese upheaval may take us even farther, for its chief inspirer, Sun Yat Sen, taught persistently that land monopoly must be abolished, and all Nationalist movements are prompted by a determination to rescue the natural resources of the countries concerned from the clutches of the imperial invader and restore them to the people. But it is here, in this small but thickly-peopled island, that events are driving us to practical conclusions. The unemployment problem we *must* solve, and to every thinking man it is becoming self-evident that for this our national resources must be unlocked and Labour enabled to get at them. Similarly our housing problem must be solved, and here again it is clear that houses need sites, and are constructed of materials situated on and under the soil our landed aristocracy has cornered; while self-evidently our mining troubles are due primarily to the fact that, in the shape of royalties, wayleaves, and other extortions the land monopolist is still permitted to exact, this basic industry is being bled to death.

Politically also Capitalism is at present stronger than ever; the State, on which it is dependent for the defence of its monopolies, having never been so powerful as it is to-day.

For the protection of capitalist interests abroad the State maintains huge armies and navies, while for the safeguarding of its home interests Capitalism has the police, in themselves a standing army. Moreover, it has now at its command a huge bureaucratic machine that supervises the entire existence of the masses and is able to enforce unflinching obedience to its decrees. Through the meshes of that cunningly-woven net it will be hard to break.

On the other hand, by shocking alike the conscience and intellect of mankind, Capitalism is driving the masses more and more inexorably to revolt. All the world is now talking continually of its most conspicuous absurdities, such as its incapacity to furnish even work to a large percentage of its dependents; the heart-breaking monotony of modern toil as conducted under its profit-making methods; its brutal curtailment of production and destruction of supplies while half the world is starving; its callous willingness to furnish arms to any scoundrel of a Dictator who can pay the price; and so forth, almost *ad infinitum*. Over these men shake their heads in growing numbers. They mutter about the corruption of politics, the venality of the press, and, above all, about the probability of its involving mankind in another and even more devastating war. Fear is the master passion, and mankind is becoming afraid of Capitalism.

Moreover, there is the intellectual revolt, caused by the understanding that the present system is largely the relic of ages that believed the earth was flat, and thought of God as an irascible old gentleman to be appeased by prayer. All that is spiritually dead, and nowadays no intelligent man has any real belief in frauds and absurdities Science long ago exposed. But economic dependence forces millions to pretend belief, and such enforced pretence is infinitely galling. Men fret at living in a world of lies; at being compelled to bow the knee to titled parasites who are worn-out survivals from the days of feudalism; at having to pay lip homage to a Church that preaches Dark Ages doctrines. Yet with all this out-of-date rubbish modern Capitalism, terrified by the growing disaffection of the masses, is now allying itself. It truckles to our territorial aristocracy. It supports the Church because, as it hopes, it will keep the people quiet. It shakes hands with Dictators of the Mussolini type, upholds militarism, and is reactionary from top to toe. In all this it is pitting itself against the Spirit of the Age, which is scientific, eager for realities, and beginning to be sick of humbug.

The Capitalist system, therefore, though stronger than ever materially, is full of weaknesses; and these, which are its vulnerable points, are precisely those our Labour and Socialist politicians are too timid and "diplomatic" to attack. They confine themselves, therefore, to wage disputes; and in these, not having the courage to go for fundamentals, they are perpetually beaten. The supposedly-powerful National Union of Railwaymen petitions its employers to pardon those of its members who were over-zealous during the General Strike. The miners stand on the edge of destitution and despair. The entire movement is paralysed, and all its leaders have to offer is the assurance that they are coming once more into office, and that thereupon the Millennium will arrive.

That sort of talk is wearing thin, and over that we properly rejoice. We have a right to be jubilant at the defeat of humbug, and to feel more confident than ever that the great change, for which all our own propaganda has been a preparation, is drawing near.

W. C. O.

Bourgeoisie and Democracy.

Our Socialist paper published recently an article which asserted that the bourgeoisie had been extremely democratic so long as the people had not known how to make use of their democratic rights, but that it had lost all enthusiasm for Democracy when, in the exercise of such rights, bourgeois interests had been disturbed. Very well; that means that universal suffrage is tolerated only so long as the interests of the possessing class are not injured thereby. Directly that becomes the case, even in the slightest degree, these gentlemen dream of Dictatorship and Fascism, and speak plainly of suppressing by force the Parliamentary régime, and putting in its place a representation of interests—their own exclusively.

This is what the Anarchists have always said. Even if they admit—and they persist in not admitting it at all—that it might be possible to conquer the bourgeoisie at the ballot-box, the Anarchists declare that the bourgeoisie would resort to the formidable armed force it has at its command—a force established for the crushing of the masses. Then we shall have either to conquer by the same kind of arms as are turned against us, or resign ourselves to being the eternally-vanquished. And here we have the whole of Fascism's lesson.—*Le Réveil*.

Sacco and Vanzetti.

On June 5c the press reported that Governor Fuller had granted Sacco and Vanzetti a respite of 30 days to enable him to complete his personal inquiry and to allow time for the Commission which he has appointed to report. This looked very favourable for our comrades, but on July 9 we received the following Marconigram from the secretary of the Defence Committee in Boston:

"Prisoners placed in death cell. Execution fixed for August 10. Committee for Defence has fixed Sunday, July 31, for international manifestation of protest. Situation desperately tragic. Co-operation urged.—JOSEPH MORO."

It now appears that as soon as the respite was announced the police removed the prisoners secretly from the gaol in Dedham to the condemned cell in the old Charlestown Prison, Boston, where the cells are said to be "windowless, airless, and lightless, and so hot that the guards not infrequently faint in summer." We have said before that this case is now a struggle between the police authorities and public opinion, and the removal to the death cell is the reply of the police to the 30 days' respite. They are determined to execute Sacco and Vanzetti if they can possibly do so, because the release of these two men would be an indictment of the police. The perjury and the suppression of evidence favourable to the prisoners are now known to all the world. All the mean tricks and the distortion of evidence which were used to prejudice the jury were carefully thought out by the prosecution, and together with the malice and prejudice of Judge Thayer prove that the execution of these men was determined on beforehand.

Even now, at the last moment, we cannot believe that they will dare to kill Sacco and Vanzetti, but demands for their release should be poured into Governor Fuller's letter box until they are free again. To commute their sentences to lifelong imprisonment would be a travesty of justice. There is not a scrap of reliable evidence to connect them with the murder and robbery for which they have been sentenced, and unless they are released unconditionally by Governor Fuller it will show that the police are masters in the State of Massachusetts and can defy public opinion.

The Sacco-Vanzetti Defence Committee (Boston, Mass.) has published a pamphlet, entitled "Massachusetts' Reputation at Stake," containing a reprint of Vanzetti's petition to Governor Fuller, on behalf of Sacco and himself, for their release. He refused to use the official form for petitions of this nature because it contains the word "pardon." Vanzetti deals with the major points of the case in detail and brings out clearly the glaring one-sidedness of the trial. He gives a brief outline of their early life in Italy and their subsequent life in the United States. There was nothing whatever that would justify their prosecutors in classing them as criminals capable of carrying out the South Braintree murder and robbery. "Our instincts make us abhor and our principles condemn such a crime." He says quite frankly that both Sacco and himself are Anarchists, and that this was known to every juror before the trial; and "jurors, and even judges, believing Anarchists to be wholly bad people, cannot do them justice even though they want to." The petition is a very powerful and telling one and should carry conviction to all readers.

The pamphlet also contains affidavits from various people with whom Judge Thayer conversed in and out of court during the trial, which show that he looked upon the case as a personal struggle between himself and the defendants and their counsel. To one person he spoke of Sacco and Vanzetti as "those bastards down there" and as Bolsheviki, and said he would "get these guys hanged"; and he frequently referred to their counsel, Attorney Moore, as "that long-haired Anarchist from California." This was the judge that sentenced our comrades to death, and whom the peculiarities of the United States law determined should hear the appeal against his own sentence.

This pamphlet, "Massachusetts' Reputation at Stake," is published at 10 cents, and we shall be pleased to send copies post free for 6d. to our readers, the whole of the proceeds going to the Defence Committee. Early application is necessary.

Since writing the above we learn that Sacco and Vanzetti have begun a hunger-strike as a protest against the secrecy surrounding the Committee of Inquiry, neither the accused nor their counsel being allowed to be present. Vanzetti has declared that he would "rather starve to death than be executed on false evidence." Send your protests at once to the United States Ambassador, Grosvenor Gardens, S.W.1

Mutualism.

To the editor's request that I review "What is Mutualism?" by Clarence Lee Swartz, I accede most gladly and for various reasons. In the first place, it seems to me an admirable book, clear and wonderfully easy to digest, when one considers the intricacy of the questions with which it deals. Moreover, I agree with it thoroughly in regarding the State as being now, as it has always been, the great aggressor, the brutally-invasive enslaver, and the tyrannical power from which flow, as inevitably as works the law of gravitation, all those forms of special privilege that flay the common people to the bone and kill individual liberty. Herbert Spencer, whom this book quotes so often approvingly, taught me pretty well half a century ago that we progress toward civilisation and away from barbarism in proportion as we substitute for the coercion of the State the action of men managing the affairs of life by mutual agreement; and the longer I live the more I am convinced of that. To me it is axiomatic that work can be conducted only under one or other of two methods, the first being by orders issued to the inferior by the superior, who is in a position to compel obedience, and the second being by voluntary contract.

In all this, therefore, I agree with the Mutualists; but I am still more interested in their propaganda, because, on the one hand, I believe that they misunderstand the teachings of Henry George, and because, on the other hand, it has always seemed to me pitiable that Henry George men habitually pooh-poo the importance of the money question. The land and money questions appear to me inextricably interlinked, for the first concerns freedom of production, and the second freedom of distribution, lacking which production is, save so far as the producer can satisfy his own individual wants, a waste of time and labour. Moreover, it is an open question whether at present the industrial or the financial monopolist is the greater and more oppressive power. The Mutualists think the latter is, but that seems to me doubtful.

On page 126 of this book it is stated that "what Mutualists do advocate and are working to bring about is equality of opportunity." I have never known a Henry George man (I dislike this term but prefer it to that of Single Tax, which I regard as a misnomer) who did not declare that this was his aim; nor do I think I have ever met one who was not, in theory at any rate, most hostile to the State. Herbert Spencer is among their gods; his entire work as an economist and political philosopher was one continuous indictment of the State; and Henry George merely expounded the plan for the overthrow of land monopoly that Spencer advocated in his "Social Statics." He there declares specifically that it is in complete harmony with the law of equal freedom, but the Mutualists and Benjamin R. Tucker insist that it would lead to a State monopoly of the most galling type. Either they or Spencer are right, and this, I maintain, is a question of the first importance.

Here are three movements—the Anarchist, the Mutualist, and the Henry George—each of which has a considerable and general thoughtful following. All three profess to hate the State, but on the land question they are divided, and to the money question one of them stands almost totally indifferent. Yet on each of these purely economic questions it should be possible to discover who is right and who is wrong, and that discovery would lead to a combined attack on Special Privilege instead of, as at present, internecine warfare.

It goes without saying that all Anarchists are in favour of equality of opportunity, and I think all of them would agree with Mr. Swartz that "no other proposed system of land tenure than that of occupancy and use can accomplish that purpose." But here we meet the gigantic difficulty that some land is far more valuable than other land, from which arises what is known as the law of "economic rent." Naturally both Tucker and Swartz recognise this, but both believe that under free competition these inequalities will gradually vanish. I may perhaps be allowed to say that for years I have been quite familiar with the arguments they advance; that I have again examined them carefully, as they are set out on pages 130 to 136, and that to me they still appear most faulty. My own opinion is that sites of land differ extraordinarily in value, and that the only way to bring about equality of opportunity is to insist that the occupant of a peculiarly favoured plot shall pay over to the less favoured an amount equivalent to the value of his special privilege—for that is what it really is. In last month's FREEDOM I wrote that it was imperative that this moot question should be thrashed out, and I trust the editor will

¹"What is Mutualism?" By Clarence L. Swartz. 50 cents. New York: Vanguard Press, 80, Fifth Avenue.

give me the opportunity of starting such an attempt next month. Here obviously I have not the needed space.

As to the importance of the money question, consider the fact that the First National Bank of New York earned 140 per cent. on its capital in 1925; that its stock has gone up to \$2,950 for a share having a par value of \$100; and that, according to the *Financial Age*, a Wall Street paper, forty-nine New York banks averaged 50 per cent. dividends in 1925. If this doesn't show that finance is a gigantic power, able to exploit on a colossal scale, what does? This book teems with similar instances, all well attested. But the trouble is that the wage-workers usually say: "We borrow no money, and therefore pay no interest. How, then, does this squabble concern us?" This Mr. Swartz answers by saying that (p. 65) "in reality it is exactly the class that has no dealing with the banks, and derives no advantage from them, that ultimately pays all the interest money that is collected." Of course it is; for all extortions, whether in the form of rent, interest on borrowed money, rates, taxes, or Customs duties, are passed on by the manufacturer and merchant to the consuming public, the vast majority of which is composed of wage-workers. To me it always seems appalling that the worker cannot understand that all values are created by the application of labour to natural resources, and that, therefore, Labour, as the real producer, necessarily pays these crushing bills.

Mutualists are strongly opposed to all those coercive measures that are inseparable accompaniments of Socialism and Communism, and Mr. Swartz says correctly that "actual occurrences are much better testimony than all predictions." He discusses, therefore, at some length the results of Russia's great experiment in Socialism, and with a most imposing array of testimony taken chiefly from the Russian Government's official publications. It seems to me impossible for any impartial student to read that testimony and retain one particle of belief in the Russian Dictatorship as a form of social organisation any intelligent people would desire or even tolerate. There is an admirable chapter on "Education and the Arts," and one that deals largely with the Co-operative movement in this country; but as to this last my own experience does not inspire me with anything like Mr. Swartz's enthusiasm. The closing chapter of this book is entitled "Bio-Bibliography," and gives a useful list of famous authors who have advocated Mutualism. Most of them are familiar to Anarchist students, but it appears to me not a little strange that the name of Tolstoy is not included in the list.

The Mutualist Associates collaborated with Mr. Swartz in the preparation of this book, and it has the approval, according to the Publisher's Preface, of important Mutualist and Libertarian groups in the United States. Alas, in England at present there appears to be practically none of that passion for study and zeal for learning which used to be an outstanding feature of the Anarchist movement in the United States. The Socialists care only for votes, and have miseducated the public into believing only in numbers. W. C. O.

LIBERALS AND LABOUR

In a recent issue of the *Manchester Guardian* appeared a letter from Alexander M. Thompson ("Dangle," of the *Clarion*) in favour of a working agreement between the Liberal and Labour parties at the next General Election. It hardly seems likely to come off if the opinions of the Right Hon. C. F. G. Masterman are held by many other members of the Liberal Party. Writing in the *Evening Standard* in reply to a criticism of Liberalism by Dean Inge, he says:—

"The Dean also makes the extraordinary suggestion that the Liberals put a Red or a Pink Government into power in 1924, and may do so again. The Labour Government which we kept in office until it committed suicide had no trace of Red in it. It had no trace of Pink in it. Its colour might more aptly be described as a kind of greenish-white. We were indeed compelled to pump red corpuscles into it in order to give it the slightest trace of the rosyate hues of health, and to prevent it from prematurely perishing from pernicious anaemia. It would need a microscope for a student from distant lands, unfamiliar with names, to discern any difference between the feebleness and futility of its inglorious existence, and the feebleness and futility of the equally inglorious existence of its successors. Indeed, if England is going to perish from internal decay and lack of energy, I can imagine no better machine than a combination of the torpidity of Mr. MacDonald and the torpidity of Mr. Baldwin, in face of the challenge of vast and inevitable change."

These politicians do love each other. But misfortune makes strange bedfellows, and we may yet see these people rubbing elbows on the Treasury Bench of the House of Commons.

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