

Freedom

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NOTES.

The Awakening of China.

The papers have been publishing alarming scares about the strikes and riots in China, and the dangerous position of foreigners, but they give no hint as to the underlying cause of all the trouble. For many years Great Britain and other great Powers have done pretty much as they liked in China. Since the first Opium War in 1840, when Great Britain began to seize the so-called Treaty Ports, she has forced her commerce on an unwilling country, and for years controlled the Customs, and in many other ways interfered with Chinese self-government. The foreign settlements are managed in a way which shows contempt for the Chinese people, whose dignity as a nation has been trampled on continuously. Now that they have got beyond the bow and arrow stage and have been forced to adopt more up-to-date weapons, the Chinese are beginning to feel their own strength and to act upon it. Their students have travelled all over the world and learnt many things about the "foreign devils," whose dominating and insulting ways they resent, and they are determined to put an end to them as soon as possible. The fearful sweating of their fellow-countrymen by foreign capitalists has stung them to the quick, and the recent strikes and riots are a sign that the breaking-point has been reached. If the foreigner realises this, and realises also that in future he must deal with the Chinese on a basis of equality, trouble may be avoided; but in any case he must give up the privileges he has forced at the point of the bayonet from a peaceful people who were civilised at a time when his ancestors were living in caves. All the talk about Communist agitators is simply a smoke-screen. They may have tried to utilise the situation for their own ends, but the truth is that the peoples of the East are taking a stand against the domination of the West, and a colour-conflict on an enormous scale is inevitable unless the Western races change their attitude. The immediate danger is a clash between the United States and Japan, who may take advantage of the crisis to get a firmer footing in China. American papers are talking quite frankly about a war with Japan over China. They think a Monroe doctrine quite right for the Western Hemisphere, but there must be no Monroe doctrine for Asia.

Free Benefits for Workers.

Ever since Lloyd George introduced his "ninepence for fourpence" health insurance scheme the organised Labour movement has been asking for more "free" benefits. The Trades Union Congress and the Labour and Independent Labour parties seldom meet in conference without passing resolutions of this character. They demand that the State give free pensions to old persons and widows, free benefits for the unemployed, subsidies for housing schemes for workers, free maintenance for school children, and many other things. In effect, they ask the State to give back to them a larger portion of the commodities they produce than are now given to them by the employers; in other words, they ask the State to increase their wages. Any economist in the I.L.P. could tell the workers that their wages are fixed mainly by the competition for jobs among themselves. When two employers are after one man, wages go up; when two men are after one employer, wages go down. Their war and post-war experience should have taught them that. Therefore, if the State gives them any benefits which they previously provided for themselves, they will be able to accept lower wages, or, what is the same thing, prices of commodities will be increased in order to pay the extra taxes imposed by the State. If the Labour movement had any dignity it would drop this business of going cap in hand to the Government year after year, begging for a few more crumbs, and concentrate on sweeping away the system of monopoly

and special privilege which renders the workers helpless. We do not want these "free" benefits. We demand freedom of access to the land, with freedom to produce and freedom to exchange. Nothing else will help the workers; nothing less should satisfy them.

The Pact with France.

It is reported from Geneva that Mr. Austen Chamberlain and M. Briand, Foreign Ministers for Great Britain and France respectively, have agreed to the terms on which Germany is to be asked to join in a mutual guarantee of the eastern frontiers of France and Belgium. The French papers have hailed it as a military alliance between Great Britain and France against Germany; but the *Daily Telegraph* of June 9 says the British Government have not only agreed to defend the eastern frontiers of France and Belgium against an attack by Germany, but have also agreed to defend the western frontier of Germany against an attack by France and Belgium! So it may happen that the "boys of the bulldog breed," who fought side by side with the French against the Germans in the Great War, may some day be fighting with the Germans against the French. This queer pact suggests some complicating situations. When Sir Edward Grey made the pre-war military agreement to help France against Germany, he agreed to conversations between the military chiefs of both countries as to disposition of troops in the event of war. Now that there are to be two military agreements—one with France and one with Germany—the British War Office, we presume, will have conversations with the military chiefs of France and Germany! This sounds very strange; but stranger by far than that is the fact that the Governments should be allowed to make these agreements at all. What right have they to pledge the lives of the workers of their countries in support of their damnable agreements? This "peace" pact is a war pact, and as a result of it the people of this country may soon find themselves called on to provide men and money to uphold an agreement made without their consent. Are they going to allow themselves to be driven to the shambles again like dumb cattle, in the interests of a few scoundrelly politicians and financiers? If so, the millions who died in the great "war to end war" will have died in vain.

Tennessee Refuses to Evolve.

The Governor of Tennessee has signed an Act to prohibit the teaching of the theory of evolution in universities, normal, and all other public schools which are supported in whole or in part by the State. The Governor is a whole-hearted supporter of the Act, which he says "is founded on the idea and belief that the very integrity of the Bible in its statement of man's divine creation is denied by any theory that man descended or has ascended from any lower order of animals. That such theory is at utter variance with the Bible story of man's creation is incapable of successful contradiction." With the last sentence we are in entire agreement. If the story of Creation in the book of Genesis is true, the theory of evolution must be all wrong. But we think the poor man is fighting a losing battle. The theory of evolution is based on so many incontrovertible facts that even the churches have given up the struggle against it, and are now busy explaining that it is in conformity with their own teachings. When the Church of England buried Charles Darwin in Westminster Abbey it was a tacit recognition of the truth of his ideas. The Evolutionists in Tennessee have taken up the challenge thrown down by the State Legislature, and a test case is to be fought out in the courts. William Jennings Bryan, oft-time candidate for the U.S. Presidency, is the leading advocate for the State, and will presumably be supported by all the great thinkers of the Salvation Army, the Seventh-day Adventists, the Latter-Day Saints, the Christian Scientists, the Flat-Earthians, and Billy Sunday. It will be a great fight, but we think Darwin will win.

OUR CHARGES ADMITTED.

In the *Nation* (New York) of March 4th no less than four articles and an editorial appear on the subject of political prisoners in Russia.

The most important of these is an article by Dr. Harry F. Ward. Dr. Ward begins by explaining the constant bold assertion of the Russian officials "that there are no political prisoners." "Technically the official denial has a justification similar to that for the like statement by Woodrow Wilson. To him the men in prison under the Espionage Act were not political but criminals, because they had violated a criminal statute. To Soviet officials members of other parties whom they have jailed are violators of the Constitution because they are seeking to overthrow the Dictatorship of the Proletariat." He thinks that there is an "important difference between the Tcheka and the G.P.U. because the former was an absolute and irresponsible agency, while the latter is subordinated to the Commissariat of Justice, which makes public reports of its doings. The G.P.U. may not, as the Tcheka could, sentence to death or deport without trial. But the trial is—only a hearing before a procureur. Public or private, the trial is not by the jury system."

(It is as if the police in Los Angeles had had the power to send Wobblies (I.W.W.) to the penitentiary, and the important change is as if that power had been taken from them and given to—the district attorney.)

"The records of all political cases, except where open trial has been given, are secret. Their friends may be told what the prisoners have been punished for—except when the procureur wants to catch accomplices, when no information is given. This is the ground for the charge made by opponents of the Government—that political are worse off than under the Czar because they cannot get a public hearing and defence."

In explanation of the continued use of old members of the Ochrana (the Czar's secret police) he tells us that "it is regarded as an injustice to remove a man from a minor position on this ground alone." How very careful of strict justice these Bolsheviks show themselves! Think of it! Old revolutionaries back again in the Czar's old prisons, under the same old guards!

But Dr. Ward is after all a man educated in civilisation. He says therefore:—"Everywhere in anti-government circles one hears allegations of injustice and oppression. Whatever may be true of individual cases, it is historically certain that no matter what the system of government, when political repression is deemed necessary and secret or semi-secret methods are employed, miscarriage of justice, rank injustice, and oppression are bound to occur."

"While freedom of assemblage is theoretically possible, practically it is impossible because of the control of the means of organisation and places of meeting."

"In the matter of freedom of organised speech and even of political organisation, the Constitution is in practice nullified. Of freedom of the press there is none. Those lovers of civil liberties in our own country who are expecting their kind of freedom to develop in Russia have yet to reckon with the extent to which the Communist system requires regimentation."

Dr. Ward was only a month in Russia. Presumably he went there in a friendly spirit; but it is evident that he kept his eyes open and that he has told the truth as he saw it. The *Nation* "seeking to come as near to the truth as possible under the circumstances obtained the testimony of two non-partisan observers, Harry F. Ward and Louis Fischer." This humour about non-partisan observers is probably unconscious. But Mr. Fischer as correspondent for the '*Nation*' in Russia, is the successor of the man who attempted to tell the truth about these political outrages and therefore had to find another connection.

Mr. Fischer begins his non-partisanship by insinuating that when Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman were supporting the Bolsheviks "political prisoners and imprisonment are a blot on the fair escutcheon which you regret; when you grow disillusioned they become a weapon for an open struggle against Russia." To Mr. Fischer it appears that Goldman and Berkman would have shown better taste had they supported Wrangel. He admits that "the G.P.U. still wields the broad weapon of exile,

it is still guilty of indiscriminate arrests, and it still seeks to press unwilling members of the bourgeoisie into its spy service." (Just as in California ordinary criminals are squeezed into testifying against Mooneys and Weinbergs or in the East against Saccos and Vanzettis.) He finishes by saying that "if the friends of Soviet Russia were to concentrate their criticism on this phase of the work of the G.P.U. they could perhaps accomplish some good." Say it nicely; tell the truth in moderate degree and tell it with tact and delicatessen. He warns us against "being made the tools of Chamberlain, Churchill and Curzon." We will be careful, Mr. Fischer. Quite evidently you are very non-partisan.

In its editorial, the *Nation* calls the earnest attention of its readers, etc.—"These are no mad cries of anger against Soviet Russia." (That is the trouble with some people: when their friends are oppressed for their opinions, when they are shot and hanged, and imprisoned in filthy dungeons and exiled to frozen wastes, and when they are besmeared with filth for protesting, they get angry.) "There are still nearly two thousand political prisoners in Russia" (in reality nobody knows at all how many there are) "some of whom have never been tried but have been sent by administrative order to places of exile in lost corners of Asia, on islands of the White Sea, in the desolation of northern Siberia. If liberals outside of Russia will focus their attack upon these long-continued abuses," etc., etc.

But do it gently! Don't join those horrid people who because they have been old revolutionists themselves think themselves entitled to say roughly that the present bosses of Russia are incompetents and ignoramuses, narrow fanatics and brutal tyrants, and that they have failed shamefully and given us a disaster and a scandal. All that is true, but to say it so is not nice.

—From "Russian Hell Holes" (Los Angeles).

BERKMAN'S RUSSIAN DIARY.*

"The Bolshevik Myth," by Alexander Berkman, is well worth reading, inasmuch as of books belonging to its special type we are by no means likely to get enough. Not many visitors to Russia have had the familiarity with her language and customs he enjoyed; still fewer have had that long revolutionary experience which is in itself a necessity for the understanding of a revolution; and among those so rarely equipped few indeed are those who have the patience to record their impressions from day to day, and keep it up two years. Berkman's book is a diary in which have been set down the events that passed before his eyes, the activities in which he took a hand, and his views of the innumerable personalities he met—as they struck him at the moment. Such records are always the best of histories, because from them we get a picture of the people's inner life.

It is, of course, a diary of disillusionment. Berkman, deported from the United States for anti-conscription activities, reached Russia in 1920, when the situation was still in flux; before things had hardened; at a time in which the inexorable logic with which a dictatorial system was bound to work itself out had not become apparent. Evidently he, in common with all his fellow-deportees, believed that the revolutionary spirit would carry all before it, and ultimately sweep away whatever was reactionary in the governing machine. It took him long to shake off that illusion, but one thinks an awakening must have come after his interview with Lenin. That determined gentleman told him emphatically that the Dictatorship of the Proletariat was a necessity, and that the Communist Party must exercise it; that all power must be centralised in the Communist State; that liberty was a bourgeois prejudice; and that if he and Emma Goldman started a League of Russian Friends of American Freedom, it should work under the auspices of the Third International. Berkman sums him up as certainly a fanatic, but asks indulgently, "What is a fanatic but a man whose faith is

* "The Bolshevik Myth." By Alexander Berkman. \$3.00. New York: Boni and Liveright. Can also be obtained, together with "The 'Anti-Climax,'" from FREEDOM Office, for 12s., postage 6d. extra.

impregnable to doubt? We imagine that his subsequent experiences must have cured him of any lingering admiration of fanatics and taught him the lesson driven home by Ernest Renan, viz., that fanaticism has been the ruin of every movement. It is perhaps the most firmly established of history's major truths.

When Berkman visited Lenin armed soldiers were on guard at every entrance. When he went to the Latvian border he found himself in the company of a Tchekist to whom "force and violence were the acme of revolutionary activity, the Alpha and Omega of the proletarian dictatorship"; who told him that "there is a Left element among us that favours even more drastic methods . . . torture to extort confessions." And, at a secret meeting, the peasants all agreed that "the times are worse than under the Tsar. . . . Now they speak to us in the name of the Party and the proletariat, but we are treated like cattle, the same as before." Berkman had previously recorded Lenin as saying, "the peasant doesn't like us," and had noted that he "chuckled, as if at some pleasantry."

There is a graphic account of the pomp and luxury with which the British Labour Mission to Moscow were surrounded, coupled with the remark that certain of the delegates regarded these proceedings with suspicious eyes. "When fried chicken was served, I saw some of the Britishers exchange wondering glances. 'A jolly good meal for starving Russia,' a delegate at my side remarked." Above all, however, they seem to have resented the incessant shepherding to which they were subjected—the "prison atmosphere," as one of them expressed it. The delegates held the Allied blockade responsible for much to which they objected, but one of them remarked that "Russia is suffering from starvation, and it is criminal to pretend well-being by grand banquets and dinners. On the contrary, let the delegates behold the terrible effects of the blockade; let them see the frightful disease and mortality resulting from it."

The book is full of criticisms uttered by people in various walks of life, caught on the wing and recorded then and there. Crowds of tired, hungry, and apathetic people waiting in the Government corridors and offices for permission to do this or exemption from doing that; overworked commissars and overbearing commissars; universal confusion and delay; terrible official heartlessness, and bitterness indescribable voiced by the disaffected in secret meetings. As a member of the Extraordinary Commission of the Museum of the Revolution, Berkman travelled far and wide, collecting material—an enormous advantage which Emma Goldman also enjoyed. As a noted revolutionist he could procure entrance to secret meetings that would never have admitted an unknown stranger, and of the opinions expressed at these meetings the book gives very full accounts, as would be only natural with such an old controversialist as Berkman. Here we learn exactly what the Mensheviks, the Social Revolutionists, and those of other rebel schools were thinking; what they had to say of the Allies and the various military adventurers who swooped down on Russia; of the fearful pogroms directed against the Jews; of Makhno's leadership of the rebellious peasants, and of many other happenings which only a Russian with an exceptional knowledge of revolutionary propaganda could hope to understand. An extraordinarily vivid picture of a phenomenally vivid time, full of colour, of appalling brutality, intershot nevertheless by constant gleams of true heroism and touching pathos. Such books one cannot summarise. They must be read, and read in that leisurely manner which allows the imagination to vivify the text.

The concluding chapter, in which Berkman summed up the lessons his two years' experiences had driven home to him, the American publishers refused to issue, declaring it an Anti-Climax! So under that title Berkman himself has published it, as a supplement to the main work. The chapter is fine. It sets out clearly and strongly the deductions a broad and philosophical mind has found itself compelled to draw. It is exactly the chapter of which a muddle-headed world stands most in need—and the publishers rejected it! A more glaring example of commercial stupidity it would be hard to come across.

CAN AN ANARCHIST SUPPORT CAPITALISM?

I was very much interested in Marjorie Peacock's article, "Shaking Off the Barnacles," in the May number of *FREEDOM*; and whilst I have a horror of catechisms of any kind, I shall look forward to Miss Peacock's with a certain amount of interest.

There is just one point I would like to contest, and that is the question as to whether an Anarchist can support capitalism. I refer to Miss Peacock's words: "Thus, one may be at one and the same time a political Anarchist and a pro-capitalist or an anti-capitalist." The idea of an Anarchist, as I understand it, is to work for a greater freedom, social and economic. As to how much economic freedom is possible under capitalism is the question we have to ask ourselves.

John Bright and Richard Cobden were very fine libertarians in their time, but their ideas of freedom of trade and commerce had their limitations when considering the economic freedom of the people. It may have been good for trade for children to be sent down the mines, but it was scarcely good for the young bundles of humanity to be instruments for profit in a mine at an age when they should have been enjoying the full springtime of their life. It is useless to talk about freedom when the land and the instruments of production are owned and controlled by a small privileged class, thus placing the rest of the community at their beck and call, a system which is responsible for causing such extremes of riches and poverty, with a large army of unemployed. What kind of freedom is it that compels the majority of men to go cap in hand begging for a job, selling their labour-power at such a price that even if they are lucky and have been working practically all their lives, they cannot save enough to retire or to take a long holiday, whilst the industry has flourished on their labour, building up wealth and power, that power which has kept them so crippled and subdued?

Another evil aspect of capitalism is that the time when we have produced the most goods is the time when the people are the poorest and we have the largest number of unemployed. The bootmaker has produced so many boots, the tailor so many clothes, and the farmer so much wheat, that the market is satisfied and there is a glut. Capitalism fails because it does not enable the wage-earners to purchase the articles they have produced. This means a declining market, which clogs the wheels of industry.

It will be argued that we are suffering from the aftermath of war, and that all we have to do is to sit and wait for the revival of trade, when we will see the wonders capitalism has to offer. I know we are suffering from the after-effects of war; that war always breeds disaster, both to the victors and the vanquished. But what is war but the hated rivals of the vicious circle struggling and juggling for markets, trying to extend their borders or to provide for themselves fresh territory to exploit? Why, capitalism breeds war. The very thing we are complaining about is the cause of our present straits. The acquisition of wealth for private gain, at the expense of the community, is responsible for all the evils we are suffering from to-day.

The doctrine of the survival of the fittest as it is commonly interpreted, "everyone for himself and the Devil take the hindmost," everything to the strong, leaving the strong to exterminate each other, is a doctrine which breeds fear, armies, navies, aircraft, poison gas, and eventual annihilation. It is the spirit of co-operation, mutual aid, and fellowship—those forces which help to bind people together, cemented with trust and good comradeship—which will preserve the race.

Every new-born babe is a potential market; it has a back to cover and a mouth to feed, it requires coal for warmth; and when we have sufficient sense to find these markets, and let our desire be based on the service each of us can render to the community through our co-operative colonies, guilds, etc., people will not be forced to go without boots whilst our warehouses are full and our bootmakers are looking for a job.

Thus I hold that an Anarchist cannot support capitalism, because capitalism does not deliver the goods to the people, therefore it stands condemned. In so far as an Anarchist's vision is freedom, he cannot support a system which makes the majority of people subordinate to the owners of land and industrial capital. We must have free access to the land and all that it contains. Its contents should be shared and socially enjoyed by all.

Bristol.

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Socialism—Old and New.

Socialism promised originally to get us out of slavery by abolishing its causes. It declared boldly that it intended to restore to the workers their natural heritage and give them control of their own lives, thereby bringing about a condition in which labour would be the only title to reward, and exploitation no longer possible. "Who," it cried, "will need to beg for a job when each is given full opportunity of working for himself. Who will be at the mercy of a master when he has access to all the resources of a civilisation so responsive to the touch of industry that its very productivity has become the worker's greatest curse? The trouble is that those resources have been cornered by Monopoly. Let us make an end of all this cornering, and automatically poverty will cease."

This was the message of Socialism in its heroic youth. It was so simple that a child could understand it; and Labour hailed it with delight. The early Socialist movement stirred all Europe to its profoundest depths, and did so because its teaching was obviously true. It is as true at this moment as it ever was. In "Coal and Power," which is the report of an enquiry presided over by Mr. Lloyd George, I read (page 6) that one royalty-owner charges Labour £423,000 a year for granting it the privilege of digging out what he is still allowed to call *his* coal, and that four others of his kind receive for a similar complaisance incomes of over £100,000 apiece. On the following page I read that in South Wales there is what is known as the "Golden Mile," because on every ton of coal raised in the adjoining valley tribute must be paid to the owner of a park which commands the exit to the railway. The old Socialism would have said that until the Monopoly which renders that particular robbery possible is abolished the miner will remain a slave; and it would have spoken truly. The new Socialism talks about agreements with the Monopolists; discusses the terms on which they can be induced to give up their piracies; bids the miners organise for the purpose of, somehow or other, bettering their condition under the existing system; whines about their claims on public charity and deceives them.

I have no hesitation in saying that the first conclusion every honest-thinking Socialist will find himself compelled to reach is that, unless his movement intends to tackle the Land Question courageously, it had better go out of business. If, for example, it is to treat with indifference the fact that the Duke of Westminster draws something like £1,000,000 a year because of his monopoly of some four hundred acres on which an army of Londoners has to live; or that the Duke of Northumberland, by similar monopolistic methods dips into the pool of values created by Labour and ladles out for his own special benefit some £500,000 a year; if, I say, it is to connive by its silence and inactivity at these obvious robberies, it would do far better, for its own reputation, to pull down the shutters and close up the shop. If it does not know that Labour, in order to become free, must have free access to Nature's storehouse, it is an idiot. If, recognising that patent truth, it is afraid to proclaim it openly, it is a coward. If, for the sake of its own political ambitions, it thinks it judicious to dodge this basic issue, it cheats the public, and is obtaining money under false pretences.

The old Socialist movement declared war to the death on what is known as the "wage system," which it denounced as slavery of the most heartless type. The new Socialist movement prates about "service" (as if there is anything fine in being a serf!), which, in plain language, means serfdom under Governmental control. It listens open-mouthed to Sidney Webb, who

says there are no such things as human rights. It applauds Fabians, who remind it solemnly that evolution is a slow and gradual process—a teaching obviously false. It diligently organises numbers for use at the ballot box; but so long as it can get followers it cares not how disastrously it disorganises their brains by pandering to every fallacy that promises to catch a vote. So far is it from favouring even spiritual revolt that its talk is eternally of discipline—and this to a class disciplined from the cradle to the grave in factory and workshop, and awed into perpetual submission by the fear of want! How can such a movement be a fighting movement?

Let us take the case of Russia. The Russians are in many ways a great and charming people from whom we have much to learn. Her peasants set an example to all the world when they took possession of the land their labour fertilised; but inevitably, being scattered over an enormous area, they are much at the mercy of the new Tsardom now ruling them. In itself that Tsardom is, like its predecessors, indefensible. No civilised man, whatever his political opinions may be, can approve of the Dictatorship's persistent strangling of free speech, which is the murder of the nation's soul. Even if it were possible to condone the barbarities to which the Dictatorship has been driven by its determination to maintain itself in power, sincere Socialists cannot overlook the fact that it is now selling out its country to international capitalism precisely as Porfirio Diaz sold out Mexico to Wall Street. The Russian Dictatorship can afford to pay an enormous price for such alliances as will make its rule secure; and some of that price, at any rate, which comes necessarily out of the pockets of Russian Labour is going to alleged representatives of British Labour. Big sums are being spent in subsidising papers and other propaganda methods, but it is not a propaganda for Socialism, or for any of the principles for which Socialism is supposed to stand. Even if it were, the money that supports it is money extorted by the high hand of Authority from Russia's poverty-stricken masses; and that also, as representing a robbery of Labour, is indefensible.

Should we then be opposed to trade with Russia? Of course we should not. Thanks to invention, the world has become one country, and nothing is more detestable than the way in which rulers treat the right of free intercourse between its various peoples as a special privilege, to be granted or withheld at the pleasure of officialdom, and always paid for. Freedom to select one's own company, either for business or pleasure, and to travel where one chooses, should be regarded as one of the most sacred of personal rights, and I should never dream of forbidding Englishmen to trade with Russians. But, as a matter of fact, our Government puts no veto on any such trade, leaving it to the individual to make his own bargains and shoulder his own risks. Business with Russia is being done daily; and if it is still comparatively small in volume, the reason is to be found in the small purchasing power the masses have. Trade goes automatically wherever goods are needed and there is the ability to pay for them—treaties or no treaties. The only way, therefore, of building up business between any two countries is to put an end to the robberies which keep their people poor. That is the Russian worker's special business, as it is the business of the British worker here at home. This great struggle for human rights cannot be carried on by proxy, or fought out at long range.

Toying timidly with unessentials, our Labour movement naturally has accomplished nothing. Of course, however, it must make a showing, and it is now trying to convince us that it is engaged on a gigantic task of world-wide organisation which is the road to ultimate success. To me all that is humbug, and I am very positive that not a single Russian worker has had a farthing's profit out of the junketing visits our Labour leaders have paid them. As for our own workers, they have been drilled into the habit of marking time; and if at intervals they goose-step up some petty hillock, they are promptly goose-stepped down again. But if they really want to help their Russian brothers, let them first tackle their own British pirates. Such an example would be worth a thousand Moscow Conferences, and would put more heart into the International movement than all the resolutions even an Ecclestone Square can pen.

W. C. O.

Mussolini Charged with Murder of Matteotti.

To those who, from a sort of mental habit, are always on the side of the strongest, Mussolini is the ideal statesman and the Fascisti Government the best in the best of all worlds.

Of the real nature of Mussolini's régime much has been written, and it is now acknowledged by nearly all the Conservative Press of Europe, such as the *Times*, the *Temps*, *Figaro*, etc., that his régime is a tyranny which can be coupled with the military dictatorships of Primo de Rivera in Spain and Tsankoff in Bulgaria.

The real position at this moment of the Fascist movement in Italy has been described in a few paragraphs by a recent correspondent of the *Evening Standard*, in which mention is made, amongst other things, of the appearance almost daily of handbills giving details of the murder of the Deputy Matteotti, of the Moderate Socialist Party, and the "confessions" of Mussolini's associates.

We reproduce here the notes of the *Evening Standard's* correspondent, followed by a translation of one of the most sensational of the handbills in question, which was published recently by the *Tribune*, of New York, and *Humanité* and *Quotidien*, of Paris, in which Filippelli, the late editor of the Fascist paper, *Corriere Italiano*, now under arrest, says that Dumini murdered Matteotti by order of two of Mussolini's lieutenants (Rossi and Marinelli), who in their turn had received formal authority from the dictator Mussolini.

WHAT THE "EVENING STANDARD" SAYS.

"Almost daily secret handbills are making their appearance, this being the only way in which, with a muzzled Press and the withdrawal of the right of assembly, public opinion can be influenced. These handbills press for the Matteotti trial to be held, give details of the murder, and add the 'confessions' of Mussolini's associates.

"Among them is one reproducing the pastoral letter of Cardinal Maffi, of Pisa, which was suppressed on publication, though some of the milder paragraphs in it were reprinted by the Vatican official organ. My correspondent estimates that eighty per cent. of the industrial workers are against Fascism, and that with them are the whole of the Liberal groups, many of which supported Mussolini until the Matteotti revelation, and many active elements of the Roman Catholic Church.

"To these is now beginning to be added a new element. This is what Americans call 'Big Business,' which, headed by the Milan and Turin manufacturers, were largely instrumental in installing Fascism, and have since financed it.

"Without the funds supplied by the manufacturers' associations Fascism would be unable to pay its private militia and maintain its extensive secret police system. With the fear of Bolshevism departed for the time, 'Big Business' appears less willing to saddle itself with the expense, and there are indications of readiness to revert to normal methods of government."

The following is a translation of the handbill referred to above:—

"FILIPPELLI'S MEMORANDUM.

"MUSSOLINI THE INSTIGATOR OF MURDER.

"Dumini is well known to Mussolini, and before the march on Rome took the name of Bianchi in order to baffle Justice, with whom he had some accounts to settle.

"I have known him at the *Popolo d'Italia*, which is edited by Mussolini's brother. Not only was he the principal friend of Mussolini, but he was also connected with well-known personalities of the Government entourage.

"He was introduced to me by Cesare Rossi, editor of the Press of the Home Office Ministry; and I engaged him as inspector at the *Corriere Italiano*. As his work gave no good results, I put him on half-pay.

"He was very often at the Home Office, and it is said that it

was he who made an attempt on the life of the Deputy Misuri; that he operated in France, and then assailed Signor Forni by superior orders.

"As I had several motor cars at my disposal at the *Corriere Italiano*, which the Fascisti of Rome used very often, on June 9, 1924, Dumini asked me to lend him one, which he declared was to be used for an old ex-soldier friend of his; and of course I lent it to him.

"On Tuesday, June 10, I went to Anzio and returned at night to the office, where I found Dumini calmly conversing with the sub-editor of the paper.

"He asked me to give him the address of a garage for the night, and added, on my questioning him, that *he had received certain formal instructions from Mussolini and that he had executed them*. I was alarmed, and Dumini begged me to keep silent.

"On the morrow, Wednesday, *being very upset at the disappearance of Matteotti*, I looked for Rossi, the editor, as I have said, of the Home Office Press.

"Rossi, on his part, was looking for me in order to tell me that Dumini had used the machine lent by me; **that their business was very serious; that Mussolini knew all; that Rossi had given orders in full agreement with Mussolini; and that by all means the matter should be hushed up to prevent the overthrow of Mussolini.**

"The same day I thought it advisable to inform Signor De Bono (the High Commissioner of Police), Signor Finzi (Under-Secretary, Home Office), and others.

"I learned from Signor Finzi that **Matteotti had fallen the victim of Dumini; that the order for the murder emanated from the Fascisti Tcheka**, a special body of secret police; that the material executor of the crime **had had an interview with Mussolini**; and that **Mussolini had received Matteotti's Deputy's identity card as a proof of the execution of the murder.**

"Signor Finzi entreated me to do my best that nothing should be discovered, as it **was State business; that the regime would go to pieces and Mussolini would risk his head if it were made public.**

"What could I do? If I had spoken I would have compromised Mussolini.

"On Thursday night I went to Finzi's residence and told him I could not live under such a nightmare. He tried to ease my fears, and so did De Bono.

"The latter told me that *he was about to destroy all traces of the murder, namely, the bloody garments Dumini was wearing when placed under arrest.*

"On the demand of Dumini, although reluctantly, I consented to have the motor car withdrawn by my chauffeur from the garage where it was concealed.

"The remainder is known.

FILIPPELLI."

After the reader has perused the above document we feel sure that he will consider Mussolini's régime the best in the best of all worlds, and the Italians the happiest of people!

SONNET.

Who was great Ozymandias, "king of kings"?
The desert answers with its fiery breath.
Democracy of Time, and Space, and Death
Its fatal arrow at Great Nothing flings.
Law, Force, and Power—dark Superstition's blight,
And all the majesty of sword and chain
Left but his futile image to remain
Half-buried where the sand-storm whirls in flight.
Feebler and feebler grow the decadent line
Which followed on that mightiest Nothingness,
Slave of that Power wherein his weakness lay,
Whom only Human Ignorance held "divine."
With every reasoned thought their shades grow less,
To vanish in the light of ampler day.

ETHEL CARNIE HOLDSWORTH.

The FRIENDS OF ITALIAN FREEDOM LEAGUE will hold a
Giacomo Matteotti Commemoration Meeting
at the St. James's Hall, 14 Greek Street, Soho, W.1., on Sunday,
June 14, at 3.30-6.30 p.m. Admission free.

EMMA GOLDMAN'S LECTURES.

The meeting at the Albert Hall, Leeds, on April 21, was not so well attended as was expected, but Emma Goldman gave a very good address and put the true position in Russia clearly and forcibly. Questions of a stereotyped character from Communists were easily dealt with. It is hoped that as a result of our comrade's visit more activity will be displayed by local comrades, who intend to organise another meeting as soon as convenient.

At the Milton Hall, Manchester, on April 29, she spoke on "The Lessons of the Russian Revolution." She was in fine form and roused the audience to enthusiasm. "One cannot but admire this woman," said the *Manchester Evening News*. "She is a portent, a tremendous intellectual force, a great, lucid mentality driven by a relentlessly dynamic energy. Interruptions there were—it was but natural at such a meeting; she crushed them as ruthlessly and as ignorantly as a steam roller crushes an insect." These sentences give an idea of the impression Emma Goldman made on her audience.

Two well-attended meetings were held in Bristol on May 1 and 4, the subjects of the lectures being "Labour under the Dictatorship in Russia" and "Heroic Women of the Russian Revolution." In the latter lecture Emma Goldman called special attention to the case of Marie Spiridonova, whose sufferings under the Tsarist régime have been intensified at the hands of the Communist gaolers.

At all the above meetings collections were taken on behalf of the political prisoners. A fair amount of literature was also sold.

The Labour and Socialist press still boycott all reference to these meetings, and have ignored the copies of "Russia and the British Labour Delegation's Report" sent them for review.

"Build the Co-operative Commonwealth Now."

The Association for Community Co-operation, of New York, have published a pamphlet bearing the above title, in which they set forth their plans for starting a world-wide chain of co-operative colonies, which they hope will ultimately supersede the present capitalist and monopolist system. Colonies, of course, have been for many years a refuge for men and women whose hatred of industrialism has driven them to shake the dust of cities off their feet and to seek new homes in more congenial surroundings. As a rule, however, these people were concerned only with their own personal interests. But the Association's outlook is far broader, for their aim is to assist in the organisation of co-operative colonies which shall be linked up with each other and with similar bodies, and thus form the nucleus of that Co-operative Commonwealth which some say can only come through revolution, while others look to the State.

It is proposed to start the first few colonies in Mexico and other Latin American countries, as there is a greater amount of suitable land available, some of which may be obtained as a Government grant. The climate is also more equable, and there are fewer restrictions on immigration.

The authors of this pamphlet meet halfway many of the objections which are bound to be raised, such as that "it means running away from the economic struggle," "it has been tried before and failed," etc. Having studied the history of many of the colonies now defunct, they are certain they can avoid the troubles which caused their failure.

We admire the optimism of the founders of the Association, whose plans as detailed here show that nothing has been overlooked; and if human foresight could bring success, the future of the colonies should be assured. We welcome social experiments of all kinds, as whether they succeed or fail the experience gained is always useful to those who come after; but we cannot imagine these colonies having very much influence for many years to come. The workers are so busy looking for new Messiahs that they have little time or inclination to study ways and means of saving themselves.

Those who are interested and wish for further particulars can obtain copies of this interesting pamphlet (price 15 cents) from the Association for Community Co-operation, P.O. Box 102, Times Square Station, New York City, U.S.A.

Death of Fred Dunn.

We regret to hear that Fred Dunn died on May 18 in a hospital in New York, after an operation for gastritis, from which he had suffered for some time. He was editor of the *Voice of Labour* (1914–1916), and was one of the band of energetic comrades which started Marsh House in 1915. Preferring liberty to conscription, he worked his passage to the States, and was for some time a teacher at the Ferrer School at Stelton, N.J. Later on he became organiser for the Consumers' Co-operative Housing Association.

A memorial meeting was held on May 29 at the Civic Club, New York, when short addresses were delivered by Dr. James P. Warbasse, Harry Kelly, Cedric Long, Joseph Cohen, and Leonard D. Abbott.

"Freedom" Guarantee Fund.

The following donations have been received to date (June 5) since our last issue:—G. P. 4s., D. M. Ballard 7s. 6d., E. R. £1, T. Brothers 4s., T. S. 5s., Elizabeth £2 1s. 1d., M. A. Mainwaring 17s. 6d., Gateshead Group (per J. R. Armstrong) £1, Sh. Marcus and "Freie Arbeiter Stimme" Bulletin Fund (per Melinsky) £1 11s., G. W. Tindale 2s. 6d., C. Sewell 2s. 6d., D. H. S. 4s. 6d., W. M. S. 2s. 6d., L. G. Wolfe £1.

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(May 1 to June 5.)

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