

Freedom

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NOTES.

Back to the Land.

Miss Margaret Bondfield seems to think that the best way to deal with land monopoly in this country is to ignore it. Speaking at Hull on January 30, she said she was "enthusiastic over family emigration." She wants family groups settled in districts of Canada not yet opened up. "Our top-heavy civilisation was going to trundle into the ditch unless we got a large proportion of the industrial classes back to the land." One would naturally expect that the ex-Member for Northampton would insist on the Briton's right to use a few of the millions of cultivable acres at present held out of cultivation by our land monopolists. But, like most of the Labour Party, she is afraid to tackle these privileged folk in a revolutionary way, and hopes to save our "top-heavy civilisation" by shipping the families of the unemployed 3,000 miles across the sea and dumping them down in the wilds of Canada. No, no, Miss Bondfield; you may think that method expedient for you and your political friends, and thus for the time being dodge the lions that stand in your path; but the social question cannot be settled in that fashion. Sooner or later those lions will have to be faced and fought, and for that purpose we must point out to the people that the source of all our economic troubles is this monopoly of the land. We are not "enthusiastic over emigration." If a man wishes to emigrate, let him do so. But when Miss Bondfield travels by train between London and Northampton she has only to look out of the window to see immense tracts of grass land where the family groups she is so anxious to send to Canada could easily get a living and help to redress the balance of our top-heavy civilisation. Another muddled land reformer complains in the *Daily Herald* that landlords are joining farm to farm, so that now, where there used to be two families, there is only one. He could point out the landmarks and ruins of seven farmhouses. He says the landlords "have drawn their rent too long for nothing." That, of course, is robbery. Does he suggest stopping that robbery? Not at all. He simply advocates legislation to prevent a landlord letting to any one man more than 100 acres! Landlords can still sleep easily o' nights.

Herriot's Nightmare.

So M. Herriot is not the angel of peace he was depicted in his meetings with Ramsay MacDonald. In the Chamber of Deputies on January 28 he made a speech similar to those which M. Poincaré inflicted on a long-suffering nation almost every Sunday. Security for France was his subject, and he said his poor innocent country "has constantly in mind the spectacle of a dagger pointed within a few inches of her body." And he tearfully begged the Chamber to help him to "push aside this dagger." The German military caste were still clanking the sword and "dreaming of nothing but blood and death." This fantastic nightmare was put forward as an excuse for a continued occupation of the Rhine provinces, which has been the objective of French military policy for years. The reason of this sudden outburst on the part of the French Premier is said to be to force the British Government to agree to a military alliance, which they seem disposed to do, though denying it as strenuously as they denied the "military understanding" with France which brought us into the War. Herriot's speech is only another version of the stale and vicious lie that the War was due solely to the wickedness of Germany, and that the Allies were poor little lambs savagely attacked by the wolf from across the Rhine. For the workers, however, the lesson to be learned from speeches of this character is that the rulers of Europe are still thinking in terms of war whilst paying lip-service to peace. In spite of their sacrifices in the "war to end war," their masters are as ready to-day to march them to the battlefield as they were in 1914. Nothing has been changed. The children

of to-day are the raw material for the armies which in the years to come will slaughter each other for the glory of their fatherland and the profit of their exploiters. Anti-militarist and "no more war" movements at present influence only a very small fraction of the peoples. The worship of the State, which is inculcated by almost every political party, is the most deadly poison gas at the command of the militarists, who know only too well that their victims throw all reason to the wind when the cry is raised, "The State is in danger!" Until we find an antidote for this poison gas war will be an ever-present threat.

Marriage and Divorce.

The harm wrought by our marriage laws has long been recognised, yet they remain almost as rigid as ever. In trying to cut through their barbed wire defences a solicitor now finds himself in prison, with consequent professional ruin. Married in 1912, his wife obtained a decree nisi in 1922, but took no steps to have it made absolute. Wishing to marry again, he forged documents which deceived the Court, and the decree was made absolute. A few days later he re-married. But the forgery was discovered, and at the Old Bailey last month he was sentenced to fifteen months' imprisonment, and has since been struck off the roll of solicitors. In our opinion, the cast-iron marriage laws are responsible for this so-called "crime." His first wife did not want him, but refused to set him free. But society demands that a professional man must be conventional in his sexual relations, and to conform to this unwritten law and also to regularise the position of his second partner he took the fearful risk of losing everything. He certainly was not injuring his first wife, and was very anxious not to injure his second one. But the law had got him in a trap, and nothing he could do legally would free him. And in trying to break out of this trap he has got caught in another. Such a case as this proves that our marriage laws should be abolished as a relic of barbarism. Some folk say "marriages are made in heaven"; we know that many of them are lived in hell. About a million men and women in Great Britain are to-day living under separation orders. Knowing as we do how much a woman will endure rather than face the ordeal of appearing in court, we can imagine the amount of misery suffered before those separation orders were obtained. In Catholic countries the marriage laws are harsher than here. In Spain and Italy there is no divorce. In Ireland it has hitherto been possible for very rich people to obtain a divorce in the House of Lords, but now the Irish "Free" State has decided to close even that loophole. When it is so difficult to get out of the legal marriage trap, wise men and women will avoid going into it; and the number who thus show their contempt for Church and State is increasing every year.

"Free" Labourers Cheaper than Slaves.

In last month's *FREEDOM* a writer showed that slavery was abolished in the West last century because it was found to be more expensive than "free" labour. To-day we find the Prime Minister of Nepal using the same argument for the freeing of the 51,000 slaves in that independent kingdom of India. After saying that the curse of heaven rested on the slave trade, "a trade which is overloaded with the leaden tears of parents and children," he brought forward the most effective argument. "If they made careful and proper observations and calculations," he said, "they would find that 'bani' (free contract) labour would be at least twice as much as that from slave labour. Feeding and clothing a slave cost about Rs4 per head per month, so that while they got double the work from a 'bani' labourer, they paid him only 50 per cent. more." Of course, the rights of property must be respected. The statutory price will be paid for the slaves, who must remain with their former owners for seven years as "apprentices." We are sure the slave-owners will appreciate this kindly thoughtfulness of the Prime Minister.

A Reply to the I.R.R.

The International Red Relief, an organisation for the aid of revolutionists imprisoned in Europe, has addressed itself to the Socialist Labour International through the press with the proposal to organise the exchange of Communists imprisoned in Europe for Socialists and Anarchists held in Russian prisons. In connection with this proposal we, the representatives of Russian revolutionary organisations abroad, consider it necessary to make the following statement:—

The proposal of the I.R.R.—the latter being one of the numerous agencies of the Bolshevik Government—we consider as an attempt on the part of that Government, alarmed by the growing protests of American and European labour against Russian terror, to shuffle the cards, to confuse the minds of the labouring masses of the West, and to change its rôle of accused to that of proud accuser.

But all the zeal of the agents of the Soviet Government will not suffice to save such an unjust cause. No reference to the "terror against the labouring classes" which reigns—as the I.R.R. asserts—in "all the capitalistic countries," can justify the crimes of the Russian Bolsheviks.

Though determined opponents of bourgeois class justice, as well as of all repressions practised by the capitalistic Governments of the West against revolutionary labour, we nevertheless declare that in countries having a Labour Government, such as Sweden and Denmark, as well as in England, Austria, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Norway and France, not only the labouring classes as a whole, but also the Communist Party enjoy freedom of agitation, propaganda and organisation. Even in Germany, to which the Bolsheviks so persistently refer, the German Communist Party (which admittedly stands as an armed opposition) exists legally and openly—sporadic persecution and trouble notwithstanding—and carries on propaganda on a large scale, issuing scores of legal publications, organising thousands of meetings, officially participating in all elections, having their representation in the Reichstag, and so forth.

True, in Europe, as in other parts of the world, there are countries in which a system of violence and terror dominates the toiling masses, where spies and hangmen reign, where the prison, knout, and deportation are the order of the day. But at the head of these "White terror" countries, like Hungary and Rumania, stands Soviet Russia. At their head and in the first place.

No Government of any civilised country has so completely and absolutely destroyed every trace of civil and political liberties, every right of the people, as is the case in Russia in regard to the labouring masses. That has been accomplished by a Government calling itself a "Workers' and Peasants' Government," and which pretends to monopolise Socialist and revolutionary ideals.

The I.R.R. has the temerity to assert that in Soviet Russia there are imprisoned only some "groups of Socialists and Anarchists," "arrested for complicity in the preparation of counter-revolutionary conspiracies." But the Communists know as well as we do that the Russian prisons and deportation places are filled not with a handful, but with thousands—frequently with tens of thousands—of revolutionary working men, peasants and members of the *intelligentsia*, who are in no way connected with any schemes of violent overthrow. They are subjected to the cruellest persecution, which often drives them to suicide, self-destruction by fire, and almost incessant hunger-strikes, for no other crime than the voicing of their Socialistic or democratic convictions, for spreading their opinions in the labour Unions or at Soviet elections, for criticising and exposing the despotism and corruption of the Government, for strikes, and very frequently for mere passive sympathy with Socialist or Anarchist organisations, or even for being related to some active members of the same.

In Russia freedom of press, speech, and assembly, the right of organisation, of participation in Soviet elections, in Trade Unions and Co-operatives, as well as the right to strike, are the absolute monopoly of the Communist Party. All other political groupings, not only Socialists and Anarchists, but even

labour organisations and Communists differing with the Communist Party, are virtually deprived of all political rights, declared "counter-revolutionists," and outlawed.

Throughout the whole of Russia there is not a single legally permitted non-Communist Party, nor any non-Communist legal political publication. There exist only illegal publications, which our comrades are compelled to issue secretly, as they used to do in the worst days of Tsarism. And now the Bolsheviks, the representatives of a system of unheard-of tyranny, having filled their prisons with revolutionary working men and peasants, dare to come before the world's proletariat in the rôle of champions of "the victims of civil war." That alone is enough to expose the hypocrisy of their proposal to exchange prisoners.

Better than anyone else, we know the conditions under which our comrades exist in the Solovetsky Islands, in Susdal, in Siberian exile, in the Arctic regions, and in the scorching heat of Central Asia. And yet—knowing all that—we, Russian Socialists and Anarchists, categorically reject the offer of "exchange" by the I.R.R.

We reject such exchange because we deem it morally inadmissible for Socialists and Anarchists to barter in human bodies and to sanction the system of hostages—the worst feature of barbarian warfare. We also reject it because it predicates the deportation of the to-be-liberated comrades abroad, making them exiles. Our aim is to obtain for them the freedom of political and economic struggle in Russia itself.

Nor is the exchange practically feasible. Even if the Socialist parties of Europe would consider such methods acceptable, the governing powers of those countries have no reason at all for such an "exchange" of their own citizens for some foreigners—for Russian Socialists and Anarchists, whom they hate even more than their own.

But even if we were to admit the possibility of such an exchange, it would lead only to increased terror in Russia and would afford the Bolsheviks an added stimulus for the arrest of hundreds of new victims with a view of compelling future "exchanges."

The Communists perfectly understand all this, so that their offer of exchange cannot be considered as anything else than a demagogic attempt to evade the real solution of the problem of "the victims of civil war."

Socialist, Syndicalist and Anarchist organisations the world over are untiring in their struggle for amnesty and freedom for all victims of bourgeois justice, all the insinuations of the I.R.R. notwithstanding. Only recently, under pressure from the organisations mentioned, a far-reaching amnesty has been obtained for political prisoners in France. And in Germany it was due chiefly to the efforts of the Socialists that the Communists were saved from massacre after the Hamburg outbreak, and that not a single death sentence was passed. The Socialist, Anarchist and Syndicalist organisations of Europe and America will continue, in future as in the past, to fight for amnesty in their respective countries.

It is the Communists' turn now. Let the Communist parties of Europe, which have hitherto never dared to voice a single protest against the persecution of Socialist and Anarchist working men in Soviet Russia, exert themselves on behalf of amnesty in Russia—let them make even a modicum of that effort which the European Socialists and Anarchists have made for amnesty in Europe.

And let their leaders and mentors, the Bolsheviks of Russia, who are amply clothed with power, do what they can accomplish by a mere scratch of a pen.

Let them open the doors of the prisons, the Tcheka dungeons, the deadly exile places and concentration camps where suffer the political prisoners.

This, and only this, could increase tenfold the energy of all Socialists, Syndicalists, and Anarchists of Europe in their struggle for the liberation of the victims of civil war and terrorism.

This, and only this, can be the motto of all revolutionary organisations in Russia. And the workers of the entire world should support these our demands.

(From the *Bulletin* (January-February) of the Joint Committee for the Defence of Revolutionists Imprisoned in Russia.)

Samuel Gompers.

The numerous tributes paid to the late President of the American Federation of Labour emphasised his great leadership. "Gompers was a leader of men," they said. One would have expected that the disaster brought upon the world by leadership would have proven that to be a leader of men is far from a virtue. Rather is it a vice for which those who are being led are usually made to pay very heavily.

The last fifteen years are replete with examples of what the leaders of men have done to the peoples of the world. The Lenins, Clemenceaus, the Lloyd Georges and Wilsons, have all posed as great leaders. Yet they have brought misery, destruction, and death. They have led the masses away from the promised goal.

Pious Communists will, no doubt, consider it heresy to speak of Lenin in the same breath with the other statesmen, diplomats and generals who have led the people to slaughter and have brought ruin to half of the world. To be sure, Lenin was the greatest of them all. He, at least, had a new vision, he had daring, he faced fire and death, which is more than can be said for the others. Yet it remains a tragic fact that even Lenin brought havoc to Russia. It was his leadership which emasculated the Russian Revolution, and stifled the aspirations of the Russian people.

Gompers was far from being a Lenin, but in his small way his leadership has done great harm to the American workers. One has but to examine into the nature of the American Federation of Labour, which Mr. Gompers ruled for so many years, to see the evil results of leadership. It cannot be denied that the late president raised the organisation to some power and material improvement, but at the same time he prevented the growth and development of the membership towards a higher aim or purpose. In all the years of its existence the A.F. of L. has not gone beyond its craft interests. Neither has it understood the social abyss which separates Labour from its masters, an abyss which can never be bridged by the struggle for mere immediate material gains. That does not mean, however, that I am opposed to the fight Labour is waging for a higher standard of living and saner conditions of work. But I do mean to stress that without an ultimate goal of complete industrial and social emancipation Labour will achieve only as much as is in keeping with the interests of the privileged class, and hence remain dependent always upon that class.

Samuel Gompers was no fool; he knew the causes underlying the social struggle, yet he set his face sternly against them. He sought to create an aristocracy of Labour, a Trade Union trust, as it were, indifferent to the needs of the rest of the workers outside of the organisation. Above all, Gompers would have none of a liberating social ideal. The result is that after forty years of Gompers' leadership the A.F. of L. has really remained stationary, without feeling for, or understanding of, the changing factors surrounding it.

The workers who have developed a proletarian consciousness and fighting spirit are not in the A.F. of L. They are in the organisation of the Industrial Workers of the World. The bitterest opponent of this heroic band of American proletarians was Samuel Gompers. But, then, Mr. Gompers was inherently reactionary. This tendency asserted itself on more than one occasion in his career. Most flagrantly did his reactionary leanings come to the fore in the MacNamara case, the War, and the Russian Revolution.

The story of the MacNamara case is very little known in Europe. Yet this story has played a significant part in the industrial warfare of the United States, the warfare between the Steel Trust, the Merchants' and Manufacturers' Association, and the infamous Labour baiter, the Los Angeles "Times," arrayed against the Iron Structural Union. The savage methods of the unholy trinity expressed themselves in a system of espionage, the employment of thugs for the purpose of slugging strikers with violence of every form, besides the use of the entire machinery of the American Government, which is always at the beck and call of American Capitalism. This formidable conspiracy against Labour, the Iron Structural

Union, in defence of its existence, fought desperately for a period of years.

J. J. and Jim MacNamara, being among the most ardent and unflinching members of the Union, consecrated their lives to, and took the most active part in, the war against the forces of American industrialism and high finance, until they were trapped by the despicable spies employed in the organisation of William J. Burns, the infamous man-hunter. With the MacNamaras were two other victims, Matthew A. Schmidt, one of the finest types of American proletarians, and David Caplen.

Samuel Gompers, as the President of the A.F. of L., could not have been unaware of the things these men were charged with. He stood by them as long as they were considered innocent. But when the two brothers, led by their desire to shield the "higher-ups," admitted their acts, it was Gompers who turned from them and left them to their doom. The white-washing of the organisation was more to him than his comrades, who had carried out the work in constant danger of their lives, while Mr. Samuel Gompers enjoyed the safety and the glory as President of the A.F. of L. The four men were sacrificed. Jim MacNamara and Matthew H. Schmidt were sent to life imprisonment, while J. J. MacNamara and David Caplen received fifteen and ten years' respectively. The latter two have since been released, while the former are continuing a living death in St. Quentin Prison, California. And Samuel Gompers was buried with the highest honours by the class which hounded his comrades to their doom.

In the War, the late President of the A.F. of L. turned the entire organisation over to those he had ostensibly fought all his life. Some of his friends insist that Gompers became obsessed by the War mania because the German Social Democrats had betrayed the spirit of Internationalism. As if two wrongs ever made a right! The fact is, that Gompers was never able to swim against the tide. Hence he made common cause with the war lords and delivered the membership of the A.F. of L. to be slaughtered in the War, which is now being recognised by many erstwhile ardent patriots to have been a war, not for Democracy, but for conquest and power.

The attitude of Samuel Gompers to the Russian Revolution, more than anything else, showed his dominant reactionary leanings. It is claimed for him that he had the "goods" on the Bolsheviks. Therefore he supported the blockade and intervention. That is absurd for two reasons. First, when Gompers began his campaign against Russia, he could not possibly have had any knowledge of the evil doings of Bolshevism. Russia was then cut off from the rest of the world. And no one knew exactly what was happening there. Secondly, the blockade and intervention struck down the Russian people, at the same time strengthening the power of the Communist State.

No, it was not his knowledge of the Bolsheviks which made Gompers go with the slayers of Russian women and children. It was his fear for, and his hatred of, the Revolution itself. He was too steeped in the old ideas to grasp the gigantic events that had swept over Russia, the burning idealism of the people who had made the Revolution. He never took the slightest pains to differentiate between the Revolution and the machine set up to sidetrack its course. Most of us who now must stand out against the present rulers of Russia do so because we have learnt to see the abyss between the Russian Revolution, the ideals of the people, and the crushing Dictatorship now in power. Gompers never realised that.

Well, Samuel Gompers is dead. It is to be hoped that his soul will not go marching on in the ranks of the A.F. of L. More and more the conditions in the United States are drawing the line rigidly between the classes. More and more it is becoming imperative for the workers to prepare themselves for the fundamental changes that are before them. They will have to acquire the knowledge and the will, as well as the ability to reconstruct society along such economic and social lines that will prevent the repetition of the tragic debacle of the Russian Revolution. The masses everywhere will have to realise that leadership, whether by one man or a political group, must inevitably lead to disaster.

Not leadership, but the combined efforts of the workers and the cultural elements in society can successfully pave the way for new forms of life, which shall guarantee freedom and well-being for all.

EMMA GOLDMAN.

Get Down to Bedrock!

Half-hearted, compromising movements are always failures, and the leaders know it well. It is impossible to imagine that the late Samuel Gompers, who at one time used to assure me he was an Anarchist, really believed that his American Federation of Labour threatened seriously that wage-slavery against which he was supposed to be at war. And what applies to Gompers applies equally to Trade Unionists and Socialists in other countries. Deliberately and systematically they have made principles subservient to tactics, and this they attempt to justify by the plea that the masses are so feeble-minded that they cannot understand a downright truth.

Thus we rot and rot in a miasmic atmosphere of half-truths which are proverbially the worst of lies. Here, in England, for example, the position is deplorable. It is not merely that unemployment and the house famine are inflicting hideous suffering on a large percentage of our population. The real tragedy is that sincerity is now held in light esteem; that we accept, with a shrug of the shoulders, the most palpable injustices; that we no longer trouble to think out for ourselves the simplest and most vital problems; that all we care for is to be amused. We applaud only the orators who entertain us. We read only such literature as excites us. Like little children, we are content to play our way through life; and while we are thus playing the prison walls are closing in.

Look at it straight, taking our own country first! To all intents and purposes this country is owned by a small handful of people, who thereby own us. Every tenant pays them all they can squeeze out of him. Every purchaser of goods contributes to the rent for which the shopkeeper is squeezed. Every traveller hands over his quota for the use of the landlord's right of way. Every man who puts up a house must buy the site from these monopolists, and for every brick or stick of timber he puts into it he must pay them whatever price they choose to ask. For leave to cultivate their land, to excavate the minerals beneath it, in short, to use any of the natural resources, we pay daily and hourly tribute; and in return for that colossal and never-ending exaction they give us—What? Simply permission to work. That seems to me most monstrous, and to talk of freedom under such conditions is, as I regard it, to utter shamelessly a brazen lie.

Here then, at the very threshold of our investigation, we find a giant wrong; one, indeed, so obvious that the most childish intellect could grasp it. When, in 1917, the Russian peasants took possession of the land their labour fertilised, Kerensky and a few others of his type vainly urged them to compensate the ousted landlords. "Why," replied these simple and illiterate souls, "should we do that? They have been living in idleness off our toil for centuries, and, if anybody is to be compensated, it is we." How disgustingly immoral! How comforting it is to think that none of our Liberal, or Socialist, or Trade Unionist leaders will listen for one moment to that sort of talk!

You see, they will not tackle this social question as eventually it must be tackled. They can spout grandiloquently about the capture of political power—for themselves an excellent investment—but they will not urge the masses to capture the one thing essential to them, viz., the economic power lying ready to their hand. They are strong on organisation, which means an army of faithful henchmen; but they placidly ignore the fact that, however completely organised, the disinherited will still be slaves. They want every child drilled into being an expert, but if I remark that they are merely furnishing the Takers with more efficient Makers, they are righteously indignant. "Knowledge is power," they shout. Is it? I have known many highly educated but propertyless men who were far more helpless than are certain primitive peoples among whom I happen to have lived.

Look abroad! Foreign papers and foreign visitors pass on us one almost invariable judgment. They say:—"You English stand coldly aloof from the world's great mental and spiritual struggles, thinking only of your own comfort and amusement. Your fleets, your troops, your aeroplanes, go everywhere, pushing the fortunes of their masters. Your ruling class will, if it can, lay down the law to all mankind, and this means ultimately lots of trouble. You are to-day the centre of reaction, and, so far as we can see, your Liberal and Socialist and Labour leaders are doing not a thing to stop it." Such is the indictment, and, even as an Englishman, I do not like it. Our monopolistic institutions have reduced the great mass of our

own people to economic helplessness, and I have no desire to see them inflicted on the world at large.

At present, and largely under our leadership, the great Trinity of Grab—landlordism, plutocracy, and militarism—is running wildly amuck, and some superior force, capable of bringing it sternly to heel, will have to be discovered; but I cannot imagine it coming out of any of the existing Socialist or Labour parties. In Russia they gave us only the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, now somewhat curbed by the growing strength of the peasantry, who were the real makers of the Revolution. In Italy the best they could beget was Mussolini; just as in France, Briand, another noted Socialist leader, was the first to show the masses what governmental law and order, enforced by the bayonet, really meant. In Germany, for years their vaunted stronghold, the Socialist record has been, and still is, contemptible; and in the United States even the vote-hunting politician now scarcely deigns to notice what he properly regards as a spent force.

In theory Socialism represents an all-government tendency from which the world, if it is to regain its fast-vanishing liberties, is bound to move away. In practice it represents a habitual subordination of principle to tactics, and the exchange of the priceless birth-right of individual freedom for a worthless dish of bureaucratic pottage. With all these beatings about the bush, these timid opportunisms and cowardly compromises, Anarchism, which aims straight at the overthrow of human slavery, would be most foolish to ally itself. Anarchism's strength lies in its direct appeal to realities which all men recognise as fundamental, and out of the present welter realities alone can hope to emerge triumphant. Our business, therefore, is to riddle shams remorselessly; to set before the masses simple but basic truths; to sow untiringly, knowing that Life will bring the harvest. Only when you get down to bedrock can you hope to find the gold.

W. C. O.

WHY THE OPIUM CONFERENCE FAILED.

The refusal of Great Britain and France to agree to the proposals of the American delegation for the complete prohibition of opium production throughout the world has been followed by the withdrawal of the American and Chinese delegations, which brings to an end the Opium Conference at Geneva. The counter-proposals of Britain and France would have postponed the prohibition of opium production for so many years that they could only have been put forward with a view to defeat the project. The British Government refused to prohibit production in India until the other producing countries did likewise.

Great Britain's attitude on this question was not unexpected. In 1839 the British Government went to war with China because the Emperor ordered the destruction of 20,000 chests of opium, which had been brought into the country by British traders in contravention of the laws of China. British warships bombarded and captured Canton, and in the terms of peace the British Government obtained an indemnity of \$21,000,000 and the island of Hong Kong. Fifteen years after another war took place, and China was forced to pay another indemnity of 3,000,000 dollars. By the Treaty of Tientsin the sale of opium in China was legalised in 1858. In the bombardment of Canton, "field pieces loaded with grape were planted at the end of long, narrow streets crowded with innocent men, women and children to mow them down like grass till the gutters flowed with their blood." The "Times" correspondent recorded that half an army of 10,000 men were in ten minutes destroyed by the sword, or forced into the broad river.

In her book on "The Opium Monopoly," Ellen N. La Motte says: "India is the source and fount of the British opium trade, and it is from Indian opium that the drug is chiefly supplied to the world." It is a Government monopoly. "Cultivators who wish to plant poppies may borrow money from the Government free of interest, the sole condition being that the crop be sold to the Government. It is manufactured into opium at the Government factory at Ghazipur, and once a month the Government holds auctions at Calcutta, by means of which the drug finds its way into the trade channels of the world—illicit and otherwise." In the year 1916-17 there were 204,186 acres devoted to the cultivation of poppies. The direct

revenue from opium for the same year was £3,160,000, but there was also an indirect revenue in the form of excise. We thus see the British Government fostering and reaping revenue from the production of opium, while, at the same time, professing a desire to abolish its use.

British colonies in the East derive a steady income from opium in one way or another. In Mauritius, in 1916, the duty on opium was 227,628 rupees. In North Borneo the Government has taken over the sole control of the sale of chandu (smoking opium), owing to a falling off in the receipts. In Singapore there are several hundred Government licensed opium shops and opium dens, a large part of the city's revenue coming from this source. In the Straits Settlements 50 per cent. of the total revenue comes from opium. By the Treaty between Siam and Great Britain in 1856, the import of opium into Siam is free—no import duty is allowed. There are over 3,000 retail opium shops in the country, from which much revenue is derived. In Hongkong "about one-third of the revenue is derived from the opium monopoly." In the colony of Sarawak "the principal sources of revenue are the opium, gambling and pawn shops, and arrack," producing in 1913 \$492,455, just about one-half of the total revenue.

Shanghai, being a Treaty port, is of two parts—the native city, administered by the Chinese, and the International Settlement, administered by the Shanghai Municipal Council, controlled, of course, by the British. In 1907, China enacted and enforced drastic laws prohibiting opium smoking and opium selling on Chinese soil, but was powerless to enforce these laws on "foreign" soil. In the foreign concessions the Chinese were able to buy as much opium as they pleased, merely by stepping over an imaginary line where Chinese laws did not apply. The result was that whereas in 1907 there were only 87 licensed opium shops in the International Settlement, in 1914 there were 663, while the monthly revenue from these shops rose from 338 taels in January, 1908, to 10,772 taels in April, 1914. As fast as the production of opium in China was suppressed, the exports of British opium from India into the Treaty ports were increased, their value rising from £1,031,065 in 1906-7 to £3,242,902 in 1912-13.

We think these facts are sufficient proof of the contentions of the American press that the British Government took part in the Opium Conference merely to prevent its success. And when we read in a daily paper that a Chinaman has been sent to prison for keeping an opium den in East London or Liverpool, let us remember that the opium was produced with the assistance of British capital and sold by a British official in India.

We have never advocated legal prohibition in any shape or form, but simply wish to point out the hypocrisy of the British Government, whose action at the Conference was supported by the representatives of the French Government, whose hands are also soiled by the traffic in opium in their Eastern territory.

I once heard an orthodox person denouncing those who discuss articles of faith. "Gentlemen," he said naively, "a true Christian does not examine what he is ordered to believe. Dogma is like a bitter pill: if you chew it, you will never be able to swallow it."—*Chamfort*.

Publications on the Russian Revolution.

- Workers and Peasants in Russia: How they Live.** By AUGUSTINE SOUCHY. 2s., post-free.
- Anarchism and the World Revolution.** By FRED S. GRAHAM. 1s., post-free.
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- A Worker's Experience in Russia.** By MOLLIE STEIMER. One Halfpenny; 4d. per dozen copies.

FREEDOM PRESS, 127 Ossulston Street, London, N.W.1.

EMMA GOLDMAN'S LECTURE.

The meeting at South Place Institute on January 29 was a great success. All the seats were taken, many late-comers having to stand.

The chairman, Colonel Wedgwood, opened the meeting promptly to time. He said the present rulers of Russia had donned the Tsarist mantle. They were now afraid of change, free thought, and heterodoxy. It was now they who exacted uniformity, suppressed freedom of speech, and sent men and women to prison for reasons of State. The Government in Russia was no longer revolutionary; it had become respectable. It was an authority, and authorities had a way of supporting one another, and so had those who preferred liberty to authority. That was why they were there that night. They who denounced the Tsar must denounce the Dictatorships in Italy and Spain and also this Triumvirate who now maintained by force their absolute rule in Russia.

Emma Goldman began by saying that Bolshevism had eliminated the spirit of the Russian Revolution and the ideal that the Revolution was to give to the whole world. It was necessary to bring to the attention of those who claimed that they loved liberty and believed in justice that there was a terrible abyss between the Russian Revolution and Bolshevism. The Bolsheviks did not believe in the people. For that reason they established a Dictatorship and concentrated the entire power of government in the hands of a few. It was a Dictatorship over, not of, the proletariat. The Soviets no longer had any power, and the Trade Unions were nothing but an adjunct to the Government. The life of the peasantry to-day was more terrible than under the Tsar. They took the land before the Bolsheviks came into power, but of what avail was the land if the peasants were taxed, spied upon, and thrown into prison for the slightest offence? The wonderful blessings said to have been brought about by the Bolshevik régime were only a myth. Industrial development was not possible without some political rights, and that was what they had not got in Russia. The Tcheka was still in existence, in spite of statements to the contrary, and with the New Year we read of new raids and more people thrown into prison. In conclusion, the lecturer spoke feelingly of the condition of the political prisoners, and referred especially to Marie Spiridonova, who was again hunger-striking.

Emma Goldman's speech was a masterly exposure of the Dictatorship, her arguments rousing the audience to enthusiasm. Question time, however, gave her the best opportunity of showing her knowledge of political and economic conditions in Russia. Questions were fired at her from all sides and on all phases of the subject, but she dealt with them without the slightest hesitation, her prompt and full replies carrying conviction to all except those who had no desire to be convinced. The Communists, of course, were very angry because of Emma Goldman's iconoclastic treatment of their idols in Moscow, and vented their feelings in loud and abusive interjections, few of them asking a sensible question. The lecturer had no difficulty in exposing the illusions which prompted their questions, and calmly ignored their abuse.

John Turner moved a resolution which, while rejoicing in the overthrow of Tsarist tyranny, "brought about by the workers and peasants, and not by a small political group," protested against the "continued denial of political liberty by the Russian Government," and called upon it to "release from its terrible prisons the men and women whose sole crime is that they differ politically from the party now in power." Unfortunately, as a member of the Trade Union delegation to Russia, John Turner was unable to speak freely about conditions in Russia until their official Report appeared, so he confined himself to giving his reasons for supporting Emma Goldman. However, copies of the "Bulletin" containing his report to the Joint Committee in Berlin on the condition of the imprisoned revolutionists were distributed to each member of the audience, and took the place of a speech on the subject.

The resolution was carried almost unanimously, and copies of it have been sent to the Russian representative in London and to the Government in Moscow.

A collection on behalf the prisoners realised £12.

We hope this meeting will be followed by many similar ones in London and elsewhere.

Push the sale of "Freedom."

EMMA GOLDMAN'S BOOKS ON RUSSIA.

"My Disillusionment in Russia" and "My Further Disillusionment in Russia" are the titles of the two volumes in which Emma Goldman has recorded the experiences of a two-year investigation and the conclusions to which those experiences have driven her. The titles chosen seem to us most apt, for the disillusionment began with the first arrival in Leningrad and deepened steadily as time went on and exploration was pushed further afield. The work is largely one of exploration. Favoured by circumstances, Emma Goldman was able to travel extensively, and to interview an enormous number of those best worth the interviewing. Lenin, Zinovieff, Lunacharsky, Gorki, and other noted pillars of the Bolshevik State; world-famous revolutionists such as Kropotkin and Marie Spiridonova; Anarchists, Social Revolutionists, and Mensheviks—with all these she seems to have been talking constantly as an explorer, as one who desired to know. It is to be remembered that she knew Russia and Russian, and that her schooling in the international revolutionary movement had been long and arduous.

These give, at least, a guarantee of competence which most of those who write on Russia could not begin to furnish. What, for example, is the value of testimony given by "personally conducted" Trade Union delegates, unable even to read a word of Russian, whose knowledge is confined to the crafts practised in their own country? What worth can be attached to the pious George Lansbury's assurance that the teachings of Jesus "are being realised in Russia"? With what sort of an authority could such reporters as Mrs. Clare Sheridan or Mrs. Snowden pretend to speak? Although, to do her justice, the latter frankly confessed her limitations. And the accredited representatives of the daily press are even worse. They have to uphold the Dictatorship. They are compelled, even when confronted by its most undeniable atrocities, to defend it with the most pitiable plea that, for Russia as for every country, any Government is better than none. All such people are crippled by ignorance and gagged by acceptance of a creed to which they must conform. From the first of these two handicaps Emma Goldman was obviously free, and if it be urged that her Anarchist convictions necessarily biased her judgment, it must be replied that, at the outset, her enthusiasm for the Revolution outweighed all else. She anticipated a long period of confused thought and action. She was prepared to wait. Unhappily, with waiting disillusionment deepened.

Frightful are the injustices ignorance commits, and Emma Goldman rightly protests against those who, forced to acknowledge damning facts, blame forthwith the Russian people, calling them "crude, primitive savages, too illiterate to grasp the meaning of the Revolution." Yet the Revolution was the people's work. They, and they alone, brought about, with an extraordinary absence of violence, the one great fact that was its very essence, viz., the transfer of Russia's lands from the parasitic aristocracy to the actual cultivators. That will stand permanently as the Revolution's great accomplishment; the change in property relations which gave it the true revolutionary character with which history infallibly will credit it. Beside this all else is little more than the backwash of the tidal wave. Lenins, Trotskys, Zinovieffs will come and go—flies on the great wheel of Progress; but the principle of the land for those who use it will not perish. It marks a definite and huge advance. It opens for all time the road humanity at large will tread.

Emma Goldman, well grounded in revolutionary history, understands all this. Her work, therefore, is certain to have a value which that of the mere reporters cannot claim. To them the French Revolution would have been Mirabeau or Danton, Robespierre or Marat; and to them the Russian Revolution is Lenin or Trotsky, Zinovieff or Bucharin. A preposterous position which Emma Goldman has been far too wise to take. In the "Afterword" with which her second volume ends she says succinctly (p. 146):—"The Russian peasants began to expropriate the landlords, and the workers took possession of the factories, without taking cognizance of Marxian dicta. This popular action, by virtue of its own logic, ushered in the social revolution in Russia, upsetting all Marxian calculations. The psychology of the Slav proved stronger than Social-Democratic theories."

In the brief space here available it is impossible to trace in

detail the course of Emma Goldman's disillusionment, and to the "Afterword," a fine summing-up of the chapters preceding it, special attention is directed. "If I were to sum up my whole argument in one sentence I would say," she writes: "The inherent tendency of the State is to concentrate, to narrow, and monopolize all social activities; the nature of revolution is, on the contrary, to grow, to broaden, and disseminate itself in ever-wider circles. In other words, the State is institutional and static; revolution is fluent, dynamic. These two tendencies are incompatible and mutually destructive." She then explains that revolutions fail because they are erroneously regarded as merely violent changes whereby a new social class becomes dominant, whereas "the great mission of revolution, of the SOCIAL REVOLUTION, is a fundamental transvaluation of values . . . not only of social, but also of human values." This is, of course, the universal Anarchist conception, and in mere changes in form of Government no Anarchist has belief.

The second volume of this book is published under a separate title by reason of a singular misadventure. The manuscript was sent to New York in two instalments, but the publishers, not having received the second, imagined that the first comprised the whole and issued it as such. My own view is that the second volume is the more interesting, but I regard both as the adequate performance of an essential task. The Russian Revolution is an epoch-making event, and even in its earliest stages we see already the conflict of opposing principles on one or other of which every honest man and woman will have eventually to take a definite stand. That necessary development Emma Goldman's book will hasten.

W. C. O.

"Freedom" Guarantee Fund.

The following sums have been received to date (February 12) since our last issue:—T. S. (2 months) 10s., G. Davison £7, G. W. Tindale 2s. 6d., C. Sewell 2s. 6d., C. Pritchard 4s., G. P. 2s., L. G. Wolfe £1, J. A. Osborne £1, A. D. Moore (2 months) 4s., G. Marin £1.

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