

Freedom

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NOTES.

Labour Party Moves to the Right.

The Trades Union Congress at Scarborough had an apparent tendency to the Left, but when the delegates of the Trade Unions met at the Labour Party Conference at Liverpool in the first week of October the tendency was all the other way. This is quite natural, as many of them are Members of Parliament or sit on municipal or county councils, and are therefore dependent on the votes of the conventional or non-revolutionary majority. It is surprising how mild the views of a "Red" become when he puts them into his election address. He knows that the "hot stuff" he serves out to the workers at a street-corner meeting will not gain him many votes from the stay-at-home electors. The brighter his chance of election, the more carefully he draws up his address. The same is also true of the party. Now that the Labour Party find their hopes of getting into power may be realised in the near future they trim their policy to catch as many votes as possible. No whisper of expropriation is heard; the rights of property will be duly safeguarded by a Labour Government, and capitalists will remain capitalists for many a year, though they may have to pay a little more to the State for the privilege of exploiting their fellow-countrymen. Ramsay MacDonald's bitter attacks on the Communists and the big majorities in favour of their exclusion from the party were dictated by the determination that the electors should understand clearly that they had burnt their revolutionary boats behind them and were now a safe and sane Constitutional party. The resolutions passed at the Conference were phrased so that almost anyone could vote for them. For instance, this paragraph:—"The Conference, therefore, submits a co-ordinated policy of national reconstruction and reform which seeks, by Parliamentary means and in progressive stages, supplemented by the increasing control of industry by those engaged therein, to develop the material and mental resources of the nation in order to secure for all manual and mental workers the reward and security to which their activities rightly entitle them." It sounds like one of Arthur Henderson's soporific harangues at a Pleasant Sunday Afternoon meeting. Nothing in that to frighten the most timid of voters.

The Secret Police.

The arrest and prosecution of the twelve prominent Communists was not unexpected. The press campaign against the "Reds" was worked specially with that object, and the speeches at the Conservative Conference convinced the Home Secretary, Sir William Joynson-Hicks, that the time was ripe for him to appear as the Saviour of Society. Besides that, the Political Section at Scotland Yard also thought it time to come into the limelight. The Secret Police have to do something occasionally to justify their existence, so now they are busy discovering Communist plots. Years ago we could not hold an Anarchist meeting without having the doorway almost blocked with detectives—mostly descendants of Brian Boru. Our footsteps were dogged, regular calls were made at our homes and offices, and fairy tales about Anarchist bomb plots being nipped in the bud by the ever-watchful secret police were a constant feature in the press. Society breathed freely and Parliament voted willingly the necessary funds. Then one day we found all the 'tocs missing—never saw one anywhere. Anarchist plots disappeared from the press, and no longer were we held up as "the enemies of society." It seemed very strange to us. But the mystery was soon solved. Picking up an illustrated paper one morning, we saw some pictures of a raid on the offices of the Suffragettes, and there we saw that the burly men who were taking the ladies to Bow Street were the men who had watched us so persistently for years past. They had found new "enemies of society" and a new means of earning a little extra money. Anarchists, Suffragettes, German spies, anti-war agitators, Communists—they all bring grist to the mill of Scotland Yard. Add

to this a Home Secretary looking for promotion, and you have one of the principal motives for the latest prosecution. Socialist and Communist papers are quoting the treasonable utterances of Joynson-Hicks and others during the Ulster Rebellion; but they forget the old saying: "Treason is never successful; for when it is, it is no longer treason."

The League of Big Nations.

The prompt action of the League of Nations when Greeks and Bulgarians began to shoot at each other was in striking contrast to its attitude when Mussolini shot down Greeks and seized Corfu. Then it did nothing but talk, and left the Ambassadors to settle the affair on Mussolini's terms. But here were two little nations throwing fireworks about, with gunpowder lying all over the place ready to go off. So down came the Council of the League and told them to stop it; and they had to obey because both of them are in pawn to the Powers represented on the Council. The League still turns a blind eye to the wars in Morocco and Syria because technically—blessed word "technically"—they are rebellions. Abdel Krim is a rebel against the Sultan of Morocco, and the Druses and Arabs are rebels against France, who is nominally responsible to the League. The League as at present constituted is an imposture. It was a trick played on their peoples by the victorious Governments, who dressed it up to resemble the Angel of Peace. In reality, it was designed to hide the annexationist aims of the few great Powers who form the Council of the League. The Assembly is only an advisory body and cannot intervene in any dispute without the unanimous consent of the Council. Thus, France can bombard Damascus, causing the loss of thousands of lives and the destruction of priceless ancient buildings, and the League cannot interfere. When a French Deputy suggested that France should evacuate Syria, M. Briand said: "We ought not to renounce a mandate confided to us by the League of Nations." That is false and Briand knows it. The Supreme Council handed out the mandates to each other, and the League cannot take them away. Like Parliaments, designed to protect privileges and power, it can never be used to liberate the oppressed and exploited.

A Bombshell for the Church.

Dean Inge is on the warpath against some of the most fundamental doctrines of the Church. Together with other writers he has contributed an essay to a book, entitled "Science, Religion, and Reality," in which he says that astronomy has exploded the idea of a geographical heaven and hell, and indicates, as a consequence, his disbelief in the physical ascension of Christ. He says there is a very serious conflict between Christianity and science, and "the challenge was presented, not in the age of Darwin, but in the age of Copernicus and Galileo." The Dean does not mince his words. Prior to the discovery of Copernicus that the earth revolved round the sun, the ordinary man, whether educated or uneducated, had "pictured the sum of things as a three-storeyed building consisting of heaven, the abode of God, the angels, and beatified spirits; our earth; and the infernal regions, where the devil, his angels, and lost souls are imprisoned and tormented. . . . Most certainly heaven and hell were geographical expressions." The Copernican astronomy, he says, leaves no room for a geographical heaven. For 400 years the Church has shirked the question, and it is now time it was settled. To our mind, if the Church were to accept Dean Inge's contentions there would no longer be any reason for the existence of the Church, for he really wipes out the idea of God as well as other things. Most certainly if there were no heaven for believers to look forward to, the ministrations of the clergy would have no meaning. The Christian superstition, however, is too deeply rooted in the past to collapse suddenly, but this attack is a sign that the foundations are beginning to crumble.

Recollections of W. Tcherkesoff.

By the death of our old comrade Tcherkesoff, who from the early nineties to the autumn of 1914 was so closely connected with FREEDOM, we lose a lifelong comrade and an old friend, and our whole movement loses the man who for the longest period of time was active in the social revolutionary and Anarchist movements. His association with these movements dates from the early sixties, the time of Tchernychevski's best days, cut short by his arrest and deportation, when Tcherkesoff, himself a boy of 13 or 14, became interested in the Nihilist movement and soon felt absorbed by it. He outlived so many generations of revolutionists that few of the younger comrades can call to mind the principal phases of his career; and as the story of his life is worth telling, I will retrace it here on the basis of very many friendly talks on past events which we had from 1892 to 1913, and of printed records, reports of trials and early papers, and also of his own writings scattered here and there, of which I saw a good deal at the time of publication.

He was a son of the Caucasian gentry, a local aristocracy in Georgia, bearing frequently the title of prince, and this title also belonged to him. This, however, did not prevent him from being always very poor and earning his living as best he could, often suffering privations. In his youth—he was born one or two years before 1848—the social differences between the minor aristocracy and the peasants and labourers in Georgia were not very marked; the rich pastoral and wine-producing country of southern climate and luxurious vegetation supplied food for all, and the oil and minerals which to-day transform the Caucasus into a hotbed of rivalry, greed, and intrigue were hardly known to exist. Whilst the Russians were still conquering other portions of the Caucasus in those years, they had been in virtual possession of Georgia since the reign of Catherine II, when the last ruler of independent Georgia resigned in favour of Russia in a peaceful manner—of course, he had no other choice left than to submit to this fate. A treaty was signed stipulating Georgian autonomy, the preservation of the Georgian language, the Georgian national church (a very ancient and unique section of Christianity), etc. But, as in the case of Finland, and even more so, this treaty became obsolete by and by and no longer binding in the eyes of Russia, and the Russification of Georgia began. For various reasons, however, the thumbscrews were only put on in the eighties and later; before then for a considerable time Russia tried to "assimilate" (read: absorb) Georgia by more gentle methods.

Thus, among other methods, most of the young Georgian gentry were educated in Russia, in lyceums and universities, and the beautiful girls of this class—the Georgian race is a remarkably fine one—became the wives of Russian officers, high officials, and aristocrats, and thus settled in Russia. But very few became Russian patriots and tools of the Imperial policy; most of the boys and girls remained Georgian patriots, smarting under the gradual suppression of their nationality by official Russia, and in the interest of Georgia as well as in many cases from general revolutionary and often Socialistic conviction, they became active helpers or at least silent sympathisers and supporters of the Russian revolutionary movements. The boys and students became Nihilists, and being of a fierce race which did not in the least feel benefitted by Russian civilisation, but, on the contrary, boasting of a very old civilisation, regarded the Russians as very late and very primitive upstarts, strong only in numbers, they imparted plenty of fighting spirit to the Russian revolutionary groups, and from the sixties to the eighties often stood in the forefront of the fight. The titled ladies, the wives of princes, governors, court officials, and generals, helped their militant young compatriots in many ways, making cold northern Russia hospitable for them, giving them warnings of imminent persecutions and other hints, sometimes sheltering in their palaces the forbidden books, whole libraries, and secret printing plant until the storm blew over.

In this milieu Tcherkesoff grew up, being sent as a boy of ten or thereabouts to Russia, and soon after to a Moscow lyceum or other educational establishment. He very early came in close contact with Russian revolutionary circles and also maintained the Georgian connections mentioned, making them serve the general revolutionary purposes, soon so dear to him.

The Moscow students' movement of the early sixties was thus indirectly witnessed by him as an intelligent boy who was permitted

by young grown-up revolutionists, convinced of his seriousness, to be present at many of their discussions, to render inconspicuous services, to become by and by a trusted little comrade, too young to be militant himself, but following all that was going on as a diligent observer. He was thus cognisant of the movement of 1862-63, and he was fully aware of the more accentuated movement of the Ishutin group of 1865, to which Karakosov belonged, who in April, 1866, shot at the Emperor Alexander II, for which he was hanged in September, after having been tortured. The Ishutin group was destroyed by terrible sentences (short only of the death penalty) passed on all the principal members, while Tcherkesoff, as the printed records will show, was also touched by these persecutions, being a young man whom the tribunal knew to be in full sympathy and close touch with the group but to whom they could not bring home any particular fact. He underwent some punishment, which I do not remember now, and from that time became a marked man whom the police knew to be entirely devoted to the Revolution, and whom they would always keep in view and more or less hunt about.

His student career was thus broken almost before it began. He passed some time in the Agricultural Academy near Moscow, where Netchaev in 1869 found the ground prepared by Tcherkesoff and others. He had to leave Moscow for Petersburg, where he was with the group which sent a delegate to Switzerland to get in touch with Bakunin and the International, before ever Netchaev was heard of. This contact was not established, but copies of Bakunin's paper, *Narodnoe Dyelo* (The Cause of the People), September, 1868, the first Russian Anarchist publication, were brought back by the delegate, and this was Tcherkesoff's and others first introduction to Anarchism, as clearly expounded in that paper by Bakunin and Joakovski. Those who, like Tcherkesoff, felt as revolutionary Socialists, found their own ideas confirmed and more precisely expressed by Bakunin's words, and they treasured the few copies of that paper, copying the principal passages by hand and spreading them widely. This directed Netchaev's attention towards Bakunin, and he left Russia to join him. Tcherkesoff and others saw the very beginnings of Netchaev's plans and schemes and thus never became dupes of his later mystifications, when he pretended to be the agent of a non-existent secret association.

During a great part of 1869 Tcherkesoff was working in Southern Russia, where a railway was mapped out; thus he was away when Netchaev returned and began these mystifications and worse, culminating in the murder of a comrade who refused to be dictated to by him and who disbelieved all his stories. This led to the wholesale hunting down of the Netchaevs, some hundreds of young men, by the police. Tcherkesoff came back when all the mischief was done, and he then resolutely took upon himself to organise the escape to Switzerland of Netchaev and shelter for others, until everything around him broke down, all his comrades were arrested, and he himself, an eminently sociable man, left alone. As he used to say, he was almost happy when he had to join his friends in prison. At the public trial, eighteen months later, of scores of prisoners he was the only one who had evidently never been under Netchaev's spell and who could look upon all these complicated and very regrettable events in an independent spirit. He was sentenced to permanent exile in Siberia, and passed nearly five years there. In 1876, however, he escaped—a very rare event at that time—and managed to return to Russia. In Moscow and Petersburg he again found great depression and isolation after the numerous arrests made in 1873-74. He left Russia for London, where he passed some time with the Russian exiles; but, with the exception of Kropotkin, who escaped the very same year, all the other exiles were State Socialists or reformists, and he felt drawn to Switzerland, like Kropotkin, and passed the years 1877 to 1883 or part of 1884 in Geneva, the Jura mountains, and Paris. We meet him at the foundation of the *Révolté* by Kropotkin (February, 1879); at the congress of 1880, where Communist Anarchism was first strongly affirmed by Kropotkin, Reclus, Cafiero, and Tcherkesoff; in the first Paris Anarchist groups, which led to his expulsion from France; and wherever in these parts Anarchist propaganda was most active.

It was about then, some time in 1884, I think, that he was indirectly implicated in certain Anarchist events happening in Lyons, and this caused his departure for Eastern Europe for quite a number of years. He lived in Constantinople and Trebizond, he visited Georgia secretly, he lived in Bulgaria, and finally in Roumania, whence he came to England in the summer of 1892. During that secret journey to Georgia he met his early friends, some of whom had returned at last to Tiflis, after serving heavy sentences for their

undaunted Anarchist propaganda among peasants and workers in the years 1873 and 1874. These men had become, I believe, somewhat sceptical as to Socialist propaganda, and their Georgian nationalism was now in the foreground. In this Tcherkesoff, always an Anarchist, did not agree with them; but he felt on common ground with them on the question of Georgia's claims for autonomy. These men and others wished to see the Georgian cause put before the European public and international diplomacy, and Tcherkesoff, who knew Western Europe and had their full confidence, left Roumania to plead the Georgian cause in England. Thus, after eight years' absence he was with the exiles again in London, where in Kropotkin, Malatesta, Stepniak, Volkhovsky, Goldenberg, and others he met old comrades, and where, some long journeys to Russia and Georgia excepted, he now lived for the rest of his life, the thirty-three years from 1892 to 1925. It was then I knew him, and I will speak of this period of his life in the concluding part of these recollections.

M. N.

(To be concluded.)

In Memory of W. Tcherkesoff.

A public meeting in memory of W. Tcherkesoff was held on September 14 at the Circle House, Great Alie Street, Aldgate, E. There was a large and sympathetic audience. The speakers were Emma Goldman, Wm. C. Owen, John Turner, and W. Wess, all of whom bore testimony to our comrade's long struggle for freedom in Russia and for Anarchism. A letter of regret was read from his old friend H. W. Nevins.

"My Disillusionment in Russia."

This enlightening book by Emma Goldman has been published in a handy and compact volume, at 6s., by the C. W. Daniel Company, Tudor Street, London, E.C.4. As we have already reviewed it in our columns, a detailed notice of it is unnecessary. Miss Rebecca West has written an Introduction, in which she says we owe a debt of gratitude to Emma Goldman for having written the book. She criticises the attitude of Socialists regarding the Bolshevik regime, and denounces the Trade Union Delegation's Report, where they admit that the population of Georgia would probably prefer to be governed by a local Menshevik Government instead of by the Bolshevik Government, but that it is our duty to overlook this preference on account of the efficiency of the Bolsheviks.

We hope this new edition will have a wide circulation. It will be interesting to see whether the Labour and Socialist press will continue to boycott Emma Goldman's revelations of the real situation in Russia, by refusing to review this book.

President Calles—A Correction.

In the July-August issue of FREEDOM we published an article entitled "Rebellious Mexico," in which the following remarks were made about President Calles:—"Pressure from below forces him to figure as the people's champion; but we remember that, under Diaz, he was Governor of the wealthy State of Sonora, and that he crushed the Cananea strike by shooting down the miners' leaders." We have since received a letter, dated August 20, from Dr. J. H. Retinger, Director of the Mexican News Service, Mexico, D.F., contradicting this statement. He writes:—

"General Calles was not Governor of the State of Sonora under Diaz, because at this particular time he was earning a precarious living as a schoolmaster in a small city of the same State. He became for a short time Governor of Sonora during the Carranza regime. Also, he didn't crush the Cananea strike by shooting down the miners' leaders, for, as a matter of fact, this strike, which occurred in 1908, was led by him, and he suffered the consequences of his action in this strike during the rest of the Diaz regime, which, as you know, lasted until May, 1911."

We gladly print this contradiction of our erroneous statements about President Calles, which were based on information supplied by a Mexican correspondent who has hitherto proved very reliable.

Push the sale of "Freedom."

THE VICTORY BALL.

(A Victory Ball is to take place at the Albert Hall on November 12. We reprint the verses written by Alfred Noyes a few years ago.)

The cymbals crash,
And the dancers walk,
With long silk stockings
And arms of chalk,
Butterfly skirts,
And white breasts bare,
And shadows of dead men
Watching 'em there.

Shadows of dead men
Stand by the wall
Watching the fun
Of the Victory Ball.
They do not reproach,
Because they know;
If they're forgotten,
It's better so.

* * *

"What do you think
We should find," said a shade,
"When the last shot echoed
And peace was made?"
"Christ," laughed the fleshless
Jaws of his friend;
"I thought they'd be praying
For worlds to mend;

"Making earth better,
Or something silly,
Like whitewashing hell
Or Picca-dam-dilly.
They've a sense of humour,
These women of ours,
These exquisite lilies,
These fresh young flowers!"

"Pish!" said a statesman
Standing there;
"I'm glad they can busy
Their thoughts elsewhere!
We mustn't reproach 'em,
They're young, you see."
"Ah!" said the dead men,
"So were we!"

Victory! Victory!
On with the dance!
Back to the jungle
The new beasts prance!
God! how the dead men
Grin by the wall,
Watching the fun
Of the Victory Ball!

THE VERSAILLES TREATY.

What, asks *Pensiero e Volontà*, have the politicians who drew up the Versailles Treaty actually done? It answers that they have set all the world at loggerheads, as follows:—

To Poland they gave territory entirely Russian and entirely German. Russia and Germany against Poland.

Bessarabia, which was Russian, was given to Rumania. Russia against Rumania.

Hungary, reduced to barely a third of her original size, was forced to hand over to Rumania territory inhabited solely by Magyars. Hungary against Rumania.

Turkey was chased out of parts of Asia because the Allies wished to favour Greece. Turkey against Greece.

Belgium was given the German districts of Eupen and Malmedy. Germany against Belgium.

The Saar, purely German, for not 100 of its 700,000 inhabitants were French, was taken from Germany and practically handed over to France, as were Alsace and Upper Silesia, both predominantly German. Millions of Germans and Austrians were handed over to Poland and Czecho-Slovakia. Germany and Austria against Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, and France.

China, though she declared war on Germany, had Shantung taken from her and given to Japan. Montenegro, abandoned by the Allies, was wiped out.

Poland has aspirations in Ukrania, and seeks to become owner of the Danzig territory. Bolshevik Russia remains faithful to the Panslavism of the Tsars, and has her eye on Constantinople. With Germany as her only European ally she is pushing Eastwards, has penetrated all Mongolia, is pressing farther and farther into China, and will finish by forming an alliance with Japan.

This is Europe, after the war for Democracy; after the "War to end War."

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By P.-J. PROUDHON.

Translated from the French by JOHN BEVERLEY ROBINSON.

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Futile Conventions.

There is deepening discontent, and that is much, for so long as a people is sunk in apathy its case is hopeless. There is a growing feeling that something vital must be done, and that none of the forces hitherto relied on is likely to do it. Almost universally it is beginning to be recognised that the politicians of all parties have failed us. Almost as universally it is felt that the Trade Union leaders play only for their own hands, and that most unsuccessfully. All that is to the good. It clears the ground. It gives assurance that these obstacles will vanish, for Life invariably eliminates the useless.

As yet, however, all this discontent is vague and formless. Inevitably the masses feel that all the Labour Party's talk about setting trade on its feet again by some political hocus-pocus is unadulterated bunkum; that its grandiose plans for international alliances are only a playing for time; that it is completely powerless to stop even the smallest war; and that in attempting to boost trade by subsidies or preferential tariffs it is simply strengthening the system it should be trying to destroy. Similarly the masses feel that such great Unions as, for example, that of the miners cannot prevent even their own members from being thrown on the scrap-heap by tens of thousands, and that certainly they cannot give the vast mass of the disinherited the relief it needs so urgently, and, sooner or later, will be forced to take. All this is felt, and with increasing keenness as the economic pressure increases; but it is only felt.

What is now wanted is a strengthening of the intellectual grip. By some form of propaganda the masses must be made to understand that the dodging of main issues is absolutely futile; that it is just as necessary to do away with the present system as it was to do away with the great Roman Empire, or feudalism in France, or chattel-slavery in the United States, when these, each in its turn, had become no longer tolerable. To convey this information, simply and clearly, by concentrating on it, and to drive it home by illustrations with which the experience of daily life makes every one familiar, is now the task. Properly tackled, it should not be difficult.

Every one can see with half an eye, and without any long-winded explanations, that we draw all our sustenance from Mother Earth, and that to cut us off from access to her bosom is to deprive us of supplies. He who is allowed to fence in the only well in the desert has the thirsty traveller at his mercy, and no eloquence is needed to establish that self-evident fact. It is indisputable that as long as one nobleman is permitted to draw over £400,000 a year for allowing the miners to get at his coal the miners' wages must suffer. It is indisputable that as long as another nobleman is allowed to draw something like a million pounds annually for allowing people to occupy his 400 acres in the heart of London a whole lot of people must go short. Obviously, therefore, all this fencing-off business must be put an end to. Obviously, before anything else worth talking about can be accomplished those fences must come down.

Every worker wants to get the full worth of his labour, and it is easy to show that, so long as certain people get something for nothing, others must be cheated out of what justly belongs to them. Mankind does not live by the labours of the past but by the toil of the present, and whoever prevents mankind from toiling deprives it of its life. The idler dips his bucket into the vast pool of products and draws it out again, full to the brim and overflowing. Every drop in that bucket is a robbery, of which Labour is the victim; and if Labour wants to stop that robbery it must stop that dipping in. It must get rid of the parasite, and the way to get rid of him is to take away the Monopoly that makes him possible.

Clearly this legalised system of robbery is thoroughly dishonest,

and for us to talk of honesty while we tolerate it is arrant hypocrisy. Clearly also it is preposterous for us to prate about Democracy and load with wealth and honours those whose present dishonourable part it is to sit in idleness while others toil. Clearly, therefore, an entirely new morality is required, and its first commandment should be that the parasite must go. We need not kill him. All that is necessary is to pull down the fences behind which he has entrenched himself, and thereby stop his parasiting. That is plainly to the advantage of every worker, for we are poor only because we are shut out from the means of making wealth.

These truths are fundamental, and until they are accepted as such, and lived up to in their integrity, a real civilisation cannot come to birth. What we have at present is a gilded cannibalism—a diet lean and most unwholesome. We are dying of it, and the sooner we turn to a better and more natural method of feeding ourselves, the sooner we shall come into a life worth living. Especially here in England, where we are staking our existence on the fallacy that we can compel all the nations of the earth to buy our goods. A gamble in which the cards are stacked against us, of which statement our evidently incurable unemployment problem is now furnishing conclusive proof.

If the Trade Union movement showed any sign of teaching these fundamental truths, we ought to support and work with it; but at present it still wanders aimlessly in the wilderness of non-essentials; and the Labour Party, drunk with dreams of power and caring only about driving the bewildered sheep into its special pen, is even worse. If you doubt it, study the reports of what went on at Scarborough and Liverpool.

What we are faced with at present is a people that does not understand, and the first step necessary is to lay Labour's case before it so plainly and simply that none can fail to see its strength. Then action will come spontaneously, and it will be effective action, directed against the one common enemy, the parasite.

W. C. O.

OBITUARY.

RICARDO MELLA died on August 7 at Vigo, in Spain, where he was born. One of the finest and most popular of Anarchist writers in the Spanish language, his writings have been published for many years in Spanish revolutionary papers all over the world. He was much respected for his sterling honesty even by his political enemies, and on the day of his funeral most of the shops were closed. The workers of Vigo intend to publish a memorial edition of his most popular works.

Another well-known Spanish comrade, PEDRO ESTEVE, editor of *Cultura Obrera*, died in New York on September 14. He was a fearless champion of Anarchism, and loved by all who knew him. Our comrade V. Garcia, who first sent us the sad news, says that as long ago as 1891 Malatesta, Esteve, and himself held meetings together in Vizcaya and Santander; and Esteve has been an active propagandist ever since. His funeral was attended by comrades of several nationalities.

London comrades will hear with regret of the death of FRED GOULDING, on October 9, at Manor Park, E. Eighty-seven years of age, he was almost unknown to the younger generation; but in the early days of the Labour movement he played a strenuous part, and opposed Authority in every shape and form. He fought against the compulsory vaccination of his children, and was in his element in the numerous fights for free speech and no-rent campaigns in the East End in the 80's. In Anarchist outdoor propaganda he always did his share of the work, both as a speaker and in selling literature, and we wish there were a few more like him in our movement to-day. He retained his interest in Anarchism to the last, and two weeks before his death he sent us a characteristic letter, enclosing a small donation for *FREEDOM*. He was buried at Manor Park Cemetery on October 15. The National Secular Society's burial service was read at the graveside by his son-in-law, W. Young, who informs us that all the wishes of our old comrade were carried out to the last.

All government, even the most democratic, is a natural enemy of liberty; and the stronger and more concentrated it is, the more oppressive it will become. Moreover, these are truths so simple and so obvious that one is almost ashamed to repeat them.—*Bakunin*.

KROPOTKIN'S "ETHICS."*

Who can follow the explorations of the mind? What a man has actually accomplished could usually be summed up on a single sheet of notepaper, but the excursions of his thought would need a library. Yet this is the task Kropotkin set himself on returning to Russia after forty years of exile, when he was already seventy-four years of age and broken in health—a task pursued persistently for three years, and to the very day of his death, in conditions about as unfavourable as any that ever beset an author. In the remote village of Dmitrov, 60 versts from Moscow, he was shut out from the civilised world; books, his most urgent need, were almost unobtainable; he had neither typist nor secretary; by the feeble light of an insufficient lamp, and suffering greatly from the cold, he turned out this colossal, yet uncompleted, work. The store of accumulated knowledge at his command must have been enormous, for without it the making of this book would have been impossible.

What Kropotkin has endeavoured to do is to bring ethics down from the clouds and give it the earthly setting of our daily life; to show that morality springs, not from any supernatural source, but from the fact that human existence requires mutual aid, insistence on justice, love, and self-sacrifice, in which last love finds its loftiest and most satisfying expression. "Without equity," as he puts it, "there is no justice, and without justice there is no morality." To that inspiring belief this old and sorely-tried revolutionist could still adhere although, more than ever, civilisation, "red in tooth and claw with ravine, shrieked against his creed." "All the more need," he would doubtless have responded, "for establishing the true and necessary rules of human conduct"; and therefore he wrote:—

"The function of ethics is not even so much to insist upon the defects of man, and to reproach him with his 'sins,' as to act in the *positive* direction, by appealing to man's best instincts. It determines, and explains, the few fundamental principles without which neither animals nor men could live in societies; but then it appeals to something superior to that: to love, courage, fraternity, self-respect, accord with one's ideal. It tells man that if he desires to have a life in which all his forces, physical, intellectual, and emotional, may find a full exercise, he must once and for ever abandon the idea that such a life is attainable on the path of disregard for others."

Well, it would seem that if eloquence could have converted the world to this great gospel, it would have done it long ago. In this strain Buddha must have talked, and surely with compelling persuasiveness. Christ certainly embalmed these very precepts in parables of matchless beauty. Socrates, Plato, Epicurus, all the most noted philosophers of ancient times, though they lived under slavery and accepted it as inevitable, struck similar chords, and with a master hand. Nor have our leading modern prophets lagged behind. Kropotkin sets out the teachings of the various schools in detail and with great lucidity, but the basis of their ideals—whether resting on some supposedly supernatural command or on some inner consciousness or utilitarian logic—he questions. He writes:—

"Mutual Aid within the species thus represents the principal factor, the principal active agency in that which we may call evolution. Nature has thus to be recognised as the first ethical teacher of man. The social instinct, innate in men as well as in all the social animals,—this is the origin of all ethical conceptions and all the subsequent development of morality."

It will be seen, therefore, that Kropotkin takes his stand on biology; and I rejoice to find him writing that "the starting point for a study of ethics was set by Darwin," who "maintained that the common stock out of which all systems and teachings of morality, including the ethical portions of the different religions, have originated, was the sociality, the power of the social instinct, that manifests itself even in the animal world and much more certainly among the most primitive savages." I am glad that Kropotkin pays that just tribute to Darwin, so persistently misrepresented; but I regret that he has still scant praise for Herbert Spencer, whose great work as an apostle of individual freedom, as a hater of the State, as an opponent of militarism, and expounder of what I conceive to be the only just system of land tenure, Kropotkin, as it has seemed to me, never appreciated. Unfortunately, the last chapter of this, the first, volume, in which the ethical teachings of Stirner, Nietzsche, Tolstoy,

Multatuli, and other moralists were to be discussed, remained unwritten. Bakunin's name, also, is only mentioned once.

As it appears to me, it is still impossible to write the history of human thought, or deduce from it rigid rules of conduct. Thought is individual, and each individual draws his own conclusions from such evidence as comes within his ken. With time and circumstances the evidence and its interpretation vary, and I myself have felt strongly that the author of "*Paroles d'un Révolté*" and of "*Mutual Aid*," though both known as Kropotkin, were two very different persons; the first thinking only of the hammer blows needed to break the chains of slavery, the second being largely an apostle of what Matthew Arnold called "sweetness and light." It is the difference between Christ the Idealist preaching the Sermon on the Mount, and Christ the Realist chasing the money-changers from the Temple and cursing it—"that not one stone shall be left upon another."

To everything its season; and, looking at the necessity of overthrowing human slavery, and noting the strength of the fortifications behind which it is entrenched, I cannot help thinking that the innings will be to the Destructionists for many a day to come. Barbarous superstitions and traditions, brutal cruelties ingrained by habit, and the monstrous tyrannies of economic and governmental Monopoly, have still to be broken on the wheel of common sense; and vainly still one scans the horizon for some power capable of accomplishing that stupendous task. Kropotkin apparently finds it in the "herding instinct"—a term he uses repeatedly; in that Unity which is the idol of the Socialists, as it has always been the idol of that greatest of Imperialisms, the Roman Catholic Church. For my part, I lean towards the Protestants, the individual Protesters, as being far more likely to deliver the needed knock-out blows. Out of the idolatry of Unity we get only a confused composite photograph of muddled thought which leads finally to Dictatorship and the ruthless suppression of individual opinion.

To that collective ethic my own ethic of personal freedom stands utterly opposed; and, despite many mutual sympathies, I feel more than ever that between the views of the individualistic rebel and those of the later Kropotkin there is a gulf too deep, perhaps, for present philosophy to bridge. It may be unfortunate, but it cannot be helped, for it is part and parcel of the great intellectual and spiritual struggle through which further advances must be won.

In his later days Kropotkin was more than once reported as dreading the influence of individualistic teachings on the Anarchist movement; while others feel strongly that from those individualistic teachings comes its chief strength. They furnish, as we believe, the ethical and intellectual backbone. They substitute for the misty sentimentalities of the masses the power of precise aims founded on logical thought. That power is needed. Without it the disinherited can never hope to break out of their present prison, or to emerge from the vicious circle they still, in their mental lethargy, so fatuously tread.

Between us and Kropotkin, therefore, there are grave differences of ethics—differences only to be settled by fearless and uncompromising struggle. For that reason this last of Kropotkin's numerous books should be studied carefully. It is a monument of scholarship, the work of an untiring student thoroughly in love with his job. The trouble is there are so few of them.

W. C. O.

The "Times" and the "Reds" 100 Years Ago.

"The public, we believe, are not aware of one subject with which the Cabinet has been occupied at its recent meetings; and when they come to hear it, those who watch political symptoms will confess that one of a more truly portentous character has seldom offered itself to the attention of this or any other Government: we mean the spirit which has for some time directed the combinations of the working classes against their employers. If this spirit proceeds as it threatens, we give it as our well-weighed opinion, that neither lawful authority nor private property—(as for commerce and manufactures, they are out of the question)—will be worth so much as five years' purchase from the date at which we are writing. . . .

"There seems to be no variety of mischievous perverseness left untried by these depredators upon the rights and free agency of their fellow subjects: they act not merely within their own sphere, but make incursions into other trades; and like despots of a higher denomination, bring complex forces to bear upon a single victim."

—*The Times*, Sept. 30, 1825.

* "Ethics: Origin and Development." By Prince Kropotkin. 12s. 6d. London: George G. Harrap and Co.

TRADE-UNION DELEGATION AND GEORGIA.

The British Trade-Union Delegation and Georgia. Published by the Foreign Bureau of the Social-Democratic Labour Party of Georgia, 4, Impasse des Prêtres, Paris.

Having read this pamphlet of 40 pages, we can but wonder at the sheer audacity of the signatories of the Report on Russia. The authors contradict statement after statement, and support their contradictions with extracts from Bolshevik writings. The Delegation said that the Bolsheviks granted Georgia "a very full autonomy." Well, Georgia has not even its own Budget, its own fiscal system, its own expenses and revenue! These are controlled by Moscow. The Delegation write: "The shooting by the Mensheviks of 18 hostages exasperated the Bolsheviks." This is a sheer invention. It was the Bolsheviks who shot hostages and published lists of them. But "in none of their official reports, or in the publications of the Tcheka, which gave reasons for the shootings of the hostages, has there even once a hint been given of any Bolshevik hostages having been shot by the people in revolt." The Bolsheviks do not deny the use of terroristic methods in Georgia, but the Labour delegates do! To bolster up a case against the Georgian Mensheviks the Delegation say: "the 26 Baku Commissars who were murdered by the Mensheviks at Kizil Avat in Transcaspia." The Bolsheviks themselves have always accused the British authorities of this massacre, and in his book "Between Red and White" Trotsky says these 26 Communists were shot by Teague-Jones, chief of the British Military Mission at Askhabad. Of course, the Delegation wrote very little of their Report, most of it was put together by the "experts," and this particular section was drawn up by Mr. McDonell, who was British Vice-Consul at Baku before the Revolution, afterwards with the British military forces in the Caucasus, and one of the intimate collaborators of Teague-Jones; and the Bolsheviks considered him as one of the direct instigators of the shooting of their 26 comrades. Were the Labour delegates aware of that when they accepted his section of the Report?

This pamphlet throws a flood of light on the Georgian situation, which has been wilfully misrepresented by the Communists and their friends in the Left Wing of the Labour movement. Copies can be obtained gratis from Mr. B. Kandelaky, 43 Belsize Avenue, N.W.3.

JOHN RUSKIN ON WAR.

The first reason for all wars, and for the necessity of national defences, is that the majority of persons, high and low, in all European nations, are Thieves, and, in their hearts, greedy of their neighbours' goods, land and fame. But besides being Thieves, they are also fools. . . . And the guilty Thieves of Europe, the real sources of all deadly war in it, are the Capitalists. . . . The *Real* war in Europe is between these and the workman, such as these have made him. . . .

You are to do good work, whether you live or die. It may be you will have to die;—well, men have died for their country often, yet doing her no good; be ready to die for her in doing her assured good: her, and all other countries with her. Mind your own business with absolute heart and soul; but see that it is a good business first. That it is corn and sweet pease you are producing,—not gunpowder and arsenic. And be sure of this, literally:—*You must simply rather die than make any destroying mechanism or compound.*

There is no physical crime, at this day, so far beyond pardon,—so without parallel in its untempted guilt, as the making of war-machinery, and invention of mischievous substance. Two nations may go mad, and fight like harlots—God have mercy on them;—you, who hand them carving-knives off the table, for leave to pick up a dropped sixpence, what mercy is there for you?

—VIIth Letter to the Workmen and Labourers of Great Britain (July, 1871), "Fors Clavigera," Part II.

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