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**ESSAYS AND ADVENTURES
OF A LABOUR M.P.**

ESSAYS AND AD-
VENTURES OF A
LABOUR M.P. *By* COL. THE
RT. HON. JOSIAH C. WEDGWOOD,
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DEDICATED
TO ALL WHO LOVE
FREEDOM AND ADVENTURE

INTRODUCTION

IT is, regrettably, a matter of common knowledge that I exist only for the Single Tax. My best friends look pained when they observe my lips framing the word "land"; others move rapidly in another direction when they see me approach lest, like the ancient mariner, I distract them from their dinner, by a dissertation on the law of rent. I have, therefore, devised this sandwich, having had sufficient adventure to play bread and mustard to the political meat. And, indeed, many casual readers may well slide into and right through a political article without ever discovering that there is a snag at all. So well do we learn to disguise our aims.

My conscience compels me to confess that two of the chapters were not written by me. I do not feel called upon to particularize the subjects. Let my readers guess! They are the best of the bunch, but nobody will ever claim them.

Some of the material of this book has already appeared in the *Labour Leader*, the *Westminster Gazette*, *Reynolds's*, or *Hearst's International*, to the proprietors of which I am indebted for permission to repeat and amend.

JOSIAH C. WEDGWOOD.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
— INTRODUCTION	7
✓ I. UNDER THE RED FLAG	11
— II. "WEDGWOOD'S"	31
— III. SOUTH AFRICAN WARFARE	39
— IV. REMINISCENCES OF A TRANSVAAL R.M.	57
V. LAND VALUES—WHY AND HOW THEY SHOULD BE TAXED	71
VI. NATIVE LANDS AND CROWN COLONIES	116
VII. TROUBLES OF A LABOUR M.P. IN INDIA	130
VIII. INDIAN HOME RULE	136
✓ IX. ON A FOOTPLATE	145
— X. THROUGH ANARCHIST SPECTACLES	152
— XI. JEAN JAURÈS IN ACTION 1911	158
⓪ XII. THE RIGHT TO STRIKE	167
XIII. AUTHORITY FOR THE "MORNING POSTER"	170
XIV. HOW TO BRING ABOUT THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION	180 4
✓ XV. WITH MACHINE GUNS IN GALLIPOLI	186

10 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

	PAGE
✓ XVI. PANIC IN WAR	200
XVII. THE PROFESSOR AND THE POLITICIAN ☉ . .	212
XVIII. FREEDOM OR POLICE	231
✓ XIX. WOUNDED	239
XX. SOOTHING SYRUP	245
XXI. GIRL-SCHOOL ECONOMICS	252
XXII. CYCLING THROUGH LIFE	261

Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.

I

UNDER THE RED FLAG

I

SUCH a collection as this should surely include an experience of Bolshevism. No politician's education can be held complete without that dread adventure. It is the modern grand tour. Fortunately I have had two contacts with the "horror", in Siberia and in Hungary. Political essay and political adventure are here at one.

About a month after the Bolshevik revolution of November 1917, we gathered from that admirable News Summary which was daily issued by the War Office, that an independent Siberian Government had been established at Tomsk. I was then an Assistant Director of Trench Warfare in the Ministry of Munitions, with little to do save steal other people's jobs—tiresome and unsatisfactory work. Therefore Lord Robert Cecil, speaking for the Foreign Office, and remembering that

12 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

I was his distant cousin (remembering, as others thought, that Opposition politicians are better placed at a distance from Westminster), asked me to go to Tomsk, or wherever it might be, and look after our interests with this mushroom Government. The position and instructions were irregular, unofficial, wholly secret, and reminiscent of Rudyard Kipling. They "left it to you, partner," with a cypher, a subaltern and some good hard cash. Winston's advice was much more definite. "You get on to an engine on the Trans-Siberian, go as far west as you can get, block the line, and retire, blowing up everything behind you." Winston does understand war; that is why, the professionals object to him so much.

Over the journey, I draw a veil. It was one long purgatory of Russian consonants, grammars and dictionaries. Even submarine alarms failed to scare us from that awful script. On the Pacific I cut down bridge to three hours *per diem*; and the "secret" journey ended in an official reception at Yokohama.

Some day I shall write a true history of what M.P.'s did in the war. They will be seen not merely "going over the top" for the greater glory of the House of Commons; they will be seen criss-crossing round the globe—the eyes of the Cabinet, the correspondents of the Prime Minister, the unofficial deputy authority, the channel through which strange inner knowledge sped to the centre, the bearers also of courage and good cheer to lonely

men cut off in distant lands. I shall show them Peter Murray converting the American Press and standing behind our Ambassador at Washington; or Freddy Guest writing acute "appreciations" from Kilimandjaro with a half-eye on the job of Chief Whip; or Aubrey Herbert passing over to the Turkish lines half-blind but wholly confident; or Godfrey Collins cabling from Basra direct to the Secretary of State, to the horror of officialdom. And there will be "Empire Jack" breaking up the Roumanian oil-wells with a sledge-hammer while Mark Sykes discovers Zionism. What a gallant band we were—the men who could take responsibility, and yet be disavowed without a murmur. We had no career to jeopardize, and no fear of superior officers. I do not think we feared that we should lose the war. There was certainly no other worry.

So I was made very welcome in Tokyo and Peking. Wherever there was a British Consul aching for news, there was home—an island in a world of enemies. At Mukden, ruled by Chang-Tso-Lin, they told us of Japanese infiltration. At Chang-Chung, built up upon the Soya bean, the talk was of Japan. At Harbin, an anarchy under three Consuls and a railway guard, Japan was looking in at every window. Fear of our ally was written up large over Eastern Asia. By this time the Tomsk Government, if it had ever existed, had given place to universal Bolsheviki control. But Bolshevism meant Russia, the West, something

14 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

almost familiar when compared with the inscrutable, unmixing, irresistible Japanese. And so we went on to Siberia, to Vladivostock under the Red Flag of Russia or the yellow of Japan.

We entered Siberia from Harbin and the West by the Trans-Siberian railway. I remember feeling a sort of exultant pride in the young Republic, on discovering that at the frontier there was no examination of passports or baggage. "A free country", one thought. "This is what one hoped for." Alas, for such pious hopes, as we halted some stations further on, a train approached from the opposite direction, and drew up cheek by jowl with ours, and in the windows and along the corridors of the new arrival there was a terrible spectacle to be seen. There they stood—men with rusty rifles and blood-stained bayonets, clothed like wild animals in furs and dirt. "The Red Guards", we gasped. They leapt from their train on to ours, and we waited for the shrieks, for the massacre to begin. I got out my revolver, and on second thoughts, sat upon it.

Nothing happened! At last, with that courage which signalizes our race, I decided to go and see. At the entrance to the car stood one of the scoundrels. "What are you doing here?" I murmured. "To protect the foreign officer", I was told. Thank God for that! "But, *Tovarisch*" (the wise in Soviet Russia commence every sentence with *Tovarisch*,¹ a sort of pass-word),

¹ Comrade.

"what are they doing?" "Well, you see, these accursed bourgeois are bringing Vodka into Vladivostock, and Vladivostock is bone dry." They found the corrupting poison. Did they drink it? No! They solemnly dashed it on the station platform. I pacified the villains with cigarettes. Only one declined the sedative, and refused to accept even a cigarette from a bourgeois. It seemed that they were railway workers from Nikolsk; that this was "overtime", and that they were not paid for it. "Good-night, Tovarisch!" We left them wreathed in smiles and tobacco smoke. If there was ever a more unjust and detestable war than that which we instigated and waged against these people for three years, I should like to know where to look for it in history.

In Vladivostock ruled that Admirable Crichton, the British Consul Hodgson. Outside in the bay lay a British cruiser, an American cruiser, and the Japanese fleet. Inside Vladivostock authority was represented by the Bolshevik Mayor. Hodgson's mornings were spent in advising the Mayor and his afternoon advising the fleet—while order continued to reign in Vladivostock. One finds these people everywhere, but he was the most perfect specimen. No views, slightly bored with his job, an iceberg, but realizing completely that it is the inevitable duty of some Englishman or other to keep things straightened out among the clashes of the inferior races. He did his duty. He even did more than his duty, for, as his country was

16 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

at war and in need of aviators, he advanced money to send aviators from among the Russian Army refugees in Vladivostock to Canada, and in the end the Foreign Office made him pay the bill.

It was not easy to preserve peace in Vladivostock. The Japanese wanted an excuse for landing and seizing the town. The town itself was filled with armed men at a loose end, whose bayonets were permanently fixed; and, the banks being closed, everybody carried their bank balances on their persons. Refugee countesses were learning stenography, and refugee generals were mingling plots with earning an honest if uncongenial living as night-watchmen. There were vast stores of munitions of war, which had not been paid for, but which might be sent west; and there were vast numbers of German and Austrian prisoners of war just inland, who might be framed into an army for anything. Add to this that the connection between Bolshevism in Vladivostock and Bolshevism in Russia was practically non-existent, also that the Peace of Brest-Litovsk had not yet been signed, and it will be seen that both peace and policy were likely to be unstable. The one thing obvious was that the Russians—perhaps all the Europeans—feared the Japanese above all other things on heaven or earth. Germany is a long way off from Vladivostock.

I slept in a railway carriage. The housing difficulty had been solved in Vladivostock by railway carriages. There were streets of them down

every siding, all occupied and all taking root. They are probably there still. The odour increased daily, but human life is cheap in Vladivostock. My days were spent in interviews with Consuls, Admirals and Mayors. I dined the Red Mayor. We were interrupted by rifle shots below us in the street. Mr. Mayor begged to be excused, hastily produced a revolver and ran downstairs. He came back presently cleaning his revolver, and murmuring "Agents-Provocateurs". Bret Harte alone could do justice to that Mayor. It was touching to see that whenever I, representing the uniform of an ally, entered the famous restaurant of the "Zolotoi Rog" the band always struck up, not the National Anthem, that was too much to expect of a Peoples' Republic, but our other National Anthem—"Tipperary". It saved time, for one could rise and bow at the end.

At this time, and for long after, the War Office at home was obsessed with the delightful vision of Japanese Armies marching through Siberia and taking the place of the Russians on the Eastern front, though that front might now be the Ural Mountains. Japan and the "loyal" Russians together would stem the tide of the German-Bolshevik alliance. The Japanese were perfectly frank in denying the possibility of their doing anything of the sort. But the War Office said: "Go in! You and Semianoff and the Cossacks together will make trouble both for Bolsheviks and the Bosch".

18 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

Now it became clear to me—first, that a Japanese landing would throw all Siberia into the other camp; secondly, that the Japanese would never advance beyond Chita or fight the Germans; thirdly, that the subventions paid to Cossack robber chiefs, such as Semianoff, were not only wasted, but a direct source of friction with both Russians and Japanese. It was the view of those on the spot. I wired home accordingly. The sequel has proved me right in every point.

The Foreign Office were less enthusiastic or better informed than the War Office. It is the habit of the Foreign Office to avoid commitments or the definition of a policy. Cocksurenness is the proper prerogative of a War Office in war. So, indicating to me that my cables were displeasing, and without informing the Foreign Office, they summoned me to return and report. The Japanese went in, and then began the tragic adventures of Koltchak and Co., which ended for Koltchak at Irkutsk, and ends for us when we shall again have the common sense to recognize the present Government of Russia after six years of stupidity.*

II

When I went to Red Hungary it was most distinctly as a private citizen. There was no uniform and no "Tipperary" about that visit.

* This common sense has at length been displayed by the first Labour Government.

I was taking a daughter to get married. The young man, who had been doing "Work of National Importance" in my back garden, returned home to Hungary soon after the armistice. So I was compelled to follow at the end of June 1919, with the bride-to-be.

The amiability of the French Foreign Office got us seats on the Orient Express to Vienna; but there civilization ceased. Only the wildest stories came out of Hungary—no telegrams or letters could go in. While we dined in the select privacy of the Bristol (with all the others who were looking after, and "doing", Austria), J—— arrived, disguised as a Bolshevik. The disguise is, of course, simple. Razors, combs and brushes are eschewed, and a certain amount of sleeping in your clothes completes the get-up. Travelling permits were not allowed in Hungary for the likes of him, so he had forded the Leitha in the night under the protection and guidance of the village smuggler. Smuggling was much encouraged at this time in both Austria and Hungary, as legitimate trade with the Reds was, of course, quite out of the question.

Dr. C. had charge of Hungarian interests in Vienna. A certain amount of suspicion pervaded the palace where he was housed, but I reached him at last, and in doubly broken German explained my case and got my visas. But he insisted that I must visit Budapest and the Government—only on those terms would he allow me to enter.

20 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

Sombathely and County Vas were most reactionary; I must see the real thing at the capital. I saw him next at that capital. It was a year later, and he was in gaol. I am glad to think that I caused the eminent gentlemen, who were conducting me through the gaol, infinite pain by welcoming "the blood-stained criminal", Dr. C., as though he were my best and dearest friend. I hope he is now free in Russia.

Armed with the visas, we set out for Wiener Neustadt and the frontier. My prospective son-in-law had, of course, no visa and no passport, so we devised a story, that he was our luggage carrier, a mere chattel who required no papers and did as he was told. I enjoyed this more than he did. At Neustadt the railway ceased, and we had to drive across the frontier to Sauerbrunn. J. had to ride on the box, and tried in vain to act the rôle. When we reached the Leitha bridge over the frontier, the carriage declined to go further lest it should be confiscated, and we procured a flat cart from the other side. The Austrians raised no objection to the departure of a paperless luggage carrier. But the Hungarian post came upon us unawares, with J. couched among the luggage on the flat cart. So interested, however, were they in my wonderful passports, that they forgot to ask who was the ragamuffin behind. It seemed strange, till J. explained that by the mercy of Providence that particular Red Guard was one of his under-gardeners.

But we were approaching more educated Soviet officialdom at Sauerbrunn, and J. slipped off the cart behind into the woods with half the chocolate and a promise to meet us in the park at Sopron at midday next morning. He would walk round Sauerbrunn and sleep in the woods till we could leave Commissaries behind.

We drove to the Soviet-haus of this once fashionable watering place. Every place had its Soviet-haus, whence issued all information and all orders. In company with two returning prisoners and half a dozen other miserable travellers we faced the local commissary. They allotted us all accommodation for the night. They had commandeered the empty houses, and our luggage was carried up to one of these, where we shared a room and the convenience of a pump in the yard. We were up by five, and joined the queue at the railway station, waiting for permits to travel. Once in the train, my fatal propensity for civility soon involved us in intimate conversation with our fellow passengers. To be talked to by an Englishman is always an unexpected delight to the "inferior races", and our new friends were determined to respond whole-heartedly. They would show us Sopron. It appeared that they knew of a place where bread and coffee could be found.

We wanted to go alone into the park and find J., but our tongues were tied on that point, and we wandered up that interminable hot street to the coffee house. During coffee, for I was grate-

22 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

ful and ambitious to show that I was no mere ordinary man, it slipped out that I was in Parliament. And my Party? It appeared that I was Labour. Our host's face beamed; "I", exclaimed Bernard whatever-his-name-was, "am under-commissary for the German population here", and henceforth to escape was impossible. He did the honours of Soviet-Sopron. He hired cabs and refused to pay. He introduced us as his friends to everybody in the streets. He showed us the only shop open in Sopron—a book shop where they sold only Bolshevik books and leaflets. He commandeered the literature and everything for the good of our souls. He took us to see his boss, Commissary Leser, and finally he took us to the common Soviet dining house.

Commissary Leser, an educated man in white ducks, was interesting and careful in face of all I had to ask him. "Law, now! What law is there? Could property be defended in Court?" Criminal justice there apparently was, exercised by the Commissaries, but at present they were thinking out how to deal with civil actions respecting private property which did not exist. However, I must obviously go to Budapest and see his chief, and he gave me a letter of introduction to the German Commissary on the Executive Council—Heinrich Kalmar. Leser was caught by the White Terrorists and vilely treated, but I believe he is still alive. Nobody was ever killed in Sopron under the Red Terror.

The common dinner was at least instructive. At our table were two or three famished girls and two or three similar men of the shop-keeping class, Bernard and ourselves. There was one course of spinach and a sausage which almost neighed at one. Half through the chivalrous sausage I gave up, and with a word of apology. "Sie brauchen es nicht?" my neighbour pounced on the remnant with his fork. "What do you think of Soviet rule?" I said to my fair neighbour on the other side. It did not break the ice. "I do not mix in politics", she said in a whisper, lest someone might hear. My chief recollection of Sopron is the boisterous jollity of Bernard, and the all-pervading silence of the rest of the population. They kept their mouths shut, and only partly because there was nothing to eat.

In vain we tried to shake off Bernard and find the son-in-law. I thought we would "rest in the park", and he forced on us the wrong park as more beautiful. We got to the station again to secure places. He would see that we got the best places. We walked on the platform, and there was J., advancing in innocence with a smile of relief. My daughter looked through him, and we walked on talking to our dear friend the Under Commissary. He saw us off finally with protestations of undying devotion and a proof, hot from the Press, of the local paper which recounted and parodied my visit and my opinions. As the train

24 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

moved off our luggage-carrier slipped in, safe for Sombathely and the castle of his ancestors.

About sunset we descended at a little wayside station and tramped off across the fields. All unheralded we suddenly found the castle in the darkness—two servant-girls silent by the well, the family in semi-darkness in the great vaulted chamber—all with an air of waiting in silence and expectancy for they knew not what. A thousand years of unquestioned Magyar landlord rule was said to have ended in a breath. No one quite knew what had taken its place. No one knew where he stood. The stable groom bent down and kissed my hand when I went round to look at the horses. The peasants professed the utmost indignation to the proprietor, and went round selecting which bit of land they would annex. The problem for the common people was how to look at the bourgeois, and for the bourgeois how to look at the common people. No man trusted anyone. There was no safety save in silence.

An outlying estate at Besered had been managed directly by one of the younger sons. The Soviet had annexed it and asked the lad to continue the management at a salary. He had refused, but continued to live there, and the sheep remained without a shepherd—waiting. In the dead of night the family had buried their valuables (including a motor bicycle) in the garden. But they believed that a servant had spied upon them and seen the spot, and the following night they ex-

cavated and buried the stuff elsewhere. The pearls had been tied in a little bag to the topmost branch of a fir, and they watched with anguish the gardener's boy climbing the trees near by for birds' nests. Their carriage horses had been taken—shamefacedly—and were known to be drawing the Commissary's carriage in Sombathely amid the (supposed) scowls of the inhabitants. Many landlords had fled; but after five months of Bolshevik rule, still everybody waited. They listened for guns. The farmers further north had fought and been hanged. No wonder people waited.

As I would visit Budapest, I found myself one morning at Sombathely with three hours to wait for a train to the capital. In the streets I met a priest called Leo Peer, who had been trained in Ireland and spoke English. I noticed that most people saluted him, and then looked round to be sure that no one saw them do it. The priest was not afraid of the Soviet, for he had nothing to lose. All men in these revolutions are more anxious for their property than for their lives. One did not speak to priests in the street, but I saw that the Holy Catholic Church stood where she did, in spite of the gaoling of the Sombathely bishop. Landlordism may go under, but the Church—?

At Papa we were held up for over an hour, and the passengers got out and waited. We were held up for a train coming from the opposite direction. It came at last, consisting of one coach,

26 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

containing a Soviet Commissary and his wife. The station-master saluted, but the looks of the waiting passengers were sufficiently sour. The Commissary was very fat, and so was his wife. At Papa, too, while we were waiting the ticket collector came to punch my ticket. He saw my name on my bag. He looked outside cautiously, came back and whispered hurriedly, looking over his shoulder the while: "It is terrible. You must help us! You are an English officer, are you not? You must help us!" And he ended, almost crying with urgency: "It is very dangerous; aber ich dächte es wäre meine Pflicht." So they had against them even the railway trades union. They had gone on strike and been beaten.

My stable companion in the compartment was an engineer-manager from the great Cepel works at Budapest. He told me of the enormous costs of communal production in the factory. It cost more to mint the coins than they were worth. Output was derisory, and everybody was "maintained". He had a friend at Győr, and when we reached there, with two hours to wait, we went off together to the Soviet-haus to find him. This friend—a former despised subordinate—was the Commissary who had charge of the commandeered motor-cars, one in authority. His attitude was delightful; puffed-up with his power and position, he yet kept one eye on the good grace of his former boss with a view to eventualities. His stories of how he had waylaid and carried off

cars wilted away when he saw my fellow traveller looking at him and then at me with a twinkle in his eye. However, he drove us round—and talked. We went to the leading café, where a gipsy band was playing. It was full, but the patrons had changed. Amid the gilt and mirrors, on the plush divans, sat the proletariat. They seemed happy, and there were no tips. Once three or four of us were talking outside the Soviet-haus—arguing, I suppose. A man joined us, and the others became silent and drifted away. He was a propaganda servant of the Soviet, his business to argue, convince and confound. I complained of the dictatorship. The answer was simple. "We cannot do without a dictatorship; no Government could rule without one." I said: "You have destroyed liberty". He answered: "We have established order". It seemed to me to be the order of cowed animals, so I said: "I prefer rebels to cabbages", and he answered: "You are a follower of Bakounin. I believe in Karl Marx." That was exactly their trouble. They believed too much in Karl Marx.

There were soldiers in the corridor of the night train to Budapest. At intervals all night I heard them singing or humming the "Internationale". The words were strange in a strange language, but "The Internationale unites the human race" came as chorus through the rhythm and hum of the rails. Poor hopeful, helpless, children, ringed round by deadly enemies intent only on handing

28 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

them over to the horrors of a White Terror, which was soon to hang them up by thousands amid all the barbarities of the Middle Ages.

At Budapest I sought out the German Commissary with my letter from Leser. Kalmar looked after the interests of the German-speaking inhabitants of Hungary. I sat in his office and listened to his conduct of business. He seemed to me to be clearly my good friend John Hodge, and I fancy he had just about the same sort of sympathy, with the ideals he played at administering. His job filled him with pleasure. He took me off to lunch—he and his aide-de-camp, a young but fully-armed marine. As both his motor-cars were laid up (as was to be expected), he raised his stick to summon a cab. The fellow paid no attention, but the youthful marine swiftly produced a revolver and ran and brought back Jehu. I was not allowed to tip the cabman, who was, of course, not paid, I do not think this Government was collecting much popular support.

At the Hotel Hungaria, then the Soviet-haus, we lunched *en famille*, and afterwards the good-hearted fellow took me up to the old Imperial Schloss across the river to meet the rest of the Executive. Bela Kun I did not see, but Garbei, the President, gave me one of Franz-Joseph's best cigars, and I had long talks with Lucacs, the banker's son in charge of education, and with another intellectual Commissary, Vargo, who has since written the most authentic history of the

hundred and fifty days. Samuely, though assured by his colleagues that he was "not really sadiste", I preferred to miss.

Nothing more purely Marxian than Lucacs ever existed. The State was "jolly well going to do everything". Initial difficulties, of course! But production was improving; and, if the currency was getting itself disliked, wages would soon be paid in chits for the right amount of food and clothes and recreation. The peasants were against them, that was true. They were not yet educated up to the idea of National land and collective farming under the guidance of well-meaning Commissaries. In vain I pointed out that the French Revolution had made itself safe by the sale of *Assignats*; that the Russian Revolution was safe for the same reason, that it had given the land to the landless, and established a vested interest against reaction. That was all very well, but it was not Marx, urged Lucacs. The others admitted that they were being driven to the solution of individual cultivation and a land tax, that they were thinking, too, of distributing suburban land to the unemployed, if only to get friends. They were still thinking, no doubt, when the crash came.

Kalmar's German secretary, who took me round the town, gave me also ideas. He wanted to talk of Ludendorf, and how the Germans ought to have won, but I got him veered round at last to the great State experiment of Soviet-Hungary. As he saw it, State production could only compete with

30 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

private production abroad if heavy import duties were imposed. The State would be driven more and more to confine itself to the functions of a middleman, acting as banker and merchant, possibly distributor. They might buy up the agricultural produce of Hungary and sell it abroad for manufactured articles. The price-fixing of everything was contemplated as light-heartedly as in the great brain-wave of Major Douglas. These people were not dreamers, but children, living in a vast world of make-believe, and, whenever brought up against natural laws, were driven into screams of "It shall be so!" and endless coercion. So, people might not travel without "permits", or speak without "permits", might not post closed letters. Communist newspapers only could be printed, sales were forbidden, all because children think a God-like State can "make it so", and hate criticism as other priests hate blasphemy. Anyone looking out from England to-day can see how infinitely wise and old we are compared with and surrounded by these sickly, squabbling, helpless children who have never had a chance to learn self-government.

When I left by the Vienna train next morning, I carried away the impression that in that land everybody was afraid from morning till night and from night till morning. Within a fortnight this particular band of children-governors was in flight and other children more cruel were in their places. It did not seem, when I saw that country next, that any change had come in the prevailing hue of fear.

II

“WEDGWOOD’S”

“ ‘ BORN and bred in a briar patch, Brer Fox ’, says Brer Rabbit, says he ”, and in the same sense a Wedgwood is born and bred on a pot-bank.

The sturdy English worship of primo-geniture deflected me from a natural career among the shard-rucks to all those other trades and professions that successively passed me on. But from earliest infancy, regardless of education and predilection, the sons of the family were taken in to town to go over the works. We turned and threw and blunged and painted and “ mussed ourselves up ”, coming home in clothes patched with white, and clutching in our hands the largest lumps of cold, moist clay. The old factory at Etruria was a rabbit warren, unaltered and un-reconstructed since the great Josiah laid it out in 1767, and bought that ancient beam-engine from Bolton and Watt of Soho. In each cubby-hole where they stuck on the Jasper figures or rubbed off the paper transfers, we were known by sight and name and lamentable repute.

To the workers of Etruria each successive generation of masters remained “ Master Frank ”

32 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

or "Master Jos" for life, and the chief clerk was Tom or Isaiah, as he had been to a previous generation when he came in as the junior office boy. The continuity, the prehistoric antiquity of everything developed a corporate pride. "I used to work at Wedgwood's" conveys to the hearer a tone as of old family or old port. The courtyard has always been spanned by the same bridge, from which the partners have always stammered the same speech of thanks to the workers for successive wedding presents. At the end of the bridge is the office door—"Please do not knock, but come in"—and inside, at each side of a table which did duty for the founder, sit the brother partners, like the Brothers Chereble. In the corner has always stood the showcase of old Wedgwood ware. Once some iconoclast unlocked it and discovered a bit of Wedgwood and Bentley that had looked down silently and undusted for one hundred and fifty years.

Under the mat you will find the key of the showroom, and in the showroom is Jane, who will show you that wonderful *chef-d'œuvre* which was exhibited in Paris in 1851—an eminent Victorian which consoles one for the passing of the nineteenth century. We suit all tastes in the showroom. You pass the sham classic jasper, black and white, blue and white, green and white, pink and white. Of course, we favour light blue and white. It is Wedgwood blue, and we are Cambridge at the boat-race. Those who work or

worked at Wedgwood's must needs, in whatever dingy by-street, have a pot of blue and white hanging in the parlour window. It conveys just that sense of superiority which can be supplied to the higher grades of our society by the Heralds' College for £76 10s. Next comes the Black Basalt—Venus and Mercury and the Wine and Water Vases. Flaxman and Hackwood moulds and models live with us yet. It may be that “then” Neale and Palmer of Hanley did it better, but Neale and Palmer have been gone this hundred years and more, and no one to-day can touch us in the black.

When I was a child, “the Works” was in four sections: O.W. (for Old Wedgwood), earthenware, china and tiles. Now “tiles” has gone. After twenty years' trial they did not pay. This was unfortunate, for the tiles were distinctive and good. They were encaustic, with the slip pattern poured into depressions in the tile, which was pressed solid out of dust. Collectors may now know at least that they will never be reproduced. When the partners came back from the Boer War they closed down that section and settled down to fifteen years' struggle and drudgery to put the balance sheet square.

The Old Wedgwood has gone on steadily reproducing the Jasper and Black Basalt of 1777. When they add a bust of Mr. Gladstone or a medallion of Henry George it is an event of revolutionary import. The methods are the same,

34 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

the mixture unvaried, the tools and moulds and ovens are identical, and the men are the lineal descendants of those who stood at gaze while Bentley turned the wheel and Jos threw the first three black vases that opened Etruria on June 13, 1769.

The hand-painted earthenware is for the English market. We pride ourselves on it. It consists of the cream colour that came before vases and classics, true Staffordshire, potted as light as a feather in cane or lavender. The china is for America—all those gorgeous dinner plates with which we pay the debt and retain our credit. "Old J. W." did not condescend to china. But Davenport's prospered so well with porcelain in the continental trade that we too took it up in 1808. That first effort only lasted for a dozen years or so, and it was not until 1872 that the real Wedgwood china was born.

Davenports of the Unicorn bank, Spode, Minton, Ridgway, Bourne—all these old pottery families were born, grew to prosperity, and passed on into the bankruptcy court or the squirarchy. All rose and passed while Etruria looked down on them from the heights of immemorial respectable antiquity. We have been master potters for three hundred years. Wedgwoods, being Unitarians, could not cut loose from their caste and become squires. Daily for a hundred years the partners rode seven miles into the works and back from Maer or Barlaston, so regularly that the cottagers

set their clocks by the appearance of my grandfather down the lane. We boys rode with them part of the way on our ponies. There were sometimes six of us. As each new partner stepped into his place he was initiated into the mysteries of the “mixing”, and customers were informed by circular that the great-grandson, great-great-grandson, or great-great-great-grandchild of the founder had taken up his duties and would seek an early opportunity of paying him a visit to make his better acquaintance. It is as though we conferred an honour by booking an order.

Outside business hours, like the merchants of the Middle Ages, they maintained the liberal traditions. Kossuth and Garibaldi were welcomed at Barlaston. At Maer were to be found Coleridge, Poole, Mackintosh, Sidney Smith, the Darwins. The first Josiah was the friend of Priestley and Franklin and Clarkson. “Thank God and Lord North”, he wrote, “America is free, as one refuge from the iron hand of tyranny”.

Hatred of slavery and love of freedom of thought pervaded the atmosphere in which they lived. My grandfather, in pre-reform days, bought land in many counties for the sole purpose of recording his votes many times against slavery. He even broke away from, and broke down, the age-long custom in the Potteries of “annual hiring”, because in his opinion it smacked of slavery. By this iniquitous custom, against which the men had struggled for forty years, the man was bound to

36 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

work for the master for a year, but the master was not bound to find work. Work was paid by the piece, when work was available. It is hardly necessary to add that they do not have trade disputes at Etruria. It would be regarded by both sides as quite bad form. Sam Clowes would be as horrified as my brother Frank.

Surely paternalism never went further in any industry! After the mid-day meal was over, or in the evenings, my father read aloud to "the hands",—read Macaulay and John Stuart Mill. "Hands" that will stand that will stand anything!

It is no longer a firm; it is an institution. The institution hangs together in good and bad times. That is the point of an institution. When the war began and trade ceased, the firm had some thousands of balance in their bank; they decided to go on as usual until it should be exhausted, trade or no trade. Just so, when the second Josiah stood for Newcastle-under-Lyme in 1831, the workmen subscribed to the election fund. In some old package in an old cupboard I turned up Josiah's reply of thanks. . . . "But your donation has given me a satisfaction which is purely personal. You and I well know that in the long run our interests agree. But it may often have appeared to some of you, and must sometimes have been the case, that in taking care of my own interest I have not been sufficiently regardful of yours. Now your unsolicited, unex-

pected and free gift is a proof that my conduct during the very long period of our connection has been such as, on the whole, to have obtained for me your esteem and regard, which I prize as among the most valuable of my possessions.”

The succeeding century made no change, save that traditions became a tradition also. The reputation runs to fantastic lengths. It is related that once, upon the Blacklake road, a wagoner fell under the wheel of his timber wagon and was horribly injured. A closed carriage passed and the wagoner’s mate ran to it asking for help. The occupant was frightened, seeing the blood, and cried out to the coachman to drive on. He whipped up, and the man followed running, shouting out that he might know the name of the owner of the carriage. “Wedgwood”, replied the coachman, for the man was hanging on to the step. “It is a lie”, cried the man after the carriage, “No Wedgwood would do such a thing”. And, of course, they would not, as was shown at the inquest. The Institution is most reliable in any crisis.

The first four generations of potters were called Thomas, and made the goods in Burslem at the Churchyard and Overhouse, works. They had generally only one oven, and fired £10 worth of crockery each week. They combined the business with farming, coal mining and the manners of Puritans. The first Josiah was a youngest son, and had to set up on his own. From 1754 to

38 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

1759 he was in partnership with Whieldon, and good fortune has just unearthed the debris of their pot-bank near Fenton Manor Station. Collectors are searching the ancient shard-ruck and piecing together priceless cauliflower teapots and the earliest of "solid agate" dishes and knife-hafts. "Everything gives way to experiment", he said, and in this shard-ruck we sample the experiments and failures.

Of course Etruria has its museum, where we now treasure the old trials and notebooks and tests and samples. There is the whole history of Wedgwood pottery exposed, from the green glaze and earliest cream colour to the powdered blue and superb lustre of to-day. Over the samples of that dread period, 1820-1870, one passes with averted head, remembering only as a consolation that at that time potting paid well, and that we made, as level-headed business men, what the public wanted. Even the curatorship of the museum is hereditary. Each in turn is called Cook, even as the firm is still "Josiah Wedgwood and Sons", although the last of the "sons" has been dead these hundred years.

Scoffers maintain that for all these reasons "Wedgwood's" will vote unanimously for "Master Jos" whatever party label he may wear. An exaggeration! It might be true of "Master Frank". I will admit, however, that the Institution has given me more than my fair share of political independence and immunity.

III

SOUTH AFRICAN WARFARE

TWELVE years separated South Africa from Flanders, but twelve hundred years in the transportation of war. In 1902 there was not a motor-car in South Africa, and an army was like unto Barnum and Bailey's show on tour. Interminable lines of mule and ox teams and wagons stretched across the map of the veldt with a fan of dust ever to leaward. Between the drifts they crawled at two miles an hour, and at the drifts they lay down and died. They went down into a pit, creaking and crashing over the boulders, but above all one heard the cracking of the long whips and the yells of the kaffirs as, first in one direction and then in another, the teams tried to swing and pull out the pantehnicon of war.

When the real business ceased in Flanders all animals had become obsolete. The hundred yards that one allowed for an ox-wagon had been shortened to five on a motor-lorry. Petrol fumes had replaced the stink of dead horse. Cavalry dismounted to find cover, and Generals had forgotten how to ride.

40 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

The change was not in the country, but in civilization. With "Flying" Columns—long snakes which crawled from horizon to horizon—we hunted Boers unsuccessfully for three years. With motor-cars they rounded up the rebellion of 1914 in three weeks. Twenty miles was a good day's march for the 2nd Cavalry Brigade. Fifteen we averaged, and the tail (cluttered up with fowls for the mess and a piano for the padre) lagged three miles behind the General's pennon.

Looking back on those years they seem a nightmare of animals—animals to drive, animals to water, animals to feed (on rations or loot), animals to nurse, lost animals to recover, at last to kill in mercy. I shot seventy-two of my own horses, through the star, an inch above the eye-ridge. Foundered oxen beside the trail, one shot too, a much more difficult and horrible task. Their skulls are very hard, and often the poor beast would look up at one after the first shot as though asking how one could be so cruel. But the kaffirs would cut strips from the hide of the still living beast for whip thongs, while gorged vultures hopped heavily round intent on business. The Aas-vogel knows full well that he alone of the flora and fauna of South Africa is immune under a shuddering taboo.

In England it is so different. Everything is arranged there, and has been done a thousand times before. The conveniences and the rules make animals a pastime. But once aboard the

troop train and you found out that war was just—animals. A horse down in a packed cattle truck must be got up or it dies. You go into that stamping, rocking truck in the night, as Mulholland went down when the lower deck broke loose and “the fear was on the cattle”. Watering and getting on the nosebags becomes a branch of gymnastics, and mules have less sense than horses. They dislike change, being conservative. If you want them to leave a truck they only bite you ; if you want them to enter a truck, they kick. If you have never smelt a mule before, you wonder who was guilty of the invention.

* * * * *

The whole Grand Army had just reached Balmoral—horse, foot, artillery and jazz band. “Bobs” was there ; Kitchener was there—with half the Indian Army to carry their cooking pots. And there the high veldt winter rain fell upon the picnic. An icy wind all day had turned us black with dust, and at dark came the rain. Fires would not light ; one of our subalterns would pretend cheeriness and sing ; the men collected bits of corrugated iron to hide under ; the lines looked like a marine store under the blue shimmer of the lightning. The lost supply wagons of every other unit except our own seemed to select our bit of swamp to wander over, pathetically asking if we were the 4th M.I. or Badenhorsts Scouts, or some other equally undesirable set of ruffians.

42 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

Of course we slept. I do not know how one does it. I woke next morning with my head bosomed on a dead mule and my body (figuratively) under water. All night the floods poured, and all night the mules stamped and coughed and rattled their head chains. Two hundred and forty-seven trek oxen died that night of exposure, also an officer and four "other ranks". The picnic returned at once to Pretoria.

As our rearguard had not got in at all, I rode off to discover it next morning, and passed the drift—the most noted drift in South Africa. No one had been put in charge of this drift, and all night long wagons of all sorts had been piled in from every angle. Whole teams lay dead together on either bank. They were left there, and ever after as one passed that way, the stink of the drift at Balmoral came up to one as the king of stinks. All over the dead and dying oxen were the red and black weals from the long whips. Flogged to death. Nobody bothered, nobody understood; it was all new to everybody, and the Grand Army just had to return to the city of Pretoria.

* * * * *

I was Captain of the Elswick Volunteer Battery, long and heavy 12-pounder guns with a range of 8,000 yards and of delightful accuracy. At first we were with General Ian Hamilton, but as soon as it became a "sort of a war" we were split up,

and, with two guns, I was handed over to the 2nd Cavalry Brigade and Q Battery R.H.A. We were in twenty-six actions of a sort, never saw a dead or a wounded Boer, and marched and counter-marched 2,700 miles through High Veldt, Low Veldt, Bush Veldt, mud and mountains. Over all is still the prevailing hue and smell of horse and mule and trek-ox. Daily we rode bare-backed down to water in strange streams, daily we hunted forage and bathed the collar sores, daily we re-fitted the harness to the ever leaner beasts. They sickened of bush fever, of horse sickness, of glanders and sore heels ; and all day long as we rode we picked off the fattening ticks. The life of a horse was four months ; the mules lasted longer, the oxen less.

One's own horse was one's child. I hunted for oat-hay and mealies as I never hunted for biscuit and bully. There was the chestnut mare that carried me 60 miles on the night raid in the Free State. The grey on which I surveyed, with plane table and compass, all that north side of the Magaliesberg, from Magato's Nek to Crokodil Poort. Why, we nearly drowned together in that mud hole by the Wonderboom. And then there was Delarey.

One night, while camped on the kopje four miles down Commissioner Street, looking out towards Elandsfontein, a trumpeting and screaming arose in our horse lines. At last he was captured and roped to the gun-wheel, that great black

44 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

heraldic stallion with a white star. He must have escaped from a stud farm, but we supposed that he was Delarey's black stallion on which he rode by night. We called him Delarey. At the time I was somewhat peeved by the sergeant's reference to the foaming, screaming, amatory monster as "just the mount for the Captain". I did not like the prospect, but of course I had to ride him, because one cannot afford to loose caste in a Volunteer unit. Four brave men held him while I climbed on to his virgin back, and then they let go. For a week that brute never put three legs on the ground simultaneously, as he curvetted bellowing up and down the column, seeking his mate among the galaxy of choice. I became a delight to the whole army. Even the Canadian Irregular Horse, whose ability to annex and disguise the horses of other units was unsurpassable, left alone as hopeless, the picket line populated by Delarey. But fever had him too at last. Four months later I led out Delarey all alone, said good-bye, spread a feed of oats under his tired nose, and shot him dead beside the Pongolo.

* * * * *

Generally we rose in the dark and trekked at dawn, or we were "inlying picket" and stood to arms, huddled, for that hour before light came. Dripping in a Scotch mist and shivering, we watched the East change colour—black to dark blue, then streaks of light blue, purple, orange,

red. At last the Southern Cross went dim and vanished in the heavens, and then came the dawn. All behind and around are the little smelly camp fires of cow dung, with kaffirs squatting in the smoke. The muddle crystallizes into ordered teams of mules and oxen. The mules shake themselves and their harness. The horses toss their heads ; and one team after another slants off into the trail.

As the growing day melts both the mist and the column on the march, mufflers, woollen helmets and greatcoats are gradually shed. How one blesses the sun after a South African night on the High Veldt. Whenever the column halted we loosed bits and let the limber poles drop down. The men threw themselves in the long grass, asleep in a moment. Then down the column from the General came the orders to proceed. We awoke to the cry : " Poles Up ", " Stand to your horses ", and on we would go again, no one knew where, rolling over the stones and ruts, while the harness jingled in perpetual undertone.

We went up the Kaapsche Hoep with fifty Gordons on each drag rope. We came down sheer mountain sides, wheels lashed and with ropes out, like climbers on the Matterhorn. The guns went wherever man could go, and all our gunners looted ponies and rode, to prove that we were Horse Artillery.

Sometimes we were on rearguard, and it would get dark long before we reached camp. The

46 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

columns of smoke from the veldt fires changed gradually to a string of red, which slowly climbed the black horizon. You just followed what was ahead, and could see no further. Even the kaffir cries seemed stilled. The cavalry, a black smudge on either side in the deep grass, moved on like ghosts into camp. And the stars came out again once more in the great velvet canopy above us. Little points of sound came from a long way off above the rumbling of the column. The line of the black horizon was clear cut, but whether that horizon was an hundred yards or an hundred miles away, who knew or cared. There seemed always to be a gap in the hills ahead, towards which one climbed as in a dream. And then the procession was checked; there was something wrong ahead; a blacker patch appeared across the black veldt in front. We had struck another drift.

A series of these drifts would completely disorganize the time-table and the army. In wet weather the ordinary going was heavy across the trackless veldt. The wheels sank in to the turf, each deeper than the one before. Subsequent wagons moved a bit to the right or left of the trail made by the guns, and made fresh trails, parallel. All South Africa is still scarred with these parallel tracks from which the grass has vanished. The wheel track becomes a drainage gully scoured by the rains. But at a drift all these tracks must converge. From every drift

they spread out like the fingers of a hand, but the drift is Clapham Junction, unless a clever conductor can find a better crossing above or below chaos.

The unexpected drift found in the dark is indeed chaos. The guns have the best of it. They get it young and fresh and in the light of day. You can put two teams on, and I have yet to see the drift that can defeat the tug of eighteen London bus horses. The gun slides in, with the traces slack, the wheelers almost sitting back in their breechings on the ground. Bump! Bump! She is down. Then the traces tauten, and all together, stumbling, and with their noses between their feet, the long string of horses pull each other and the gun up the precipitous bank to safety. But for wagons in the dark six hours later, that same drift is just a yelling torment.

The Master of Ruthven, Captain of the 10th Hussars, was O.C. Transport. He would take charge of a drift, standing on the bluff and shouting his directions. Here was work for a man. I used to envy and copy him—all except his immaculate uniform. The last of the rear-guard filed by in silence, splashing in the drift below, and up and on to the camp. The army had left us. Ruthven and I shared a biscuit where we foregathered in the dark. Then he went off back to where his wagons were still breaking harness and killing mules in the last drift three miles away, and left me with the chaos below.

48. *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

"Try it lower down there with that wagon!" Bump, bump, crash, and the pole broke. "Two teams on to that wagon!" "Now, all together!" and they moved off so well together that the trek-chain parted. "Dig out that wheel!" "Off-load that wagon!" "Mule over the trace, there!" Wagons collided, teams got mixed; the night wore on, and slower and more wearily all moved. The only thing that flew was the harness when the traces tightened. The kaffirs mended everything with "riempjes", and once every half hour we succeeded in getting a wagon through and campwards. In a moment it was lost to sight, but one continued to hear a little longer the groaning and creaking of the wheels. This is "riding transport" in South Africa.

At the last I left two ammunition wagons jammed. They were so firmly aground that not even brother Boer could shift them if he should come down "like a wolf on the fold". I sent the teams on, and struggled after, armed with a sjambok and alone with the night. I was soon lost. While trying to make out from the Southern Cross and Jeppe's map where the camp might be, I was suddenly challenged by another apparition. It was a Lancashire Fusilier, also unarmed and also lost. "I thought it safest to challenge, sir. You see 'they' might have cleared off." That man ought to have been a General. He knew by instinct the principle of Marshal Foch: "When all is lost, attack".

If it can be said of a care-free life, I was haunted by fear of surrender. One despised them so ; but one could never be certain. Lying at night, looking up at the stars, one thought how one would comport oneself. That war was made disgraceful, not by the concentration camps and looting—we have lived to see worse in that respect—but by the cowardly habit of surrender. Even my wife's letters from home said, " Never surrender ". You just handed over your boots and your rifle, and they gave you a packet of Quaker Oats from the looted convoy and packed you off back to your camp, with a hearty invitation to come again. Half a dozen casualties, and you hoisted what old General Tucker called in his rage " the bloody national flag ", and lived to " fight " another day. The Boers told me afterwards, with a sneer to which there was no answer, that they got to know our men by sight and name. But once De Wet captured a train north of Bloemfontein, captured all on it in the night, all—save one man in his pyjamas. He was unarmed, but he refused to surrender, as being an action unbecoming in a Captain in the British Army, and he was straightway shot. I wish I could remember his name. At any moment the test might come for each of us.

In the Army, responsibility to your country is fortified by responsibility to your regiment. *Esprit de corps* keeps the upper lip firm. The gunners and the Guards have it best. The last mentioned

50 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

insisted on marching in step across South Africa, to the huge amusement of a somewhat slouching army. Gunner officers who surrendered found life less cheerful afterwards. Standards slackened, but in early days at least the regimental mess shielded and protected the honour of the regiment.

I off-loaded in Pretoria with two guns on the morning that the Lincolns and Scots Greys were cut up at Zillikats Nek. Colonel Hickman took us straight out from the troop train with a scratch force to relieve them. We met the debris about 10 p.m. below the Nek on the Rustenburg road, and came back with them. Generally, even at night, a British column is a fairly cheerful if cursing crowd. That crowd was silent, and hurrying—apt to look over the shoulder. There was something that showed that discipline had gone; a bunching together and untidiness. It was as though some terrible disgrace had happened in the family, of which it was impossible to speak. It was doubly impossible to speak to volunteers, who were obviously outside the family.

At last we got back under cover of Daspoort. About midnight I outspanned the guns beside the store in the poort, and I went into the store to find a sleeping place. The surviving Lincoln officers were there. They were civil, but distressed. They talked feverishly about anything to distract my attention, to get between me and a young officer sitting in the corner. He kept starting up and shouting out that the Boers were looking in

through the window ; that they would shoot him. We had never heard of shell-shock in those days. But what struck me was his brother officers trying to conceal an indecent spectacle for the honour of the regiment.

The same applied to our own little bunch of volunteers. We were held up for a month at Piet Retief. The rains were in full swing, the rivers bank full, and no convoys could get through to us. The Brigade was reduced to trek-ox and green mealies with no salt. Then some fool in the Commissariat issued my men with a keg of rum. Of course they drank it at a sitting, and became uproarious. The whole camp heard it. I could not get the horses groomed or fed or watered. "Obey orders! Certainly not!" and my pet wheel driver called me every unprintable epithet he remembered. The class conscious minority succeeded however, without the assistance of extraneous forces, in roping the worst cases to our own gum trees with their own drag ropes, and stilled the hubbub. While to the mess I maintained that the strange sounds were merely a sing-song. It is indecent that regulars should have the satisfaction of contemplating volunteer indiscipline.

It is a joke now to look back on that picnic which we called a war, and make comparisons. The prehistoric army starch was everywhere. The harness and the drill were just so, and if it did not suit South Africa, so much the worse for South

52 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

Africa. When the guns found a target, by the time they had "bracketted" both range and fuse, the solitary Boer in question had got into the next parish. The chief popularity of our guns was, that we could open out at once with time shrapnel. Our velocity and low trajectory showed where the line of bullets struck the earth, and we did not have to burst right on top of the target to make the bullets deadly.

"Elsricks to the front!" came the cry, and at a lumbering gallop (ten bus horses on each gun, the gunners and drivers clothed like nothing on earth, just to show that they were not regulars) we joined the 12th Lancers and Dennis' Pom-pom in the "view halloo". "Action front!" and round went that heavy trail. "There they are! Don't you see them? Just right of that mealie patch!" "No, you juggins! Not *that* mealie patch!" Patiently: "Do you see that white scar on the hill?" "Yes." "Well, at seven o'clock from it ——" "Right! I see them." "Range 7,000 yards; fuse 18; Fire!" The horses jerked up their heads at the bang. There was a far distant puff of smoke in the air, a scar of dust across the distant slope, a further faint explosion, and off would scurry a bunch of specks that might be Boers on horseback. Or, by their subsequent erratic coursings, they might be a herd of loose horses. You can at least frighten anything at four miles, but you certainly cannot see with the pleasing certainty of the domestic drill

ground on Salisbury Plain. Then up and on the hunt went—cheerful, obvious, and a good deal safer than steeplechasing.

The next time I saw guns at it, there were the same old intervals, the same obviousness. The Royal Field Artillery required no fictitious aid from camouflage. The old battery fire from the right was going on like clockwork. Each officer and man, straight at attention, was in his proper place, and . . . they were being wiped out before my eyes. They were wiped out, officers, men, horses and guns. The curtain rang down on the old order; the old R.F.A. might not know what to do, but they did know how to act their part, right up to the fall of the curtain.

But we, like sportsmen and like gentlemen, hunted brother Boer in a prehistoric age. We were "fed up", of course, but there was rough comfort, and there might be good shooting any day. Of course we could not let "the blighters" win, and say they had beaten us again; but you never had that sick feeling of visualizing a world under the heel of the Prussian War Lord.

Carelessly we drove east and west, and east again. How well we got to know those beautiful little towns, houses deep set in shady gardens, clothed in bougainvillea and clematis, and the clear stream running down each side of the straight white street, and the old Dutch kirk in the central square. Each was a little more draggled and infested with tins and trenches every time we re-

54 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

visited it. But each was always a sort of a home in a sort of a war. One had even friends to revisit, for the remaining inhabitants were often reasonably friendly and lent one novels to read and stoeps to read them on.

We played Box and Cox with the Boers in many of these towns. At Ermelo the rival generals occupied alternately the same house and the same bed. General Botha, leaving, told his hostess that General French would be in that night, and that she would be all right if she fed him well and aired the sheets. General French conveyed his compliments to General Botha, and bequeathed him a few bottles with suitable contents. It seemed all so pleasant ; and then suddenly we would come upon a bridge over the Pivaan River and along it was scrawled : " We have fought two years for our country and will for as many more ". This bringing of reality into the picnic seemed to smack of bad taste.

Nor was it all compliments and chivalry for common people. I see women and children huddling on wagons amid a welter of feather beds and chairs and bundles, while, back of them, soldiers are tearing out the door lintels and window frames of what was their home. Long lines of wagons filled with these wretched exiles went in to the railway with every returning convoy. Some wagons were tented in a sort of decent privacy ; some were just exposed pictures of misery and woe. House, crops, wagon, sheep and cattle, all

had been taken, and of a lifetime's work there remained only the bundle and wreckage collected on that wagon. The wife of General Tobias Smuts told me that when she was taken away, the English General opened the curtains at the back of the wagon and grinned at her. That was what she remembered, what she will never forget or forgive. Cruelty, robbery, even death may be forgiven, but nothing will ever wash out from the weaker sex (or from the weaker race) the indignity of insult.

Even before we had begun to cart them away and destroy the farms the scenes were bad enough. A number of horses are eating oat-hay spread out upon the stoep of a farm which lies deep in the folds of the Magaliesberg. A sergeant comes out through the door with his arms full. "Mealies, sir! Up in the loft there." Behind him runs a poor woman with a black shawl over her head and her arms outstretched. She runs up to the officer. "You leave me that lil' bit, jost that lil' bit." She points to half a dozen bare-legged children, some black, some white, who are looking on solemnly. "How we live?" says she. In that instance she saved her "lil' bit".

At another time I am sitting in a big black oak-panelled room. It is still half an hour before dawn. A chilly light comes in through one unshuttered window, and there is an oil lamp on the table, burning dimly in competition with the dawn. At each door, arranged as if set for the stage, stands erect a fully-armed yeoman, great-

56 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

coat, slouch hat, boots, spurs, and bayonet fixed. Only the outlines are visible ; no features ; dark menacing shadows by the door. Two men are standing by the hearth. They have slipped on trousers, but some of their clothes are still in their hands. A woman, her hair all down, her feet bare, with a shawl round head and shoulders, is sitting at the table. Her face lies on the table between her two arms, and she will not answer the questions of the officer who sits opposite her. We are searching the farm for arms after an all night gallop. The birds were trapped. Poor birds ; they have often been trapped like that, through all history and through all romance. There was Flora Macdonald before me ; but she had never heard of Flora. She was just a poor Boer woman, whose men were being carried off into captivity. She saw herself in no affecting picture, only the plain facts of war.

IV

REMINISCENCES OF A TRANSVAAL R.M.

PEACE had come. The conquerors were taking possession. I galloped up to the edge of Tafelkop and looked down on the Promised Land. Behind me was my family in an old Boer ambulance wagon, and six mule wagons besides, laden with food for three months, tents and blankets, and with the books of the law that I was to administer. Far below us lay the town of Ermelo, dotted with blue gums and willows—a city of the dead. Distended carcasses of oxen lay rotting in the streets; churches, houses, gaol and shops, all looked roofless up to the blue sky; and beside ourselves there was no living soul. Such was Ermelo when I re-discovered it after the war, in July 1902.

The common hunt for food and shelter left one little time for the humours of life. But amongst his other duties, the R.M. had to marry the people as they dribbled back, and there were two years' arrears to make up in this as in everything else. The departed "landrosts" of former years received a fee of 2s. 6d. for the performance of this rite, and enjoyed also the proud privilege of taking the first kiss—a survival, no doubt, of the *droit de*

58 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

seigneur. Alas, a virtuous British Government abolished these privileges, though I do not think there was over much repining among the Resident Magistrates.

Occasionally, however, these weddings did break the monotony of justice, taxation, and food supply. As an act of grace, the ceremony was sometimes allowed to take place on the Boer's farm in the country, instead of in the Ermelo Court House, and then one got to know Boer hospitality and endurance.

I remember driving out one morning a long thirty miles to Lake Banagher in New Scotland, to marry off a very rich old "dopper" Boer, Schalk Meyer, to his third wife—tying the knot at the same time for his son, who was marrying his second wife, and for his grand-daughter, who was only at her first husband. The family were all "bitter-enders", i.e., had fought to the bitter end of the war; and they had fifty thousand acres. One naturally did all one could under the circumstances to placate them, for the landlords rule there as elsewhere. Besides that, they had the best herd of buck in the country, and though I was never quite certain whether young Schalk would not just as soon shoot me as the buck, their venison broke most usefully the daily round of bully beef—cold, warmed or curried—upon which we were surviving.

As we approached Lake Banagher in our hooded Cape cart we saw the wedding guests galloping

up from all directions. To gallop is quite *de rigueur* upon these occasions. They would have fired rifles, too, had they still had any. Presently, swaying like a ship at sea, there swings across the veldt a long covered wagon drawn by twelve mules, all be-ribboned with red, white and green favours—the colours of the old republic. “Coos” Smit is driving, and wants to show me how they do it in the family. Between his lips is a cigar—for he is a dandy, and knows his London and Paris; the reins are held firmly between his knees, while he wields in his two hands the great whip, the length of a cricket pitch, with which he guides the galloping mules.

The ceremony itself took place in the dining-room at Lake Banagher, roofed with a tarpaulin for the occasion. As a protest, the old man, like Wellington, refused to have his house repaired, and he was building instead a new one near by. I married them in the Doric Dutch, for the same reason that one smokes Boer tobacco. It is probably illegal, but it shows the right feeling. The feature of these performances is always the difficulty experienced by bride and bridegroom over the white cotton gloves. Such gloves are exhumed for this ceremony alone. The bridegroom has to get the glove off and the ring on. He gets pinker and pinker, the glove grubbier and grubbier.

However, they did it at last, and we sat down to the banquet. All that we lacked was plates. There were just enough—dug up from the garden

60 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

where they had been buried—to go round once; nor was there any water to clean the ration plate. If one could have made certain of getting through each course completely, this might not have been so serious; but only the men sat down to dinner, and *all* the girls waited on us, with the result that we had no chance in the desperate struggle to get ahead of our vittles. I forget if we had ices, but there were six distinct strata on my plate—catfish from Lake Banagher at the bottom, and strawberries and cream as the newest formation.

After speeches we smoked and drank. For two hundred yards round the house the veldt was covered with carts and wagons—all of which contained whisky, but no water, and it was much too hot to go down to the lake where the water was. So Veld-Cornet Ben Smit and his smart lady-sister from Pretoria carried me off, the lady to abuse the English, the Veld-Cornet to show me the scene of one of the finest actions of the war.

“I was sleeping in this house with twenty burghers when the khakis rushed us at dawn. That is where I jumped my horse into the lake, and here were the Tommies shooting.” Some of his men had managed to get to horses, but the house was surrounded, and Ben Smit alone had forced his horse to jump twenty feet down into the lake. This lake or pan, like all of them, is only four or five feet deep, and three hundred yards across. But you cannot gallop through four feet

of water, and I can believe him when he says it was the longest five minutes of his life. His father, General Frank Smit, had led the Boer attack at Majuba Hill. I was trying to get this man to agree to join the nominated Legislative Council, which Botha and Smuts had refused to do. "While you treat us like Kaffirs without votes, the worse you govern the country, the better I shall be pleased", said he. I met him again thirteen years later in the East African bush. He was wearing khaki with two stars and a crown on his shoulder straps, Colonel Ben Smit of the 3rd South African Horse. Equal rights had induced the "bitter-ender" to co-operate.

Meanwhile the dancing had begun. "Oom" Schalk was a "dopper", that specially puritanical sect of Boer. He disapproved of dancing, but he was finally induced to allow it on condition that he did not see it. So he and his newly-elected spouse sat in the wagon-house out of range. There they sat all night long on high-backed chairs, there was nowhere else to rest. From time to time his friends would come in and sit solemnly by him and smoke and chat, and when especially bored, Oom Schalk would take off his top hat and rub the nap round the wrong way. It was, indeed, a wonderful white top hat. It must have trekked up from Cape Colony in the early years of last century, contemporary with and reminiscent of Sam Weller's father.

Ben Smit's sister from Pretoria was too fine a

62 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

lady to dance on a mud floor. That was the impression conveyed. Then—she thought she might give me one dance, if I could do the mazurka. Some other excuse sufficed, and I last saw her still dancing in the dawn of the next morning, the powder and varnish of civilization had liquidated, and the Boer was once more at home among the old dust and flies and smell.

These Boer dances never cease. To begin with, there are no chairs to sit down upon. Then, you cannot drive home across the ant-heaps in the dark, and there are no beds to sleep on; so dance you must. There was at Banagher one exception. One bedroom had a roof, and it was presented to me. About one o'clock in the morning, after an endless game of whist, which seemed to have no beginning and no end, I proposed to retire. But when I reached my chamber I found three lovely damsels asleep on the bed, and one on each side on the floor. One felt overcrowded. This was obviously no place for a Resident Magistrate. The fact is, instead of sitting out dances, they sleep out dances, and then arise refreshed to go at it again. I was told of one dance which lasted three days and three nights, and, what struck them most, there was still food at the end. I am quite certain that there was no whisky, however. The curious thing is that no Boer is ever very drunk. They carry their liquor like gentlemen, and leave it for the degenerates out from Europe to make beasts of themselves.

One has to help oneself. I extracted a feather-bed from one of the tented wagons, pushed it underneath and slept fitfully. It appeared, shortly, that bed and wagon belonged to the newly married couple, and there is not much clearance under a wagon floor, but that is another story. All around the wagon children played and slept alternately. Children cannot be left at home in the Transvaal, so they came too, and slept—on the dresser, under the sink, on and in the fowl-house. You tumbled over them everywhere; and when they woke up and played in the night they were always chasing and killing Englishmen and hands-uppers (i.e. Boers who had hands-up'd). I got to know much about the real views of my faithful flock that night, and a good many of those views were pretty uncomplimentary to myself.

With the dawn I harnessed up and left. My clerk I found fast asleep upon a mound of ladies' cloaks and hats. The cloak-room had been commandeered as the dance grew wilder and the impedimenta thrown upon the verandah, and had there served a useful purpose. Inside they were still dancing, although the concertina was now tied up with a red bandanna to prevent it leaking, and the violin had lost one string. We breakfasted by the Vaal River, and I left my clerk with a jibbing horse at the foot of the last range of hills, while I unharnessed and rode in bareback on the other. That excellent clerk came from Brixton, and had been brought up on Exeter Hall.

64 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

But circumstances alter cases. He raised another horse somehow, by means I never inquired into, and brought the cart and jibber in before midnight.

After a war which has suspended government for three years, as did that in South Africa, one question becomes all-important on the restoration of "lor-an-order". Will the new Government make debtors pay old debts, old rents, and fulfil old contracts? Few thought they could do so in South Africa, but they did not know the power of property—and debts, rents and contracts were made payable in full with interest. The only grace allowed was that the interest was not compound. There was no *tabula rasa* in the Transvaal, though I think there would be in England after a similar ordeal.

The ultimate result was four years of acute depression; the immediate result was that, as the old tradesmen and farmers came back into Ermelo, they sat down by their ruins, broken men with their families in tears. Their houses and shops, with perhaps £3,000 worth of stock-in-trade, were destroyed; but the overdraft at the bank, the debt to the supporting merchant at Durban, the mortgage to the local solicitor—these all remained with those three years arrears of interest. Some went bankrupt and started life again on the level; others, for the sake of the ruins, the chance of compensation, or the value of their goodwill, struggled on. For these one felt the greatest pity.

It was obviously the duty of the R.M., not so much to judge and tax these people as to cheer them up as they dribbled back from the coast or the concentration camp. At different times we tried polo, a debating society, rounders in the Market Square (it was beautifully grass-grown), a public library (in a bell-tent), cricket, a tennis club, and weekly lectures on hygiene. The whole population turned out on these occasions; the police captain unkindly alleged that the only reason for such unanimity was the desire to acquire credit in my eyes, with a view to their compensation claims. The bank manager deposited the cash reserves under his coat when he took it off to play tennis. The Post Office (also a bell-tent) "closed for rounders". The Kaffirs made a picnic of everything. But of all the things that we tried, the only three that really made their impress upon the culture of the Eastern Transvaal were the newspaper, the dances and the club. Of the last it is enough to say that it nearly converted all of us into dipsomaniacs in our vain efforts, through two years of decline, to drink it out of debt.

The dances, once a week, began on a bucksail spread over the dripping turf, and ended with a masked ball in the restored Court House. From thirty miles round came in the burgher's daughters and the school marms, and we should have cemented for ever the *entente cordiale* between the two races if we could but have persuaded

66 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

the South African Constabulary to dance the mazurka and give up their unnatural preference for playing poker for each other's pay.

But the only really durable thumb-mark on history was that wretched newspaper. It flourishes still under Floris van Schouwenberg—an avenging angel of discord.

The "Voortrekkers", as we called the first dozen families to return, started it on the office mimeograph, to keep their Sundays cheerful. The office staff composed it, typed it, and struck off the fifty treasured copies, which sold at sixpence each. There was no telegraph in those days, and a post only once a week; but it is not difficult to invent news of thrilling interest, and the Public Prosecutor, the dashing Captain Jones, was always equal to the occasion. Thus, notices about seed-oats for sale (they turned out to have been kiln-dried, and therefore useless), or Government mules, which turned out to be glandered (after sale), jostled the reports from imaginary "specials" in Pretoria or Johannesburg. This could not last, however. The clerk, from Brixton and Exeter Hall, was our printer, and he struck at work on Sundays; so I bought a printing machine and type, and engaged an editor. And then my troubles began.

I first met him, whom I will call Captain Ernest for short, when he was employed, nominally, as a captain in that dashing Regiment, the Cape Town Highlanders. Connection he had none with either Cape Town or anything more Highland than

Highgate—nor had his men. But the khaki kilt and sporan were very effective on his six-foot-four of muscle. I say he was nominally captaining the C.T.H. in reality he was keeping the whole of Wellington C.C. in perpetual joy with limerick competitions and private theatricals. Wellington C.C. was more sought after than Stellenbosch by those who enjoyed the peaceful distractions of “a sort of a war”. Distraction never failed in the neighbourhood of Captain Ernest.

We next met in a Pretoria bar, after the declaration of peace. He was “devilling” for a man who wanted his “rights” and 100,000 acres of bushveld out of the Government. The process involved a generous hospitality, for which none was better suited than Captain Ernest. This was obviously the man for Ermelo, and when I wanted an editor who could also turn his hand to that eternal *entente cordiale*, I naturally wrote to him.

He relinquished the rôle in which he was then engaged—the lucrative, if somewhat speculative, trade of a horse doctor with a patent (and impromptu) cure for the mange. (He had selected mange because it was universal, and his patent—coal tar—was comparatively cheap.) He came away hurriedly, with almost suspicious speed, and added another to the galaxy of “grass captains” at Ermelo. (We called them grass captains because there was the same sort of fugitiveness about their corps as about the grass widow’s husband.) The Public Prosecutor was a grass captain.

68 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

the Native Commissioner was a grass captain; the Repatriation Officer was a grass captain; the S.A.C. sported no less than three of this variety; those Boers who afforded gaiters and had modern views ended the war successfully as grass captains; and I was one myself.

Captain Ernest only added another to the prevailing hue of militariety; but he celebrated his first issue of the *Highveld Herald* with a skit on this titled caste in one column, and a parody in another column on the Boer weakness for getting out of the Government everything they could, at the least possible trouble to themselves.

He did all he could to push that paper. He tossed possible subscribers for drinks or a subscription. He brought out one sheet in laborious and unpolished Dutch. The Government used the paper as its sole advertising medium; so did all those who wished to get the most satisfying compensation out of the Government. We issued five hundred copies and sold fifty. The paper took its place beside the barbed wire and the sheets of burnt corrugated iron as a permanent feature of the "illimitable veld". And yet it did not go.

The fact was that every self-respecting burgher suspected the pacifying mission behind the *Herald's* mask of impartiality; and they had no intention of being pacified. They quoted the poets—

His gold has bought the venal Press to flood the land
with lies.

Something dramatic had to be done. It was. The *Highveld Herald* started attacking me with unquenchable ardour and immoral bitterness. And now the paper sold. It went with a swing. One would see a party of Boers come to town to beg for hens or sugar deeply engrossed in its perusal. On my approach it would be rapidly transferred to an inside breast pocket, while Oom Jan or Piet tried to look as though he had been discussing the price of mealies. Captain Ernest and I felt that the sleepless nights we had spent on drafting those leading articles had been well repaid indeed, and, as I saw the possibility of going through all the other officials in turn, I began to have the most rosy views of the future of the paper.

But alas for human ambitions! The pace was too fast for Captain Ernest. To avoid all complicity in the "rag", as it was now called, I had transferred the ownership of the paper to him. All I held was a mortgage (of the full cost) on all the plant. Now the management and proper pushing of the club, of the polo playing, of the dances, and of the race meeting which we ultimately held, were too much for the fortunate captain. He had an ability, I have never known surpassed for borrowing money. It would have been denying Providence for him not to have exercised that talent, and he certainly showed no such denial. And yet, when he left us, somewhat suddenly—left us with his debts and with three damsels to whom

70 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

he had been simultaneously engaged—even those to whom he owed money, agreed that the money had been well laid out. Some, indeed, thought it was well laid out in getting rid of him, but then there are always cavillers.

As for the paper, I sold that. I got all my money back and interest. But the syndicate who bought it were "Het Volk" and the Hollanders, and I lived to see a time when I would have welcomed all the old vitriol of the *Highveld Herald* as an anodyne for the laboured politeness and bitter hostility of the *Hoogeveld Herald*.

LAND VALUES—WHY AND HOW THEY SHOULD BE TAXED

There was a Sultan in Egypt, and he taxed the people. For every fig-tree he took payment of ten dinars. So it came to pass that the people cut down their fig-trees. Then another Sultan arose, and he took the tax off fig-trees and taxed instead the soil from which all good things must come. And behold, the people planted fig-trees with diligence, and the land flourished exceedingly.

THIS parable puts in a simple form the case for land value taxation. If taxation were in proportion to capacity for producing, and not according to actual production, such taxation would stimulate production. Our aim should be to encourage human effort by setting free from taxation everything which results from man's industry.

HOW LAND IS A MONOPOLY.

I shall begin by a paradox and say that taxation of land values is the wrong name for the right thing. Taxing things usually makes them dearer. No one, except the owner, wants to make land dearer. We want to make it cheaper, and to have more fig-trees planted.

Tax wheat, and bread becomes dearer; the eater, the consumer, pays the tax. Tax boots, and boots

72 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

will cost more; the wearer, the consumer, pays the tax. Tax capital, as all European countries now have to do, and capital becomes dearer [(especially if it can flow elsewhere), and the worker who borrows it in order to increase production, pays the tax in a higher rate of interest, passing it on to the consumer in a higher price. Therefore the natural inference is, that if land were taxed, land would become dearer.

Yet it is not so, because land is fixed in quantity. It cannot be increased or decreased. "Rent", says Mill, "is the effect of a monopoly. The monopoly is a natural one, which may be regulated, which may even be held as a trust for the community, but which cannot be prevented from existing."

Monopoly means the ownership of the sole power to make and supply, to hold or withhold, any sort of thing. A monopoly gets in any case the utmost it can out of the consumer. It is getting all that the consumer, or user, can pay. Whether you tax it or not, it would obtain a price fixed only by the demand. Raise the tax, it can get no more. Reduce the tax, and it will take no less. The rule, taxation raises price, which holds good elsewhere does not apply, to monopolies.

To put it in another way: The taxation of anything made by man—of any goods produced by labour—tends to diminish production and so increase price. Land is not made by man. It is not "produced", it is there. Taxation cannot

Land Values—How they Should be Taxed 73

reduce the supply, rather will it increase the supply available for use. Any increase in the supply of land available for use will weaken the power of the land monopoly. It will not abolish rent, but it will make rent reasonable—economic.

The private ownership of land of a particular kind, in a particular place, is a monopoly. The private ownership of coal, of a particular sort and accessibility, is a monopoly. The sole right to sell drink in a certain neighbourhood is a monopoly. There can only be one tram line in a street. There can hardly be two rival systems of water supply, or light, or power, in a town. All these are monopolies. Roads, canals and railways are more or less monopolies, partly because of their position, partly because of the Act of Parliament, granting the franchise, and also partly for the same reason that great aggregations of capital are monopolies. Those great trusts or rings are monopolies, because they can crush out rivals (especially in protected countries where foreign competitors do not count). They can crush out rivals by withholding their own profits. They alone, in each trade, have the power to forego the interest on, say, a million of money, in order to reap a richer harvest thereafter. They alone have the power to lose for a time and yet prosper in the end.

Growing is the conviction, especially in local administration, that monopolies (at least those conferred by the community), should be owned by

74 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

the community; or (what comes to the same thing), that the State should take in taxation the net annual value of a monopoly; or (what comes to nearly the same thing), that the State should restrict the price at which the community is to be served, to a fair interest on the actual capital, excluding monopoly profit. Whether the State benefits in its exchequer, or by increased prosperity in the community, is immaterial.¹

Which of the three ways you choose will depend partly on your tastes—how far you are individualist, and how far collectivist—and partly on the nature of the monopoly. If you discard as impracticable the idea of the State itself "running" the land, with State farms, State servants and State ploughs, the two other alternative methods are seen to merge into one. If the State lets the land to tenants with security of tenure, then the rents must be revisable at fixed periods, to prevent the tenants becoming, in effect, landlords at a quit rent. To prevent this new monopolization, the rents at each revision must be made the full economic rent. This is, of course, identical with charging a full land value tax, also periodically revised. The results are the same, and the two methods merge into one directly you accept the theory that the full value of

¹ Trams, for instance, may be owned and worked by a municipality; or the privilege of owning and working them may be leased by public tender for short periods; or a company may be allowed to own the trams subject to the right of the municipality to fix the fares to be charged. The first method might, the second would mean a contribution to the rates. The first method might, the third would, mean a contribution to the pocket of the community in cheaper fares. This illustrates the three methods.

Land Values—How they Should be Taxed 75

the monopoly is to go into public pockets. Rent or Tax become one and the same. The periodic Land Valuation corresponds to and duplicates the periodic Rent Court.

There is a school of thinkers who would widen the scope of this term "monopoly," to embrace all capital. They say that so long as a house, or a machine, or a £100, belongs to one man, that man has a monopoly; that till the community own all these things there will always be private monopolies; and that one monopoly is as bad as another. They maintain that a freeholder owning land of the value of £100 is no worse, and extracts no more from the community than a bricklayer with £100 in the Savings Bank.

In this they seem to be confusing private monopoly with private ownership. Something may be said by Communists against private ownership; but the difference between property and monopoly is vital. One possession can be made and duplicated, the other cannot.

Because the £100 in the Savings Bank can be duplicated by anybody, therefore the interest the bricklayer gets on his £100 is determined by the law of supply and demand—by the number of people who care to make £100 (or £100's worth), to lend or to use, and the demand by industry for the use of this capital.

But because no more land can be made—no more land in that position and no more land in the aggregate—therefore the rent that the land-

76 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

owner takes from the community is not regulated by the law of supply and demand, but by the law of rent alone. The demand may increase continually, but nothing can increase the supply of land such as his.

Capital is fluid, and flows to any part of the world, land is a fixture. Capital, allowance being made for varying risks, is of approximately equal value throughout the world, land varies in value from point to point. These are differences of degree, important enough when we contemplate taxation and the incidence of such taxation, but the vital distinction between what is and what is not a monopoly, and the price which either can extract from the community, depend on the possibility or impossibility of manufacture and duplication.

The possession of the sole power to supply or withhold even a small portion of land of a particular kind and position (which is therefore limited, and cannot be duplicated indefinitely), constitutes a monopoly. The annual value of that monopoly is the "rent" a tenant is willing to pay to use that particular piece of land, while he has choice of other pieces of land, dearer, cheaper, or rent free.

Rent cannot be forced up indefinitely, as it could if land of all kinds and all positions were in the hands of one monopolist. Rent depends solely on the demand for the particular piece monopolized, and that demand is limited by the

Land Values—How they Should be Taxed 77

possible use of free land or cheaper land elsewhere. The relative advantage of the peculiar position or condition determines demand and fixes rent. The owner gets all he can. He can get no more while there is the alternative of other land available. Therefore, if land is taxed according to its varying rent, the rent is not thereby increased, because that is impossible. Merely some of it is taken for State purposes.

Moreover, by taxing all lands, whether used or not, the offers of alternative lands for use are increased, and so all lands are cheapened. The present fantastic rents will fall to the natural economic rent—and not merely is some of the rent taken for State purposes, but all rents charged for the use of land are reduced.

If, on the other hand, private capital is taxed, either the owner goes elsewhere until industry will pay him the extra rate of interest to cover the tax, or else less capital is accumulated until its scarcity makes the price remunerative again.

“Taxation of Land Values” is a misleading name. By it we mean “the State appropriation of monopoly rent”. We want gradually to divert to the public pocket some of this constantly growing stream of monopoly rent which goes at present into private pockets. We want to divert it, not just because it is constantly growing, we should want to divert it even if it were decreasing—but because, increasing or decreasing, it is still the return of monopoly. It is still a tax extracted

78 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

from the community and, unlike other taxes, it gives back to the community no value for their money, because it goes into private pockets. It must be diverted gradually, for we have to consider the credit and security of mortgages and other charges on land. No benefit from the alteration of our present system of taxation would counter-balance a sudden shock to our financial credit.

THE VALUE OF THE LAND MONOPOLY IS GIVEN BY THE STATE.

Those monopoly values which are created by the State ought, above all others, to be diverted to the public pocket; and if we look into this land question we shall see that *the value of land everywhere is an exact measure of the benefits conferred on the owner by the State.* By the State we mean not only the English Government, but the English people, and English trade, and our English ancestors—our soldiers and sailors, our municipal councillors, our inventors, our workers, and our savings. Why is land in such a town as Stoke worth more, and more highly rented, than land on the High Peak? Because it is nearer to 200,000 people; because the railway is close at hand, and the trams run down the streets; because men work in the mines and factories, and must spend their money near their work. But land even on the High Peak is worth something, and even that little something has been

Land Values—How they Should be Taxed 79

created by the community. The army and navy keep us safe from invasion, and so give value to the High Peak lands. The sheep on it are not stolen because of our laws and police. The railway station may be a long way off, but State roads lead to it, and when the sheep are on the railway, there are millions waiting to eat them and pay the breeder. Take away those factors—take away the community and the benefits conferred by the State—and land values on the High Peak would be even as land values now are in Babylon.

The man who owns this land need do nothing. He can let someone else use it, and himself receive from the occupier a rent which he owes to the community, but puts into his own pocket.

As the community increases and improves in efficiency, so rent increases. Rent, in time, silently absorbs all improvements and economies. Let me give a few examples to show the way in which good government and progress of any sort translates itself at present into increased rent.

Mr. Lief Jones, speaking in the House of Commons on April 26, 1906, quoted figures to show that in the total abstinence areas in New Zealand the value of land had risen abnormally. We may well match with this the action of the late Duke of Argyll's agent, who tried to suppress the sales of whisky on one of his Grace's islands on the express ground that the crofters would thereby be better enabled to pay their rents.

Mr. Pember Reeves, in his well-known book,

80 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand,¹ shows the following results of legislative reforms : Between 1896 and 1901 the number of workers in New Zealand factories had increased by 52 per cent.; the wages paid had increased by 5 per cent. for men and 8 per cent. for women; the value of buildings, machinery and plant had increased by 32 per cent.; and the value of land had increased by 61 per cent. Thus legislation, the chief object of which was to raise the conditions and status of labour, had resulted in conferring ten times as great benefits on the New Zealand landlords. Later figures from New Zealand bear out the same story. The following are taken from the Official Year Book of 1923 :

Year	Population (white and black)	Land Value	Land Value per Head of Population
		£	£
1897	762,000	84,401,000	111
1902	840,000	94,848,000	113
1906	936,309	137,168,000	146
1911	1,057,000	184,000,000	174
1916	1,149,000	241,000,000	208
1919	1,195,000	276,000,000	231
1921	1,277,000	318,000,000	249

Not only has the land value increased, but it has increased more rapidly than the population, just because the people can do more useful work than was previously possible, and can pay more for the

¹ London : George Allen & Unwin, Ltd.

Land Values—How they Should be Taxed 81

privilege of doing it in New Zealand. And this has come about in spite of the fact that nearly half the local authorities in New Zealand raise their local taxation entirely from land values, and so secure a share of this increasing value, for the community. The advantages arising from the invention of cold storage for New Zealand mutton has in a wonderfully short space of time translated itself into increased land value.

Some people will remember the time when a toll of a $\frac{1}{2}$ d. was extracted from everyone crossing Waterloo Bridge. A considerable number of workmen employed in the Strand and at Covent Garden Market lived in small houses on the south bank just west of the bridge. It cost each of them exactly 6d. a week to get to their work. The Rev. A. W. Jephson, vicar of the parish, has stated that when in 1878 the toll was abolished (at a cost of nearly half a million to the London rates), the rents of these small houses was raised—just 6d. a week. The whole of the saving to this community was translated immediately into higher rent.

The State and the municipality are not, however, the only benefactors of the landlords in their well-meant efforts to benefit the people. Take the case of exceptional charity. A member of the University settlement at Southwark reported as follows: "About £350 a year, roughly speaking, is given away in doles of bread in connection with Christchurch, Southwark. As a consequence

82 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

the competition for small houses, but more particularly for single rooms in tenement houses, in this parish is so great that the rents are considerably higher than in neighbouring districts. And yet the clergy go on contentedly putting £350 a year into the pockets of the owners of this kind of property and call it charity."

As long ago as 1868, Professor Thorold Rogers put the case strongly enough: "Every permanent improvement of the soil, every railway and road, every bettering of the general condition of society, every facility given for production, *raises rent*. The land-owner inherits the fruits of present industry, and has appropriated the lion's share of accumulated intelligence."

It is cases like these which demonstrate how necessary it is that the land question should be dealt with, and should precede all other social and fiscal reforms. Without that, the most model structure of society is based upon sand. Every attempted amendment of the condition of the people loses, and must continue to lose, a great proportion of its anticipated effect.

MONOPOLY RENT, TAXING INDUSTRY, SHOULD REPLACE OTHER TAXES.

The two previous sections show that land of a particular sort and position is a monopoly, and a monopoly whose value is involuntarily given by the State and Community,

Land Values—How they Should be Taxed 83

What is the object of taxing, or appropriating for public purposes, this or any other monopoly? Why should this sudden onslaught be made on landlords? It is possible, one might say, that the old landlords have had an unfair advantage, but so have men who inherited fortunes in consols, and, moreover, many landlords have only bought recently. Why should they be singled out for attack? Why should we demand that the monopoly owner, the ground landlord, should pay rather than other rich people? Why, in a word, do we wish the State to absorb all monopoly rents, and to become the only monopolist?

Every Government must raise money for communal services, defence, education, health, order, etc. For this purpose it must appropriate part of the wealth that is created. All wealth is created by labour, with the use of capital, out of land. In other words, all taxes take wealth, burden industry, and are seen in a higher cost of the article produced by industry.

But all monopoly rents also fall upon industry, and are now an addition to the public taxes. Monopolies—(land, royalty, liquor, railway, trust)—levy private taxes upon industry. Private rent, like public taxes, must take wealth from those who produce it. Thus industry is burdened with a double taxation—public and private; and it does not help matters that rent is a natural and just tax, falling upon all those who use land in exact

84 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

accordance with the relative advantages of using that land.

Here, then, are two burdens hampering industry, restricting employment, and enhancing the price of goods. If the supreme object of the State is to do that which is expedient, then the development of industry, the opening up of opportunities for employment, and the cheapening of the goods we require, would seem to be the acme of expediency. In the interest of the community, therefore, it would be best to eliminate one of the two burdens. Rent is a natural tax, and cannot be avoided. Let that therefore be *the* tax, but let it be the only tax, so that industry may not be squeezed twice over. At least let us see that the one tax we cannot possibly avoid, replaces as far as possible those other taxes whose remission would benefit industry.

Now, when the whole future of civilization depends on the reconstruction of a trading world, when we are faced with a dying foreign trade, when millions of industrial workers are idle or in deadly fear of idleness, the claims of expediency cannot be safely refused a hearing. Everybody unites in crying for economy to reduce prices and save our foreign trade. Rings and monopolists are no longer held to be economical, but piratical. But if prices are to be brought down, of what elements are these prices composed?

Part of the price of everything that is made goes to the State in public taxes, part goes to private persons as inevitable rent, part goes as

Land Values—How they Should be Taxed 85

interest on the use of capital,¹ and part to the worker.

A reduction in taxation cheapens goods. The rate of interest which has to be paid for the use of capital, is fixed by world-wide considerations of credit and self-restraint. It is only by sound finance that we can gradually reduce the capitalist's share—by paying off our debts, public and private, and creating assets and improvements. The workers' share depends at present on the cost of living, and can never rise far above that "fodder" level, so long as jobs are limited and his competition forced.

If good trade and cheapness are so expedient as to constitute the proper aim of the State, then we should aim to reduce taxes, to reduce the interest that can be obtained by capital, and to reduce the cost of subsistence. We cannot reduce the inevitable rent. Yet rent to-day is a private tax. Why should both public and private taxes combine to enhance the price of goods. There must be one tax; but why two? That goods may become cheaper, one of these two taxes should be elimi-

¹ The rate of interest demanded and obtained for the use of capital (apart from monopoly) increases with the taxation of capital, such as income tax and urban rates. So that all these taxes are paid, not by the owner of the capital, but by the user—that is by the worker who employs capital. He pays these taxes in having to pay a higher rate of interest on the capital he uses, and the consumer in a higher price for the goods he buys. For capital is not confined to any particular country, but can be lent or invested anywhere. If we want to use it in England, we must pay the price it asks, and that depends in part on the security of the country or business, but also on how much this country takes in taxes compared with what another country would take.

86 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

nated. Let the inevitable public tax be the inevitable rent.

If, in doing this, the worker's wage is raised above subsistence level, owing to the opening up of fresh jobs, and the ending of his desperate struggle with his mates for the chance of a job, so much the better. It is surely in the interests of the community that the reward of labour should be related to the value of the work done, rather than to the cost of subsistence.

One of the objects, therefore, in taxing the monopoly of land is to reduce our present taxes, thus cheapening the cost of production and increasing possibly the proportionate share of labour in the value of the product. We would substitute one tax for two, and so improve trade. There is no sentimental animus against the monopoly owner. We would make goods cheaper and the worker's reward for his work more adequate. We should aim at substituting the Single Tax on land values, mineral rights and other permanent monopolies, for other taxes and burdens upon industry.

Moreover, under this system, the full value of every improvement in town or country—street-widenings, new railways, new sewers, the removal of tolls, the provision of electric power or improved economics in manufacture, improved trade and increased population—would find its way immediately to the community. The citizens would always and directly reap the full advantage of their efforts and of every increase of land value.

JUSTICE OF THE CHANGE.

There will be many, however, who will say that the supreme object of the State is not to do that which is expedient in the interests of the community, but that which is just. Is the abolition of a privilege unjust? There are certain human rights which must, in any State, be more sacred than privileges however long enjoyed and sanctioned by the State. The precise line which is drawn by our collective conscience varies from age to age. We abolished suttee in India, and put human life first—above immemorial custom. We abolished, without any compensation, the private privilege of feudal justice. We abolished the right enjoyed by borough owners to nominate Members of Parliament; and though compensation was asked for, it was refused. In the West Indies we compensated the slave owners, but they did not do so in America. Quite recently, without any compensation, we abolished slavery in Zanzibar, and the Mui Tsai in Hongkong. We abolished the Corn Laws without compensating the owners of the protected corn-lands.

What, then, is the human right which one must now prefer to the immemorial privileges of rent collecting? The right to live? Certainly! The right to be free? Yes! Both these must be admitted. Compensation for the abolition of slavery receives short shrift in the twentieth century. But we have not succeeded in abolishing

88 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

slavery. The landless worker is still half slave, begging piteously for a job of work. If we can show that his real emancipation depends on the abolition of the private ownership of land, there we discover a human right which transcends the claim of privilege in such ownership. The State can therefore combine expediency with justice.

INITIAL EFFECT ON SPECULATION AND TRADE.

There is another reason for taxing land values. So far we have only thought of abolishing the double burden, that is the ultimate goal of such taxation. But the mere first imposition of a tax on land, even if our present "fig-tree" taxation were not correspondingly reduced, would actually benefit industry. It would break the monopoly price.

Suppose that Mr. J. P. Morgan controlled the wheat supply, and held up all available wheat in his granaries until we were willing to pay the price he asked. If, then, we taxed the wheat which he held up and did not use, we should by that very tax force him to sell, and at a lower price; so industry and the community would benefit.

Suppose that the House of Rothschild buried all their capital—machinery and bank reserves and balances—in their Buckinghamshire park; or suppose they stopped the use of their capital everywhere, like any gang of strikers; suppose, in a

Land Values—How they Should be Taxed 89

word, that they held up a great part of the world's capital and were content to go without their interest. Then, if we taxed their hoarded wealth, whether they used it or not, they would be forced to use it; to employ or lend out that hoarded wealth. The rate of interest on capital would fall and benefit industry.

Suppose that some Alderman Smith of Leicester controlled the boot trade—had bought and held up all boots made and to be made. If we taxed the boots held up, Alderman Smith would be forced to sell, and the price of boots would fall and benefit industry.

We want to tax land—the source of wealth—whether it is being used or not, and then we shall actually benefit industry by bringing land into use.

In so far as lands round towns, or sporting lands, or unworked minerals and quarries are held up, they are in exactly the same position as the cornered unused wheat and boots and capital. Taxation will force them into the market, and will directly benefit industry, which depends on the *use* of these necessities.

The fact is, there are certain resources whence wealth and capital can come which are at present *unproductive*, which would benefit the country if they became *productive*. We claim that the taxation of such resources would, in fact, penalize the owners of unused land, and force them to allow it to become *productive*, thereby increasing the supply (and reducing the rent) of all lands and

minerals. Thus we could increase the supply and reduce the price of all the raw materials of industry.

The unused sources of wealth consist of the land—in so far as it is not used for the most productive purposes—and of all minerals still below ground. These are hoarded or idle, and as such have a directly harmful effect on the nation's prosperity. The damage done by holding up land and minerals may be exactly compared with the damage and loss due to a great strike. Thousands are turned out of work, capital lies idle, and prices rise disastrously. The manufacturer who locks out his hands, the Trade Unions which go on strike, are just like the ground landlord, speculating on the ultimate issue of the conflict, speculating in their own interest, to the loss of the whole community. But the landlord, unlike the others, suffers no inconvenience while so speculating. While and in so far as he holds up the source of wealth he is relieved of the necessity of paying rates or taxes to the community whose suffering he causes.

The men who own the land round a growing town, land which is wanted for houses and factories, and who, instead of putting the land to the best possible use, withhold it and let it for grazing until their fancy price is reached, these men are strangling the prosperity of the town and country; they are economically bad citizens. One may call them more, for are they not condemning thousands to be born and bred in slums? Yet,

Land Values—How they Should be Taxed 91

the worse their citizenship, the more detestable the results of their action, the less they are at present asked to contribute to the State to alleviate the conditions that they have created.

I think that previous writers have not sufficiently insisted on the two distinct trade benefits that would arise from the taxation of land values :

(1) The indirect aid to industry which follows from the abolition of double taxation (private rents as well as public taxes), and the substitution of a single public tax, i.e., the State resumption of rent.

(2) The direct aid to industry, in that it would stop or check individuals from speculating in and holding up the natural resources, and thus keeping them unproductive.

FLUCTUATIONS IN TRADE AND UNEMPLOYMENT.

No apology is required for developing this question of the speculative holding up of land and minerals, for its bad effect on industry is of even more importance than the double taxation of industry (by public taxes and private rents), which we first considered.

It is not only that the natural raw materials are withheld from use, but more than anything else, this land speculation causes those great fluctuations of trade that affect the whole world and cause such widespread misery. Rent and the value of land not only rise, but they rise unsteadily, in waves.

92 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

In times of good trade rents rise, the value of land rises ; people are attracted by profits thus made, expect profits, and refuse to sell or allow their land to be used except at an inflated price. There is a rise of rent which *has no economic justification*. If one piece of land lies idle, all other land round about must become dearer. In any case, the user pays a fancy price, often one economically unsound. Hence the cost of all we want and all we use rises ; consequently we buy less, fewer wants are gratified, fewer things are made ; there is a "slump" in business ; and, owing to the absence of economic justification for much of the speculative enterprise, credit collapses. The rise in rent acts exactly like a sudden and large increase in taxation. It ruins trade.

Then for a time trade is bad ; rents will at last fall slightly, the value of land must go down a little, and gradually, as more inventions and economies in manufacture are introduced, as the weaker holders of land or stocks are shaken out or go bankrupt, as population and workers increase in numbers and efficiency, trade and industry will again become able to pay the rents demanded, and yet produce at a price which will attract both purchaser and investor. Then comes good trade again, until once more the cream is liberally skimmed off by the man who can raise his price—the land owner.

While the fluctuations in the "rent tax" have a direct and fatal effect seen in fluctuations in

Land Values—How they Should be Taxed 93

trade, the "rent tax" is by no means the only sinner. The fluctuations in the money market, increasing or reducing the demand for and price of capital, accentuate the oscillations. As the money market fluctuations can be followed dramatically in the daily press, they are often taken to be the sole cause. The wicked financier, when trade is booming and all is well, suddenly raises the bank rate. Result: It is no longer possible to develop that new extension to the factory, the builder cannot get the money to build that row of houses at a remunerative price. Therefore their demand for new goods slackens, and the slump is all charged against the grasping financier who raised the bank rate. We saw that rise of the bank rate in the morning paper; we did not see the slow and steady rise in the rent tax sucking the profits of the boom. The bank rate rose in reality, because the demand for free capital exceeded the supply, and the supply was insufficient because a larger and larger portion of the wealth produced was being sucked away by the rising rent.¹

The three factors follow laggingly behind each other, land, capital, and labour. Land goes up, then the bank rate has to go up too, and then as the cost of living rises, the cost of labour follows.

¹ This rising rent tax shows itself very clearly during a boom in the rising prices of shares in public companies, most of which contain a large element of monopoly based on the control of land and raw materials. Monopoly, in these times of boom, enables them to suck higher profits, and the higher profits show in higher prices of the shares.

94 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

Then down comes monopoly, as we have witnessed it these last three years ; down comes the rate of interest on capital ; and as for labour, the strongest trade unions in the world were swept away like chaff before the storm.

As builders and engineers know full well, the most obvious cause of unemployment is the instability of trade. A man hangs on through bad times to the trade in which he was employed in good times. When employment is good and high wages can be earned, many are trained in the booming trade ; but the bigger the boom, and the higher the maximum of employment in it, the more hands there are who must be thrown out of work in times of minimum employment. Times of great prosperity and of great depression are, under the present system, equally disastrous in the end to workmen who require constant employment. It is the height of the wave from crest to trough which measures the economic disaster.

We want a steady supply of raw materials—no hold ups, no rings around the house. The New Zealand Commissioner of Taxes says : " The effect (of the rating of land values) on urban and suburban lands has been very marked. It has compelled owners of these to build, or to sell to those who would " (Cd. 3191, p. 26). The brickfield owners and the quarry owners felt the same " urge ", and a steady supply of the raw materials at a reasonable price is the result.

Coal pits are at present often closed in this

Land Values—How they Should be Taxed 95

country "because of the rates". But if the rates were levied on ungoten minerals, then the pits would be opened "because of the rates". Thus another primary trade would find steadier employment, and there would be more sacrifices made by owners to keep the output alive even at "unremunerative prices".

But agricultural work should be the greatest steadier of all. Agricultural land ought to be a sort of reservoir for labour—the free alternative of the harassed wage-earner. Mr. James Keir Hardie aptly pointed out that what enabled the kaffirs on the rand to withstand the reduction of pay attempted after the South African War was, not a strong trade union, nor legislative effort, but the possibility of alternative work on the land to which they still have (or had) free access.

Free access to land, cheaper land. Here we have not only a stabilizer of trade, but a reservoir for the everflow of labour from the oscillations of civilization. Here we have the key to our social problem. Those who have borne with me so far, I beg you to look one further step ahead.

It is unfair that the worker should get as his reward a wage which is based on no more than the cost of subsistence. Wages should be based, were we accustomed to think in terms of right, on the service rendered. We have seen in the last few years how inevitable it is at present, that wages should sink as the cost of living falls. We have seen in obvious operation the Iron Law of

96 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

Wages. In 1920 wages were high, for during the war and for some time after there was no competition to get work, but rather competition for workers. And then we saw unemployment reappear and increase, and competition for jobs intensify, and the old Iron Law got back into full operation. One after another the unions went down before it. So long as there are two men after one job, with no alternative but to get that job or go to the wall, so long will they cut each other's wages, till wages sink to subsistence level.¹

The injustice, the wage-slavery, the poverty of to-day, can all be traced back inevitably to this Iron Law. But this Iron Law itself is not inevitable. It depends upon the worker being kept

¹ "Let there be ten men and but nine jobs, and you have 'hard times.' The tenth man will be out of work. He may be a good union man who abhors a 'scab' and will not take work away from his brother workman. So he hunts for a job which does not exist, until all his savings are gone. Still he will not be a 'scab,' and he suffers deprivation. But after a while hunger gets the better of him, and he takes one of the nine jobs away from another man by underbidding. He becomes a 'scab,' and who can blame him? Anyone would rather be a 'scab' than a corpse. Then the man who has lost his place becomes a 'scab' too, and turns someone else out by underbidding. And so it goes on again and again, until wages fall so low that they only just support life. Then the poor-house or a charitable institution takes care of the tenth man, who thereafter serves the purpose of preventing a rise in wages. Meanwhile, diminished purchasing power, due to low wages, bears down upon business generally.

But let there be ten jobs and but nine men. Conditions would instantly be reversed. Instead of a man all the time seeking a job, a job would be all the time seeking for a man; and wages would rise till they equalled the value of the work for which they were paid. And as wages rose, purchasing power would rise, and business in general would flourish.

If demand freely directed production, there would always be ten jobs for nine men, and no longer only nine jobs for ten men. It could not be otherwise while there were any wants unsatisfied."—Louis F. Post.

Land Values—How they Should be Taxed 97

with no alternative other than the subsistence job or the subsistence dole. If he, like Keir Hardie's kaffir, had always the chance of free access to land and nature, from land and nature he could wrest some sort of a living which would give him bargaining power and govern the wage he would be content to take from a master. Wages would then be based no longer upon the cost of subsistence, but upon the "marginal utility of labour". The cost of subsistence *falls* as invention and co-operation develop, but the "marginal utility of labour" will *rise* with these factors. Civilization would then become just and helpful, instead of what it is to-day.

If it be said that the skilled worker of to-day is too far divorced from the land to be saved, can it not be understood that his employment in his own trade depends always upon the primary trades starting the job. If the land worker gets his chance of a job, the artisan will get his chance to complete the job. But if the builder or the miner or the cultivator is deprived of his chance of work, the artisan must go workless too. All useful productive work begins by the application of labour to land. If you allow the stream to be damned at the source, industry below will perish in stagnation.

"Suppose", wrote Henry George, "that when thousands are out of work and there are hard times everywhere that we could send a deputation to the High Court of Heaven to represent there the poverty and misery on earth due to men not

98 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

being able to find employment. Why, what answer should we get? 'Are your lands all in use? Are your mines worked out? Are there no natural opportunities for the employment of labour?' What could we ask Him for that He has not already given us in abundance? He has given us this globe filled with raw materials ready to our hands. He has given to us, and to us alone of the brute creation, the power to work up these raw materials into things that we want to use. If there seems to be scarcity, if there is want, if there are thousands of people tramping our streets in search of work, is it not because what He intended for all has been made the private property of a few?"

But Freedom! Freedom seems so far distant a thing to ask for that one seeks first to make the first stage visible, hoping that some day, guided by experience and example, other eyes may see and follow on. Let us consider, therefore, whether we cannot—using existing conceptions of what is possible—stabilize industry, increase opportunities for employment, cheapen production and increase our trade, by making it less easy for landlords to withhold land from labour and mankind from goods.

THE URGENCY FOR LEGISLATION.

I have now set forth two of the reasons for the State appropriation of economic rent. (1) To

Land Values—How they Should be Taxed 99

put a stop to the double burden upon industry ; and (2) to check the withholding (for speculation or private reasons) of the natural resources which the community require. There is a third reason for legislation, and it is one that brings the immediate urgency of this question prominently forward.

No permanent improvement can be made in the condition of the people so long as all benefits translate themselves into an increase of *private* rent. State appropriation of rent must precede all real reform. It is the necessary preliminary to all the other important reforms now before the country, and one on which their success depends. Other legislation is increasingly wasted until this reform is effected.

Take for instance the prominent question of Housing Reform. It is no doubt true that better housing would be secured by better regulation, more thorough inspection and condemnation, and by State subvention. But just as good and cheap food was only obtained by taking off the tax on food, so good and cheap houses will only be obtained by taking off the tax on houses.

The suggestion that the State should give or lend money cheap for building houses, which shall then be let at an uneconomic rent to certain favoured tenants, can only result in either subsidizing wages (the wages of the few lucky ones), or in saving the pocket of the agricultural landlord. If you are an agricultural landlord you have to supply accommodation for the cattle and

for the labourers ; if the State takes off the landlord's shoulders the expense of providing the human accommodation it saves the landlord that expense, and so increases the value of his land.

Even the small Old Age Pension granted at present has resulted in saving from the workhouse many of the aged poor. They can possibly end their lives in their own homes in peace. The result is a greater demand for house room and for building land—increased rent for the landlord.

One of the best palliatives for exceptional unemployment is the opening up of new roads and the widening of old ones, the laying out of parks and playgrounds, the planting of tree belts and of disused pit-dumps. Such work involves little expense for plant and materials, and a large share of the money involved goes directly to the suffering unskilled worker. But the immediate result of any one of these communal improvements is to raise the price of adjoining land. The required land has first to be bought from the monopolist, and when he has been paid his fancy price, he then, without even the recognition of the benefit, proceeds to pocket the advantages that spring from the expenditure of the public money. If this benefit reverted to the public in tax and rate many of these schemes would pay for themselves, and cost not one penny to the public.

Temperance legislation is again coming to the front. Yet even there we are up against the same blank wall. Of the moral advantages of increased

Land Values—How they Should be Taxed 101

abstinence and temperance even the landlords cannot deprive us, but the economic results are likely to be a failure, as in New Zealand. Suppose it were possible to prevent the people of England wasting £350,000,000 a year on alcoholic drink. Suppose this money was not wasted, and was spent instead in useful trade—on boots and clothes and books and travel. For a time no doubt trade would boom; for a time certainly the country would be very prosperous. But as it became prosperous rents would rise, and in ten years time the lions share of that £350,000,000 saving would have transferred itself to the private landlord. We want it for the community.

Besides these reforms which are not generally associated with the land, there is the question of the compulsory purchase of land for public purposes, and also for the better provision of small holdings and allotments in urban and rural areas. The Select Committee on Housing and the Departmental Committee on Small Holdings advocated the compulsory purchase of land. The Select Committee on Housing, as befitted an entirely representative and parliamentary body, expressly asked that the compulsory purchase price should be based on the official valuation of land—a valuation which the late landlord-ridden House of Commons has just managed to destroy. But it is obvious that if compulsory purchase for these objects is to be extensively resorted to, and is not to burden the experiments (as the ex-service men

have been burdened) with an exorbitant charge for sinking fund and interest, then a general valuation must precede these reforms.

Palliative Social Reform has been going on now, before, during, and after the war, till reformers are glutted and the country hates the sound of the name. Because he invented 9d. for 4d. and ladled out Social Reform, Mr. Lloyd George is now barely listened to with politeness in the House or on the platform. Yet it is not altogether his reforms that are to blame, only the results of them. Things are as they were, or worse; the virtue was sucked out of the reforms; either they became part of the machinery of poverty or they wilted away and died under the blight of the inevitable power of land monopoly.

Palliatives will only remain permanently beneficial if we go to the root of the evil and stop the rot. That is why the land question is urgent, and why it is the most practical of politics.

PRACTICAL POLITICS.

Obviously the first practical step towards any land reform is to get a general and public valuation of land throughout the kingdom, both for urban and rural areas. The Select Committee on the Taxation of Land Values (Scotland) Bill recommended in 1906: "It seems to your Committee to be absolutely essential, before the new standard (rating entirely on land values) of which

Land Values—How they Should be Taxed 103

they approve is adopted, that a valuation of the value of land be made". These new valuation lists can then be used for both local and imperial taxation.

The land values once ascertained, power should then be given to all local authorities to levy rates, partially or wholly on these new valuations, instead of the old annual value of land-plus-building as then let for use. The same person could pay the rate, but the rate would be based on a different valuation. The buildings and machinery and improvements on the property would be disregarded—the site value alone would count. The better the farm was equipped, the better the house ; the better the factory you put up, the more you benefitted a town or parish by investing your capital in it ; the greater would be your reward. Your rate would remain the same, whether you used the land for a factory or a dump heap.

The Select Committee quoted above deliberately adopted this change in the basis of rating. "Your Committee consider that the new standard of rating, based upon the value of land apart from buildings and improvements upon it, is sound and would prove advantageous ; that to set it up by estimating the value of land apart from buildings is practicable ; that so far as both occupiers and owners are concerned, the new standard of rating should be substituted for the present standard."

In advocating this change in the basis of rating, they explain the results they anticipate as follows :

“ Owners of valuable land—either unoccupied or occupied by buildings unsuitable to the site—will pay more ; owners of highly utilized land will pay less ; and owners of land put to the ordinary average use will pay the same proportions as at present. The indirect effect of the adoption of the new standard will be to stimulate building and improvements, to bring more building land into the market, to lower rents and to diminish overcrowding ”.

This change in local taxation will help in the country as in the towns. At present every effort at intensive cultivation is obstructed by the penalizing rate that is immediately applied to the increase in production. The rates demanded from the small-holder per acre of land occupied average five times as much as the rate per acre demanded from the large farmer adjoining, and the smaller the holder, the more intensive the cultivation, the greater is the disparity. Yet the land value is probably about the same ; the difference arises solely from the higher ratio of capital improvements on the smaller holding. Any increase in production would be as beneficial to the community as the increased opportunities for production would be to the unemployed.

But the whole question of what burdens ought to be borne locally and what should be borne by the central Government is now very definitely practical politics. We have to consider not merely how local taxes should be levied, but whether roads,

Land Values—How they Should be Taxed 105

or education, or sanitation should be, to the extent they are now, a local burden at all. Hitherto the chief objection to making a change in this direction has been the realization that a remission of rates levied upon land merely added to the value of the land and translated itself into an increase of rent. These rates were the "hereditary burdens" subject to which land had been bought and sold and inherited for ages. To remove the burden would be a gift to landlords at the expense of the producing community. It was recognized long ago by the Royal Commission on Local Taxation that if relief in this direction was to be given, the expense should be met by a general charge upon the landlord interest.

It is for this reason that we propose, as well as the changed standard of local rating, a general tax of at least a 1d. in the £ upon all land values, urban as well as rural, to defray the cost of these charges, which should be borne centrally and not locally. If this were done, no additional burden would be borne by real estate as a whole, but the charge would so fall as to encourage instead of discouraging production.

The revenue provided by this tax upon land values would pay for that portion of the highway rate which still falls upon local authorities and for the bulk of the education rate which falls with exceptional severity upon agricultural areas. The relief would also do away with the necessity for "grants in aid", unless it were thought desirable

to retain some of these grants as rewards of merit rather than as subventions. The grants in aid have been an expensive anomaly, and were only resorted to because our present basis of taxation and discrimination between rich and poor districts is unsatisfactory.

Until the land values have been determined it is almost impossible to estimate with any accuracy the revenue which such a tax of a 1d. in the £ would bring into the Exchequer. Rough approximations can be made, based upon the relation between population and land value in New Zealand (agricultural) and New York (urban). In New Zealand in 1921 the land value per head was £249. In New York in 1916 the land value per head was £188. The cost of living and the value of a worker's life is probably less here than in either of the two quoted countries, but the land value per head should not be less than £100 per head of population, or say £3,700,000,000, exclusive of minerals.

Agricultural land alone, as assessed to Schedule A, is worth £26,000,000 a year. This assessment is probably, if we may judge from the present reassessments, 30 per cent. below real letting value. We have also to add the value of tithe and chief rents, but we have to deduct the value of the buildings and improvements. Suppose this leaves us with £20,000,000 as the annual value of agricultural land in Great Britain. We know that such land is rented pretty generally on a 2 per

Land Values—How they Should be Taxed 107

cent. basis. The landlords never cease to tell us so, and 2 per cent. is probably in excess of what the average landlord receives even as gross rent, so great is the value and magic of ownership. On a 2 per cent. basis therefore, agricultural land may be totalled at £1,000,000,000, while the urban and suburban land may therefore be supposed to reach £2,700,000,000, the value of the ungoten minerals will perhaps reach £200,000,000.

On the basis of this computation a tax of a 1d. in the £ would bring in about £17,000,000 a year. This would meet the just claim of the local authorities for assistance as well as doing away with the need for grants in aid.

There is no finality in the 1d. in the £ tax ; it can be further increased to replace other taxes which burden industry and particularly the income tax paid under Schedule A (which, like the local rates, falls upon improvements as well as land, and so penalizes production). In due course the tax can be raised still further, till tax and rate combined absorb into the pockets of the community the whole annual value of a monopoly which is created and maintained by the community.

It will be noticed, however, that while the rate and tax upon land value tends to drive land into better and fuller use, it does not definitely throw open to the public land which is hardly worth using but might be used. It does not free marginal land for use by the unemployed. It

does not offer the perpetual refuge which the wage-earner needs if he is to be able to bargain on equal terms with the employer. The less valuable the land, the less the pressure of the tax. In time, no doubt, land holding for the fun of the thing will cease to attract, but it has to be reckoned with at the moment. I think it is therefore practical politics, as it is certainly agreeable to that large section of the labour movement that believes in nationalization, to advocate one further measure.

Land purchase is impossibly costly till a valuation has been made and decreed as the basis of the purchase price to be paid. It will remain too costly even after the valuation is accepted as the purchase price, unless some rating and taxation upon land values is present to bring down values and eliminate the speculative element. But once rent is down to economic bed-rock, once the valuation records the true economic land value, then indeed purchase becomes a practical question.

Management by the State of the use of all land would involve assisting in the management of all private businesses which require the use of land. That is probably outside the aims even of Mr. Hyder or Mr. Outhwaite. But the marginal lands of low value, lying practically unused at present, these do offer fields for experiment. Though the experiments should fail, the State cannot on such lands fail worse than the present owners have failed.

Land Values—How they Should be Taxed 109

Suppose the State bought up land worth less than £5 an acre. Suppose they threw that land open to the British, just as South Africa was open to Keir Hardie's kaffir (only more so). There indeed would be a State experiment worth while—a State experiment in Freedom. I quote elsewhere a law which I helped to pass for the African natives of Tanganyika, securing to them their land forever. One might almost do as much for the natives of this country if the State would but put freedom first.

COMMON OBJECTIONS TO THE TAXATION OF LAND VALUES.

1. That a tax or rate upon land values would be passed on to the occupier.
2. That it would mean confiscation.
3. That it would lead to overcrowding.
4. That there is not enough land value to meet even the local rates.
5. That it is impossible to discover this hypothetical "land value".
6. That rich men would buy up more land if it were cheap, and hold more idle.

Objections 1 and 2 are, of course, mutually destructive. If the tax can be passed on there is no confiscation. If there is confiscation, the tax must be supposed to settle and remain on the landlord. Every action and protest of the landlord class show clearly enough that they know

that the tax cannot be passed on to the occupier. If anyone desires authority, to convince them, we have :

A tax on that part of the annual value of land which arises from its position, its extension, and its yearly income of sunlight, heat, rain and air, cannot settle anywhere except on the landlord.—MARSHALL.

Even if the tenant occupier himself pays the rate in the first instance, still the landlord will pay in the end :

The real incidence of a rate depends mainly on the nature of the property in respect of which it is levied, and is but little affected in the long run by being primarily charged on this or that person. The real ultimate incidence of a site value rate would be upon the owners of site value in any case, even if it were simply charged on occupiers as the present rates are. Accordingly, we regard the question of the party on whom the rate is to be charged, as a question of sentiment and temporary convenience.—*Minority Report of Royal Commission on Local Taxation* (Lord Balfour of Burleigh, etc.).

But is a tax or rate on land values confiscation? And if so, what is confiscated?

The change in the standard of rating—from annual value of land-and-improvement to land value alone—imposes no additional burden upon property. The total sum levied in rates will remain the same, but the ratepayers will contribute in different proportions. Those who occupy land which is improved above the average for the district will gain, by the exemption of improvements, more than they lose by the higher rate on land. Those who occupy land improved up to the average will pay

Land Values—How they Should be Taxed III

the same before as after the change. Only those whose land is not improved up to the average will have to pay more; and even these, by further improving their holding, will be able to put themselves right with the rate collector and the community.

No confiscation here one would say; merely an incentive to go and do better.

Nor is the tax we have proposed any more confiscatory. We promise that the whole of the proceeds shall be devoted to reducing the burden of the rates—reducing an existing tax on property. One tax on property replaces another. Again, a mere change in the standard, so as to encourage improvements. How harmless are the doctrines of Mr. Henry George!

Of course, however, that is not all the story.

Consider house property. We are told that even in these days of house famine there are 218,000¹ empty houses in Great Britain. There are two ways of getting people who want houses into these 218,000 empty houses. One way is to help them pay a "protected" rent. Prevent any building of new houses, protect the existing houses and house owners from competition, then people will be forced to take the houses that there are and to pay the protected price. The other way is to reduce the rents of the empty houses until tenants are tempted to take them, even though they leave the high-rented houses in which they

¹ Latest figures, being from 1921 Census.

at present reside. One method is protection, the other is free trade. If you penalize new houses, you protect old ones. On the other hand, if you stop penalizing new houses and instead permit free expansion, unrestrained by rates and taxes, you will deprive the owners of the old houses of all that fictitious value due to the obstacles which at present prevent keen competition.

The taxation of buildings has had exactly the same effect as a protective tariff ; they check the free supply and so enable those houses which are used—or that land which is used—to obtain a higher price. The removal of these obstacles in the way of building expansion will have exactly the same effect as freeing trade—it will benefit the consumer at the expense of a vested interest.

Exactly the same arguments may be applied to agricultural land, or to factories. The greater the supply of factories or of land, the less will the owners of existing factories or land be able to extract from the consumers or users. The vested interest of those who profit by being in the privileged position of being able to use or withhold land, has, like any other protected interest, had a fictitious value given to it by bad laws. If it was sound politics and sound morality for Bright and Cobden to alter taxation to the injury of one vested interest (in order to benefit the consumer), then it is equally sound politics and sound morality for us to alter taxation, even to the injury of a pre-historic interest, in order to achieve the same end.

Land Values—How they Should be Taxed 113

All new enterprise will be put in a better position to compete with existing enterprise, and privilege, being deprived of the artificial support of the law, will no longer be able to extract a fancy price from the community. If this is "confiscation", then we are guilty of its advocacy. But if this is confiscation, then there was just such confiscation when the corn laws were repealed—there was just such confiscation when Captain Kidd's profitable trade was driven off the western ocean.

To increase the supply of land for use is to reduce the price of all land. That is ultimately the measure of our "confiscation".

Objection 3, which suggests overcrowding, should really suggest the reverse. Anything which makes land cheaper will enable the house builder to provide more land with the house at the same price as he would have had to pay before. The idea at the back of the objection is the old one, that a tax on land value will make land more expensive. If that were so, we should meet with no opposition from landlords.

Objection 4 suggests that, however desirable the change of rating might be, there is not enough land value to meet the rates. One might reply that we are only changing the standard by which each ratepayer's contribution is measured, and are not concerned with whether we take all the land value or more, or less. But that is not sufficiently conclusive. In fact, of course, the value of all property is what it will sell (or let) for *subject*

114 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

to the existing rate and tax. If no additional sum is required from property, the total value of property after the change would be the same as before—save for the increase in the supply available. The value of the improvements will be exactly as before, viz., what it would cost to replace them. Land will be cheaper; but in spite of the fact that the rate and tax may amount to over 1s. in the £, the still remaining land value will only be less than before by reason of the increased supply.

Objection 5 says that "land value" cannot be discovered. But people who deal in land find no difficulty in discovering land value. They find it easier than estimating the value of improvements. How often has an agent said to me, "If you buy that house you can sell off half the land. It will fetch £5 a foot frontage", or, "You can buy another half acre at 10s. a yard". With merely the map before them, without even visiting the property, they can estimate what the land is worth, or what the ungoten minerals are worth. It is when they come to estimating the value of improvements that they have to go and count and measure and calculate; and even then they will all differ one from another.

If, in any example, we imagine the complete destruction of all the improvements on the piece of real estate under consideration, and understand that all other surrounding improvements are existing, we may discover in the remaining value

Land Values—How they Should be Taxed 115

of the property—in the price it would, after such destruction, fetch in the market—the value of the site as distinguished from the value of improvements.

The distinction is frequently made in business life. Indeed, the objection that the value of land cannot be distinguished from the value of its improvements is among the most frivolous of the objections that have been raised by people with whom the wish that it may be impracticable is father to the thought that it really is so.

Objection 6, that really rich men might still buy up cheap land and hold it idle, is answered by the obvious fact that it will at least be more difficult for them to do so. But who would dare? Why, if we ever have the power to enact such legislation, "rounding off" estates will cease to be a popular pastime. Land will be cheap, but never cheap enough, save only for those who are prepared to use it. A further answer is that there will not be so many rich men to attempt the dangerous amusement. Inordinate wealth is generally based upon the ownership of a monopoly; and even inordinate wealth will be helpless when men can work for themselves.

"I do not know whether the Single Tax is the cure for all human ills, but I am quite sure Freedom is."

NATIVE LANDS AND CROWN COLONIES

With their present reckless bartering away of their rights in their ancestral lands, by the alluring offers of fat options, the natives do not seem to realize when and where to put a stop to the dangers they are unconsciously courting for their posterity. What provision have they made to preserve lands for their own working and profit, or those of their children's children? . . . Are we going to suffer ourselves to be reduced to the miserable status of the proletariat, for exploitation purposes by foreign settlers to enrich themselves, and make us a landless people in the land of our birth.—"Gold Coast Leader."

THERE may be faults in the English of the *Gold Coast Leader*, but there are none in the sense of the above quoted warning. The Gold Coast is a Crown Colony. We govern the inhabitants from Downing Street; they do not govern themselves. We are those responsible for the creation in Africa, as in Europe, of a landless proletariat. The Liberals and the Church and their missionaries look with self-satisfaction upon Africa. Have they not abolished slavery? Have they not even saved the Congo from Leopold's forced labour?

In reality it is of little use taking credit for the abolition of chattel slavery, if, with our eyes open, we allow economic slavery to take the place of the old outworn form of compulsory labour. There is a "slavery" which locks up men's

bodies ; and there is a "freedom" which indeed sets men's bodies free, but locks up all they need for subsistence. It is not to this sort of freedom that we ought to condemn those coloured races for whom we alone are responsible. Nor ought we to allow the native chiefs, under the cover of our laws, to do for us the dirty work of robbing the people and the people's children.

Yet this is what is happening all across Africa. The landless proletariat has arrived.

The process of alienation of natives' lands to white company promoters—and to educated civilized natives—which is making such strides in the Gold Coast Colony at the present time, is one that is going on, and has been going on for years, in nearly all our Crown Colonies, and, indeed, wherever white and black come in contact.

Umbandine sold his Swaziland to the whites, sold it indeed many times over. If we and Khama managed to preserve the Bechuanas, and if Moshesh and Sir Godfrey Lagden did the same for the Basutos, yet the Chartered Company now own the land of the Matabele, just as another Chartered Company holds the land of North Borneo, in trust for its shareholders. And in Nigeria too, but for expensive wars and a wise chairman, another Chartered Company would now own all the land of Nigeria. The very vastness of these Chartered Companies causes their land-ownership to strike most the attention of the public, but the acquisition of native lands by individuals or syndicates

118 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

is every bit as fatal to the economic freedom of the native, and far more prevalent and uncontrolled. It is taking place now, with yearly accelerated speed in most of our Crown Colonies—in Uganda and East Africa, in Nyassaland and Lagos, on the Gold Coast and in Sierra Leone; you can see it all the way from the Federated Malay States to the wilds of British Guiana. "To whomsoever the soil at any time belongs, to him belong the fruits thereof. White parasols and elephants mad with pride, these are the flowers of a grant of land." This is still as true a saying as when the old Indian Rajah embodied it in his land grant a thousand years ago.

The intimate connection between slavery and the native land question could not be put more clearly than in the words of Sir Percy Girouard, Governor of Northern Nigeria :

My predecessor in Northern Nigeria (Sir Frederick Lugard), referring to the difficulty of obtaining free labour (after the abolition of slavery), mentions the necessity of the creation of a labouring class to till the lands of the ruling classes, and the "enforcement of proprietary rights in land" as the solution. I can only presume that this meant the creation of a landlord class. I am not at all certain that it would be in the natives' interest to create a landlord class.

And in two years he took effective steps to prevent the possibility of a landlord class, black or white, ever rising in Northern Nigeria.

Observe that the difficulty of obtaining labour came from the abolition of slavery; that as long as the natives could work for themselves on free

lands, wage labour was scarce and costly ; and lastly, that Sir Frederick Lugard clearly saw the way to get over the "difficulty" of scarcity of labour—it was by depriving the natives of free land. It would hardly be fair to say that he *advocated* this way out of the difficulty ; indeed, all his actions show that he was entirely opposed to the solution, but with a certain cynicism he pointed out the way for those who might wish to introduce European "civilization" into Darkest Africa. His successor slammed the door in the face of such civilization. One wonders how long it will remain shut.

There are two principal methods by which natives may be deprived of their free lands and forced to work for wages. The older method, and the one still employed so successfully on the Gold Coast and in Sierra Leone, is to assume that a native chief is already in the same economic position as an English lord of the manor, possessing a right to charge rent and to lease or alienate land. This conception of a native chief is, of course, a European gloss, based on the civilization known to the European. "There is no individual in Northern Nigeria who can say, according to native law and custom, this piece of land belongs to me." So declared Mr. Temple, Acting Governor of the country ; and no one who has studied the question can doubt that what he said applies to by far the greater part of our Crown Colonies, particularly to those in Africa.

But for the purpose, if it be our purpose, of getting cheap labour—for the achievement, if it be our aim, of the future exploitation of the natives—the land must be got into private hands. We therefore assume that the native chiefs are landlords, and allow them to lease and sell their followers' land—in return for what? In the good old times it would be for a case of whisky or a bundle of striped blankets; now, in these more respectable days, they get paid in debenture shares.

What happens next? At first the native population notice no appreciable change. Then comes the polite request to help in the labour on the estate. The native may work, or go. It may be easy to go at first, and the alternative work will be correspondingly light. To go elsewhere will be more difficult later on, when "proprietary rights in land" are universal, and then the work will no longer be light for the landless man.

This first method of creating landlordism is, however, somewhat crude and out of date. The Anglo-Indians brought it to India for the better founding of civilization. So long as a hundred years ago the Bengal Zemindari settlement converted native tax collectors into semi-landlords. The Gold Coast and Sierra Leone are old Colonies. In no other Crown Colony at the present time is the native chief imagined to be a real landlord, free from executive control in his dealings with the tribe's lands. It is, however, proving so convenient a method in these latter days on the Gold

Coast that it may be revived and even transplanted into Southern Nigeria, in the interests of the Stock Exchange.

By far the most usual modern method of depriving natives of their lands and of solving the labour "difficulty" is the nationalization and sale method, which we owe to the more ordered and bureaucratic mind of the French, German and Belgian Colonial administrators. This method works as follows: The uncultivated, or at least the unoccupied lands of all our new Crown Colonies are assumed to be Crown lands, or lands held for the benefit of the public—in some one of the public's many manifestations. Such is the assumption in varying degrees and forms in Malaya and the Seychelles, in Uganda and Nigeria, in Trinidad, British Guiana and Honduras, in Burma and Kenya, probably even in the Soudan. The land is held, as it were, in trust; but the object of the trust, and the manner in which that trust is exercised, differ by all the degrees that separate the two poles from the working hell of the Congo to the idle paradise of Northern Nigeria.

May one add, in parenthesis, that far more wealth is produced in the Congo "Free" State than in Northern Nigeria. In the Congo the people work very hard indeed; and if you want people to work hard and to produce a great deal of wealth, the Congo system is the best yet invented.

The land, then, in most of the Crown Colonies

is held in trust. Perhaps it is held in trust for the people of England, or perhaps for the shareholders ; perhaps it is held in trust for the white settlers, present and future ; perhaps, possibly for the natives. But whatever the theory of the " trust " in practice it is usually held without any definite or settled policy at all. The policy changes with each Secretary of State, with each Under-Secretary ; even at any one time it varies from department to department, from room to room in the Colonial Office itself. Unfortunately there is just one all-pervading and accepted idea—that the " development " and " civilization " of the colony must be the first object of the Governor and is the measure of his success. And there is the consciousness that such development requires cheap labour and British capital ; and there is out there in each colony the sure and certain knowledge that the way to produce both the labour and the capital is to sell as quickly as possible to all comers " proprietary rights in land ". The natives may have no land, but they will have trousers. Also there will arise a leisured class, who will settle in the colony and endow scientific and charitable institutions. Such a goal, attained in such a manner, or in any manner, has hitherto been held to constitute the whole duty and essence of " the white man's burden ". To doubt has hitherto been blasphemy.

Strip off the hypocrisy, and we see being performed swiftly in Africa, just that exploitation of

the helpless, which it has taken rather longer to do in Europe. The peasantry are ground down and out by the march of triumphant capital. Robbed of their land, the helpless become wage slaves. It is so that we perform our "trust".

Can we change this policy? Can we make the trust one of which Englishmen should be proud; make it a trust for the natives and their descendants, or rather a trust for present and future inhabitants of the colony?

There are indications which make it seem possible. The preamble of the Land and Native Rights Proclamation (Northern Nigeria) 1911, as well as the preamble of similar legislation now becoming law for our new Tanganyika, opens as follows: "Whereas it is expedient that the existing customary rights of the natives of Northern Nigeria to use and enjoy the land of the Protectorate and the natural fruits thereof . . . shall be assured protected and preserved . . ." and the Proclamation goes on to enact that the State shall grant only the perpetual right to the use of the land, at rents revisable every seven years at most, such rents to be based solely on the value of the land itself; that the tenant shall have absolute ownership, free of rent and tax, of the improvements upon the land. There were then no customs duties or indirect taxes of any kind, but as population increased and the unoccupied land came up to the margin of cultivation, so rent—the single tax—should increase and provide

for the common wants of the inhabitants. These inhabitants will be mostly natives, for the country is too hot for white labour, and the absence of any chance of acquiring land value or of getting natives to work for low wages will certainly discourage the settlement of those who desire these privileges.

This defining and enacting of the new British conception of trusteeship in Northern Nigeria must be admitted to be largely accidental. A series of happy accidents has given power there to a Lugard, a Girouard or a Temple. Circumstances differing as widely as the casual discovery of an analogous German Ordinance in the Kamerun, the close study by Captain Orr of the old Hausa civilization, and the Land Budget of 1909, have all played their part; and in no other part of the British Dominions do we see as yet anything to approach it for completeness or breadth of view. Nowhere else is there such a break-away from the old traditions of development and exploitation.¹

It will be noticed at once that the Nigerian tenancy is very similar to the Ryotwari tenure in India and Burma. The revised land tax in India, however, takes into account the ryot's improvements whenever a fresh "settlement" is made; nor is the tax or rent revised so often as seven years; nor is the tax the full rental value, both differences tending to give to the ryot the position

¹ This excellent practice has now been extended to Tanganyika also by the Hon. W. Ormsby Gore.

of landlord rather than of tenant. That the Indian ryot owns land value can be seen from the fact that perhaps half the ryotwari land in India is sublet to tenants at a rack rent, while the tax-paying ryot draws his rent like any landlord. The test of the need for raising the Nigerian valuation should be the first appearance of sub-letting and rack-renting.

But something is being done elsewhere than in Nigeria and Tanganyika, and this something can be strengthened. The trusteeship idea is growing, or perhaps changing, though the abstract question of for whom they are to be trustees has not yet troubled the Colonial Office. They have just grasped the idea that intelligent public opinion objects to Crown Lands being sold away in perpetuity. For instance, the London Chamber of Commerce has urged that they should not allow land to be so alienated, and that the fee simple should be retained as security for the money that has been advanced to the Colony by the British taxpayer. Here the idea is obviously that of trusteeship, and if the money is wisely spent a trusteeship not necessarily antagonistic to the natives ; the chief security is retained in the hands of the trustees.

The practice of the German Colonial Office was moving in the same direction prior to the war, as is shown by their land laws in the Kamerun and at Kiao-Chow. Even recent legislation in our self-governing colonies is tending to emphasize in

the minds of our Colonial Office the idea that the land may be a trust.

Although in the case of Northern Nigeria, that powerful person, the man on the spot, was always ahead of Colonial Office opinion in this matter, yet elsewhere, unfortunately, the reverse is the case. In the matter of trusteeship, most Governors lag behind the responsible conscience of the Office. The educated man on the spot—white man or black coast lawyer—is usually anxious to see the quickest possible creation of proprietary rights in land, and all the consequent development and exploitation which he calls Civilization ; the landless proletariat of the future trouble him very little. In fighting him, Governors and all officials have an uphill task. When the Governor unites with the men on the spot, as in Kenya, the task of the Colonial Office is well-nigh hopeless. The greater therefore is the need for those of us who hate slavery, and have the sense of responsibility for the uneducated and helpless native, to be active on the other side.

All over the field we can now watch the struggle between Colonial Office and the man on the spot. Again and again Ordinances are passed, and gradually ignored or whittled down in practice. In Malaya the Colonial Office seems to have won its point so far as insisting that the alienated Crown Lands shall only be leased ; but the leases grow in length, till they become in fact deferred payments of capital, and there is no revision of

rent. In Uganda too they started with a healthy determination to avoid any more large concessions of freehold lands ; but there a mixture of local pressure, love of patronage, and the desire to show a growing export of cotton in the Annual Report, shakes the good principles of each Governor in turn. There is an Ordinance in Nyassaland demanding leaseholds. In Tanganyika there is now the most perfect Ordinance, though the plums had already been alienated under German rule.

In Nigeria, as has been already stated, the Crown Lands are reserved for the natives, and each native holds only on lease at a revisable rent. In this way all increase of land value finds its way back to the pockets of the community. And it was with just this object that the battle royal began between the Colonial Office and the settler in Kenya. All the early grants were of course freehold. The princes of East Africa got in on the ground floor. But before half the useful land had gone the Colonial Office stepped in to save the rest of the Crown Lands. For twenty years now the war with the settlers has continued. At one time they managed to limit the freehold grants to 360 acres, and put a land values tax even on that. If a man wanted more he could have it on a lease, and the rent for the leased land was revisable every 33 years. Since then the settlers have got on top again. The revised rent may not exceed some trifle, and the period is extended. So that to-day one can see in Kenya land held in

half a dozen different tenures—freehold, perpetual lease, fixed rent, varying rent, subject to land tax, free from land value tax. Fortunately, the landless whites in Kenya are growing in numbers, have votes, and are beginning to take a hand. It is one thing to take land from natives; it is quite another to keep land from whites who vote.

One could go on tracing the struggle through the West Indies, in North and South Rhodesia, or far away in the Falkland Islands. The settler wants to get his grip upon the land and upon the future; in a fumbling hesitating way the Colonial Office is trying to save the land and the future. One watches the growth of a conscience.

For us the question is: Can we establish this new conscience, establish and extend it? How can we emphasize that the land in all our colonies is held in trust for the people of those colonies for ever? How can we block that civilization which is founded on private property in land? First we must say that no native chief has a proprietary right in land, but that the Crown holds all the land in trust for the people. Secondly we must say that, holding this land in trust, the Crown has no right to sell it, but may only lease it on such terms as shall secure to the tenant the full value of his improvements, and give him security of tenure subject to the payment of a revisable rent determined by the general demand for land.

It should be our business to focus public attention on one point, and to convince both

Governors and Colonial Office on that one point ; namely, that those lands are held simply and solely in trust for the inhabitants, and must not be alienated from them to either blacks or whites.

This way alone lies real freedom for the native—freedom to work for himself, freedom from wage slavery, freedom from the hopeless state of a landless exploited proletariat. Those who desire to help on these lines may some time see that all that is written above applies also to the land of England.

VII

TROUBLES OF A LABOUR M.P. IN INDIA

THERE is a limit to the amount of exhortation that the public will stand on the tragic subject of India, just as there is to the number of serious addresses one can give to bearded Indian students, and to the number of after-dinner orations one can make (on thin ice) in a tropical atmosphere. They and I have reached that limit. After all, a visit to India by a self-appointed ambassador, has its humorous moments, even when his painful mission is to prevent the enjoyment of race hatred and pat soothingly both sides. As good a picture can be obtained from that angle as from any other.

The Labour Member arrives on the Apollo Bunder at Bombay and is garlanded. Some hundredweight of flowers is thrown over his neck by successive lassoes, to the great disturbance of his new topee, and till he feels like a turkey-cock with all the weight in front. He gets into a motor, and dense crowds get on to the footboards, pressing his hands and crying "Wedgwood-ki-jai!" A pleased feeling of satisfaction steals over him. At last he is recognized for what he is really worth, and then he finds that he shares the glory with

Troubles of a Labour M.P. in India 131.

“ Mr. Horniman-ki-jai ”. It seems that there are other great men.

Every meeting you go to is larger than the last ; every reception more tumultuous and heated. Everybody is anxious to keep you out of the contaminating influence of everybody else. You stay with a Governor, and they suspect you of perfidy. You share a meal with the Mahatma, and you are no longer fit to share a meal with the loyal sons of Britain. In India each side puts its visitors into Purdah lest they be corrupted.

Meetings and processions are just a bad habit in India. There is not much fun in life ; these provide the chance. The chance is certainly taken advantage of. There were a carefully reckoned 40,000 sitting solid to see rather than to listen at Pertabgahr, and I do not think one had ever heard of my name before. At Calcutta the sea of students' heads and knees was lost to view on the horizon, for the Bengalees are exceptionally intelligent.

These meetings are in the open air. The platform or pulpit is in the centre, reached by a pier along which you walk out from the chairs on the dais at one side. All around for 200 feet the crowd sit, and beyond that range they stand. You face all ways in turn as you pour forth moral maxims and dissociate British Labour from the Punjab Martial Law. A nice intelligent audience—Bengalee or students—will understand English as well as any other language that anybody is

132 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

likely to speak. Other audiences have to take the right moment to cheer from the cheering boss on the platform, who often uses a whistle as well as his hands to conduct the performance.

That excellent Labour leader, Mr. Miller of the North-Western Railway Union, had his crowds at Lahore and Pindi so perfectly under control that they seemed to follow every point with the intelligence of my own dear home constituents. There are three of these Englishmen leading Labour Unions in India. They are the real ambassadors between the two races, welding the solidarity of Labour in the face of Government repression.

One meeting at Bombay, that seemed like a nightmare under the blue flare lights, went on and on till two o'clock in the morning; and I have no doubt that, as they were Khilafatists, they were saying things all the time that no self-respecting Englishman ought to have listened to. This followed a great polite dinner party of "moderates", at which my carefully balanced speech had been violently interrupted by Englishmen of the kick-the-damned-nigger type who had collected outside the doorway. Such is the life of the peace-maker!

But great as are the meetings, the processions are greater still. In old days they had elephants and howdars and glittering rajahs in uniform; now they have a leader or so and a Labour M.P. in somebody else's motor-car. You proceed at a foot pace for four hours, through a jellied mass

of humanity packed into twelve-foot streets. You stand up and bow and salute and smile to right and left, while garlands and rose petals are thrown on you from afar until the car is literally knee-deep. You are thus provided with material for a battle of flowers and can further add to the universal delight. They throw rose water, too, in copious amounts ; and one man at Lahore mistook the bottle, and some sweet and gummy mixture arrived on me before I could take cover.

Round what remains of the car are the stalwart volunteers, arms linked in a living chain, to keep the way clear. Back of them are the surging crowd, and back of them, each little open cabin of a shop has its load of beaming faces. Above, every window is full, the ladies daringly defying Purdah ; and right up on the roofs there is the same immense sea of spectators. Across and across the street are cloths and banners and inscriptions, "Remember Jallianwallah Bagh", "Death or Slavery", "Home Rule is our birth-right" ; and all the time, drilled into unison by the volunteers, rise the shouts of "Hindu-Muslimsalman-ki-jai", "Mahatma Ghandhi-ki-jai", and down through all the leaders names "ki-jai", ending on another note with "Bande Mataram".

It seemed to me that two millions came into Peshawar, three millions into Rawal Pindi, and four into Lahore. At Guzranwala, where they were bombed with aeroplanes, I nearly died, too, from heat and dust, and foreswore forever further

134 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

glorious discomforts. And all through I never heard any brutal hatred of the foreigner expressed towards me or my wife—only found millions of kindly, smiling faces. No race in all the world could be so easily helped and led by kindness and sympathy. The caste bar of colour is not so much their as our own misfortune.

But India is too tragic for the perfect enjoyment of the political globe trotter. Burma and Ceylon really give him scope. The land question at Mandalay is a fascinating subject, but I suppose that I am the first follower of Henry George to address yellow-clad ponghies on the matter, I standing between four damsels clad in fourteenth-century chain mail. So effective was my oratory, that I retired from Burma after three days with five pair of slippers, fourteen sunshades, twenty-seven lacquer trays, and about three tons of oranges. Hospitable? I should say so! Why, the school children came down to the railway stations at all hours of the night to sing me through and hand in the trays and goods. I have no idea what the interpreter said I said, but it made them hand him slippers too. Burma is undoubtedly the country for a Labour M.P. who is thinking of setting up a small business in fancy goods.

Ceylon is more useful for the sporting type. I cannot hit a barn door with a scatter gun, and the wild duck simply sat and quacked at me. Even this, however, served its end, for most of the Singalese are Bhuddist and do not approve

Troubles of a Labour M.P. in India 135

of using scatter guns on anything except barn doors. They, too, had a liquor problem, a housing problem, a labour problem and a land problem absolutely up to date, a politician's paradise. They had six conflicting local papers, each requiring an interview every day. I solved all these problems in countless speeches, and the orgy of publicity chased me back home across the ocean from Colombo. But alas! never again shall I enter Kegalli behind twenty-one elephants and forty morris dancers, for I forgot to solve just the one little problem that mattered. I made it worse, for I never went to Jaffna, and Sir Ponandulam Arunachalam will never forgive me, and the Singalese and Tamils have quarrelled ever since. Caste, creed and "community" still beat the Labour M.P. Democracy will win in the end, but not in my time.

VIII

INDIAN HOME RULE

THOUGH neither Essay nor Adventure, and therefore wholly out of order here, I intend to include for reference some fugitive writings on Indian Home Rule. It is not yet achieved, but for good or ill what has happened has been the writing of history on a large scale, and I wish to record my share of the responsibility.

It all came with a rush in 1917—Mrs. Besant's establishment of the Indian Home Rule League, culminating in her internment in June 1917; the evidence before the Mesopotamia Commission of the inefficiency of the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy, ending with the two Reports of the Commission, June 26, 1917, and the replacing of Mr. Chamberlain by Mr. Montagu. There was finally the famous Montagu declaration of August 20, 1917.

Three months' hard labour in the middle of a war without parallel gave birth to the germ of Indian freedom. In this I bore my part, as could any man who knew exactly what he wanted.

After condemning the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief in India for their attitude towards the war, my Minority Report concludes :

7. In one of the Papers put before us by the Indian Government, in order to justify the contrast between the attitude of

India and the attitude of the self-governing Dominions, they write as follows: " The self-governing Dominions deny to India the full privileges of citizenship. India again, though not of her own volition, is practically a free market for the trade of the Empire, whereas the Colonies impose upon her trade . . . a heavy handicap in the shape of protective tariffs; and are at liberty, as it would be urged, to equip themselves for an increased outlay on Imperial defence by methods from which India is debarred ".

My last recommendation is that we should no longer deny to India " the full privileges of citizenship " ; but should allow them a large share in the government of their own country and in the control of that bureaucracy which in this war, uncontrolled by public opinion, has failed to rise to British standards. Lord Kitchener said that it would be better to lose India than to lose the war. It would certainly be better to lose India than to lose that for which we are fighting this war—the glorious traditions of a people old in liberty.—Cd. 8610.

The above was written in May, though publication was delayed till June 26th. During June I had interviews with Mr. Chamberlain (then Secretary of State), both about Indian Home Rule and about Mrs. Besant's internment. Thought was developing quickly in India, even in official circles, and liberal proposals by the Secretary of State were being capped and improved upon by the new Viceroy in his replies. I leave on record here a letter of mine to Mr. Chamberlain because its prevision of non-co-operation has come so remarkably true.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

June 14, 1917.

DEAR CHAMBERLAIN,

It seems to me that I left you yesterday under a somewhat false impression of friendliness and co-operation. The least one can do for personal friends like yourself is to be quite

open with them. The freedom of India seems to me to be the biggest thing in politics that there is for Liberals such as I am to fight for, but I do not think you can be expected to aim at anything except delaying that freedom.

What you offer will not do. It would have sufficed (for a time) before the (Russian) Revolution, but not now. Cannot you feel that it is too late? You talked to me about Commissions in the Army. It is not any longer a detail, such as a training at Sandhurst or in India, that matters (save as indicating that you are a little afraid of the Anglo-Indian official); what matters is, whether the Nationalist Movement will allow young Indians to take Commissions at all. They seem to have grown up in the last two years, till the relative positions of ourselves and them is now that of Austrians and Italians in the Venice of 1861.

The goal, and the public statement of it, is the important thing. The Indians, and the Liberals here, really do want India to be a self-governing unit in the Federation of Nations called the British Empire—even though it does mean less “efficiency”, more corruption, fewer British officials, Indians as equals. Neither you, nor Chelmsford, nor Islington, nor any single one of your Council or Officials in India, really want this; you are the Ulster garrison. I am not abusing you or them. It is all quite natural. But we cannot trust you, nor must you trust us. So you must not consult or talk to me in private again about India; we want different things.

We shall have to state in public, and state soon, what we are after—which is Home Rule for India, perhaps, as Sinha said, in fifty years time. That is our goal. Honestly, I do not think it can be yours. If by some miracle it is, then the time table must be laid down and lived up to. Your various stages of responsibility for the Councils must come like clock-work, not just when the Anglo-Indian gets his periodic fright. The basis for all advance is education. Universal education must come, in spite of Anglo-Indian dislike of educated Indians. The basis for Responsible Government is (1) control of the purse, not only how money is spent but how it is raised; and (2) a free electorate. Here the time table comes in. Your “centimes additionnelles” is a meagre beginning, acceptable only if understood to be a milestone on the road.

If you do not state the goal clearly ; if you leave India with vague promises of further advance " when the time is ripe " ; if there is no hope for India of a *beau geste* by Lloyd George—why then we are enemies.

We have sat so long together in the same House, know each other so well, and I think like each other in spite of complete difference of view, that you will not be offended even by this last test. It looks like a threat ; it is a friendly warning.

What is coming in India is the boycott—not just the boycott of Englishmen, but the sending to Coventry of every Indian who associates himself with Government and the English. Those who join this movement sacrifice much ; but self-sacrifice in a national cause, in any cause which the sufferer believes to be just, does not merely ennoble the individual, it is also a very infectious moral elevation. Once the majority of Indians are in the movement they can terminate in six months the " detested rule " of the Anglo-Indian Bureaucracy. A strain of patriotism (surviving in me still) leaves me wishing that you might give freely before the thumb-screw is applied. You will give way too late after the martyrdom. India will be lost to the Empire ; far worse we shall have missed a chance of imperishable glory for the name of England.

Mr. Chamberlain would not have had the vision to have drafted the August Declaration; nor, if he had had the wish, would he have possessed the industry necessary to get a harassed War Cabinet to accept so revolutionary a change. He resigned, and Mr. Montagu took his place—the last of the Liberals. Mr. Montagu was good enough to consult me on the wording of the Declaration, but the greatest success of his political career, and the only thing that mattered, was his slow and persistent conversion of each and every member of his colleagues in the Cabinet. He obviously knew his job, and they, exhausted, gave him at length a free hand.

My last document for record is a letter that I wrote to the Indian Home Rulers on July 14, 1917 :

Two new facts have brought Indian Home Rule into practical politics. The first is the wonderful result of giving Home Rule to the Boers of South Africa ; the second is the Russian Revolution with the inspiration that it gives to all subject peoples, and with its hint to England that if we would remain the leading exponents of democracy, we must do our part and subordinate old selfish aims.

The objections that the bureaucracy raise are these. They say that Colonial Home Rule would lead to corruption, to inefficiency. The Report of the Mesopotamia Commission destroys the " efficiency " excuse. No uncontrolled bureaucracy can ever be efficient. Public criticism and control alone can keep a bureaucracy in check. As for corruption—why it is better to be even corrupt than to be servile.

What I have suggested is that the British Government should lay it down that Colonial Home Rule is the end they have in view ; that it may take even fifty years to complete the process, but that the stages will be so and so and the dates when they will come into operation so and so, provided that each stage works satisfactorily. The stages might be of this nature : popular education ; first the power of imposing certain taxes for certain purposes ; then complete control of the purse ; free direct election and some responsibility ; then full representative government ; then full responsible government. Whether the province or the nation be taken as the unit seems to me to be immaterial, provided you create and preserve the national spirit as a driving power.

Any man who sets himself to oppose absolute government incurs great risks. In proportion as your sacrifices are great so will your reward be. The loss of employment and promotion, petty persecution, even the loss of fortune and freedom, all these you may have to face. But keep your hands clear of murder and you will have the respect and honour of all that is best in this country and of millions throughout the world who believe in liberty. I hope the struggle need not be very long. My nation which supported the Italian against the Austrian, the Pole against the Russian, and which has

fought with a single mind in this war, will not long allow itself to remain oppressors of a nation that can make sacrifices for a national cause.

In any case I salute you, the newest soldiers in an old struggle, and I trust that a common cause may make us no longer aliens but brothers. We may not in our time achieve success (for there is no real end), but we can hand on the torch burning brightly to the next generation, and believe me, it is some satisfaction to do so in such a goodly company.

Looking back on the past five years, and the marvellous transformation wrought in India, one sees much to regret, but not the boldness and promise of the Montagu Declaration. The enemies of the Reforms have done their worst—the Rowlatt Acts, the Punjab Martial Law, the bloody massacre at Amritsar—yet still it moves and the new spirit grows in spite of O'Dwyer and the Lords and the raging of the *Morning Post*. Non-cooperation, roused by the fanatics of the "garrison", has likewise done its worst, but it is weakening before the advantages of even a small dose of democracy.

It is right, however, that those of us who have watched over and helped this new birth of freedom should now realize a factor that is growing clearer and dangerously clear. The Indian non-cooperation movement is not wholly inspired by desire for immediate Colonial Home Rule. There is also in the movement, hardly conscious it may be of itself, a fear of representative and responsible institutions. There is a conservative element, nervous of these Western ways of voting. The idea of authority is

very deep-seated in India. As time goes on *they* realize that the new Reforms and the old authorities are not compatible.

In India it is visible to the careful observer that there is already in the ranks of the non-co-operators an undue proportion of Swamis and of Moslem religious leaders, while the college-bred Nationalists tend to break away, and are now to be found supporting C. R. Das and Pandit Notilal Nehru in their revised policy of seeking election to the Councils. Dogmatic and authoritative religion, in India as elsewhere, is against popular government—fearing not an English trap, but change.

The same factor can be seen far more clearly in operation in Burma. The Burmese are less college-bred than are the Indians. They have less knowledge of Western ideas about government. And they are far more subject both to superstition, and to the Buddist monks or ponghies. The mendicant priests live upon the people in enormous numbers, with saffron robe, shaven head and begging bowl. Free thought and these other Western inventions and institutions would surely be dangerous to the immutable rights of so numerous a Church.

The result can be seen in the recent elections in Burma. The constitution granted to Burma is far more liberal than those granted to the other Indian Provinces. The franchise is as wide as it was in England in 1918; women vote, election

is direct and untrammelled, the powers of the legislature over the executive are more extensive. Yet the first elections were absolutely boycotted. Only in the towns have any considerable number of voters gone to the poll. Few Nationalist politicians have dared to stand for election. And the boycott has been inspired, led, carried through, almost entirely by the ponghies. The monk, U. Ottama, backed by his massed monks, assumed all the power and domination of Mussolini. The saffron robe has taken the place of the black shirt with results equally disastrous to democracy.

It is quite possible, however, that the anti-democratic instincts of the Indian and Burman priesthood will after all serve a useful purpose. The popular institutions will only gradually prove their value. If they had been accepted with acclaim, and had then proved how little can be done to put the world right, even by democracy, then it is not unlikely, that the East might have thrown over for ever Western institutions of this sort. When Parliament fails, autocracy is the alternative. As it is, the Indian elector will only gradually discover that his elected representative is a servant and a useful friend. Gradually he will want help, ask for favours, find that the M.P. is useful. As each election comes round, in spite of non-cooperation, gradually more and more electors will exercise their votes for the benefits to be received. There will be no wild expectations of the millennium, but a gradual proof

144 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

that it is better to be master than servant, and that the elector is, in the long run, master.

The struggle in the East will not be Britain against India, nor even West against East, but Liberty against Authority, as everywhere in the free development of man.

IX

ON A FOOTPLATE

GIROUARD had always been helpful, ever since the day when he deflected the survey of the Springs-Eastern railway to pass through my town of Ermelo.¹ It was therefore only to be expected, that seeing me wandering disconsolate through Ostende, he should discover that, for me, he had a mission. Antwerp had, or had not fallen. In any case it was falling. I was to get through with rations and petrol for our retreating troops to Selzaete on the Dutch border. I was in the navy, but it seemed all in the day's work.

It was then 10.30 in the morning; by mid-day, and by considerable assumption of authority, I had collected the rations, collected here a car and there a car from endless goods sidings, and connected them up with a locomotive. And so we pushed out from Ostende, the last train to leave for the front. I had with me an engine driver, a fireman, a guard, and a revolver.

As neither the driver, nor the guard, nor I, knew what was ahead of us, our progress lacked

¹ Directly Girouard and I left our high offices, they deflected the line back again, and land values in Ermelo fell 25 per cent. in a night. But that was not his fault or mine.

146 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

that *élan* and dash' that one associates with the Orient Express. At every station the delighted station-master had many views to express on the war, on the courage of the engine driver, and on the next leap in the dark. Naturally at each station the engine driver and the guard became more and more anxious to pursue the conversation and less and less anxious to take the next leap.

About four o'clock we reached Ghent, but there we did not dally. Indeed, we saw no station-master—only a number of little men in blue tam-o'-shanter caps with red bobs on the top, who were very busy running about and shooting. Under the bullets the glass station roof kept crackling and splintering down. The French marines were making their last stand prior to retirement. This station at Ghent is high up on an embankment and indecently exposed. I and the *train personnel* were unanimous in our wish to depart quickly, and by the mercy of Providence the guard knew where to find the points to switch us on to the single branch line which runs north to Selzaete. The engine, three trucks and a guard's van proceeded north. The Germans were advancing from the east on to our flank, and as the shadows lengthened, we kept on picking out, beside every hedge-row, imaginary Uhlans. Everything that sparkled in the setting sun was a "pickel-haube".

And now all railway workers had vanished from the road-crossings and signal-boxes and stations. We could no longer receive the white staff that

gives authority to proceed. We could no longer telephone that we were coming or get the line clear. A whole lifetime's experience and prejudice held back the driver from overrunning signals whose dead arms stood out protestingly. I thought it best to get on to the footplate with revolver carelessly attached, so, too, did the guard—for company; so, too, did an occasional stranger picked up from the permanent way. And we all peered out to the right as the darkness came down. The last fugitives from villages and stations were moving west in the night. Every time the train stopped, the men on the footplate also looked longingly west. But they stuck it out. That footplate was our desert island, and we were cast-aways in a dangerous ocean of blackness. Still, it was as well that the nondescript British officer should stand beside them with just that touch of authority that comes from being the only man with a gun.

At one station I saw lights and found a cavalry camp and the officers' mess. They were packing up, had just had orders to retire, and could tell me nothing of the line ahead, or of the position between me and the frontier at Selzaete. To the officers' mess of a cavalry regiment one would generally apply the epithet care-free or careless. But I think now of that group of half a dozen silent men getting ready to retire in the night, leaving behind them their country at the mercy of the enemy. Black care had got its seat on

those men's shoulders. "Bon voyage," and I climbed up back on to the footplate. We put out the head-lights and proceeded with caution. There were no signal lights—no lights anywhere—nor yet was there any moon. The red glare from the stoke-hole lit up our faces. We all thought what a fine target we made, and wished the stoker would close that door; but we did not speak. We wanted to be quiet. The engine made quite noise enough.

Again we halted to listen. It was ten o'clock and pitch dark. There was a dull roar coming from in front—like a river, and yet punctuated by occasional high notes. We crept towards it, and suddenly found under our nose the level crossing and the living lava-flow of the Retreat from Antwerp. On the other side of the road was the station of Selzaete and the frontier.

That retreat has had no parallel on earth. Wells's account of the flight from London before the Martians approaches it in drama, but this flight was in the darkness. All Antwerp and an army was pouring itself down that narrow road in the night. Cars, carriages, carts drawn by dogs, push-carts, all piled high with furniture and refugees—men and women on foot, on bicycles, on horses, batches of soldiers, here and there a gun or an ambulance—all streamed past. A bicycle went down and was trampled under-foot. The wheel came off a cart, but the living tide swept on and over it. All went by, at a walk. The

stream could not stop; and at the side sat down and collapsed those who could go no further. Now and again, with a stabbing reminder of a far-off age and place, would loom up and lurch past a red L.G.O.C. omnibus, heeling over at an angle of 30 degrees, for only the centre of the road was paved, and two wheels ploughed through the sand at the side. Beside the 'bus I saw nurses walking, and inside were the wounded. I am told that the cockney bus-drivers alone retained courage to break the tragedy by alleging that the next stop was Piccadilly Circus.

This was the tail end of the rout. I found that the armoured cars and Naval Brigade had passed;—some of them had. What was to be done with my petrol and rations? They must not fall into the hands of the Germans. With my companions of the footplate, we broke open the cases and served out the contents to the passing starving crowd. It almost checked that tragic procession, almost, but not quite. Men half turned round with hands raised to catch the bully-beef tins and were swept onwards. But we got rid of our cargo to our own side.

It is well known that many of the Naval Brigade had not passed. Between one and two thousand had walked over the Dutch frontier before reaching Selzaete. It is not so well known, and I have seen nowhere in print a story of this walking over the frontier that was told to me by Winston Churchill. There were in the Brigade two newly

joined sub-Lieutenants—Mawby and Grant. Officers and men were worn out. The Germans were behind them, or thought to be so. They were ordered to march over the frontier and lay down their arms. "But that", said Mawby, "means that we shall be locked up, no use for the rest of the war". "You will obey orders", said Lieutenant M—. "I'll be damned if I do", said Mawby, "come on any men who will follow me", and with forty men he trudged on along the road. But Lieutenant M— had more trouble. No sooner were they across the line than sub-Lieutenant Grant asked: "Are we now disarmed?" "Yes." "So military discipline is at an end?" "Yes," said Lieutenant M—. "Then I will not obey your orders," and he too went on down the road and many men also followed him. When one has experienced the absolute discipline exercised in the navy, when one knows the ever-present fear of the new-fledged officer for his regular superior, when one realizes how easy it is for tired men to accept the easy path, I doubt if the whole war presents a more striking example of devotion to England. It is well known that war is a useful and obvious expression of "the survival of the fittest". That is why Grant and Mawby are now dead, and those who walked over live.

If you ask why we did not destroy the engine and cars, too, I cannot say. As well ask why we left at Ostende three days later over three hundred locomotives and thousands of wagons which

had been better dumped and piled into the harbour. With these "goods" and a charge of dynamite we could have made Ostende harbour such that it would have paid the Germans better to excavate a fresh Ostende. But we did not know how to make war thoroughly in 1914. We know better now. We have certainly had practice.

The job done, my companions being of the footplate, got themselves and me on to an engine in Selzaete, and by way of Eclloo, we fled to Zeebrugge. Dawn came as I found the leeward side of the famous Mole and composed myself to sleep.

There still stood at that time at the landward end of the Mole a big hotel, and thither I went for breakfast. The only other occupant of that hotel was an old Belgian Colonel. I sat beside him over a cup of coffee, and suddenly I noticed that he was crying without any noise. The tears ran down, drip, drip, upon the tablecloth. I had forgotten that Belgium was anybody's country, and I understood then why the men on the footplate had over-ridden the signals and driven on without lights into the dark.

X

THROUGH ANARCHIST SPECTACLES

I. SAVARKAR.

SAVARKAR was mixed up in the supply of revolvers to the rebels in Bengal. While a prisoner on a P. & O. liner he escaped through the porthole and swam ashore at Marseilles. The British police landed, seized, and took him back. The French Government protested, and brought the case before the Hague Tribunal. The Tribunal acquiesced. But the Press, in 1912, was still sufficiently liberal-minded to print the following protest :

"After much conscientious hair-splitting, the Hague Tribunal has decided that there is no obligation on the British Government to restore Savarkar to the French Government. As to the legal pronouncement, I have, of course, nothing to say, but the trial and decision have a remarkable significance quite apart from the merits of the particular case.

"The Hague Tribunal was founded by well-meaning, peace-loving people, and backed by the great financiers of the world, to oppose a civilized barrier to those barbaric national wars which Europe had

outgrown; and by a natural evolution it is turning into an actual weapon by which these same interests are defended against a far greater, though a vaguer, danger—that of social war. The nations of Europe have, in fact, founded a co-operative law court, and this court is finally closing down the hatches on every rebel against the existing order. Some of the outside public imagined that the question for decision was whether—by an absurd political anachronism—Savarkar might claim to be free from British justice when he reached the French coast. But they have been undeceived. There was no question of Savarkar's rights, but only whether the British officials had been guilty of *lèse-majesté* towards the French officials.

“ Authority is, it seems, at one all the world over, and we must recognize that there is now no longer the least illogical loophole of escape for a fleeing man on this earth or in its waters; it is merely a question of which uniform shall arrest him. In old days there was always some leakage, some chink for escape between the machineries of different nationalities. In France he might be drawn by horses, in England hanged, in Turkey impaled; but amongst the mountains on the lawless frontiers, or at sea, the criminal, the prophet, the revolutionary, the outlaw, had a possibility of survival; public custom afforded him at least a sporting chance. The slave who touched English soil was free, regardless of the ‘rights of property’. The evil-doer who fled to sanctuary,

154 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

and threw himself before the judgment seat of God could be ousted thence neither by sheriff nor by priest. But the nets are drawn closer now; the marconigram forestalls the swiftest flights; the police of all the established powers are watching hand in hand; daily the elaborate international system for maintaining the *status quo* becomes more perfect, and from it there is no appeal. The fugitive—'assassin', or 'patriot', 'avatar' or that weird monster the 'anarchist' of the newspapers, whatever he may be, so long as he fails to conform to the rules laid down by the united school masters of society, can find no corner of the globe to shelter him, and the only doubt is under which precise code of regulations he shall be judged, punished, and put away.

"There might be some refuge from King or Kaiser, from the strappado or the stake (the world's greatest men have been such refugees); but there is now no possible refuge from the co-ordinated bureaucracies, from the strait-waistcoat of modern civilization. This triumph of organization may be admirable, but it must give food for reflection to every individual who values freedom of speech and action."

At last, this year, Savakar has been freed.

II. CROWSLEY.

Just before the coal strike, in March 1912, a L. & N. W. R. stoker, being touched with religion,

got some leaflets printed, urging the soldiers not to fire on civilians, even though ordered to do so. Having a Sunday free, he went down to Aldershot, distributed them to the troops, and was arrested. The publishers of an obscure sheet, called *The Syndicalist*, reprinted the leaflet. They and Tom Mann were also arrested. The following appeared in the *Daily News* :

“ This country seems to be threatened with a danger so serious as to call for public remonstrance. Three men have been imprisoned, and two are awaiting trial, for taking part in disseminating an opinion with which numbers of men of all politics and religions sympathize. One is under remand for handing to soldiers a leaflet urging them not to fire on their fellow-countrymen; one is sentenced to nine months’ hard labour, and two small printers to six months’ hard labour for printing the same appeal; the fourth, for publicly declaring that he agrees with them, is awaiting trial.

“ These men are five, but who knows how many will be in prison before the ‘ crusade ’ is over, and how many thousand more would be so, too, if they were not cowed into silence?

“ These men are prosecuted technically for inciting soldiers to disobey orders (orders not yet given). Technically that is their offence. In reality their offence is that they have ventured to question one of the accepted ideas of comfortable society. It is foolish to pretend that their real

156 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

crime is inciting to mutiny. Unless you forbid soldiers to read and talk, you cannot keep them isolated from such ideas. The trials of Crowsley, Bowman and the Bucks, must have made the British Army think more than any letter in a paper they probably never see, or a leaflet handed to them by a modest railway worker on a Sunday morning.

“The mediaeval States were wise in suppressing by similar means the circulation in the vulgar tongue of the New Testament. In it, too, men are bidden not to kill.

“These leaflets, letters, speeches, expressed ideas which are approved by most non-resisters and by many ordinary citizens, who, recalling horrors of past English history, know that the intervention of the military in industrial disputes leads to the futile barbarities of Peterloo. But supposing that this Open Letter had contained something glaringly wrong, is that a reason in England for checking the liberty of the Press and of public speech? Who knows what other doctrines may next be called in question! May we only think and speak freely so long as our beliefs tally with the opinion of the authorities? Are we to be bound in a political creed as particular and circumscribed as any Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion?”

“The Crown lawyers imagine that they are suppressing agitation by these Treason Trials. In reality, they are creating revolutionaries. For every man who is sentenced under this obsolete Act of 1797, ten men spring up fired with indig-

Through Anarchist Spectacles 157

nation and fervent hatred of Government methods. Not only those who believe that in appealing to soldiers not to shoot working men, the prisoners were right, but all who believe that freedom of speech and writing are vital to any country's health, and far outweigh any danger that can come from the utterance of wrong opinion, must regard this action of a Liberal Government with something of shame and dismay."

JEAN JAURÈS IN ACTION—1911

TO an English spectator, watching events in the French Chamber of Deputies during the critical week which saw the fall of M. Briand's Ministry, the scene was one, not only of intense political significance, but also of overpowering dramatic emotion.

Through the kindness of M. Jaurès I have been able to observe the debates, and the political question at issue has been one that must sooner or later come forward in this country—namely, the right of the worker to cease work to the grave inconvenience of the community. But the drama which has developed during the last few days has an overwhelming interest of its own which has almost overshadowed the subject of debate.

The French railway strike was unpopular in Paris, as unpopular as anything that causes general loss and inconvenience can be. The man who suppressed the strike, by imprisoning the leaders and by calling out the Army and turning them on to do the work, was the Prime Minister, M. Briand. Six days ago M. Briand was the hero of Paris. He was hailed as "The Strong Man" for whom

France pined. And on Saturday night this same man, this former Socialist, left the Chamber amid howls of execration, protected, as it were, by a bodyguard of nobles of the Right. Six days ago he ruled France; to-day he is almost impossible as a Minister. And the man who has made this change is Jean Jaurès, and he made it under our eyes in the Chamber of Deputies.

The fact is Jaurès had a strong case. It is difficult, among Frenchmen, or among any who have the traditions of liberty, to maintain that people who do not wish to work must be made to work. Moreover, the Napoleon who had done this, M. Briand himself, had but ten years before advocated the general strike as the weapon of democracy.

So the scene was set. Whatever the personal bias of the onlooker, he must have been filled—possessed—by the intensity of feeling which rocked the Palais Bourbon—a great howling sea of passion, lashed and guided by, and bearing up and on with it, the uncouth form of perhaps the most gifted actor of any stage—the much-abused, much-adored Socialist leader, Jaurès.

With his Party of seventy-five Unified Socialists, M. Jaurès worked his miracle, and nobly was he backed by his men. Often on his feet, sometimes standing on the bench, always with the broad front gazing fixedly at the Centre benches, where the Radicals trembled in the balance, M. Jaurès has not convinced the Assembly—he has terrorized them

with the wave of the attack—a Pelion on Ossa of oratory. And what orators these Socialists are, the men to whom politics is no game, but a matter of deadly earnest. “You may make laws to repress strikes”, cried Rognon of Lyons, “*Du haut de cette tribune je vous défie*”. The Seventy-five reminding one of “*Les Quarants-cinq*”, worked together like an orchestra. They cheered and clapped every point made by their comrades; but let the Right or Centre interrupt their orator, and a dull wave of sound rose and fell, a roar that made one feel cold between the shoulder-blades, the “Hue, Hue” that has made such grisly history in France.

As the hours and days went on, the Centre became more and more depressed, the Prime Minister more visibly nervous, the Right more anxious to back him up, and the Left more terribly triumphant. At the end of every speech the same cry went up, “Jaurès! Jaurès!”. They all wanted him, even on the Right, for he must end the interminable debates; and at last he came. This was on Saturday afternoon at three o'clock. The sea in lesser waves had been foaming against the Ministerial benches for three days, when M. Jaurès stepped up into the Tribune.

To any speaker of dramatic instinct the French Chamber is an inspiring theatre. For such a speaker as M. Jaurès it is the stage above all others fitted to bring out his full power of terrorizing, inspiring, infuriating. From the raised

fenced-in platform (which reminds one, according to its occupant, of either a prison dock or the central altar of a Greek play), the orator harangues at a pitch which must weary even a practised open-air demagogue. He stands, picked out against the white sculptured bas-relief, at the merciless scrutiny of some 1,500 pairs of eyes.

M. Jaurès's form, which curiously resembles in shape and vigour the best type of "fighting" Boer, seems to gain stature as he paces to and fro, the central figure in the great semicircular hall. Below him, to the right, are the well-bred, vapid, somewhat empty benches of the "Droite"—evidently gentlemanly hearers, among them a dark member from Martinique and a representative Jew or two—for the most part silent, a little amused, a little bored, just a little cowed, too, as if the melodrama were beginning to take too lifelike a turn. Below, in the immediate front, the little row of Ministers' benches, convenient for denunciation or appeal. To the left his own Seventy-five—seventy-five hundred by noise, fidelity and fury—a hungry, raging, rude, dangerous, "Mountain of Men", with tousled hairy faces, shouting in strange dialects and in coarse voices, ill-dressed, doubtfully washed; and amongst them the special body-guard, some dozen of another sort, having the mild faces and fanatic eyes that we associate with the Russian prophet. And round the arena, half audience, half actors, semicircle upon semicircle of packed faces: smart ladies in the newest Paris

hats, *commettants* from the provinces, even children brought to see the man-fight. And perched aloft above the man in the Tribune, like a plaster angel on a gilded tester, the elderly, amiable, pathetic figure of the President, M. Brisson, rising now and again to tinkle his dinner-bell appealingly, or to rap on his desk with his school ruler, whenever the "Right" shows any signs of coming to life. To still the hubbub of the "Left", he has long since learnt to be an impossible, perhaps a venturesome task.

I have heard Gladstone and Dillon and Chamberlain, but I have never heard or seen anything like those 2½ hours during which Jaurès held that great assembly. Now speaking in a whisper of which every syllable could be distinguished, now raging in a tempest of sound, his whole body swinging with the noise, now leaning forward to the Prime Minister in the most engaging irony of politeness, he taught one to understand Mirabeau and the French Revolution. He stretches out his hand, and the Seventy-five are hushed into something nearly silence, as, in a voice which seems to be altogether a different organ from that which was shaking pillars a moment before, he quotes the fine echoing words of Mirabeau, "*Respectez le travail . . . Respectez le peuple, ce peuple qui pour être formidable n'a qu'a devenir immobile*", that people who, to become dangerous, have only to withhold their hands from toiling.

And then with inconceivable comprehensiveness

and lucidity he passes from defence to accusation, from accusation to indictment—point after point, merciless, cruel, grandiose, intenser; now shaken with frenzy, both hands above his head, like a Syrian prophet calling down curses from the God of Battle; now waving on his Seventy-five like to a pack of hounds in full cry, his own voice dominating the tumult; and now slowly, monosyllabically, as if pouring vitriol drop by drop upon his victims, he singles out each head on the bench below him with accusing forefinger and tongue, “You, Millerand! You, Briand! who in the hearts and eyes of the young men shone as a guiding star and a great hope, and whom now they name as a proof that there is no truth in the world”. “Sabotage!” He believes that sabotage is disaster to the workers and to the world—but who are the worst *saboteurs*? Those men who out of fear and the weakness of their cause destroy rails and trucks, or those who use their power to limit output, and seek to destroy that finest of industrial machines, organized labour? Some say that this is not a mere strike, but a revolution against Society. Ah, no! The common workman is still too ignorant and blind to see any enemy beyond the employers through whom he suffers. But if it were a social revolution, does M. Briand fancy he could prevent it with a superficial repression by police? No, to stay the social revolution the Government must go back and undo all their own work of the last thirty years—back

to the policing of soul and intellect—back to the Institut de France—to the Papacy—to the English House of Lords, to the German General Staff.

He did not plead for mercy for the imprisoned strikers. He did not try to rouse any sympathy for them. He was there to defend the right to strike on the broadest basis—that of human justice and freedom. And then, most deadly thrust, he quoted the Prime Minister himself. "All strikes are a skirmish which prepare the way for the general strike against all masters." "If they mobilize the Army, and if the officers order the soldiers to fire on the people, *les chassepots partiront mais pas dans la direction indiqué.*"

Finally, with a sudden turn of thought and phrase, he summons all his powers to give the *coup-de-grâce* in half an hour of practical detailed accusation. Why have the accused strikers been kept in prison untried till yesterday? What is this proposed law about strikes, of which the capitalist Press knows so much and the Chamber so little? Why is M. Viviani's resignation withheld until after to-day? And why is it to be announced in forty-eight hours? "I, I alone, stand for the liberty of Parliament", and in a thunder of sound, amid which individual tones rise and fall like shrill instruments in a chorusing orchestra, he goes back to his seat through a forest of hailing or threatening arms. It was a marvellous performance, both of physique and of intellect. M. Jaurès had summoned all his resources of

oratory, debate and personal influence to wreck the Cabinet. The wave, having risen to its topmost height, had crashed.

It was no wonder that, after four days of incessant harrying, culminating in such an attack, M. Briand had lost his nerve. He went pluckily into the Tribune, a slender, elegant man with thick dark hair and a face very pale. His voice was controlled, but his fingers played nervously behind him as he stood waiting to get a hearing. He had one chance; and that was to treat Jaurès and the "Mountain" with cool irony; to pass slightly over all personal points, and to proceed to a very matter-of-fact exposition of the Government's policy, such as should appeal to common sense and take the wind out of idealism. He made a mistake in his first pass, and proceeded to discuss in a tone of personal resentment the question of M. Viviani's resignation. This was Jaurès's opportunity.

I have a vivid picture of this last scene. Jaurès got M. Viviani on his legs to explain why he has not yet resigned, though resign he will. Viviani explains. M. Viviani says that the strike had to be suppressed because of sabotage. Suddenly every man of the Seventy-five is on his legs. The vast bulk of Jaurès towers above them, standing on the topmost bench, supported on either hand by Aaron and Hur. This time there is no sound. They are all pointing with outstretched arm and accusing finger at the waiting figure in

the Tribune—the Prime Minister—as though to say that all might understand, “There is the man who taught them sabotage”.

The wavering Radicals cheered Viviani, but they were damped. Hubbub broke out again and again; and, for a while, in spite of the President's remonstrances, his bell and his ruler, the Prime Minister could not continue his speech. When he did, it was to make a final and fatal blunder. “Had my course of action been illegal, I should still have taken it.” After that, a hearing was impossible. M. Briand himself had confirmed the idea of a *coup d'état* already cleverly insinuated by Jaurès.

Instantly the Seventy-five became two hundred. They absorbed the Radicals as a wave sweeps over the beach. From the whole of the Left, from parts of the Centre, arose cries of “Resign” and “Dictator”—Jaurès had won. Pandemonium ensued. From the great semicircular gallery the big-hatted ladies bent down, beating with their fists upon the panelling, screaming, “*a bas les Socialistes! A bas l'Anarchie!*” And a body-guard of the Right, of his new supporters, the Royalist-Conservatives, formed round M. Briand and escorted him from the Chamber.

So Jaurès won his victory. If the Labour Party in the House of Commons had such a leader, or if their leaders had such followers as the French Seventy-five, the coming Session would probably be one of unique and unparalleled interest in English Parliamentary History. But the English are eminently a sane and a Saxon race.

XII

THE RIGHT TO STRIKE

IT is customary among the good and wise to come forward at certain seasons with the inevitable demand that a law should be passed making arbitration compulsory in the case of trade disputes. When Trade Unions decline to accept the Law, it is held to be evidence of their lack of confidence in their own case. The good and wise weep over one further example of the wickedness of the working man, or shake their heads and try to find excuses.

One may pass over the obvious fact that the "impartial arbitrator" is always drawn from the master class. Even if he were drawn from the workers he would still have to concede the least possible to the workers, because in the last resort the masters can always close their works and the very workers themselves would hold that to be the worst calamity. The whip-hand is always with the masters. To strike is the last resource; but remove the right to strike and the worker is completely helpless.

The power to refuse his labour is to the labourer what the power to refuse his land is to the land-

lord—the sole foundation of his bargaining power. Take this power away from either and you leave labourer or landlord powerless. But how different is the ease with which the two classes can refuse. If the landlord refuses his land he is exempted from rates and taxes ; if the labourer refuses his labour he sees his wife and children getting hungry and his sticks of furniture go to the pawnshop. Only the direst necessity will induce him to withhold his labour from the labour market, and yet all the social reformers of my acquaintance would enact a law which should have as its object to make it even more difficult than it is, by making it illegal.

Sugar the pill as you will, there is this stark truth about the cry for compulsory arbitration. It would take from the worker his last weapon and turn him into a complete slave, the conditions of whose working life, of whose whole life from the cradle to the grave, would be immutably fixed by law. All this is to be done for the convenience of Society—say, if you like, for the safety of Society. Even if you do believe that this is the best of all possible worlds, I suppose there are some limits to what you will do in order to preserve it ; and slavery to my mind is outside those limits.

Fortunately, perhaps, working men still dare to break the law when there are a number of them together ; and even if a compulsory arbitration law is passed, some day two or three hundred

thousand men will be "out", and there will be little chance to lock them up in prisons then. But it is a great mistake to make too large a hiatus between moral laws and these opportunist politician-made laws. The people, knowing somehow instinctively that one set have no moral weight, may, with a regrettable lack of perception, begin to discard the other set also.

A man has a perfect moral right to refuse his own labour; but what of the landlord's moral right to refuse his land? No abuse seems to be too bitter for the man who refuses his labour and restricts production; yet do but hint that the landlord has no moral right to withhold his land, and one becomes an obvious bolshevik. The very pulpits denounce "Ca'canny", but in a landlord, to hold up rubber or cotton or land till it is "ripe", merely shows a sound business instinct.

AUTHORITY FOR THE "MORNING POST"

ANY British politician, however undistinguished, has always this consolation at death—when once safely dead he will become an authority. With us, demise is canonization. Unfortunately the reverse is also true. A dead Mr. Gladstone was verbally inspired; but a live Mr. Gladstone can only be quoted to his own damnation. With us, as a nation, and more particularly with the upper classes who read the *Morning Post*, authority is everything, and for abstract argument we have little time. We inevitably measure the value of an authority by the length of the obituary notice, and by the remoteness of his past; but it is generally valuable to have had in that past a reputation for unpopularity.

When arguments sweep harmlessly and ineffectively over the serene intelligence of the reader of the *Morning Post* (as ineffectively as poison gas over the gentleman in the other sort of gas mask), it becomes necessary to bring up the heavy artillery. Authority is required. Authority they shall have.

I desire to suggest a better state of Society,

based on the Taxation of Land Values. How shall I do it?

Readers of the *Morning Post* have perhaps fewer inducements to desire a change than most. It would be only human nature if, to them, this seemed the best of all possible worlds. To recommend effectively the change to them is indeed difficult. Were one dealing with the *Manchester Guardian* one would of course appeal to the good old instincts of the Cobdenite free trader; one would emphasize the unrating of buildings, of improvements, of trade. "Just as you got cheap and good food by taking off the tax on food, so you will get cheap and good houses by taking off the tax on houses." So one would argue for the *Guardian* and hope for the best. To the social philanthropists of the *Daily News* one would lay stress on the low wages, unemployment side. "So long as valuable land and minerals are not rated they can the more easily be withheld from labour. Idle land means idle men; idle men mean more blacklegs and lower wages all round." Once upon a time that would have settled the *Daily News*. Before the small shopkeepers of the *Daily Chronicle* one would demonstrate that if the owners of valuable building land join the ranks of the rate-payers, the present ratepayers will have less to pay. One can rub into the progressive town councillors, who read the *New Statesman*, that the municipal reforms of their dreams—public parks, new roads and bridges, tramways, and even

county halls—would begin to pay for themselves if the resulting increase in land value came back year by year in a sevenpenny rate. At present they are pouring the ratepayer's money into a sieve. To the rebels and fighters of the *Daily Herald* one can, of course, point out that if it is fighting they want, we provide the battle-ground. They have only to follow the maxim of Napoleon and *marcher au feu*.

But, the *Morning Post*!

The feature of the *Morning Post* is, that it is read by hard-headed business men who will stand no nonsense, but know how to make money. They will charge us quite flatly and finally with being both mischievous and impractical. But reading the *Morning Post* they will know the value of authority. They have no time for thinking out any such things for themselves, but in authority their faith is implicit. Quote Mr. Gladstone and they throw up their hands; produce an extract from a Dean and they are convinced; before Lord Beaconsfield they are mute. The more ancient and dusty the authority the more devoutly do they bow down.

Obviously, therefore, our business is to produce the authorities that they love. They say that our proposals are mischievous and impracticable. Let us refer them to the Report of the Select Committee on the Taxation of Land Values (Scotland) Bill, drafted by the Lord Advocate, signed by Lord Dewar, by the Right Honorable McKinnon Wood,

Authority for the "Morning Poster" 173

and by all the Liberal and Labour M.P.'s on the Committee, save one. It reads as follows :

The main principle which underlies the proposals is the setting up of a standard of rating whereby the ratepayer's contribution to the rates is determined by the value of the land which he occupies, apart from the buildings and improvements upon it; the object being to measure the ratepayer's contribution, not by the value of the improvements upon the land but solely by the value of the land itself.—Cd. 379.

They report also that it is practicable, and this after hearing many witnesses whose cross-examination is delightful—as thus :

Mr. MCKINNON WOOD : I understood you to say that, in your opinion, all rates are paid by the landlord ?

Mr. HAROLD COX : Yes. They tend to diminish his income.

Mr. MCKINNON WOOD : They tend to diminish the rent that he receives ?

Mr. HAROLD COX : Yes.

Mr. MCKINNON WOOD : At the end of your evidence you suggest that the true remedy for the present state of affairs is to substitute Income Tax for rates ?

Mr. HAROLD COX : Yes, local Income Tax.

Mr. MCKINNON WOOD : That Income Tax would fall upon land, buildings and other forms of personal property, including all forms of income ?

Mr. HAROLD COX : I would rather put it, that it would fall upon all persons, from whatever source their incomes be derived—wages and everything.

Mr. MCKINNON WOOD : Then you would agree accordingly that an Income Tax like that would free the landlord from the personal burden of rates which you think he ultimately pays ?

Mr. HAROLD COX : Yes.

Mr. MCKINNON WOOD : Do you think that would be a fair change ?

Mr. HAROLD COX : No, I do not think it would be fair.

174 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

My evidence, through some slip, was stopped at that point. You will see that I provide for that point.

Mr. MCKINNON WOOD : I merely take the evidence which you gave to-day.

Mr. HAROLD COX : I deal with the point on the very last page of my *précis*. There I say that this change would relieve the landowners from all liability on fixed property. Therefore, in addition to local Income Tax, there should be established a local Death Duty on fixed property, and also a local duty on transfer.

The Committee went on to give the following arguments in favour of the change :

It is well to select a standard of rating which will not have the effect of placing a burden upon industry. Hence the proposal to exclude from the standard the value of buildings and erections of all kinds and fixed machinery. To include these in the rating tends to discourage industry and enterprise. To exclude them has the opposite effect.

This, of course, is the argument of mere expediency, but they went on to say :

The justification for the adoption of the new standard of rating is, that the land owes the creation and maintenance of its value to the presence, enterprise and expenditure of the surrounding community.

But, after all, these authorities were politicians, and politicians will notoriously say anything for popularity. Suppose, therefore, that we quote the Report signed in 1902 by Lord Balfour of Burleigh, Sir Edward Hamilton, Sir George Murray and other distinguished non-politicians (Cd. 638, p. 167) :

We think that the general truth that the benefits of improvements (effected by the Local Authority) attaches to the site is

Authority for the "Morning Poster" 175

a powerful argument for making the necessary taxation proportionate to the site value. . . . There is a strong argument for rating site values on the ground of public policy, regard being had to the effects of taxation on industry and development. Our present rates indisputably hamper building, make houses fewer, worse and dearer.

Or is it that they prefer the "authority" of a Municipal specialist? Here is Sir Lawrence Gomme, Secretary to the London County Council :

Local Taxation is the legitimate burden upon site value, imposed in return for benefits received.—Cd. 9528, p. 244.

One may leave here our Morning Poster muttering "impracticable" and "mischievous". Quite well-known people seem to deem otherwise ; even if the practical experience of our colonies were not enough. There are, however, other bogies often waved before the ignorant. The commonest of these is, that the landlord will be able to pass the tax on to the tenant and the consumer.

This is a conclusion so natural. The veriest beginner in politics will have grasped the idea that taxes upon commodities shift to consumers. They jump naturally to the conclusion that taxes upon land values would shift to the users. But this is a mistake, and the explanation is simple. Taxes upon what men produce make production more difficult, and so tend towards scarcity in the supply, which stimulates prices ; but taxes upon land value tend towards plenty in the available supply (meaning market supply of course), because they make it more difficult to hold valuable land idle,

176 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

and, therefore, such taxes depress the price of land.

Again I do not give my own reasons for knowing that the landlord cannot pass the tax on—beyond observing that if they could, they would not make such a fuss about the tax. Let us have rather the High Priests of Political Economy.

John Stuart Mill says :

A tax on rent falls wholly on the landlord. There are no means by which he can shift the burden on to anyone else. . . . A tax on rent, therefore, has no effect other than its obvious one. It merely takes so much from the landlord and transfers it to the State.—*Prin. of Pol. Ec.*, V, chap. iii, sec. 1.

Mrs. Fawcett, upon whom we were all brought up, says :

Taxes which are levied on land . . . really fall on the owner of the land.—*Pol. Ec. for Beginners*, pp. 209-10.

Thorold Rogers lays it down :

The power of transferring a tax from the person who actually pays it to some other person varies with the object taxed. A tax on rents cannot be transferred. A tax on commodities is always transferred to the consumer.—*Pol. Ec.*, XXI, p. 285.

But of them all I prefer Ricardo :

A land tax levied in proportion to the rent of land, and varying with every variation of rent, is in effect a tax on rent ; and, as such a tax will not apply to that land which yields no rent, nor to the produce of that capital which is employed on this land, it will not in any way affect the price of raw produce, but will fall wholly on the landlords.—McCulloch's *Ricardo*, 3rd ed., p. 107.

Authority for the "Morning Poster" 177

Let us make it clear too that it is part of our case, and the converse of all the above argument, that if the tax is wisely spent it will go to raise land value, go indeed back to the landlord. The better the government the more land value will rise. Let the municipal authorities anywhere pave a street, put water through it, and sewer it, or do any of the wise good things, and sites in the neighbourhood will rise in value. Instances of this result of public improvements might be collected in abundance. Every man must be able to recall some within his own experience.

And it is perfectly reasonable that it should be so. Land, and not other property, must rise in value with desirable improvements in government ; because, while any tendency on the part of other kinds of property to rise in value is checked by greater production, land cannot be reproduced.

The authority runs as follows. Again it is Prof. Thorold Rogers :

Every permanent improvement of the soil, every railway and road, every bettering of the general condition of society, every facility given for production, raises rent. The landowner inherits the fruits of present industry, and has appropriated the lion's share of accumulated intelligence.

No authorities can be quoted on the other side. Let it be understood, therefore, that certain economic truths are accepted. That the present rating system penalizes industry. That it is practicable to levy rates upon site value. That, far from being mischievous, this would benefit

industry and make land more accessible to labour. That any such rate or tax, whoever pays it in the first instance, must ultimately rest upon the landowner. And lastly, that it is the same landowners who ultimately benefit by the public improvements effected by the expenditure of the rate or tax.

Conceding all this, the Morning Poster will still be hostile. He will say that it is unjust to select one class in the community to bear a special tax. And he will say with Lord Rosebery, and say, rightly, that this is the beginning of the end of all things, and that he does not intend that they shall end.

The answer to the first may be made once more. If one class benefit, it is only right that that same class alone should pay. Harold Cox used to call it taxing red-headed men, to point out its absurdity. If the red-headed men take and divide the plunder I can see no wrong in asking them to find the cash. But the question puzzles other than those wilfully blind. We have got so bred into us the idea that taxation should be according to ability to pay, that we cannot realize the justice of any other system—we cannot realize that taxation might in reality be payment for services rendered. The Taxation of Land Values cannot be squared with taxation according to ability to pay. We have discovered the futility of that cliché. We know now that the persons who actually pay according to their ability have in reality the best facilities for passing their tax on to the consumer—that

their payment is camouflage. On such a basis you hit the poor, not the rich, who can afford to pay. The basis of "ability to pay" is ineffective; it is also, even in its origin and still more in its results, unjust. Far better, and far juster, is our basis—that taxes should be according to benefits received. Land values rise, therefore let land values pay. I cook with gas, therefore let the gas appear on my gas bill.

But, alas, to our Morning Poster's last and sufficient objection there is no answer. "The end of all things." If this were the best of all possible worlds it would indeed be a sufficient objection and unanswerable. Our society, as we know it to-day, with some living upon the cheap labour of others, does indeed depend upon land monopoly. The fear of involuntary unemployment must be always present if our civilization is to endure on its present basis. I know of no other way, and no man can discover any other way of preserving the fear of unemployment if once idle land and idle men are allowed to get together.

So perhaps our Morning Poster was right after all. He was certainly right if it is held desirable to keep things as they are.

XIV

HOW TO BRING ABOUT THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION

YOU ask my opinion on the "problem of transition from Capitalism to the Co-operative Commonwealth". I am not sure which of two possible societies you mean by the "Co-operative Commonwealth"; but the roads to each are quite clear and diametrically opposite.

The first Co-operative Commonwealth has this in common with the present capitalistic society, that the co-operation is compulsory. It is the co-operation of galley slaves, chained to the same bench and toiling at the same oar to further the progress of the ship of State. Their Commonwealth consists in common rations (equally divided by the overseers), common subjection to an equal and impartial lash, and a most communal death by drowning when the ship goes down. The transition to this Co-operative Commonwealth would be most certainly effected by continuing—only more logically and energetically—along the lines we have begun.

Start, methodically, with the parents of the future galley slave. Segregate and suppress those

How to Bring About Social Revolution 181

whom the galley air does not suit, the unfit, the rebellious. Breed only from those of docile brains and serviceable sinews. Take the child while still young, educate him to galley ship habits, train him—according to his potentialities—to wield either the oar or the whip. Coax him into a uniform—for a uniform disciplines the character. Give him eight hours a day at the oar, while applying the Winslow-Taylor method—of course under medical supervision. Feed him with the right amount of inspected food at regular intervals, and enforce a period of organized amusement on deck. At sixty-five replace him on the bench by younger men, and provide him, if well behaved, with a crib to die in. Bury him, hygienically, in a sheet; and call in the ship's chaplain to sing over him a dirge and preach a sermon in eulogy of the officers of "The State". Apply to these methods all the latest results of science, and success is assured. The ship of State will be a model, inside and out, and will "progress" with a rapidity beyond all record.

This is one kind of Co-operative Commonwealth, and with a good apparatus of statistical tables, well enforced police regulations, and an inspired Press, the process of transition is quite easy; it merely needs the existing processes of industrial concentration to be developed. The trusts of our benevolent capitalists must be completely unified into one single trust, under an equally benevolent bureaucracy. Bournville must be apotheosized by

municipal decree ; and the enlightened efforts of our cocoacrats must be backed by cocoacratic law with cocoacratic dope—or if necessary bludgeons behind it.

Capitalism? Of course Capitalism will disappear. It will no longer be necessary as a means of exploitation. Feudalism died when Capitalism was ready to replace it ; so will Capitalism die when the State is ready to replace it in its ownership of men and goods. This is the law of social evolution to which all good citizens bow.

But there is another Co-operative Commonwealth of quite another kind. It is not a " ship " nor an " organism ", nor any other allegorical symbol, but an association of free individuals, voluntarily associated for mutual aid, and co-operating for common ends ; who, just because they are free, can yield without suspicion and fear to the natural social instincts. They share, each alike, in the common sources of life and labour, and the produce is the property of the producers.

This Commonwealth is perhaps a dream, but it is a better dream than the other. Nor need it remain a dream. To realize it requires no elaboration of government machinery, nor carefully restrictive measures, but the simple abolition of privileges and monopolies—from the monopoly of land and privileges of capital, to the privileges of majorities.

What can effect this abolition? Indirectly, a moral education of the mass of people, until all

How to Bring About Social Revolution 183

recognize—as a few do already—that such privileges and monopolies are wrong and ought to be disregarded and resisted. And if any of these monopolies and privileges can meantime be destroyed in any way, their iniquity will be all the more speedily recognized. This might be done by making use of the existing government machinery, and the first privilege to attack should be the primary and fundamental Monopoly in Land.

It is by far the most noxious of them all : (1) Because it lies at the root of a whole tangle of false social conceptions, feudal superstitions, class snobbery, wrong notions as to what is private property, ambition for power ; (2) because it is the base on which Capitalism rears itself, and which gives to money its power of buying men ; (3) because the Land Monopoly is the immediate cause of the more notorious social evils—unemployment and low wages, overcrowding, disease and prostitution—and of their outcoming disease, State officialism.

To restore to each individual the possibility of free access to land is, I believe, the means of transition to the true Commonwealth, and also the best guarantee for its continuance. Freedom is the indispensable condition of successful co-operation. Without it co-operation is only a fine name for bondage. And to have free men you must have free land. By "land" I do not mean only agricultural and horticultural soil (though that is likely to play an increasingly important part on the

social revolution), but all that the land contains—the sources not only of food, but of all the needs of life, minerals, and space to raise homes and workshops, and to grow the raw material of all industries.

The result will probably be very much the same whether the people regain access to the land by "direct action", or by the governmental method of the taxation of land values. In the first case the workers will seize the land they work on, agreeing to pay the rest of the community for any special natural advantages of the site they have taken; while vacant land will be open to occupation by anyone who may want to use it. In the second case, a full tax (or rate) on the unimproved site value of lands, will induce the present landlord to put his share to full use or loose his grip, destroying both the monopoly and the monopoly price of land, and reducing the landlord from a rent receiver to a worker. At the same time, land of insignificant site value, not actually cultivated, would be open to anyone for use, with security for all improvements and for tenancy during use.

Personally, I favour this latter method of destroying land monopoly, both because it seems more practicable, and also because there is with it less danger perhaps of the tyranny that inevitably accompanies force and direct action.

Will Capitalism vanish in the wake of Land Monopoly? My answer is: Consider what gives to the capitalist his wealth, and gives to his wealth

its power. Is it not because the workers have no possible access to the source of labour and can support themselves neither by individual nor co-operative industry, that they are driven in herds to sell their labour to the capitalist, and to beat down the wages of that labour? The capitalist's strength lies in the land monopoly, for that alone enables him to buy landless men. Abolish that, and you have a shorn Samson to reckon with.

Statisticians ask whether the Single Tax will bring in sufficient revenue to support the increasing demands of the British Navy, the Labour Exchanges, the Whitehall officials, the police, compulsory education etc., etc. To those who believe that the Single Tax is a means of transition to the free Co-operative Commonwealth, the question seems somewhat pointless. When the free Co-operative Commonwealth is attained, free men, enjoying free land, will not need nor desire this expensive State fostering and these lavish remedies for ills that will no longer exist. The greater part of the present vast State revenue will be no longer required. For my part I expect they will be too busy and happy to care much about beneficent legislation or the upkeep of permanent officials. As for the remaining municipal services, monopoly being gone, free men can safely decide for themselves which undertakings are best supported by the communal revenue from site value, and which by voluntary co-operation or individual effort.

XV

WITH MACHINE GUNS IN GALLIPOLI

I

"THIS is my seat in the stalls, and there are many men in England would give £1,000 for it," said the Hon. Arthur Coke as he fixed on the site for his maxim-casemate on the forecastle of the *River Clyde*. They were to be a grim sort of stalls, and cost him his life, but it cheered up the mechanics who had volunteered to go on the forlorn hope on the "Wooden Horse of Troy"; they had been rather depressed by the unexpectedly touching farewells of their friends on the transport who had not volunteered. This old tramp steamer was commanded by a dug-out half-pay captain, who dreamed of lighters, a midshipman of Adonis-like beauty from the merchant marine, and an engineer from the River Plate, who would describe to us with unnecessary zest how he was going to get two extra knots out of the old tub to "boost" her ashore by sitting on the safety valve. Meanwhile, our mechanics built casemates, armed her with maxim guns, and lined her bridges with boiler plate and leaky sand-bags.

On a flawless Sunday morning, as the mist rose from the semi-circle of the bay, we ran ashore 400 yards from the mediaeval castle of Seddel Bahr. I never noticed the grounding, for the horror in the water, on the beach. Five tows of five boats each, loaded with men, were going ashore alongside of us. One moment it had been early morning in a peaceful country, with thoughts or smells of cows and hay and milk; and the next, while the boats were just twenty yards from the shore, the blue sea round each boat was turning red. Is there anything more horrible than to see men wading through water waist-high under a heavy fire? You see where each bullet hits the water, which, like a nightmare, holds back the man for the next shot, which will not miss. Of all those brave men two-thirds died, and hardly a dozen reached unwounded the shelter of the five-foot sand dune.

Then they charged from the Wooden Horse. From the new large ports on the lower deck they ran along gangways to the bows, then over three lighters to a spit of rock; twenty slippery yards over the rocks, and there was shelter. I think this was more terrible. In the first rush none got alive to land; and they repeated these rushes all day. There was no room on the rocks; there was no room on the lighters and boats; they were so covered with dead and dying. A dash about nine o'clock was led by General Napier and his Brigade-Major. Would they ever get to the end

188 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

of the lighter and jump into the sheltering water? No ; side by side they sat down on the engine coaming. For one moment one thought they might be taking cover ; then their legs slid out and they rolled over.

It was the Munsters that charged first, with a sprig of shamrock on their caps ; then the Dublins, the Worcesters, the Hampshires. Lying on the beach, on the rocks, on the lighters, they cried on the Mother of God. Ever when I looked ashore I saw five Munsters. They at some moment had got ashore ; they had been told off to cut the wire entanglements ; they had left the shelter of the bank, charged fifteen yards to the wire, and there they lay in a row at two yards interval. One could hardly believe them dead. All the time great shells kept hitting the shivering ship and doing slaughter in the packed holds. These shells were fired from Asia, but it was the maxims and pom-poms in Seddel Bahr and on the amphitheatre that kept our heads down below the bulwarks and boiler-plate. There, now, was Midshipman Drury swimming to the lighter which had broken loose, with a line in his mouth and a wound in his head. If ever a boy deserved his V.C. that lad did. And there was the captain of the *River Clyde*, now no longer a ship to be stuck to, but a part for ever of Gallipoli, alone with a boat by the spit of rock, trying to lift in the wounded under fire.

All these things I saw as in a dream as I moved from casemate to casemate, watching to see Turks,

wearing an "Election smile", and trying to pretend in an even voice to men, who had never seen death, that this was the best of all possible worlds. Columns of smoke rose from the castle and town of Seddel Bahr as the great shells from the fleet passed over our heads and burst; and in every lull we heard the wounded.

I looked at the Commander on the spit of rock trying to lift in the wounded, and every splash by his side meant a bullet. The Colonel, the second in command, was shot through the head on the bridge. One of my men came to me: "May I go over and help get in those wounded?" "Why?" I said, and I remembered the story of Stephen Crane's of the man who went across the shell-swept field to get a drink because he was "dared to" by his companions. "I can't stand hearing them crying." He went with the second lot, but another of my men had been before him, and he had dived in, without leave, being a Single-Taxer from Glasgow. He was shot through the stomach, but lives.¹ The Turks could easily have killed all those who went to the wounded. They did not fire on them sometimes for ten minutes, and then a burst of fire would come. Then and afterwards I found them extraordinarily merciful as compared with the Germans in Flanders.

At twelve I had given up all hope; one gun on the ridge, and we should be smashed to pieces.

¹ Russell was killed later.

At one o'clock I got 20,000 more rounds from the fleet, and the Lancashires were appearing over the ridge to the left from "Lancashire Landing". We saw fifteen men in a window in the castle on the right by the water. They signalled that they were all that remained of the Dublins who had landed at the Camber at Seddel Bahr.

At three o'clock we got 150 men alive to shore, and great chunks were flying out of the old castle as the 15-inch shells from the *Elizabeth* plastered the ten-foot walls. We watched our men working to the right and up into the castle ruins—at each corner the officer crouching in front with revolver in rest. One watched them through the fire zone, and held one's breath and pressed the button of the maxim.

Then night came, but a house in Seddel Bahr was burning brightly, and there was a full moon. We disembarked men at once. All around the wounded cried for help and shelter against the bullets, but there was no room on boats or gangway for anything but the men to go to shore. For three hours I stood at the end of the rocks up to my waist in water, my legs jammed between dead men, and helped men from the last boat to the rocks. Every man who landed that night jumped on to the backs of dead men, to the most horrible accompaniment in the world. It was then that I first learnt the shout of "Allah", for the Turks charged. All night long the battle raged. On shore everyone was firing at they knew not what.

Our men went up the hill through the Turks ; and the Turks came down through ours to the beach. Over and past each other they went, sometimes not seeing, sometimes glad to pass on in the darkness. One party of our men were found by daylight at the top of the gully on the left in touch with the Lancashires. It is not necessary to burn your boats to ensure the courage of desperation ; it is as good to have your ship firmly aground. The paladins of that night's fighting knew this, and knew what was their position.

You must remember that for two nights no one had slept ; and then another day dawned. We were firmly ashore at Lancashire Landing, and at Du Toit's Battery to the north-east ; and the Australians were dug in at Anzac. An end had to be made of V. Beach. The whole fleet collected, and all the morning blew the ridge and castle and town to pieces. And all the time that wonderful infantry went forward up the hill and through the ruined town. The troops that went in that attack had already lost half their strength ; the officers that led up those narrow streets, dodging first through gateways, across the openings, and beckoning when safe for their men to come on, were nearly all killed. Dead beat, at one o'clock, before the final rush, they hesitated. Then our last colonel, a staff man, Colonel Doughty Wylie, ran ashore with a cane, ran right up the hill, ran through the last handful of men sheltering under the crest, took them with that rush into the trench,

192 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

and fell with a bullet through his head. But the Turks ran and the ridge was ours!

I had to take the maxim guns up, skirting the village. If you have never felt afraid, try crawling up a gutter, crawling over dead men, with every wall and corner hiding a marksman trying to kill you. We got the guns into position, and then cleared that village, peering into dark rooms and broken courts in the growing twilight. Everywhere were our dead Munsters and Dublins, some horribly mutilated and burnt. No wounded had survived.

Of that 29th Division that landed on V. Beach, and was finally exterminated within the fortnight that followed the landing, one knows not how to write. On and on, by day and night, ever getting fewer and fewer, they pushed forward till the ground was sown with them. They had never been in action before; they had come from all the corners of the world, from Burma and Pretoria, from the Himalayas and Bermudas, and they all rest in Gallipoli; and may God rest their souls. There was once a division of which much has been written that charged over the fatal hill of Albuera; but their losses were nothing like these. Henderson taught us that Sharpsburg, where one-third of all the Federals and Confederates were left on the field, was, for the numbers engaged, the bloodiest battle in history. Sharpsburg was a joy ride compared with Seddel Bahr. So by this one knows that the men of our race in the

past have left bigger men behind them, bigger at least in soul and in the spirit of sacrifice.

II

"Cease firing there, damn you!" The night alternated between ingenuous bursts of fire which infected all the line, and the curses of the officers who tried to stop it. It was our first night on Gallipoli, and we had a graveyard in front of us. Even a grave-stone under the moon will look like a Turk—after the losses we had suffered. Next morning the blue-coated French relieved us in the trenches, and the 29th went forward. They were flung forward on Krithia.

I did not see the first part of that battle, as each regiment went blindly over the moors, driving in the snipers and striking against the machine-guns. It was one o'clock when I was moved up in the centre to "push them into Krithia". Our men went up through the wreckage of this desperate attack—the wounded, the men helping the wounded, growing ever more numerous, the men who are coming back to get more ammunition. How well one knows them and their terrifying stories, begging you to go no further. "Sheer murder at the next bend of the nullah." But our guns thumped above our heads, bursting in the orchard, and with a mixed crowd of English, Scotch, French, and Irish, rallied men that turned again as soon as they saw an

officer, we went up to Krithia, as though it were Calvary.

Then we dug those remnants in—Munsters, Dublins, Lancashires, Worcesters, Essex, Royal Scots, the Foreign Legion, and the Turcos. They dug in lying on their stomachs, till one after another, becoming a man, found it safe to stand up and dig. And blessed night came, with wind and rain, most vilely cold for men who had cast their overcoats in the sweltering heat of mid-day. We had no flares, no barbed wire, and stood at gaze shivering.

Next day we dug in again elsewhere, and in the sun we began to take a joy in our cave dwellings. At that time we had only Turkish shells to fear, and could wait outside for the note, and then run and jump to safety underground. The exercise kept us fit and became amusing; their shrapnel was a supreme joke when it hit the wrong side of your trench. And the French next door had excellent coffee. We were so glad to be still alive that it was a very happy family. Our General came round, walking rapidly between the shells and jumping acutely, to deliver us lectures on how to entrench. "These trenches", he said, "date from the time of Noah". We reminded him gaily of the proximity of Troy. But that night the Turks attacked.

They came with the rising of the moon. The first shell came at 10 p.m., as I lay in my sleeping sack outside the trench for space. I heard it

come like fifty express trains in my sleep, and with a convulsive wriggle shot myself and bag into the trench. No one who has not heard shells has any idea of the speed with which they travel, or the rage with which they burst.

Then the sing of the bullets ; then our flares, great crests of blue fireworks, began to go up from agitated officers who could, or could not, see. Under these ghastly flares you see—for five seconds—Turks as tussocks and tussocks as Turks. I believed the regiments on our left were firing from nerves when they were actually being rushed ; and the first one knew of disaster were the shouts, as of a football crowd, on my left rear, where the " fedais " charged the Hampshires in our second line. The Hampshires killed those that got there, even as they killed the Hampshires. When I walked down to see how they were progressing that gallant regiment had one captain and one subaltern left. It was then that Major Leigh died, and his adjutant, and Colonel Smith of the artillery, were joined in death in that black mêlée. One did not know where the Turks were ; how they got in our rear. And now the football-crowd-shout, which seemed to resolve into " Allah, Allah ", came from our right rear also. I knew that they were through the French, too, and charging our horse artillery, who were firing at point-blank range in the darkness of the night. I had exhausted my flares, and lit up the ground in front of the trench by volleys of fire which

showed Turks, always silent, and creeping forward—but they were really dead.

Up to us from the black road behind came the Royal Scots—Territorials. They had been in reserve, after that frightful 28th. Out of the night they came. "Where are the Turks that have got through?" and off they filed into the night. There was silence for perhaps ten minutes, and then the splutter of the rifles, the shouts of the charge. Off went the Essex after them—splutter, shouts. It was only midnight, and till 4.30 no man knew how that bayonet work on the left was faring, least of all those gallant Territorials, who could not tell from minute to minute whether they were charging fifty or five thousand.

Somewhere in the valley on the right was a man calling on "Maria", and one prayed most to hear the guns of the horse artillery, an assurance that they were not captured. I do not know who makes the French ammunition; but they are above all men blessed. All that night long, like clockwork, their .75 shells passed thumping ten feet overhead. One felt one hold on hope and sanity; one thing left solid; they would pump on through eternity and hold the fort. Each burst gave us a little light.

"Allah, Allah, la illah illah Allah." There must be another wave going through the French in the valley. "There is no God but God, and Mahomed is His prophet." "Train your gun more into the valley." "Don't you hear me, Rhys Evans, get

your gun on to the valley." "He's dead, sir!" So in the black trench that brave dentist died with his thumb on the maxim push and his eyes straining into the darkness beyond the parapet.

At last the dawn came red over Achi Baba. The black forms lying in the grass in front began to show up. Figures were moving away in the night. Till one could make out which way those figures were moving no one knew whether we were cut off or saved. "The Turks run!" To right and left they were in flight. The relief after that night's tension made one turn and solemnly shake hands. The Senegalese bayoneted the Turks on the right; the Lancashires and Essex were after them on the left; and the guns caught them up on every skyline; and so the 2nd of May came up.

This day saw the baptism of the Naval Brigade—the *Howe*, the *Anson*, and the *Hood*. We were to press the Turks at once on their repulse, and at 11 a.m. the Naval Brigade went forward on the right of the Krithia road, the French on their right in the valley, and the everlasting 29th on the left. Half an hour later what were left came marching coolly back. Seasoned troops would have come back hunching themselves small and going quickly; these came back under a thunderstorm of shrapnel, a little white in the gills, as wondering why war was made like this, but ramrod straight and without talking. I saw three separate men go out from the trench into that torrent of shrapnel to carry ammunition to their

198 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

maxims. It takes courage for a man alone to go to the front when everyone else is being blown to the rear by blasts of shrapnel.

We borrowed some barbed wire from the French. The Turks seemed to have trebled their gunfire, which never stopped all day, as we prepared for another night.

Night after night—2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th—the Turks rushed upon us, but never again did they get through, or even home on to our parapet. On the 6th we were to advance.

Things happened in this way. At 10 p.m. a message was passed to me in the trench to report at once to Divisional Headquarters, and I wandered off four miles to the beach, tumbling over peat hags. There the General gave me supper and instructions; and I set off to walk back at midnight, very tired. Halfway back I could go no further, and the orderly and I sat down; he was a son of the manse, and as we sat there in that hubbub he talked of his old university till I could get up and go home to the trench.

At eleven next morning the three days' battle began. The whole line went forward. I had now thirty maxims in my charge, to get forward to the right place, show the target, and dig in—a hen with too many chickens. One's narrative must become personal. I ran from gun to gun till I was hit. At the last it came as a surprise.

This is what happens to the wounded. There was a crash, and I and another man were on the

ground. A cart-horse might have kicked me. The pain was all present, and gingerly I felt underneath to find if the blood were dripping. It was all nasty wet clothes. My eyes hunted for possible cover. Two who had never faltered ran to help me, jumping out of their hard-dug gun-pits. I was not for moving just then; one could only beg them to go away. I was conscious that the gun close to me was not being worked, and that bullets were chipping the stones round me. That gave me at last a sudden panic, and I tried to crawl off back to that blessed home of a trench that I had left in the morning a whole man.

Undoubtedly in the treatment of the wounded you see mankind at its best. The wounded man is, in a moment, a little baby; and all the rest become the tenderest of mothers. They carried me in in whispers. One of my men gripped my hand as they cut away the clothes; another lit a cigarette and put it between my teeth. They crooned over one. Before this war it was given to few to know the love of those who go together through the long valley of the shadow of death and have learnt to trust each other to the end.

XVI

PANIC IN WAR

"OUR heroes" are carefully hedged around. History and the Press collaborate with the ladies to perpetuate the theories of undaunted courage. You fit on khaki and a tin hat and the whole nature of timorous man changes. He becomes the strong silent man—one to be relied on—worshipped. This suits both parties—and the State. Most people like worshipping, all like being worshipped, and the State knows the value of prestige.

It would seem a pity to expose the conspiracy, but too many men have now worn the tin hat and know the nonsense of the theory. It is unwholesome to leave so large a gap between fiction and fact. Too many are turned into humbugs or cynics. We, who have hit the breeze, know that no normal man can escape deadly fear when for the first time he is under fire. When you see your first wounded man dragging to the rear—that is the first item to take the sap out of most heroes, even before you hear the sing of the ricochet or the bee-buzz of the long range bullet. How afraid I have been; and how afraid that I should show it!

The worst fear comes when you might do something to save yourself and don't dare do it. If you just have to sit and wait for it—well, you just have to, and it's no use worrying. That is why discipline is so cracked up, and would be cracked up more, only there are so many different ways of carrying out orders. They all went over the top, but every shell hole was a temptation to fall into—if only nobody was looking! So it is that the officers suffer most. I am sure they do. I know.

Likewise the sailor is much less afraid than the soldier. He is on the ship. He can't get off it. The whole ship's company goes to glory the same way. There is nobody drawing a bead on you personally from that clump of ruins, intending personally to slay you. No one is creeping up behind you in the dark. The man on a ship is not responsible for the adjectival ship. But the column in *The Times* always ran: "All 2nd Lieutenants except where otherwise stated." Yes! These were the people who suffered most from fear—and they had reason to, for they had to do the fearful things.

Giving way to fear is a very different thing. That is where the infection comes in. Do but see someone you rely on—an officer—an older soldier—afraid, and the bacillus of terror leaps to your eyes too, and from yours on and on through the whole mass. It is showing fear that creates the panic, particularly if they do not know what has

made you afraid. Men are so imaginative—more so than women. The unknown is the devil.

It is written of one of Wellington's seasoned regiments in the Peninsular War that, being quietly camped in a wood, one night, all—all rose and ran away, and no enemy was near. They say it was a haunted wood, but I know. One man had a nightmare and screamed, and another man looked afraid in the firelight, the next man said, "My God!" and the next man jumped to his feet, and the next man ran blindly; and then they all went. You see what would happen to you, sleeping in a black wood, if the man beside you suddenly rose and ran screaming; worse, suppose he ran silently, afraid even to make a noise.

But let me give my own samples of this dread infection. In the South African War I remember none. It was long range bowls, not suitable for panics. Once a shell fell among our transport, and—but they were native drivers—and we laughed. The infection cannot spread from black to white, and the vanity of white pride enjoys showing how superior are the master race. It is as well that the love of swagger is as great as the fear of death. Fear I did learn in South Africa—fear chiefly of being hit in the face where one was horribly naked. I remember there one could see the bullets coming not merely when they kicked up the spots of dust, but like instantaneous telegraph wires. And they sang. You can make the noise by throwing a spinning safety match. One adopted

automatically the crouched attitude of the cricket field, and wanted to put a hand in front of the eyes. But it was not a war. In two years I never saw one dead Boer. I was more afraid in ten minutes in Flanders.

It was the morning of the day the Germans got Lille. In Lille were British marines and French territorials. We went off patrolling in an armoured car. They called it an armoured car. I remember that the tyres were armoured, and so was the radiator, and the chauffeur sat in a sort of armoured extinguisher. But we were not armoured, and the armour elsewhere made us feel indecently exposed. We went south from Lille on the Douai Road to find out where the Germans were. "Go as far as so and so, or perhaps, if safe, to this and that", had been our orders. I was a passenger. The country got strangely empty, and silent as before an eclipse. Birds stopped singing. One covers ground with considerable rapidity in a motor-car, and map-reading is an art little known to the marines. So we found ourselves at "This and that" before we knew we had passed "So and so"; and all was deadly silent, except for the machine. Houses were there; inhabitants had vanished. The blind windows looked at us unwinkingly. The four cross-roads were empty, suspiciously empty. Who was there behind those windows? They always shot down on cars from above. We remembered that now. Only silence? Not a foot upon the stairs? Or

204 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

a face at the windows? (Where would the first shot come from?)

"Quick, turn the car!" He swung to the left in the cross-road, reversed, and lost his engine. The officer's nerve broke. He began to curse that chauffeur, his voice rising to a scream. He danced in front of the radiator; while the terrified driver, who could not see behind, tugged, jerked and cursed the lever; the rest of us got momentarily more silent. The engine whirred, the clutches slipped and ground. It seemed an age. At last trembling car and trembling chauffeur started home from that awful silent cross-roads, where the silent windows still looked down concealing the unknown, and I had learned my first lesson. Speak your orders most quietly when things seem most dangerous, or you start your own and others' panic.

It so happened that we ran into the German dragoons on our way home about six miles nearer Lille, and got into them from the rear with machine guns. They gave us a very good target, of which we took some advantage; but when I come to think of it, an elderly, short-sighted gentleman running after and shooting at galloping dragoons with a Lee-Enfield carbine at 600 yards is hardly a dignified or efficient method of making war.

My next panic was at the battle of Berlaar. The Germans had forced the crossing of the Scheldt that morning in a fog. Somehow I had got attached to a Belgian cavalry regiment with two

cars. I forget the name of the regiment, but they wore beautiful cherry-coloured riding breeches, and were commanded by someone who seems to have been the Prince de Ligne or some other historic title. We were the only English with the Belgian Army. I was ordered somewhat vaguely to patrol on the left front, and got right down to the Scheldt on the Termonde side. But the Germans had crossed further up-stream, and on my oblique return to the right wing, I came in for the rout at a fork of the road. The Belgian infantry were pouring north, dishevelled, without order, or hope, or officers. The wounded showed their wounds for pity and for an excuse. The villagers were pouring out of their houses into the rout with dogs and push-carts and mattresses and children. The shells were flying over. Terror was in every face. I caught it. I too looked back over my shoulder for the sight of the terrifying German helmet. The country was all cut up into hedges and houses. They might be behind that clump. Was that them back against the wood? I sympathized with those artillery drivers who, in like times, cut the traces and ride flying, leaving guns and honour behind.

But you cannot do that with an armoured car, and you cannot drive through a rout of horse, foot, artillery and dog carts with any comfort to them or yourself; and again I could not forget that we were the only English there. So perforce we halted at the road fork and looked cheerful.

206 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

We pretended that we had seen dozens of battles. Some genius started cooking tea in an etna on the top of the chauffeur's extinguisher. And when the mob got to the other side of our two cars—had us between them and the terror—their pace slowed down and their courage came back; the mob became an army again. And I learnt my second lesson. The guns must be the last to retire. In battle you pathetically believe that somebody else knows what to do, and will be doing the right thing. Frightened guns are worse than a screaming staff officer.

If you look inside the uniform, a battle is a pathetic business. They all carry rifles, and are so helpless. High-strung and nervous, and they have never done it—or at least just that—before. It is so novel. You look to see what the fellow next door is doing. The more helpless you are, the more you crave for somebody to follow, somebody to tell you. An example, either way, means more in battle than at any other crisis of life. One man may, with his eyes, turn a thousand into heroes or rabbits.

It was one of those early ill-considered "pushes" in Gallipoli. The three brigades had gone forward in the morning without preparation or objective. Towards noon I had found myself accidentally alongside a budding general, who was of the friendly sort—Williams was his name—specially friendly he became afterwards, and got me the D.S.O. and joined the Labour Party. Seeing me

with a bunch of idlers and machine guns, he told me to "push them into Krithia"—a nice vague order for a complete civilian to interpret as he chose. It was hot, and the machine guns were heavy, and the men straggled, and it is absurd to get killed, and a dozen times I thought, this is far enough; we can take up positions here and dig in.

More and more stragglers and wounded came back on us—men with the facile excuse that they were coming back for more ammunition, and a half-dozen kindly helpers for one man whose arm might be bloody. Greener and greener in the gills we went up through the débris. By a last effort of my palpitating will we did another hundred yards and found the whole attack coming back of us—French of both colours, Welsh, Essex, Irish, Borders—not so much running as coming away. This was a perfectly good excuse for retiring also into comparative safety. Undoubtedly that would have occurred, but here comes in the terrible force of example. There was under me a chief petty officer, a sort of sergeant, called John Little. He had joined us from Berwickshire, older than I, on the wrong side of fifty—the bravest and most modest gentleman I have ever met. Genially waving his revolver, he held up all who came huddling back. "I think, sir, we might get them forward now—just another hundred yards, sir!" Our parcel of men had increased to a thousand—all lying down, now hiding their faces. I wanted

to lie too, but there was Little standing away on the left, and I dare not lie down. Somehow we did as Little told us, and got forward that hundred yards. My French, usually fluent, resolved itself into adjuring our blue-coated allies to recollect the glories of Robespierre, Danton and Napoleon—and it had little effect. “Give the wounded time to come in”, said Little, and it held the Irish.

A Captain Churchill of the Essex came down to us with half a dozen men still under control. He saw Little, and put three stars on his shoulder strap with an indelible pencil. “If it is my last act, you ought to be an officer.” But when he moved his half-dozen to the rear, meaning to bring them along to my exposed right flank, the terrified men lying on their faces, looking over their shoulders, began to get up and move to the rear, too, and the new officer, addressing his creator, was shouting, “Halt, d——n yqu, or the whole lot will stampede”. They did not stampede. As the captain and Little and I walked up and down that line of prostrated men, gradually, fear left them, and lying on their stomachs, they dug themselves into safety. We won great honour (and many new machine guns) from that day's work, all because one man took away panic from over a thousand.

If panic by day is bad, panic by night is ten times worse. My final example shall be in darkness. It was our last night on the grounded *River Clyde*. For two hours I had been standing up

to my waist in water, jammed between corpses, helping fully-equipped men to jump from a boat of corpses into a jetty of corpses in the dark. I had put my tunic under the head of a dying Munster, and I went aboard to see why no boat could come to take off the wounded from that horrible jetty of dead and dying. One could only pass on the suggestion to a superior, and nothing was done. All were past doing anything, and it was dark. I remember that Geddes of the Border Regiment, who had shared my cabin the night before, was sitting on the cargo hatch coaming, covered with blood, patient and helpless, waiting as all wounded always wait. I hope I got him a drink, but I forget. I went under the poop to change my wet breeches, if I could find dry clothes in the dark.

Just when my boots and breeches were off, there came a specially sharp gust of firing on to the old ship—bullets made a startling noise on her iron hull and funnels. The moon seemed to have gone in—perhaps we had a squall of rain. There seemed to be nobody on deck. Presently a figure rolled along the deck, actually rolled over the step under the poop and into a corner, huddling up, groaning. "What is it?" I asked, terrified. "Are you hit, old man?" "No! I can't stand any more", and groans. That and the bullets, and the absence of boots and breeches in the dark, switched me from sanity. I knew the Turks were upon us, coming aft, and my feet

were bare. Alone under the poop were two terrified, crouching figures awaiting death—we both got the D.S.O. Fortunately I had men to look after, and I got something on those exposed parts, and crawled forward along the deck, into the Turks, who had so obligingly left the dark poop in peace. Of course there were no Turks, but fear pervaded the ship. As I crept into casement after casement, where my men and guns were, the men had to lick their lips and answer in whispers. Somewhere I met the same Colonel Williams, the only man on board who had kept thorough hold on himself, and fortunately he gave me something to do. We moved some guns and a metal bath for a barricade, and rigged them up on the deck, to sweep the gangway if the Turks should come. "Collect half a dozen you can trust, and get them on the bridge", he said. That was to be the keep of our castle, and there we dozed and fired by turns, looking down the gangway for the first mob of Turks from the impenetrable black pandemonium of the land.

One more vision I have of that night. On the steel decks below us there was a sudden rush of feet. More and more shuffling footsteps. Blind men pushing, thrusting in the dark. Louder, louder, louder! Scratching the steel decks, and yet no sound of voice. What do they run for? "Go down and see", said Williams. Clenching my teeth to prevent them chattering, I went down two ladders into the pitch black alley-way. Everyone

seemed blindly pushing aft. "What is it? What is it?" I kept asking the crowd that jostled past me. No one knew, no one even answered, they just pressed aft, pushing each other in their haste to escape from they knew not what. They could not know, for there was nothing to know. Perhaps one man had gone aft quickly, and the others had thought it most reasonable to do the same, and so the noise and panic grew, and their tongues clave to the roof of their mouths. But there was nothing, only the black night, only the gusts of bullets from the unknown shore, the unknown doings on the beach. They fled, like Wellington's regiment, from the unknown, silent, in the dark.

THE PROFESSOR AND THE POLITICIAN

When Christian saw the Celestial Hill, he began to run, and on the way he overtook a man who was called "Professor".

And Christian asked him "Whither are you bound, brother?"

And Professor answered "Truly, I am bound for the Celestial Hill".

"That is the way I am going", said Christian. "It is a good way and we may go to the Hill together".

"Nay", said Professor, "I am a specialist on hills and I know that we shall never get to it in the world".

"Why!" answered Christian stoutly, "he set me in this broad way that is called Liberty, saying that we have but to follow it to mount the hill before us".

"I perceive that you are an unlearned man and are bent on your own destruction", said the other, "for just above you will see that the fences of the road end, and the side slopes down to the plain of Licence, where you and all with you will be lost".

Then said Christian "I do not fear to walk in Liberty, for I perceive that its path goes straight up the Hill".

"Aye, up the Hill of Anarchy!" answered Professor hotly. "I have just come from the Ecclesiastical College, where we have analysed economic specimens and political concepts taken from that Hill, and we find that it is a mass of demand and supply and competition and self-interest. Come back, I say!"

By this time Christian was near the top, and he cried down to the other "I cannot go back".—BOLTON HALL. "The Game of Life".

THE professor annoyed me. He was so obviously nervous at daring to connect theory and practice. His training, one might suppose, had been not thought, but caution. He tried—an obvious con-

cession—to use my glasses, and supposed that they were dirty ones. He tried to get down to my level, and I wanted him to come up. It seemed that he had never thought what were the objects of any teaching, or whither he wanted men to go. There was no clear light. Just, so it seemed, words and muddle—such a waste—degrading.

It is perhaps inevitable that Professors of Political Economy and Politicians of the Market Place should approach by very different avenues of thought, such a controversial subject as the Taxation of Land Values. Yet there is no pressing question of the day where want of co-operation and understanding between the two elements that frame public opinion is more likely to be disastrous.

I will here try to make the Politician's road, down which he would have you go, clear to the vision of the Professor. I will try to make it clear just because he has not made clear to me the road down which he would have us go. I do not know where he wants to go. I do not know what he proposes. He may not want to go anywhere or to direct anyone; but, human nature being what it is, that is improbable.

If I understood the Professor aright, however, his argument for the taxation of land values, and the argument he conceived of as the Politician's also, is the probable increase of material prosperity. "Production is more efficient"; "there is an expectation, well founded, that the public will gain more than the land-owner loses"; the best

214 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

development of urban life is to be achieved when "towns are able to devote most of the rent of land to improving the attractions of the town". His only difficulty is "on grounds of equity" to the landlords. His aim is some conception of that indeterminable "greatest good of the greatest number", to achieve which he would commit a little injustice.

There are doubtless politicians and politicians, but the brand that gets elected knows that electors do not approve of that sort of morality. And of the Land Tax men, I can safely say that they have not the aims of the Professor, and, if they had, would not try to achieve them at such a cost. We have a sort of feeling that the ancient Professor is trying to put on what he believes to be modern spectacles, or, to change the simile, trying to come down to what he fancies to be the Politician's level of thought and morality. I think that I prefer the honest indignation of Captain Pretyman or the Duke of Northumberland.

In a word, therefore, we do not seek to increase material prosperity; we do not aim at the greatest good of the greatest number; we regard either of these aspirations as being consistent with slavery and with autocracy. Our object is to secure freedom. Our method is by stopping injustice. We have a (possibly old-fashioned) prejudice in favour of the dictum of Aristotle that—in the long run that which is unjust can never be expedient.

FREEDOM.

In our estimation, men will be free when any man or body of men are able to work freely for themselves, and to secure for themselves the full reward, each of his own labour. This free opportunity to work will break down what Labour calls "the iron law of wages". What the Professor calls our "iron law" I do not know; we mean the inevitable result of there being two men after one job, with no alternative save to get the job or starve. The free opportunity breaks down this law. Wages, we say, will be governed, not by the cost of subsistence, but by what a man can get working freely for himself. Apeing perhaps the language of economists, we say, that wages will then be governed by "the marginal utility of labour".

This free opportunity to work presupposes a free margin where men can apply themselves to the land with security of tenure and without demand for rent, rates or taxes. The Ricardian theory in perfection, involves a gradual sloping increase of rent going up from the free margin, where land is free, to, say, the Royal Exchange, where land is £1,000 a square yard. In our present society the rent-slope ends, not in a margin of free land, but in a sudden precipice; and below a certain price or rent no land can be got, however worthless. Further, every established change from one form of land utilization to another, in-

volves another abrupt precipitate rise in rent. This is partly due to custom. It would seem to owners to be almost absurd to let the smallholder have land at the same rent per acre as the large farmer ; or the allotment gardener to have land in an urban area at accommodation land rent. And the builder—the builder must not expect to get land till it has “ ripened ” to building rents.

These precipices, these sudden rises in rent, are always obstructing the use of land, or a more intensive use of land. Our present rating and taxing methods encourage the elevation of the precipices, since the rates and taxes are based upon the inferior use of the land, and rise with devastating effect if the same land should be put to more productive use. We believe the Single Tax would level down the precipices, and give us the Ricardian rent-slope in its perfection with its free margin where men can work in freedom.

With the slope flattened out, the builder, too, would obtain his free margin, where he could get market garden land at market garden rents ; the market gardener would secure his free margin where he could get agricultural land at agricultural rent ; and the farmer would find land available at a grazing rent. The miner, the quarryman, the wood-chopper would have their free margins also. We are not speaking here of absolute freedom to use land for any purpose. There will nearly always be some inferior use to which land might be put. All we ask the Professor to agree

to is, that it is desirable to facilitate the better use of land, and that such better use is hampered by our present system of taxation, and would be assisted by such a change of system as we propose. He may deny that the Single Tax would secure absolute freedom, but he cannot deny that it would result in less obstruction and cheaper land.

JUSTICE.

My Professor believed that the Repeal of the Corn Laws was justified, because it made for the greatest good of the greatest number. But he hinted that the Repeal amounted to the robbery of the landlords. Professors, I have no doubt, felt much the same about the abolition of rotten boroughs in 1832. But it is here that we—the Professor and the Politician—differ. Irrespective of what its results might be, the Repeal of the Corn Laws was to us, and to Richard Cobden, an act of justice. The protection conferred by the Corn Laws, when first imposed, gave to certain persons a privilege, and the value of that privilege was akin to the value given to the owner of premises when they are licensed for the selling of beer.

People bought and sold that privilege (the right to get a higher [protected] price for food produced from their land), just as they bought and sold rotten boroughs, just as they bought and sold public-house licences. They called what they bought and sold "property"; yet it was not

property, but privilege. A privilege is very different from property. My title to a chair or locomotive goes back to the man who made it ; my title to a privilege goes back to the vote of a temporary majority in the Houses of Parliament. If a man wants to use my locomotive, he gets something he wants, and he pays in effect the man who made it, a price which is determined by the cost of reproducing the article. If a man wants to use my privilege, he gets nothing but a temporary State protection, and he pays me a price for acquiring my "right" to tax the public.

This difference between privilege and property is well known and accepted. The State did not compensate the owners of rotten boroughs in 1832 ; the State did not compensate the landlords in 1847 ; the State did not compensate the owners of slaves in 1864 ; it did not compensate the owners of public-house licences in 1904, it arranged for them to compensate each other. These privileges, which a temporary majority of the House of Commons has given, are a private right to tax the community. The granting of the privilege was unjust ; the revocation of such privilege is not robbery, but justice.

We have now in this country, and we may have more, protective tariffs, whereby certain protected industries will flourish. The ever-changing shareholders will enjoy a privilege, a legal right to tax the community. Property or Privilege? Will those who get the tariff reduced be guilty

of robbery, or will they be acting justly? Further, suppose that, as in many foreign countries, the protective tariff is raised every five years; suppose that this process continues so long that the purchaser of shares in the protected industry may well have bought in expectation of a continual intermittent increase in the tariff. Is it conceivable that it could be considered unjust to say, "There shall be no further rise in the tariff?" Yet that, in effect, was the Professor's complaint as to the injustice of the Increment Value Duty.

So that when we advocate the alteration of our system of rating and taxation (with a view to securing the free margin), and find that the alterations involve the destruction of certain privileges, enjoyed of old time as the result of legislation, we still support the alteration. We believe that injustice consists not in the destruction of privilege, but in its continued existence.

HOW TO PROCEED.

What are the privileges to be destroyed? How do the Politicians seek to destroy them? On these points, too, in the interests of clarity, there are explanations to be made by the Politicians to the Professors of Political Economy. They would have made it clear to us had they not become the most conservative of churches.

What steps do the Politicians advocate? We must answer that question first, before we can

see what privileges exactly will be destroyed. The Professor, as was natural, concerned himself with the Increment Value Duty of the 1909 Budget. This Duty is not properly a Land Value Tax at all. It makes land no cheaper, no easier to get ; it in no way creates a free margin. It has all the disadvantages of a tax partial in its application and accidental in its incidence. Invented by Mr. McKenna in order to burke the issue, it was only accepted by radicals as a method of securing a full valuation. It may be buried without a moment's regret on the part of any land-taxer. Looked at from the mere Treasury point of view, there was no money in it. The Professor may have his fling at it, and one would leave Mr. McKenna to defend his unfortunate bantling.

Something of the same sort may be said of the other Land Value Duties, as imposed in 1909. They were only a makeshift at first ; they are only a nuisance now ; they can be forgotten with pleasure by all save the Whigs who begot them for campaign purposes. The radical Politician has never varied in his object, nor in his method.

We ask for two things :

1. A general tax of 1d. in the £ on Land Value in town and country alike ; part of the proceeds to go to relieving the rate-payers of certain burdens which are national in character ; part to abolish the food taxes.

2. Power to be given to Local Authorities to adopt Land Value as the standard upon which rates are to be levied, instead of using the Annual Value of Land and Building in their present condition of use.

My Professor confined his approval, somewhat illogically, to the Local Rate on Land Values. So does Lord Robert Cecil, and so do many other Conservatives by whom the scandal of the rise in Land Values, due to public improvements, cannot be overlooked. The problems, and the principles involved, are exactly the same whether we are considering the Local Rate or the General Tax. But for the moment I will touch on the General Tax (used for the relief of local authorities), to show that it is necessary if only in order to get round the great and obvious difficulty of Boundaries. Some Municipalities have within their taxing limits wide areas of unbuilt-on suburban land, to the value of which they and their citizens largely contribute; others have a restricted area, already built over, and are creating and maintaining the land values of suburban Urban Districts. It is only by a General Tax on Land Values that you can deal at all fairly between the two classes of Municipality.

But as the Professor is sympathetic to the change in rating, I prefer to deal here with this change. It gives one a complete illustration. Unlike the General Tax, it involves the complete change to

222 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

Single Tax for local rating. It therefore shows exactly what are the privileges which will be destroyed. And theoretically a General Tax should be justifiable by every argument which justifies the Local Rate.

CHANGE IN LOCAL RATING.

The change in Local Rating, as recommended by the Select Committee on the Land Values Taxation (Scotland) Bill of 1906, is not to constitute an additional burden, but is to effect a substitution for the present system of rating improvements. The same sum total will be raised from owners and occupiers of property in any locality. The same people will pay, but their contributions will be measured by the value of the land they own or occupy, instead of by the annual letting value of the property in its present condition, improved or otherwise.

Those persons whose property is improved above the average, will contribute less than at present; those whose property is improved up to the average will contribute the same; and those whose property is not, will pay more. But all will be able to improve their property—build, cut up into small holdings, open up minerals, etc., without being penalized for doing so. Even the man whose land is "ripe" and unbuilt-upon has only to build and improve up to the average to set right his balance sheet of income and taxation.

It is true that the contributions of the citizens will not be according to ability to pay. They will be measured by a juster rule; they will be levied according to benefits received. All wise expenditure of the ratepayers' money results in increasing land value—whether the money be spent on a park, a tram line, a sewer, free schooling, or poor relief. Because of any of these conveniences, the users of land and houses are able to pay more rent—i.e. land values are higher, and the landlord receives the benefit.

This can best be seen if one contemplates the effect of the abolition of any one of these public services. If, for instance, there were no Poor Relief, then property would be less secure and orderly labour would be less efficient and less obtainable. Both results would diminish land value. "Poor Relief" is a business proposition, just as much as a sewer or a gaol. How good is each business proposition can be measured by the increase of land value resulting. Land Value everywhere is an exact measure of the benefits conferred by the people upon the owner of that land. The owner's personal activities do not matter, only the activities, the needs, and the intelligence of the community. It is true that the expenditure of the ratepayers' money may be unwise. In that case the owners may suffer, even by the present system, more than they gain from the public service.

WHAT IS THE PRIVILEGE DESTROYED?

What then is the privilege of which land-owners will be deprived? As a whole, in every locality, they will pay in rates no more than at present. Every individual land-owner, by improving up to the average, can be sure of being no worse off than any other; and, as a whole, they pay no more.

One could quote good quotable authority, Professor Sedgwick among the number, to show that, ultimately, the incidence of all rates is upon the landlord, whether those rates be raised upon land value or not. Professor Marshall, on the other hand, maintains that only that part of the present rate falls upon the landlord, which is proportionate to the amount of land value in the whole hereditament. No doubt, so far as the immediate incidence is concerned, Marshall's is the correct view. But if the ultimate incidence be considered, there would probably be no difference between Professors Marshall and Sedgwick as to the general result. It is a question of time. One might say, therefore, that no change in the method of raising rates really matters to the landlord; what matters to him is how the money is spent. That would be true were it not for the effect the change in the method of raising rates would have upon the victims of privilege, who are now deprived of freedom.

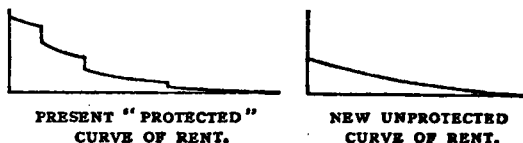
How, then, will the landlord suffer? What is

the privilege of which this change will deprive him? It is merely that he will have to face increased competition. For, in the case of house property, for instance, the rating system which checks the free construction of houses will be abolished. There will therefore be an increase in the supply of houses. Therefore the rents and prices of *all* houses will fall. The same reasoning applies to all factories, to mines, to small holdings. The increase in the supply, due to the exemption of improvements from taxation, will lower the rents now obtained for houses already built, as well as for those to be built. It will lower the royalties obtainable by mines now worked, as well as the royalties obtainable for minerals which can no longer be held up. It will lower the prices obtainable for the product of factories and small holdings already in existence, and therefore reduce their rent.

The present rating system is, in fact, in its operation, exactly similar to a protective tariff. It checks competition with all those houses, factories, mines that are now in use, by, on the one hand, penalizing all new production and, on the other hand, by benefitting those who withhold the land from use. Looked at in this light, all land-owners will indeed lose a valuable privilege. They will lose the protective tariff, which makes competition difficult, and which limits the free supply of land which might compete with theirs. They will lose the privilege of being helped to

226 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

erect these precipitous barriers of which I spoke earlier—those barriers which now obstruct the free margins and increase rent and unemployment.



If it is unjust to deprive them of this privilege, then it was unjust to deprive them of the Corn Laws ; it was unjust to allow the invention of steamships and railways to bring us cheap wheat ; it was unjust to allow the free competition with our old-established industries, of the newer and more scientific industries of Germany and Belgium.

“ But ”, says the Professor, throwing up his hands, “ such a change as this, would tax landlords out of existence. You are not merely depriving them of a protective tariff ; the rate will be at least 20s. in the pound ; you are depriving them of their property altogether ”. That is not so. Real estate consists of land and buildings. Real estate owners, as a whole, will pay no more than at present. So far as the direct effect upon them is concerned, what they lose on the swings, they gain on the roundabouts. All they lose as landlords, is the artificial protection. But, also, of course, all the master-class lose their slaves.

“ Anyhow ”, says the Professor, “ there is not enough land value anywhere to meet the needed

rates". My answer is the same. What is called land value to-day, is land value *subject to the payment of the present rates*. If the present communal services were rendered free of cost so that there were no rates, land values would be higher by the capitalized amount of the rate now collected. If the present communal services cost twice as much as they do, land value would be less than it is by the capitalized amount of the rate. As we propose to raise the same sum total in rates after as before the change, therefore land values will still exist, and indeed would remain the same, were it not for the loss of the protective tariff. It is the increased supply of land available for use which alone will reduce land value.

Some reservation is needed here. As the margin is freed, and wages rise and men become more free, they will not work so hard. They will not be so driven when the whip has ceased to crack. The less hard they work, the less land they will need. That, too, will reduce the value set on land.

I have endeavoured to show, so far as Local Rating is concerned, what is the privilege that we are seeking to destroy, and how we propose to go about it. Our justification is that we are destroying a privilege. If we wanted further justification it is, that we want free access for man to those natural resources which he requires in order to be free, to which men should have equal rights, and without access to which, man must die. Inci-

dentally, it happens that our every step towards our goal is likely to increase the material prosperity of the workers by increasing the opportunities for productive employment, increasing both wages and the purchasing power of those wages.

A GENERAL TAX ON LAND VALUES.

If the change in Local Rating is justified and makes for freedom, exactly the same arguments will apply to justify a similar change in general taxation. The defence of the change on principle remains the same, and the results of the change must tend in the same direction. So far as Schedule A of the Income Tax is concerned, a change in the standard by which the Tax is measured, from annual value of land and building to Land Value alone would obviously be precisely the same, both in effect and justification, as the similar change in Local Rating. But are we justified in using the general tax on land values, not merely to replace a tax on buildings and improvements (whether Schedule A or a part of the Local Rate), but also to reduce the taxes on food? Yes, for just as, in the long run, all rates are incident on the landlord, so, too, are all taxes ultimately incident upon the same landlord, so long as the "iron law of wages" is in operation.

Some amplification of this point may be permitted here. The value of the product of labour is shared by landlord, capitalist, and labour. The

share of capital, the price demanded for the use of capital, depends on world-wide conditions of supply and demand. A tax on capital (true capital in the economic sense) checks the creation of capital, thus reducing the supply, and increasing the price that those who have it can charge for it. In other words, the capitalist shifts the tax; for the supply being reduced, he can charge more, and the man who uses it pays more, and the man who buys the goods pays him. As for the share of labour—if the “iron law” is in operation, his wages depend always on the labourer's cost of subsistence. The last three years have made that fairly obvious. Therefore taxes on the labourer's necessities, increasing their cost, increase his cost of subsistence, and therefore, necessarily, his wages also. The share of labour, like the share of capital, is independent of any tax (in the long run); and the other partner, the landlord, finds that in the long run the incidence of any tax is upon him and him alone. Lest this should seem hard on the landlord, let us remember, that if the money is wisely spent, he too, the landlord, is also in the long run the sole beneficiary.

If labour were fed, and clothed, and housed, out of taxes, its costs of subsistence upon which wages depend would be lowered, and the landlord could take a larger share in the product of labour.¹

¹ One should perhaps say that under present conditions wages tend to sink, not to subsistence level, but to that level below which revolution or a general strike becomes probable—a level dependent on an accepted standard of minimum comfort, and the spirit of the people.

230 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

Therefore, unless you break through the "iron law of wages" by giving to the workers the opportunity to freely employ themselves, all juggling with forms of taxation that do not free the margin must work in a vicious circle. Such juggling is, in the long run, economically futile, and the only arguments for and against such changes must be based on considerations other than their ultimate effect. Just as, according to Professor Sedgwick, all rates ultimately fall upon the landlord, so too, while men are not free, do all Taxes fall also upon the landlord. We are supplied with our justification for the General Tax upon Land Values by the same arguments that justified the change in Local Rating. And our object is again the same—not revenue, nor the penalization of a section of the community, nor even, indeed, greater production—but just freeing the margin so that the worker may be free.

"Why", triumphantly asks our Professor, "why do you want to throw Local and National Taxation upon the proprietors of land, seeing that on your own showing they already bear the full amount of it?" The reply obviously is, that they, indeed, will not be taxed more; but, whereas they now receive in return for their taxes the enslavement of a people, under the Single Tax neither they nor any other masters will find slaves to exploit.

XVIII

FREEDOM OR POLICE

How are you to argue with people who think that what a majority wants is necessarily right ! A Home Secretary thinks that *because* the majority wants to raise the age of consent, that *therefore* it should be raised. The majority thinks that Mr. Bertrand Russell should be in prison ; the majority—I daresay, for all I care—approved alternately of the burning of witches, or Catholics, or Protestants. The majority has as much right to bully a minority because it is a minority, as the Germans had to invade Belgium.

If ninety-nine people out of every hundred wanted England to be "dry", that in itself would give them no right to coerce one man off his drink. If ninety-nine out of every hundred women thought that no woman should be a prostitute, that would not give them the right to lock up the prostitute. Conscientious objectors were in a minute minority, but it would be ridiculous to imagine that they objected to the fighting, half as much as they did to the injustice of coercion. The majority does not like money-lenders, or priests, or hair-oil, or the sound of German names ; the majority of men

think that women should wear veils so as not to dazzle or distract the male from serious business ; the majority of women think that husbands should not read the paper at breakfast. No one thinks of quarrelling with these majorities—they can think what they like—those we quarrel with are the unprincipled politicians and professional benefactors who say : “ The majority thinks this or that. Let us make a law about it ”.

A majority, because it is a majority, has no right whatever to make a law in accordance with its wishes. This truth is now realized, in fact, if not in words, by every Legislature. The argument is abandoned to the uneducated. Any skilful statesman avoids any such argument. He rarely needs it, for he uses instead a far more formidable persuader. He calls upon “ the Interests of the Public ”. We may, therefore, first clear away the nursery idea that a majority *qua* majority is supposed by any sensible person to have a right to make Acts of Parliament with a clear conscience, if that Act does in effect coerce a minority *qua* minority. Brush that to one side. Acts of Parliament do not make things right or wrong, still less does majority opinion.

The argument that is used, and used with deadly effect, to make wrong right is the more acceptable one that the measure is “ in the public interest ”. It is in the public interest that the one man should not get drunk. It is in the public interest that there should be no infected prostitutes ;

it is in the public interest that agitators and pacifists with poisonous ideas should not be allowed to air those views in public ; it is in the public interest that we—clip the ears of Prynne, burn Latimer, and remove the head of Sir Thomas More.

The Six Repressive Acts in England a hundred years ago, and the Six Repressive Acts in India the other day, are alike supported, conclusively, by the argument of "the public interest". "Speaking in the interests of the Public", says a character in Chesterton's *Napoleon of Notting Hill*, and he has invested this joyous phrase with ridicule for evermore.

The impressive statesman of to-day, instead of rolling out "the interests of the public", turns with patriotic anguish to the Latin tongue, and murmurs, *Salus populi suprema lex* (the Safety of the State is the supreme law). We then go down on our knees, say, "Trust the Prime Minister", or "Trust Haig", or "Trust Bottomley", and sing the National Anthem. That is, if one may say so, a most suitable tune for the occasion. It comes from Germany, and so does the sentiment that everything must give way to the safety of the State.

There are two schools of thought in England, and there have always been just these two, ever since the time of Wycliffe at least. There are those who believe in this State-supreme law ; and there are those who regard it as a damnable un-English

heresy. I may mention that I do not belong to the former school.

The Constituent Assembly in Paris in the year 1792, terrified at the gathering enemies of the Republic beyond her frontiers, and at the flight to those enemies of the noble *émigrés*, propounded a law decreeing death for those that fled, and the galleys for those that aided in the flight. Mirabeau alone opposed, recalling the persecution of the Huguenots, declaiming of "right" and "wrong" rather than of expediency, ending: "You may pass this law. I swear that I will never obey it". In the teeth of great danger to the State, the Assembly went over to the view of Mirabeau and unanimously rejected the law.

It is quite simple; there is a higher law than "Safety of the State". It is this: "Do justice, though the heavens should fall". *Fiat Justitia ruat cælum*. Though this maxim, too, is old and classic Latin, yet, unfortunately, *Justitia* is harder to define than the safety of the State, and the doctrine much more difficult to follow down the straight and narrow road.

We are all now concerned with the making of laws; we ought to have some working principle to guide us. I think "the safety of the State" is one such guide—a bad one; and the other—just what each individual conscience tells us is right or wrong. There can, of course, be no State without coercion—taxes, police, bye-laws, enforced respect for your neighbours' convenience or health,

or wishes. The absolute right of the individual to do what seems right in his own eyes, is inconsistent with the existence of a State. We cannot dispense with the State till the individual has reached a higher state of evolution than he has yet attained. But we can contemplate the perfection of the individual, when coercion will no longer be required to get him to respect his neighbours' rights. We can also assist the development of such perfection by constantly taking down the scaffolding of law, even though risks may be involved, rather than by constantly adding to the scaffolding in the interests of society. It is the individual whom one wishes to perfect, not the State-scaffolding. Yet it is of the State-scaffolding that we seem to make a fetish under the cloak of benevolence. Every new law adds a tincture to the structure.

The ultimate result of the "do justice" doctrine, carried to its logical limit is, indeed, anarchy, though no sensible man would have anarchy till the individual is fitted for it. But the immediate result of the practice of the "do justice" doctrine is to fit the individual for freedom. Protect him always, and in every way, and he will never learn to walk by himself or think for himself or even to respect himself. Real progress can only come by tumbles, kicks and bruises.

The ultimate result of the "Safety of the State" doctrine, carried to its logical limit, is complete bureaucratic tyranny—a tyranny under which every

236 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

child born into the world will be inspired by the State with the State thoughts, and guided through State grooves till every conception of individual initiative has been eliminated. The immediate result is a constantly increasing reliance upon the wisdom and judgment of the bureaucracy—the priesthood of the new State.

The whole spirit of one doctrine is that the individual should think for himself; the whole spirit of the other is that the individual should accept authority. One depends on the belief in the perfectability of human nature, the other on the belief in original sin.

But we get into metaphysics, and it is the practical issue in everyday legislation that must be made clear. It is fatally easy to make a case for laws "in the public interest", laws to coerce people for their good, laws to benefit the poor, laws to inspect the drains, or the children's hair, or, indeed, laws to attempt to make tolerable any of the hundred and one manifestations of the inequity of the present social order. The sufferers from the system ask for them, ever more dependent on the State; the officials know that such laws make more officials; a newspaper starts an agitation that draws readers; the experts dogmatize uncontradicted; and fresh crimes are created for the greater glory of the State.

In H. G. Wells's *Time Machine*, the people of the age to come are found without chins or wills or thoughts; all risks have long since been elimi-

nated by legislation, so that an individual will or thought has been sloughed off like the monkey-tail. This is a long shot at what comes from thinking only of the welfare of society.

To-day nearly the whole of our Upper Class, while rejecting this dictation for themselves, yet assume that for common people nothing could be better than that they should work and live and think as our all-wise legislators from the Upper Class would have them do. They are right in thinking that we might in that case achieve the "greatest good of the greatest number", but the definition of the word "good" would rest with the legislators. We could get the peace that is akin to death, and the progress that leads to a purely mechanical existence.

On the other hand, is the anarchy goal so very terrible? Man cannot yet "love thy neighbour as thyself", because in the world as we know it, men rob and exploit and enslave one another. But if each got for himself the full reward of his labour, there would be much less need of police, or bye-laws, or of compulsory taxation. In spite of the growth of laws, in spite of the apparent passion for an all-embracing bureaucracy, it is evident that even to-day we are better fitted than we were fifty years ago to be trusted. The amount of voluntary service during the war proves this; the decline of crimes of violence proves this; the fear of public exposure in the Press, a fear greater than that of prison, shows the same decline in

238 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

the necessity for law. Though it was not possible in 1872, it is quite possible now that if education in Scotland were made voluntary, parents would still continue to send their children to school without any coercion, and the schools would be likely to be more attractive.

That this should be the growing sentiment, in spite of the Upper Class habit of relying upon the police, and in spite of the struggle and exploitation of the present day, shows what could be expected of human nature under free conditions. Those who believe in human nature must above all seek to put an end to the present hideous exploitation of the working classes, just in order that human nature may have a chance. The man who seeks to do away with exploitation, and yet believes that regulation and regimentation are essential, and show the road to follow, contradicts himself. Human nature has no chance in a strait-waistcoat.

The choice before us is obvious. There are just two roads. Those who will *not* believe that you can do away with exploitation—that is, those who do not want to do away with it—all those “in the interests of Society” will regulate, inspect and convert the working man into a machine that shall like its servitude. And there are those who know that exploitation can be stopped, and that man can yet be free; they will take liberty and justice as their guides, and pin their faith to the perfectability of human nature. Is our guide to be—Police or Freedom?

XIX

WOUNDED

THERE is a children's game—puss in the corner, I think—in which you are safe when in the corner, but directly a newcomer arrives for safety, you must fly through danger to a fresh refuge in another corner. That was the game I played with my conscience under Achi Baba. At intervals, some fifty yards apart, were my machine guns each safely dug into a pit. I could run to each for refuge, and stop there till the gad-fly drove me on to the next, when again I ran over Gallipoli. At last I went down, pole-axed, with a bullet in my groin, all out in the open.

There was a loathsome, tepid wet mess underneath. Was I bleeding to death? Should I die? In *Mr. Barnes of New York*, the girl's brother was shot in the groin, and he died in five minutes. It is many years ago, but I remember all—what I thought and saw and felt. My sole surviving lieutenant ran to pick me up and take me in. But just ten minutes before there had been a man beside me shot through the stomach. He had begged for a doctor. I had not let them take him in. I had made them take up the gun and

carry it forward. He could wait, and so I waited.

I was on the slope facing Achi Baba, and the whole semi-circle of the battle lay before me. One of the guns of the Anson Battalion stood idly on its tripod a few yards away; they were also in my charge. There was one man lying beside it. Things seemed to be dancing up and down, but what a target! "Fire that gun", I said, and then I rolled over again, for the place in which I had been hit made me feel very sick. "Beg pardon, sir, but I don't know how", said Jeaves. Then, what a horribly exposed place this was to lie in. Everybody could see me and shoot at me—and they did. That was a bullet, and that, and that, and the stones beside me rang. And I couldn't bear being hit again. I started crawling back—oh, so very gingerly. Almost directly two ran out and put arms round me and brought me in, and everything became misty.

I remember the exact spot in the trench where I lay as the doctor cut my good riding breeches. In the trench I was no longer afraid. So far as I remember, I was most anxious to be told by the wireless operator, who had me in his arms, that I had done all that could be done, that I was a brave man. As a rule I set no great store by the opinions of the wireless operator. But I was in a state of wishing some kind old "mammy" to hold my hand and whisper: "What a good, brave little man it is, to be sure". They say

that I remarked with sufficient cheerfulness, "Thank God, my seat's safe", but I meant, of course, safe for my party in case of a bye-election.

And now the long, long struggle with conscience was over. Nothing more was expected of me. For the first mile, two carried me down on a stretcher, and the shrapnel burst over us, and they never dropped me. That is a test of real affection. But what did it matter? My fear had gone. There was nothing more for me to do. My family, the House of Commons, my constituency need never be ashamed of me now. There was—at last—rest. Never need I trouble about what they would think of Josiah Wedgwood. I had passed the test. It is so we all think—all the three million casualties that survived.

They put me on a bullock cart with a Gurkha driver, and as I lay jolted to and fro I thought I should burst asunder. Two miles more and they laid me in a tent on W Beach. There were about twenty of us officers lying there. Would the doctor ever come to me? Some were moaning. I moaned and they gave me morphine, but what I wanted was the doctor. It became an obsession. I knew lying there in the half-dark that I should die all because I had to wait so long. Then they carried somebody out. He had died. "Doctor! Doctor!" They all felt like me. There were snatches of talk. So-and-so was knocked out. One of the machine-gun subalterns was dying at the far side of the tent and kept telling us about it. Young

Asquith had got his first wound, the first of four, and was lying also at that end of the tent. That boy raised the tone. For General Ian Hamilton came to see us, especially to see after Asquith, and when he was asked how he did, his reply came pat, "All right, sir. How is the battle going?" I still wish I had thought of that. But I wanted the doctor to save my life.

At last they came and carried me out on to a table and clapped chloroform over me, and I slept. Now the sun is bright again, and they are carrying me on to a lighter. There seemed to be hundreds of us side by side on the thwarts, stretchers touching. How long will they leave us here, rising and falling with the swell.

Patience, unlimited patience, is the one lesson one learns in war. After hours, the lighter moved out to sea, and each stretcher case was hoisted up on to the tender. Hours more, and the tender transferred us to the hospital ship—all the deck carpeted with stretchers, each loaded with a blanket and an impassive, patient face looking up to the burning sky. Whenever anybody cried for "Water" or "Doctor", others were aroused to call too, and a pitiful chorus of wails rose and fell—a cross between an infant crèche and the tenth circle of Dante's Inferno. It is borne in on me that there were 1,200 cot-cases on that boat and three doctors, one of whom threw in his hand and went sick himself. Most cases were not wounds, but dysentery, and there were no nurses. At that period of the

war it was felt, as in Mesopotamia, that female nurses would make trouble, and must be shielded from all dangers and horrors, and reserved for the comforts of the base.

There on the deck of this hospital ship, gazing upward at the sky, amid those cries and moans, I think I should have finally died, but "Daisy" found me at last. I saw him coming, peering down at each face in turn, but I had no strength to call recognizably. He looked like a young Greek god straight from Mount Hymettus. He always did—till he died. While I could not speak, a silly picture got into my feverish memory, of Edith looking for the body of King Harold on the field of Senlac. To and fro he went, stepping over the stretchers till he found me. Then he—the Hon. Frances Stafford Maclaren, Member of Parliament, who always expected to get anything he wanted, and got it—had me shifted under shelter, brought the doctor and had me operated on once more. I never again saw "Daisy" after I closed my eyes that time.

I lay on the saloon table, and they told them to take my money and seal it up. One remembers such small things. It sounded final. The surgeon from Liverpool, mercifully a civil surgeon, fixed me this time. The bullet, he explained, had passed between the main vein and the main artery, where there was no room for anything to pass, and had slipped against my thigh bone. Unfortunately, there were other infernal complications. I shall certainly live to be hanged,

244 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

I shared the nightmare cabin with a ranker officer of the Lancashire Fusiliers, with a smashed leg. He could move carefully from his berth, I couldn't. I think he left at Alexandria. It got into my head that we had been cast ashore on the coast of Asia Minor, and that I was lying on the shelf of a dug-out. The roar of the surf was in my ears. Beaumont occasionally looked over the top, but I couldn't catch what he said for the roar. It was a pity the ship had been lost; clever of them to have saved me. The light filtered down to me from above when Beaumont was looking out, but the roar pervaded all things.

Then I was in a hurricane, and the ship was rushing down an endless hill with inconceivable speed. We could not possibly survive this, positively must run off the rails at the next corner. Then, up again and—dive. Then, was I really nailed to my bed like a butterfly staked down. So on and on each day, till nature and the sea air conquered even the terror of sleep and pain. When they off-loaded me flat on to a lighter at Malta I began to feel a fraud. I was no longer wounded enough for all their care. At Bighi, with a room to myself and nurses and books and newspapers, the drop scene came down. The great adventure was over. I came back to life, the old life and the old dull ache, waiting, still waiting, as the wounded always wait, for the letter which never came.

SOOTHING SYRUP—THE ANNUAL HOUSING
BILL OF 1909 OR 1929

THE annual Housing Bill will presently pass the Commons amid a shower of congratulations upon the Minister for Health. Mr. Lyttelton will have complimented Mr. Burns ; Mr. Burns, Mr. Lyttelton. Budding statesmen below and above the gangway will have kissed again with tears, and another 80 Clauses of pious legislation will be through the mill and on the Statute Book. There is not the least danger from the Lords, so far as the Housing, Town Planning, etc., Bill is concerned. Pass Friend ! All's well !

The Bill belongs to a class with which we are drearly familiar. They are all devised by the superior people who govern, in order to soothe the working classes—to keep them quiet and tame—a legislative Mother Seigel. Those who get them up generally mean well. They sympathize with “the poor”. The “lower orders” are so wonderfully good and patient, and their conditions quite distressing. The owners will do, and will like doing, all sorts of kind things for the workers, so long as they will keep their proper place.

246 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

Hence these Bills ; one or more every year. Politicians, with speeches to make and gratitude to collect, back up the demand of the more feather-headed sentimentalist. Such Bills are invaluable for platform purposes among the good ; they can be written up as philanthropic ; yet they can be shown, in the privacy of an office, to be perfectly safe and harmless—every privilege is safeguarded. In a word, the safety and permanence of the "system" we enjoy necessitates a constant tinkering with the too unpleasant and visible results of the system.

One imagines them saying : " These people are getting too noisy and troublesome. Worse, in these houses of theirs they are not breeding healthy new workers, and if we do not make them more comfortable some may become wicked enough to become violent ". The bad housing is known to be largely due to their dirty habits. But the time has come to do something. " We will pass a new Bill for the better housing of the Working Classes."

Then a careful draughtsman is set to work to draw up the Bill. He is selected for the care with which he will safeguard all interests and privileges. We, the rulers, like to be kind to the working classes, but be careful. The rulers must not be weakened by any tampering with the saddle, whip or spurs. And the result is our annual philanthropic Bill.

The oldest dodge is to make the Bill permissive. " The Local Authority may . . ." That is all

Soothing Syrup—The Annual Housing Bill 247

right. We know the Local Authority will not. But should the Local Authority be stirred up by some crank to use its powers and act, we are still safe. For the safest dodge of all lies in the compensation Clauses. When you buy a hat you know about what you will have to pay. A number of people can make hats and will compete with each other, so that you will get the hat somewhere near the cost of production. When you buy up land, or any vested interest under these Acts, then you pay what the Act says you must; and that is where the careful draughtsmanship comes in. Cross references, references to long dead Acts, to obscure terms that lawyers love and have decided the meaning of—all these come in to help the draughtsman. The department, and the benevolent owners of the people who will do anything for the people except get off their backs, may know full well that hidden away somewhere there is sure to be something that makes them safe.

Since the advent of the Labour Party the compensation clauses in this yearly crop of Bills have been much more artistically drawn. It is a tribute of a sort. They are more artistically drawn, but nevertheless they all work back, deviously but surely, to a pleasant Act of 1845, called the Land Clauses Consolidation Act. Passed by landlords for landlords, when they had no false shame nor any doubt that their interests and the interests of England were one, this Act has preserved the Empire and the Governing Families for three-

quarters of a century. It has piled up their riches, ravished from railways and docks, from water companies and public authorities, and it will continue to do so for many a long year to come. If gratitude built statues surely that Act should be commemorated in every market place. It is too modest for any such advertisement—far too retiring and hidden. You have now to look very closely in our annual Bill crop to discover the treasure; but it is always there, somewhere, the basis of our glorious Constitution. I assure the owners of property that the Housing, Town Planning, etc., Bill of 1909 is perfectly safe.

Now for the Bill itself. There are Clauses in it which will ensure that the dear working classes (and they are terribly expensive nowadays) shall be kept a little cleaner in future. There are Clauses in it which prohibit the working classes from living in cellars or dog kennels. Really bad property may be destroyed, very slowly of course, and after five inquiries. It is surmized by some that one Clause will compel every cottage to have a separate closet, but I think this is an exaggerated view. Very valuable statistics are expected to be got from parts of the Act; such as the number of people sleeping in one room, the state of the kitchen sink, etc., though I am afraid that my amendment will not be carried, designed to give us also the number in each bed, and whether they brush their teeth in the morning. The sheer impertinence of the whole thing staggers one. They

Soothing Syrup—The Annual Housing Bill 249

are getting to take as much interest in their dear workers as in their carriage horses. They *will* see that the straw is clean—in the interests of Humanity.

But of course the gem of the whole Bill is the Town Planning part. This enables a Local Authority to make a plan showing how all new suburbs shall be laid out, and to this plan all buildings must conform. The plan shows how all the streets shall run, and how wide ; what sort of factories shall be built, and where, and how close ; where schools and chapels and squares and playgrounds are to be. It also enables a landlord to do the same thing on his own suburban estate ; which seems at first sight to be a superfluous permission.

It is no wonder that this idea, which works excellently in Germany, has raised a chorus of praise. Philanthropists look at Ancoats, and then picture Mr. Burns' alternative, with wide planted avenues laid out in graceful curves, with chubby faced children playing in the public sandpit or on the public swing, with select semi-detached Kate Greenaway cottages inhabited by Watteau shepherds and shepherdesses. Yet, so far as this Bill is concerned, it is a dream, and nothing more. For in Germany you do not compensate a landlord for laying out his land for him ; under this Bill you do. In England, if the Local Authority lays out its suburbs, it has got to compensate the landlords. It is true that the landlord keeps his

land and gets the rents, but if you direct him how to lay it out in the most beautiful way, why then you must pay him most beautifully too.

So carefully had the Department drawn the Bill, as it originally stood, in the interests of the landlords that they would have been able to claim compensation for fixing a minimum width of road, or a limitation of the number of houses per acre, for restrictions indeed that bye-laws have for years imposed without thought of compensation. We got that new robbery knocked out last year, but our landlord will still get compensation if the roads curl instead of going straight. If factories are excluded from any area, or for any other mortal thing that limits his absolute freedom of action in dealing with "his own". And if this is not enough to choke off any Local Authority, let them mark this: They have got to pay the compensation at once, though the building according to plan and the "damage" to the landlord may not occur for forty years—if then. It is true that in Committee, where the Government whips do not watch, I carried an amendment against the Government to the effect that this compensation should not be paid till the "damage" had actually been incurred; but I am told that the Lords will now cut out this amendment with the consent of the Government.

I do not think, however, that this part of the Bill will be quite a dead letter. It will enable landlords to lay out their own suburban estates

Soothing Syrup—The Annual Housing Bill 251

without bothering about local bye-laws, so long as they get the approval of the Local Government Board. Bye-laws may possibly be the quintessence of folly administered by knaves, in which case the Housing, Town Planning, etc., Bill will no doubt be very useful.

There are a number of hygienic moralists of the neo-Fabian type who believe in making the cattle compulsorily comfortable on the most up-to-date lines. They will gush over this Bill. It seems unkind to damp their enthusiasm, but let them remember that the Department which has, after three years labour, brought forth this wonderful baby, is called the Local Government Board, and is presided over by Mr. John Burns. I have the greatest regard for Mr. Burns personally, and I am glad to think that few bits of window dressing will cause him more healthy enjoyment than his part in administering this soothing syrup. But for real housing reform we shall have to look elsewhere.

The "ring round the house" can only be broken by untaxing the house, and by cheapening land and raw materials by a healthy tax on their owners when they hold them up.

Take the rates off houses and so make houses cheap. Impose the rates instead upon land value, and so make land cheap. Only—all the owners dislike cheapness.

GIRL-SCHOOL ECONOMICS

FOR the better education of both politicians and financiers I venture to ask His Majesty's Government to set up yet one more Commission. The terms of reference shall be to consider the relative advantages of being a debtor nation (and working for other people), or being a creditor nation (and letting others do the work while we "play"); to consider whether we should deflate or inflate the currency in order to make things different from what they are.

These two questions are of course one; and as members of the Government have to make up their minds which or what they want—as they argue both sides of the question with equal ability and conviction as the spirit moves them, without even observing that they contradict themselves—I can conceive of few more helpful commissions and inquiries. No doubt it would have been adopted ere now, had it not been felt that it was indecent to let the world see that esteemed Chancellors and ex-Chancellors of the Exchequer did not know whether they should go up or down hill. So they are still thinking it over. Occasion-

ally both Chancellors and Banking Magnates make little outbursts of dogmatic speech in either direction, and then wait to see what the other "experts" will say about it.

One expert, Mr. Lloyd George, told us that there was practically no unemployment in France because the Germans had destroyed the industrial area. I suggested that we should destroy London, if that was all that was necessary. He said it was a *non-sequitur*, but it is quite a good answer to the sort of brain that demands payments from Germany, and then tries to stop the payments by putting a tariff even upon German dolls'-eyes.

The fact is, there is a great deal to be said for destroying London, and for being a debtor, and for turning the £ sterling into sixpence, and for the protection of home industries.

As thus: Destroy London, and there will be a great deal of work to do building it again. Be a debtor, and you will be likely to have more than your fair share of the work that must be done. Send the £ down to follow the mark, and all our existing debts—national, municipal and industrial—will become insignificant; send the £ down, and wages will drop right down too, without the "fool worker" knowing that he is being "cut"; send the £ down, and then we shall be able to compete with the Germans in the neutral markets. Stop goods coming into this country, and our people will be employed making them here.

"Girl-school economics"! Yes! But if there

is only a certain definite amount of work that may be done in the world, and that not enough to keep all the workers occupied, why complain of the girl school? The gentlemen of leisure, who are getting their dividends from debtors abroad (in the shape of unemployment doles) positively crave for some occupation, and we refuse them even allotment gardens.

The fact is, of course, that there is really an indefinite amount of work that wants doing, if men could only get the chance to do it. But as all productive work starts at the land, and as the land is locked up, they cannot start. So that's that. Hence "ca' canny", and the passionate desire to owe money to others, and the love of earthquakes, or wars, or merely fires to burn down London; hence the Kill Trade Bill to keep up prices. There is sound sense in all of it, in spite of your sneer at school girls.

Now let us disclose our secret panacea to the experts. It is so simple. We can get all these things that are so excellent quite easily—if they are excellent.

All that is necessary, to start with, is for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to be human. Let him cast off his frigid orthodoxy (if he has any) and step out as the popular hero of the *Daily Express*. Let him please the farmers by promising to help them at the expense of the taxpayer; let him please the coal owners the same way; let him not be stinted and grudging in his promises. He

can guarantee loans to the Soudan ; he would gain even more kudos from Manchester if he would guarantee the bank overdrafts of the merchants engaged in the export trade. He can find money to make great new roads out of London ; let him be courageous and add to his popularity by tackling the roads inside London and becoming our British Haussman. Why boggle at a few millions? Instead of adding to taxation, that should be reduced. He cannot help trade better than by reducing the Income Tax to 4s. in the £ ; he should increase the refunds of the E.P.D. ; exempt railways from all taxation in the hope that then they will consent to reduce freight rates ; and—borrow money to make his Budget balance.

All will then be well. He will be able to borrow quite well at first ; and we shall go more deeply into the elysium of debt. Later, when the surprised bankers get scared at the great trade boom, or the demands for currency and credit get too great, he may find some little difficulty in borrowing, even on six months bills. That must not distress him ; it should be welcomed, for he can then " help " still more by just printing the money and balancing accounts in that way. Really, really, our Chancellors should understand that by printing money instead of borrowing it we save the interest. There is no interest to pay on Bradburys, and the more numerous and worthless the Bradburys, the easier does it become to pay the interest on all the other debts (and the less

the creditor will thank you for paying it). Trade and prices will boom. Any fool of a business man will tell you that a boom in prices always means a boom in trade.

On and on it can go. The Government can afford to be more generous, when it has become obvious that debt pays. They will probably have to subsidize bread prices and house building ; but they can afford it. The more they spend, the greater the boom. Let them reflect that during the war everybody was fed, and fed well ; we could organize in order to house and arm the troops ; cannot we as well organize to feed and house and equip our people in peace? Of course we can, once it becomes obvious that the old saw about " blessed are the peacemakers " should really read " blessed are the debtors ".

Every loan will help somebody to spend some more money and so benefit trade. If no interest is forthcoming from the borrower, we shall thereby arrive the quicker at our goal—the debtor nation with a depreciated currency. Let us have lots of money to spend. Not only loans to the rich. Why not give everybody, even quite poor people, £10 apiece in nice new paper money?

If we mortgage the labour of posterity, then we shall at least be sure that posterity has work to do.

There is one objection to all this. You cannot stop it. The late Chancellor, Sir Robert Horne, started nicely down this road. He heroically

decided to be popular and to benefit trade by reducing the Income Tax at the expense of the Sinking Fund. The next holder of the office can take the next step. Let the debt increase, instead of merely remaining stationary. He will find it now easier to take the next step—more difficult not to. With the exception of America and ourselves, every other warring nation has gone quite serenely down the road, and who are we to be such prigs as to think that we know better than M. Loucheur? There is no want of employment in France; the taxes are not collected, and the Budget does not balance. There is unemployment in this country—so much so, that it is becoming less and less a question of whether we want our Budget to balance. We can be driven, by unemployment, down that road. The Local Authorities are running down it now. If you would change direction, then you must let men start work, even if it does mean breaking the landowners' grip. But that of course is wicked bolshevism. We prefer to—go down the road.

Russia went first, then Austria, then Hungary; last year Poland took precedence, followed by Germany and Roumania, and Greece on the run as usual. Funnily enough Brazil, and even the Argentine on the other side of the water, seem to have caught the prevailing disease—if, indeed, it be a disease and not a virtue. France and Italy, owing to a persistent course of Couéism under the able direction of MM. Poincaré and Mussolini, have

so far managed to make the best of both worlds. They neither balance nor collapse. This marvellous juggling, however, cannot endure indefinitely. They will soon be on the heels of the others running down that road. All working harder for less money, but all fully employed, undercutting our trade, scrapping their debts, and bringing down the standard of living to that of the Fleet Prison.

Of course Big Business will be all right. The Junkers and the steel magnates do not need to worry. They will own the land and the machines, which do not depreciate. They will own the helpless men and women, ever more avid for work as their food gets more expensive and their wages buy less. These creditors can afford to hold their hands; they take no exception to their dole.

The outlook for working people in this country is black enough, because the workers in the other countries will do ever more of the modicum of work that is allowed to be done (under our present system). Unemployment may increase rather than decrease in this and other rich idle creditor countries. But what is at the end of the road down which the rest of Europe is hurrying with feverish steps?

We can now look with an interest that is personal at the struggles of Vienna and Berlin. Where they are now, France may be next year, and ourselves a year or two after that. Observe that at the final moment, the coinage becomes

so valueless that the countrymen with food to sell will not exchange it at all for the bad money. Dollars or pounds are taking the place of the krone and the mark, legislate against it as you will. And dollars and pounds become ever more expensive and difficult to obtain. Obviously, too, raw materials cannot be imported; access to land and raw materials becomes ever more difficult. Manufacture cannot start. But perhaps the most serious effect is, that having lost their money's worth so often, no man will lend again at any but the most usurious rates. Thus credit ceases and trade dies.

We can learn yet more from Vienna. Vienna is in luck. Being the first to go bankrupt and call in the receivers, they have actually managed to get a loan from the receivers. By the sacrifice of their independence they have at least saved themselves from dissolution. It may be possible by strict control of taxation and expenditure in Austria to stabilize the crown. The League of Nations has taken on the control and nursing of Austria, so Austria may survive. But there is less likely to be any nursing loans for Germany, when Germany too asks for a receivership. Still less are there going to be any further loans available for the rest of Europe from the rest of Europe as one by one the exchequers put up the shutters.

What closes down is civilization, the cumulative result of three hundred years of growing specialization and co-operation with credit and capital.

260 *Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.*

Agriculture, the simple production of food, will go on as usual, as it went on in the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries. If you look at Germany, Austria, Hungary, or even at average Russia, you will find the peasant on the land contented and prospering amazingly if he owns the land he cultivates.

As the collapse progresses, the peasant owners who produce essential foods will be all right ; the wretched industrials are at their mercy. It is because of this that the end of the road would be far more painful for industrial England than for rural Austria. It is because of this that we should stamp ruthlessly on any sentimental flirting with the joys of debt and the blessings of a depreciated currency.

Those who start cannot stop ; and at the end lies ruin.

CYCLING THROUGH LIFE

LOOKING back, with a growl, through a century of progress, one says, "What good has it done?" We have invented everything to produce the goods quicker and better : we have conquered steam and electricity, and sea and air and the atomic theory, and how are we better off? Common people have to work harder than ever, and get no more of the results. And so on, and so forth, and then we remember—bicycles !

" They " had not got bicycles. They missed, even though they never knew they missed, one of the joys of life that lasts from seven to seventy. They never free-wheeled down a perfect slope between the pine-trees and the heather. They never saw the world pass silently by, at five o'clock in the morning as another glorious day came up. They never swished along under the gas lamps with the day's work behind and home in front. One supposes that adventure met them too at every corner, but how few corners they were privileged to turn ! One must suppose that they too had memories to look back upon, but how few and how dull must those memories have been !

What sort of a holiday does the non-cyclist suffer from? If he walks, he sees the same patch all day. Twenty-five miles is the limit, and you always have to whistle or sing those last five miles to get through with the grind. But for us, the last five miles are the best ; she moves so serenely as the shadows lengthen and the familiar landmarks come by with giant stride.

That it is, I believe, which makes the chief joy of cycling, the giant stride. Two hundred and sixteen steps to the mile we take, and common earthlings take 1,760 even if they be full-sized. So we move on in fact and fancy.

You may rush silently, through the azure and white sunlight on skates or skis ; you may bend low in the saddle as the thundering hooves carry you through the wind that whistles ; you may beat to windward while the sheet tugs and the water raps rattling under the forefoot ; and, if pace is all you want, you may hide behind a windscreen and a carburettor ; but in none of these, swift and exciting though they be, do you softly put your own foot down eight times further forward than mortal man has a right to do on earth.

And in fancy we can move, too, swiftly, on and on. I never shoot down that long hill on the Ripley Road without the vision of a girl from *The Wheels of Chance*, who waves a handkerchief in the most attractive novel that Wells has ever written. Day by day, as I ride to Parliament along the Chelsea Embankment, I compose in

fancy, to the fellows who rule, those crushing replies which, alas, remain enshrined in fancy. But of course we are free. We can let our thoughts run riot. We have no need to be eternally watching some wretched machine wriggle. We need not rub our eyes to penetrate the dust, nor worry about the world round the corner. Our machine is part of us, and moves like a dancer, lightly to and fro to the dreamy swaying of the body.

Have you ever ridden by night on a strange road through the woods, when you hear the owls, but they do not hear you? The pedals rise and fall in ghostly silence. You find yourself climbing a hill all unbeknown as they grow heavy, or swimming lightly down one, unexpected, as the road drops and even the pulse need work no longer. Do you remember? Do you remember?



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