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Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

Society is divided into two classes: The shearers and the shorn.

TALLEYRAND

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Threepence

COLONIALISM ON TRIAL

THE trial of Captain Griffiths in Nairobi last week comes hard upon a similar trial of a young officer in Tanganyika which was recently discussed in FREEDOM. One trial resulted in an acquittal, the other in a nominal sentence; but both really constitute an indictment of colonial military methods which make the guilt or otherwise of the individual accused a secondary and minor matter.

What are the facts conceded in the present case? Captain Griffiths in evidence said that he was on patrol duty in a restricted area i.e. one in which Africans were not allowed, and had told his company sergeant major that he could shoot any African who came out of the forest in this area "even if they were P.W.D." (Public Works Department). This latter remark, he added, "was a figure of speech". It is however significant of the attitude of the army towards Africans, and amounts to advice to "shoot first and ask questions afterwards".

Three Africans came from the forest and their papers were examined. An old man's were in order, but the two others were out of date. They were told to wait by the side of the road, but instead (according to Griffiths) sought to run away. (Another witness said they walked away and were shot in the back as they did so).

Here we come to a point which is more important than the question of guilt. According to a *Times* report from Nairobi dated 27 November: "In his summing-up the Judge-

Advocate said that *the accused would have been justified in killing the arrested suspects provided that they could not in any other way be prevented from escaping.*" This is the famous "law of escape" which has permitted thousands of people in all countries to be killed by police or army without trial or any serious subsequent calling to account of the officers involved. The Judge-Advocate referred to the Africans as the "arrested men" but in the newspaper reports there does not appear any account of arrest, but only of their papers being checked.

The "law of escape" which provided Capt. Griffiths with the "justification" for firing, is something absolutely alien to all reasonable ideas of justice. Yet it is part and parcel of the ideas of colonialism, and in itself symbolizes the attitude of a colonial power to the subject peoples.

Scoreboard Barometers

This attitude emerged in the Tanganyika trial already referred to, and was even more thoroughly exposed in Griffiths' trial at Nairobi. Thus Capt. Joy who was with Griffiths, said he

thought the area in which the operation took place was a prohibited area and therefore members of the armed forces had the right to shoot any African there. When the President of the Court, Major-General T. Brodie, asked him if he had orders to that effect, Joy replied that he had got the impression from conversations in the officer's mess. This gives a revealing sidelight why Griffiths was an object of sympathy, and was widely congratulated on his acquittal, even though his own admissions revealed conduct absolutely shocking to our English mind. In the context of colonial administration such conduct is however quite normal.

One is reminded here of Bertrand Russell's remark of many years ago to the effect that life in England was made more pleasant by the fact that all the most unpleasant elements had been drawn off into the colonial administration. One is reminded also of the behaviour of the Palestine Police during the "troubles" of the nineteen thirties, when brutalities were committed and accepted in just the same way.

Questions have been asked in Parliament about the rewards given for every Mau Mau killed, and of the rivalry between regiments for high "scores" or kills. The Minister of War has expressed official disapproval, but cannot make any statement till he has made further enquiries, etc. That is, he has stalled until indignation dies down a little. Here is what Captain Griffiths said (*Times* 27/11/53):

"Griffiths told the Court that the attitude of his battalion commander with regard to Mau Mau kills was the same as that of others. There was a lot of competition and his commanding officer had told him that their battalion had to beat the record of the 23rd Battalion, King's

African Rifles, before their battalion went to Malaya. Griffiths said that he personally had given askaris 5s. reward for terrorists killed, and some company commanders gave 10s. This practice was known to his commanding officer and approved. The 23rd Battalion had a scoreboard barometer of kills."

What Griffiths was clearly trying to say here was that his attitude was no different from that of his superior officers or of other units. There seems no reason to doubt him.

"Mercy Killing"

Returning to the details of evidence. After shooting the two men with a Bren gun, Griffiths drove off with Captain Joy and returned 20 minutes later. Both the men were still alive, one of them moaning, the other still breathing. Because the man who was moaning was in great pain, Griffiths shot him with his pistol. The two bodies, one still alive, were put on to a lorry and sent to Nyeri. Later on, a Lieutenant Innis-Walker told Griffiths he had stopped the lorry and as one of the men was still alive, he had "put a shot into his head".

In his summing-up, the Judge-Advocate stressed that mercy killing was not in any circumstances recognized in British law. Yet it does not seem that Innes-Walker had been charged, nor do either he or Griffiths appear to have thought that what they were doing was illegal. Once again it is clear that such officers regard the taking of African life as not a serious affair at all. Griffiths said that when he found one of the men moaning he was very upset. This evidence conflicted with that of the company sergeant major, but

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Police Agents & Conspiracies

"I believe that the institution of a police force is an infringement on the constitution and liberties possessed by our ancestors."

—WILLIAM LOVETT, Chartist.

THE use by the police of agent provocateurs for the purpose of inveigling people into incriminating actions is no new thing, and the British police are no exception to the rule. The once famous Walsall 'Bomb Plot' of 1892 is a case in point. As a result of the machinations of a police agent named Conlon three Anarchists received prison sentences of 10 years each and one received a sentence of five years. Many other historical examples could be cited to prove that our 'wonderful' police and judicial authorities are not averse to using the slimy services of informers and provocative agents when it suits their nefarious ends. Naive legalists may regard this reliance by the police upon provocation in order to obtain convictions as an abuse of an otherwise necessary institution, but to Anarchists 'the thing, the thing itself is an abuse'. So long as such institutions of coercion as the police remain in existence such methods can be expected as an inherent part of their functioning.

The latest example of the use of police agents in order that "the organized vengeance called 'justice'" can prove its usefulness as a protector of the *status quo* is provided by the recent trial of the four Scottish Nationalists on conspiracy charges in Edinburgh. According to the evidence given at the trial the police gave one of their agents—a man called John Cullen—"dummy" fuses and sticks of gelignite so that the 'conspirators' could go ahead with their 'plot' to undermine 'law and order'. The police also thoughtfully provided a motor car and a chauffeur. The chauffeur was another agent, a sergeant Mieras (known as 'Higgins'). These two, together with a third agent calling himself 'Callum Watson', actively assisted the alleged conspiracy to the stage where arrests could be made.

However, the subtle conspiratorial work of the police was apparently wasted, for the jury rejected the blood-and-thunder charges of 'conspiring to coerce Her Majesty's Government to set up a separate government in Scotland, or to

overthrow Her Majesty's Government, not to mention the 'blowing up' of St. Andrew's Hall in Edinburgh and 'terrorising the nation' and so on. The four defendants were found not guilty on these charges, but were each sentenced to one year's imprisonment for being 'unlawfully' and 'maliciously' in possession of gelignite.

The defendants contended throughout the trial that the whole 'conspiracy' was a hoax designed to unmask the activities of Cullen and his ilk. In view of the verdict and the evidence they gave it is not difficult to accept this contention as being the truth. What is important to note about the whole affair is that the police deliberately helped to foment what they considered to be a 'plot' by providing materials by which the participants could be incriminated. This fact is yet one more substantiation of the Anarchist argument that institutions such as the police force in reality draw their sustenance from the things they purport to exist to suppress.

The press of this country is loved in its professed adherence to freedom. We wonder if it will make any protest against this latest police conspiracy? As for its readers, well they are far too much interested in the travels of Mr. & Mrs. Mountbatten or the defeat of England by those Hungarian 'reds' than to bother themselves about the misfortunes of cranks. It is up to us, the few who are passionately concerned with the liberty of man, to make our protest and to point the moral of such demonstrations of the deceit of authority. We have no sympathy with nationalists as nationalists, but as human beings, victims of police plotting, we have every sympathy with them in their misfortune.

S.E.P.

(N.B.—The *Manchester Guardian* for November 26, reports the Lord Justice-Clerk [Lord Thomson] as making the following statement in passing sentence: "The law cannot tolerate violence, whatever the purpose or motives of those who intend it."

We await with interest the prosecution of all those who belong, or have belonged, to the armed forces and police who have used, or intend to use, violence. We fear we have a long wait ahead!

'A Welcome to our Gracious Queen'

EVEN the most ardent supporters of the Monarchy will admit, if somewhat reluctantly, that Kings and Queens have similar biological needs to ordinary folk, but they will shy at the suggestion that we should regard ourselves as their social equals.

In Britain, most people are aware that the Monarchy has no real power, but the present Queen and her children have been set up as a model family invested with the idea of perfection to which none ever hopes to aspire, but the existence of which many people reverently respect, and need, in their rather colourless lives.

The ruling class are very concerned to perpetuate this state of affairs, so much so that any criticism of the Royal family is regarded as 'bad taste'. The newspapers, if they have fault to find with what the Queen did or did not do, reprimand her 'advisers' and hasten to point out that it is not the Queen's fault.

Colour Divisions

This attitude, which almost amounts to belief in the infallibility of Her Majesty is implicit in the pomp following the Royal pair on their protracted tour of the Commonwealth.

The unctuous tones of the B.B.C. narrators, to say nothing of the newspaper reports, describing every detail of health, diet, dress, dressing tables, etc., and the enjoyment with which it seems to be lapped up must sicken intelligent people.

As the tour proceeds the unsavoury aspects of the division between class becomes more apparent, although the newspapers are doing much to cover up.

The first act of discrimination to our knowledge was taken by the Governor of Bermuda, Lieut.-General Sir Alexan-

der Hood, who made sure that no coloured person would share the same table as Her Majesty at the first State dinner given in her honour on arrival in the West Indies.

The reason given for the absence of coloured people from the list of invitations was that they were issued strictly according to precedence and the number of invitations would have to have been doubled to reach far enough down the social scale to include a coloured man.

We should add that Sir Alexander is not altogether an unjust man, because he agreed to allow the Queen to shake hands with some coloured people—at a garden party—where officials were well in evidence—keeping the crowds shepherded round the enclosure.

Not that the interests of the Jamaican people will be in any way advanced by a handshake. The Queen, even if she so desired, has no power to legislate for improvements in the conditions of the people under British rule, which is one more argument against the continued existence of the Monarchy.

British Culture

The people of the West Indies have little to gain from this visit of a reigning monarch—the first in 300 years of British rule. The poverty, ill-health and illiteracy which go hand in hand with imperialism are rife in Jamaica and the shanties of the poor contrast unfavourably with the luxurious dwellings of the rich. Even the native leaders lack the kind of idealism which characterises many of the African leaders in other parts of the colonies (at least until they get into power).

One writer on this question suggests that the West Indian is set apart from other colonial peoples because of his lack

"Socialists" and Moral Rearmament

THE columns of *Tribune*, voice of the "Bevanite" wing of the Labour Party, have been enlivened recently by a controversy upon the nature of Moral Rearmament.*

Correspondents have included an African student who went to Caux, Switzerland, for one of the famous M.R.A. sessions. He described the hokey practised by the pressure groups whose function it is to get at visitors and convert them to the racket.

Not unexpectedly, other visitors reported contrary impressions—indicating both their conversion and the fact that the African's eyes were wider open than theirs.

These correspondents, however, were all writing as individuals. A startling departure from this has been the receipt and publication by *Tribune* of a letter protesting against "misrepresentation and bias" against M.R.A. in the "false report" issued by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

The I.C.F.T.U. is the international T.U. set-up for the Western Powers, and in view of the rabid anti-communism which is almost the reason of the M.R.A.'s existence one would have thought the I.C.F.T.U. would have welcomed their reactionary activity. Presumably, though, it is the old rivalry for power that is involved and the T.U. bosses hate to see their potential and actual supporters going elsewhere.

But the letter which has appeared in *Tribune* is signed by no less than 61 County and Borough Councillors who describe themselves as "Socialists". That is, they are Labour Councillors.

Their letter states that M.R.A. "has given new hope to thousands of workers in many boroughs throughout Britain. It has enhanced all the principles on which the Labour movement was founded." Which is largely true of course. Religion is always a source of hope—it is all it has to offer. And the Labour Movement was founded on ideas of class-collaboration which is the basis of Moral Rearmament.

What is disturbing however is to see the extent to which this insidious doctrine is permeating into Local Government. The 61 Councillors, Lord Mayors and what not, from Aberdeen to Portsmouth, who signed this *Tribune* letter, call themselves Socialists. How many of their opposite numbers in the Conservative Party are also peddling this line?

What the letter shows also is the confusion of thought which exists within the Labour Party. That anyone can believe there is any connection between Socialism and its attainment—or "progress and world peace"—and Dr. Buchman's new order, shows an abysmal ignorance of the realities of social struggle.

*See FREEDOM 17/1/53.

of truly native culture, and that if he is educated at all he is a smudgy carbon copy Englishman. It is not surprising that after 300 years of British rule any native culture which may have developed is lacking. The lack of this as well as the alleged corruption of native officials can be placed at the door of the British, since they claim to have brought culture and enlightenment to the backward peoples of the world.

The kind of Government that exists in Jamaica follows the usual pattern of colonial administration. Any major decisions or 'unsound measures' can be vetoed by the Whitehall appointed Governors, which is not calculated to encourage responsibility. The apathy of the Jamaican worker allows men like Bustamente to climb to the top (at any rate to the top of the coloured tree, whose branches never reach quite as high as the white ones) and eventually sell themselves to their white masters.

The coloured inhabitants of Jamaica were brought there as slaves by the British, and the song they sung to welcome Royalty last week is alas, after 300 years, a symbol of their continued slavery, a Calypso—"A welcome to our gracious Queen".

R.M.

SELFHOOD

TWO false impressions of anarchism, gathered on a first superficial acquaintance are that it is a vindication of selfishness, and a violent whimpering or petulant, but always childish condemnation of a world that does not let poor innocent anarchists have their own way.

It is well then to recall that anarchism affirms the supremacy and centrality of the concrete, existent, authentic individual. In this sense it is a philosophy of selfhood, but selfhood and selfishness, far from being synonymous, will appear incompatible on more than one line of enquiry.

First, as Heidegger insisted, the self is given always together as well as beside other selves, so that attachment to and cultivation of one self does not exclude attachment to and cultivation of other selves. Secondly insofar as a philosophy is always a process of integration, and more often than not is meant for communication, a philosophy of selfishness would be a contradiction in terms. Thirdly, and decisively, selfishness can thrive only by denying the autonomy of other selves, and that is what anarchism is most emphatically and uncompromisingly against.

I mentioned the existentialist Heidegger because existentialism and anarchism have this in common, that they disclaim the existence of any external Self transcending the selfhood of concrete individuals, anarchism being more particularly resentful of the fact that once a transcending Self has been postulated, abstractions, institutions and groups of men are soon invested with an authority impairing and destructive of the individual's autonomy. The autonomy can be taken as primary and irreducible or, on the other hand, a hypostasis can actually be felt as underlying and sustaining selfhood, and also be rationally subsumed to account for the givenness, if not the giving, of autonomy. Belief in this hypostasis makes me respectful of the selfhood of others, but the acceptance and, to a certain extent, the adoption of its givenness can inspire the same respect. Without belief in a hypostasis or acceptance of any individual's autonomy as a primary fact of intuition or existential experience, I doubt whether anarchism can hold its own as an independent philosophy, although a philosophy is not needed to make it an ethical emotion, a touchstone of judgment or a rule of behaviour.

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ANOTHER trait anarchism has in common with existentialism, and both of them have with romanticism, is the preoccupation of safeguarding the authentic individual from the impersonal, devitalized collective. But while existentialism, at least in its Heideggerian form, sees in the tyranny of the collective mainly an imposition of sordid, strenuous or even brilliant futilities, and romanticism the stifling of passionate values, anarchism condemns it because it is an ossification of society exploited and directed by the State at the cost of the individual's surrender of his primary responsibilities.

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Of the collective as such, that is mainly as tradition and custom, anarchism is not excessively critical because, tyrannical as it may be, it still remains biologically and psychologically necessary. There will always be duties, in fact, towards the impersonal collectivity, and it is doubtful whether even the most thorough existentialist or romantic could stand the strain of a life entirely devoted either to passion or to anticipation of death without the respite and the dissipation, the refreshing and comforting of the impersonal collective.

The collective, however, as far as we can imaginatively reconstruct the structural development and succession of human societies from historical and anthropological evidence, loses its primacy and not a little of its importance as biological needs become easier to satisfy, and needs of another order, endopsychical or spiritual, emerge. A re-statement of its primacy in our time is not a genuine social happening, but a political one, a mask behind which and in the name of which anarchist groups operate in order to manipulate, control and mechanize society. The adulthood recommended by psycho-analysis in the Western countries is at bottom a surrender of the individual, including what is historically and ideally social in the individual, to the process of ossification of society as carried out by the party in power, and differs only circumstantially

from the surrender demanded in other countries to the inexorabilities of historical dialectics.

Freudian psycho-analysis has made a most valuable contribution to the understanding of children, but the general impression it leaves is that the child is but the seed-bed of all the evils the adult will suffer from, and that adult normal life is achieved thanks to a betrayal, even through sublimation, of all that one was as a child. Anarchists may look childish in their self-assertiveness and self-frustration, in their all-or-nothing attitudes, and in their idealization of an early sensory-affective enjoyment of blissful communion, but we must not be blind to the fact that all societies are in various degrees of complexity based on the organization, legitimization and stylization of some traits characteristic of childhood or adolescence. The perfect adult society, on the other hand, would be the one in which nobody remembers having been a child, where possibly nobody would suffer pain, and certainly nobody be capable of intense and deep-reaching joy.

I am not aware that a psycho-analytical description of the anarchist has been attempted yet. Perhaps he is not considered such an abnormal individual as he was some forty or fifty years ago; more likely the type is not so common and differentiated as to attract the psycho-analyst's attention, and certainly he would not be an anarchist who let himself be psycho-analysed. Ready to be contradicted and corrected, I venture to say that if Freud's topography be

accepted the most characteristic feature of an anarchist's mind would be an alliance of Id and Ego against the Super-Ego. His respect for the selfhood of others, however, which is the product of an ideality-sense as much as of a sense of realities, would be ascribed by psychoanalysts to the Super-Ego or interpreted as a global inversion of selfish instincts of the type described by the term of reaction-formation.

Be that as it may, an anarchist would not particularly care to lay a claim to adulthood or normality if these were not marked first and foremost by a recognition of the ontological autonomy of the subject and the deontological respect of other subjects. Nor would he care how infantile a society may be in all other respects providing it gives him scope to express his selfhood and establish genuine relationships between self and self.

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It is commonly assumed that the existence of a plurality of selves constitutes an impassable limit to the affirmation of each individual self, and that anarchism therefore is not only negative in name but also in fact. It is not realized that this assumption is the result of an extrapolation of the laws and facts of the material world into the world of spirit. Selves are not things; they cannot be acquired, possessed or taken away. They are centres of freedom, and have therefore no laws; they exist or perish as selves as they exist or perish as freedom. A spiritual good can

be shared and yet suffer no diminution. Genuine personal relationship is of the type "I and the other", and in this relationship no coercion is imposed, but I offer myself to the other as a choice. Far from denying his freedom I give him a chance to affirm himself either in acceptance or refusal, and my freedom is given a chance of affirming itself in turn by the new choice confronting me after the success or failure of my first. Thus, far from being a limitation or negation of freedom, the plurality of selves is both its substance and condition. Following a similar line of thought Soloviev reached the paradoxical assumption that even the Absolute had its other, and had to include it within itself. Soloviev's philosophy is not anarchism, nor is that of his follower Berdyaev, but with their help one can affirm that if coercion is so repugnant to the anarchist it is because it consists in treating selves as if they were things. The man who resorts to coercion is a man who feels himself as a thing. His aim is power, and power belongs to the world of things, not to that of the spirit.

It is only too true that selves appear as things, and can behave, under external pressure, as though they were things, that is according to a foreseeable relationship between cause and effect. Yet freedom can only be conceived when a dimension of being is discovered in which the laws of cause and effect do not obtain. To admit determinism; however qualified, is *ipso facto* to deny freedom. In a world of men deterministically or even dia-

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Reflections on the Author of "A Vindication of Natural Society"

IN vain you tell me that artificial government is good, but that a fall out only with the abuse; the thing—the thing itself is the abuse," wrote Edmund Burke in one of his earliest essays, "A Vindication of Natural Society", published in 1756. It is one of the first contributions of modern anarchism, a serious and earnest denunciation of government, under whatever name or form it may exist; its author anticipated many of William Godwin's conclusions. But when Burke later became the most virulent advocate of State reaction, he apologised to the *bourgeois* for having once had the weakness to give way to the dictates of reason and conscience, in opposition to conventionalism and self-interest, by coolly pretending that his "Vindication" was simply a piece of irony! and, strange to say, the literary world believed him, although the only ironical passage in the essay confirms the *bona fides* of the rest. The real cause of Burke's pretending that his essay was written in an ironical spirit appears to have been an apprehension that the novel doctrines he had enunciated in it—so utterly subversive of the Church and the State and all established opinions—would be an effectual bar to the realization of the ambitious plans which he had subsequently formed for his advancement in the political world of the day.

"But with respect to you, ye legislators, ye civilizers of mankind! with respect to you, be it spoken, your regulations have done more mischief in cold blood, than all the rage of the fiercest animals in their greatest terrors, has ever done, or ever could do."—Burke. The truth of this can be seen when we consider that the whole history of the world may be successfully challenged for a single instance where a people has been improved by its rulers. On the other hand, they may be, and often are, debased almost immeasurably by the pernicious effects of rulers, of law and authority. It is impossible to improve men by despotism. It is the rulers who would order all things and put everything into the greatest disorder; who would advance all things and hinder all things. Every State is a despotism, whether the despot be one or many, or whether, as people

Music

A Beethoven Sonata

BEETHOVEN'S Piano Sonata Op. 109 is a strange and wonderful work. One very soon runs out of adjectives in trying to describe this sort of music, but there is no doubt at all that, to at least one listener, this sonata has moments of real terror. It is as if one were at the bedside of a dying giant who has some message of the utmost urgency to communicate: ordinary language no longer suffices to transfer such thoughts as these, and strive as we will to understand the revelation, we do not yet possess the key to the cryptogram.

I have never heard this Sonata better played than it was by Liza Marketta at the R.F.H. on Sunday, 22nd November. If an audience must co-operate with an artist to create a real musical performance, then my attention and Miss Marketta's playing produced an unique musical experience.

J.S.

usually conceive to be the case in a republic, all are masters, *i.e.* each tyrannizes over all the others. The State is sheer tyranny; but Burke forgot this when he wrote many years later that "government is a contrivance of human wisdom to provide for human wants. Men have a right that these wants should be provided for by this wisdom," which to an Anarchist reads like satire.

"The blindness of one part of mankind, co-operating with the frenzy and villany of the other has been the real builder of this respectable fabric of political society: and as the blindness of mankind has caused their slavery their state of slavery is made the excuse for continuing them in a state of blindness; for the politician will tell you, gravely, that their life of servitude disqualifies the greater part of the race of man for a search of truth, and supplies them with no other than mean and insufficient ideas. This is but too true; and this is one of the reasons for which I blame such institutions."—*Vindication of Natural Society*.

Government has always and everywhere been on the side of the rich and educated against the poor and ignorant masses, who are condemned to a want of that leisure which is necessary for the improvement of the mind. Whatever be the weakness or the superstition of their age and country they have scarcely any chance to escape it. "The poor by their excessive labour, and the rich by their enormous luxury, are set upon a level, and rendered equally ignorant of any knowledge that might conduce to their happiness." The vice, the crime, the ignorance and the brutality which still exist among us, notwithstanding the progress in the arts, sciences, and facility of production of wealth, all come from the State, as certainly as a stream flows from its fountain. As Burke wrote, "the whole business of the poor is to administer to the idleness, folly and luxury of the rich; and that of the rich, in return, is to find the best methods of confirming the slavery and increasing the burden of the poor. In a state of nature, it is an invariable law, that a man's acquisitions are in proportion to his labours. In a state of artificial society, it is a law as constant and as invariable, that those who labour must enjoy the fewest things, and that those who labour not at all, have the greatest number of enjoyments. A constitution of things, this, strange and ridiculous beyond expression!"

In an Anarchist society, where private property is abolished and no one is compelled to work, nobody will work, every man will lay the burden of his work on another if he is not forced to do it himself, argue our opponents. Only the mean mind of a bourgeois could conceive such an idea, because his aim is to get rich, to destroy everything that stands in his way, and to do it by every possible means save those that will land him in jail. In a capitalist society the pocket is the cradle of motive and the grave of conscience. Rich idling is considered a highly honourable way of life. Because the people are at present compelled to labour for the luxuries and false pleasures of the rich, it does not follow that they will be unwilling to work for the well-being of each other in a free society,

where all of men's wants are met by associations or groups. The work performed by free men for their own benefit will be greatly superior to the work performed under the lash of the capitalist.

Burke realised that the two fundamental institutions of slavery are the Church and the State; this is clearly shown when he writes: "The professors of artificial law have always walked hand in hand with the professors of artificial theology. As their end, in confounding the reason of man, and abridging his natural freedom, is exactly the same, they have adjusted the means to that end in a way entirely similar. The divine thunders out his anathemas with more noise and terror against the breach of one of his positive institutions, or the neglect of some of his trivial forms, than against a neglect or a breach of those commandments of natural religion, which by these forms and institutions he pretends to enforce." The priest accustoms the people to the idea of law to make them better obey what he calls "the divine law", while the ruler prates of the divine law in order that the civil law may be better obeyed. The State is a society for the mutual insurance of the priest, the landlord, the warrior and the judge in order to enable every one of them to assert his respective authority over the people, to exploit them, to sacrifice them, and to keep them in a condition of a flock so

that they can shear and devour them.

A prelate is a church office having a superior degree of holiness and a fat preferment. One of Heaven's aristocracy.

"Far am I from proposing to in the least reflect on our most wise form of government; no more that I would, in the freer parts of my philosophical writings, mean to object to the piety, truth and perfection of our most excellent church. Both, I am sensible, have their foundations on a rock. No discovery of truth can prejudice them. On the contrary, the more closely the origins of religion and government are examined, the more clearly their excellencies must appear. They come purified from the fire. My business is not with them." Here is the only bit of irony in *A Vindication of Natural Society*, as is effectively proved by Burke who says in another paragraph in which he shows how "our most wise form of government" must, from its very nature, breed all manner of social and moral evil.

"The several species of government vie with each other in the absurdity of their constitutions, and the oppression which they make their subjects endure. Take them under what form you please, they are in effect but a despotism."

What a great book Burke might have written had he developed the ideas in his *Vindication of Natural Society*.

DOUGLAS MUIR MACTAGGART.

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COLONIALISM ON TRIAL

Continued from p. 1

even if one accepts that he really was upset, is it not clear that it is the same attitude as that which recommends that a dog which has been run over should be "put out of its misery". One does not do that to English people who are in pain, but Africans are different. Once again Griffiths' individual responsibility is lessened because he was so obviously only doing what general opinion in a colonial army unit demanded.

The Administrative Attitude

The whole incident is sufficiently shocking to evoke an editorial leader in the *Times*. "The Mau Mau are admittedly conspirators. They have taken a terrible oath and many of them have done savage and murderous deeds. Nevertheless they remain human beings. A rebellion has to be stamped out. All the sternness in the world is admissible, but not the atmosphere, which such incidents rightly or wrongly conjure up, of an afternoon's shoot or a pig-sticking match. It is not thus a great nation should discharge its imperial responsibilities. It is the certain way never to achieve eventual understanding between white men and black."

One can imagine the authorities in Kenya, like Malan in South Africa, regarding this as all very pious and naive, but not very practical. Such comments by the *Times* serve to lull the conscience of English people, and there is surely hypocrisy in its opening remark: "Captain Griffiths has been acquitted and there will be general relief that the crime of murdering an African does not lie against a British officer engaged in operations against Mau Mau."

Now Griffiths shot both men with a Bren gun. He then killed one of them with his pistol. Lieut. Innes-Walker (not charged) killed the other also with his pistol. Griffiths was charged with killing a man called Ndegwa. The prosecution however failed to present evidence that the man killed by Griffiths was in fact Ndegwa, and therefore he was acquitted.

It is apparent that this was a technical point of law (let us remind ourselves of the congratulations Griffiths received on his acquittal technically called "not guilty"); that the prosecution do not seem to have made up their case very efficiently; and that the Court were favourably disposed towards the accused. The case provides a striking contrast with that against Kenyatta, at Kapenguria, where the magistrate believed all the prosecution evidence and dismissed all that of the defence. In one case the accused was white; in the other black.

The Social and Economic Background

The whole case therefore puts colonialism on trial far more than a mere Captain Griffiths. At all points there emerges that attitude of contempt for Africans and a cheap regard for African lives, with killing on mere suspicion and tolerance of the most humiliating treatment.

Nor should it be forgotten that all competent observers agree that the Mau Mau movement itself is the result of the economic and social misery of the Kikuyu. In the face of such misery, these brutal military methods, with their sports analogies and scoreboards, cannot produce anything but hatred in the African himself. In English people, the mingled shame and contempt ought to promote a re-valuation of the whole of colonialism.

Notes for the MALATESTA CENTENARY

DURING December our Italian comrades are organising meetings and demonstrations and are issuing special supplements to their journals to commemorate the centenary of the birth of Errico Malatesta. We would wish to join with our Italian comrades, for Malatesta was both in his thinking and in his actions the true Internationalist. It was only the chance of having been born near Naples, of having spent his youth in Italy, and that his maternal tongue was Italian that he should be more closely associated with the Italian revolutionary movement. For during his long life Malatesta acquired fluency in the French, Spanish and English languages which permitted him in his travels to play his part in the revolutionary movements of the various countries in which he resided, or to which he paid short visits, just as effectively as in the more familiar surroundings of the land of his birth.

In this country Malatesta—the man, the revolutionary and the thinker—is unknown to the post-first-war generation. Even in anarchist circles here he is known simply as the author of one or two *Freedom Press* pamphlets and by a few articles which have been published in translation in *FREEDOM* during the past few years.

To attempt to assess the importance and the significance of Malatesta's activities in the revolutionary struggles, in the space of even a series of articles is a task which not even the most presumptuous journalist would dare undertake and feel at the same time that he was doing

justice to his subject. Malatesta, never enjoyed good health—(his parents and a sister and brother died of tuberculosis when he was still a young man, and he himself also had the symptoms of what in his youth was a fatal disease¹) yet, as so often happens the desire to live to the full, seemed to make light of these physical disabilities, and the many privations—including terms of imprisonment. When he died in July 1932 Malatesta was in his 79th year, of which more than fifty were spent as an active revolutionary. How can we hope to compress to newspaper proportions a life so long and rich in experience.

As we write these lines we cannot help thinking of yet another member of the "old guard" of Italian anarchism, one of Malatesta's co-workers in that period of revolutionary hope in Italy immediately after the first World War: Gigi Damiani. He died in Rome only a fortnight ago in his 79th year. His friends say that death came as a release for a man who was blind and partially paralysed. Yet to the very end Damiani was in full possession of his faculties. Devoted friends who looked after him kept him informed of events by reading to him, and he would in his turn dictate to them his articles which appeared in our contemporaries *Umanità Nova*

¹He describes in his account of the first meeting with Bakunin how ill he was on arrival, and of overhearing Bakunin's "sad forecast" of his [Malatesta's] early death: "It is a pity he is so ill—said Bakunin—we shall lose him soon, he can't possibly last more than six months." In fact, Malatesta "lasted" another sixty years!

(Rome) and *L'Adunata dei Refrattari* (New York) regularly week by week until his death.

The tenacity, the sense of purpose, which survived the many disappointments, disillusionments, the privations and the weakening of physical resistance which inevitably overtakes us all with the passing of the years, add immeasurably to the stature of men like Malatesta, Damiani, Bertoni, Galleani, Fabbri—to mention only a few of the "old guard" of the Italian movement.

Malatesta was not the professional revolutionary in the sense that one might for instance describe Bakunin. But the social revolution nevertheless dominated his whole life. He was only nineteen when with Carlo Cafiero (a noble and tragic figure of the revolutionary movement²) of the 1870's they went as delegates of the Neapolitan Federation of the Workers' International to a Congress of the International held at St. Imier in 1872. There he met Bakunin for the first time and the deep and lasting (and sympathetic) impression this meeting left on the young Malatesta was vividly expressed in an article he wrote more than forty years later with the title *Il mio primo incontro con Bakunin*³ (my first meeting with Bakunin).

Some five years later (1879) he met Kropotkin in Switzerland and it was the beginning of a deep friendship which was to last many years. "I had the honour and the good

²Bakunin's relations with Cafiero are referred to at some length in Prof. E. H. Carr's *Michael Bakunin* (London 1937).
³*Pensiero e Volontà* (Rome, July 1, 1926).

fortune to be linked to Kropotkin for many years by the most fraternal friendship. We loved one another because we were filled with the same passion and hope . . . and also by the same illusions." Thus wrote Malatesta in 1931, a year before his own death, in an extensive article of *Recollections and Criticisms by an old Friend*⁴.

In his writings Malatesta has expressed his, and the revolutionary movement's, indebtedness to Kropotkin and Bakunin, both as personalities—that is men who were able to inspire those with whom they came into contact—and as social thinkers. Our indebtedness to Malatesta—and it is, we believe, the real significance of Malatesta as a revolutionary thinker—is that though he never minimised the great qualities of these two men and their very considerable contribution to anarchist thought he was not however hypnotised by their intellectual stature into accepting their ideas, as so many anarchist did and still do, as being almost "universal truths" and of which to express doubts was for some "nearly a heresy".

To Bakunin's "too Marxist" views on political economy and interpretation of history, and the contradiction between his mechanistic concept of the universe and his faith in the effectiveness of will on the destinies of men and of humanity; to Kropotkin's "absurd" definition of anarchism as "a concept of the universe

⁴*Pietro Kropotkin—Ricordi e critiche di un vecchio amico. Studi Sociali Montevideo*, April 15, 1931. An English translation published in *FREEDOM* Jan. 12/19, 1952.

ISRAEL: THE HISTADRUT

THE major organization around which most of the economic and political life in Israel rotates is the General Federation of Labour—The Histadrut. Other countries have bigger Labour organizations than this one, no other labour organization however, in any country, has so much power, and controls the life of a nation to such an extent as does the Histadrut in the five-year-old Jewish State.

The Histadrut is unique in as much as it is not only a labour organization, it is also the greatest business undertaking in Israel. It controls the biggest co-operatives, owns the biggest business enterprises, runs many huge factories, and as a result of all that employs many thousands of employees; and is therefore the greatest factor in the economic life of the nation.

The Histadrut has many worthy accomplishments to its credit. During the 33 years of its existence, it has organized an efficient communal co-operative life in Israel, such that no official government could ever accomplish. It interests itself with the cultural life, the health of its members, and with their general welfare. Until the establishment of the State, the Histadrut was responsible for the entire educational system of the country. It publishes daily newspapers, has its own book publishing company, a worker's theatre, its own artists and cultural activities, trade schools, etc.

In order to take care of the health of its members, the Histadrut has founded the Kupat Holim (Sick Fund). This fund is sustained through a payment of 2% of the payroll by its members, and 3% by the employers. It covers a million persons with complete medical and surgical treatment, hospitalization, X-Rays, drugs, convalescent homes at a low cost, and old age assistance. To furnish medical service to its members they have 850 clinics, and employ 1,250 physicians, and hundreds of nurses and pharmacists.

It is quite possible that the land of Israel would have been better off to be managed by the Histadrut completely rather than to have established a political government, which it now has. Of course, as anarchists, we could hardly approve of any organization wielding such power as to rule a nation. Yet, it may in many ways be preferred to a political government. However, this was our objection to a Syndicalist form of society, and our objections bear out exactly in the case of the Histadrut. When an organization grows to such size, with control in the hands of such a small number of officials, its members can have very little to say about its conduct,

and it actually becomes a system of dictatorship.

Its Growth and Attainment of Power

The Histadrut was founded in December, 1920, with a total membership of 4,433 Jewish workers. To-day it has about 700,000 members, which is 42% of the entire population, and 73% of the skilled and non-skilled, members of co-operatives, and agricultural collective settlements; building trades, clerical workers, teachers, nurses and physicians. In short, as set forth in its statutes, "All workers subsisting on earnings of their own labour and not exploiting the labour of others." It therefore also covers people who are self-employed.

Membership in the Histadrut is on a direct individual basis, whether the member is a hired worker, a member of a co-operative or of an agricultural settlement. The membership fee is 4½ to 5½% of the payroll paid directly to the general federation. This embraces all the trade unions and maintains a single organizational fund for all purposes. 40% of this fund goes for the Sick Fund (Kupat Holim).

The great power the Histadrut wields upon the economic and political life of Israel is not only by reason of its membership, but also by virtue of its own great wealth and the still greater wealth it controls. Among the principle economic enterprises the Histadrut owns, the following are worthy of mention.

TNUVA—Central co-operatives for marketing produce of agricultural labour settlements.

HAMASHBIR HAMERKAZI—Co-operative wholesale society for supplies for agricultural settlements and for consumers' co-operatives.

SHIKUN & NEVE OVED—Workers' housing in urban and rural areas.

SOLE BONEH—Building and public works contracting company.

YAKIN & HAKAL—Agricultural contracting companies.

WORKERS' BANK—Central credit institution for workers' enterprises.

NIR LTD.—Long term agricultural credits.

HASSNEH—Co-operative insurance company.

I could not procure the figures on the capital these enterprises own and the amount of business they do at present, but in 1950 when the population in Israel was only 1,000,000, these enterprises owned 22,620,000 IL. Since then the population has risen to about 1,700,000, and so their capital has undoubtedly risen in at least the same proportion.

The Setup and Jurisdiction of The Histadrut

As stated above, membership in the Histadrut is direct; dues are paid directly to the general organization. The activities however, are carried on through the local labour councils and unions. In each town and village the Histadrut members elect council members. Through these councils and trade unions, local and national, the activities of the Histadrut are carried on. All the national unions are under the jurisdiction of the *Histadrut Executive Committee*, which may decide any question of policy or principle. The Executive Committee is elected by the General Council, which in turn is elected by the General Convention. Delegates to the General Convention are elected by the Histadrut members once in four years on a basis of proportional representation. The voting is not even for individuals, but for proportional party representation. This Executive Committee not only controls the national unions and councils, but also controls all the enterprises, factories and the various economic undertakings by the Histadrut.

This, as can be seen, is a strict centralized system. No matter how ideal an organization may be, no-one can tell to what such a concentration of power in the hands of a few officials may lead.

JOSEPH SPIVAK.

SELFHOOD

Continued from p. 2

lectically conceived the less powerful yields and submits to the more powerful, and if it cannot submit it is destroyed. This is the world in which most people professedly believe, even some anarchists, if one is to judge by their blindness to the element of freedom contained in religion and to the element of slavery contained in science. Not that there is no principle of slavery in religion as well. On the contrary, it is through religion that power has been divinized. For most religious people God is still power, first and foremost, the same as for self-styled irreligious people the highest form of manhood they can conceive is to be like God in the exercise of power or to have in the State a supreme power to worship and abjectly obey.

POWER comes from a self-identification with the supremacy of God or a natural force, and it is a denial of humanity in that it tends to rob men of selfhood and turn them into things. That is why, in one of my preceding articles, I said that archist needs are not spiritual. I also said that they were not biological because a man or a group of men with the power to force others to supply them with food, shelter and other necessities

have also the power to procure them for themselves. Love or parental care is a biological necessity, but power is a perversion. It is an overweening demand of love's works when one has ceased to be lovable. In its more complex form it is instead a construction of the aggressive phase of the instinct of self-preservation hugely outstripping and finally defeating the organic needs of the individual and the social body.

Power is fed and sustained by imagination, at least of an imaginative and reducing kind, while selfishness is imaginatively sterile. It does not seek to reduce persons to things in self-exaltation and harvesting of guilt, but chooses to ignore the existence of other selves, doing violence to them, only indirectly by its striving for absolute possession of things and blocking all avenues of communication. It could be considered as a fixation of the child's passivity, dependence, and absence of responsibility, but its tempering and surpassing is not wholly a product of adulthood because the child's libido is just as centrifugal as it is centripetal, and it is only in adulthood that selfishness acquires its worst feature, that of an hostile trend against selfhood, a fear of others' and one's own freedom.

GIOVANNI BALDELLI.

A PLEE FOR ANARCHIE

"Those people spell best who do not know how to spell."

—BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

"Connexion with an x!" cries the outraged business-man to his secretary, "That's an Americanism, Miss Smith. You'll be spelling sox with an x next!" He could not be more wrong, of course; but as he has been compulsorily educated we can hardly expect him to know it.

Poor Miss Smith! She knows, or thinks she knows all about "American" spelling. She does not need Fowler to tell her that "Our first notification that the book we are reading is not English but American is often, nowadays, the sight of an -or. 'Yankee' we say, and congratulate ourselves on spelling like gentlemen; we wisely decline to regard it as a matter for argument; the English way cannot but be better than the American way; that is enough." The only time Miss Smith spells *honour Honor* is when she writes her name. And when she goes to the theatre she buys a *programme*; though, oddly enough, she never draws a *diagramme* or sends a *telegramme*. But even in British print there are enough alternative forms to bewilder her at times: is it *judgment* or *judgement*, *inquire* or *enquire*, *sovereign* or *sovrain*, *despatch* or *despatch*, *benefitted* or *benefited*? Only at times is she puzzled, though, for spelling on both sides of the Atlantic has for many years been cast in a rigid mould (or mold).

English-speaking people have never had much time for grammarians, who in consequence have never been able to exert much influence on the language but have had to be content to tag along behind, trying to keep up with the changes made by the common people. "It is the very anarchy of English" says Claude de Crespigny, "that has made it the dominant language of the world today." It is all the more surprising, therefore, that English-speakers should have abandoned the anarchist way of free experiment in their spelling and submitted to the tyranny of the dictionary-makers. The printers were partly to blame, of course, and by the beginning of the eighteenth century there was already a regrettable uniformity in English spelling; but it was not until Samuel Johnson published his dictionary in 1775 that the prevailing welter of heterography began to be organized into the chaos we have today. Johnson plumped for *-our*, though he let *exterior* slip in with *interior* and *posterior* with *anterior*. He also included such contradictions as *deceit* and *receipt*, *deign* and *disdain*, which we have been stuck with ever since.

Nationalism came into spelling with Noah Webster, the American lexicographer, who tried to enlist patriotic support for his proposed spelling reform in these terms: "A capital advantage of this reform in these States would be that it would make no difference between the English orthodox and the American. . . The alteration, however small, would encourage the publication of books in our own country. . . The English would never copy our orthography for their own use. . . Besides this, a national language is a band of national union. Every engine should be employed to render the people of this country national."

Webster seems to have been a practical sort of man, however, and the reform of spelling for its own sake was probably more important to him than patriotism. He expunged the *u* (on etymological grounds) from words in the *honour* class; lopped off the *k* from *publick*, *musick*, and their analogues (or analogs); cancelled (or canceled) the redundant letters in *traveller*, *waggon*, etc.; and reversed the *re* in some of the centre class of words. More than that, he believed that sooner or later "common sense and convenience" would lead to *nabor*, *hed*, *proov*, *det*, *tung*, *wimmin* (for *neighbour*, *head*, *prove*, *debt*, *tongue*, *women*) and so on.

Not all of Webster's proposals were adopted, and he had to face a lot of opposition; but he cleared the ground for his successors, of whom there have been many. In Chicago, where the nites are, if not braw, at least brite, and moonlit, the *Tribune* informed its readers in 1935 that it had adopted twenty-four simplified spellings to its list. Altho this reform seems to have appealed to the common sense of the patriotic fervour (or fervor) of some of its readers, it caused much distress to such mystics as Blanche Jennings, who wrote to the *Catholic World* (August, 1934) that *nite* "connotes speakeasies, gin, cheapness and vulgarity." *Night*, it seems, "suggests quiet, rest and beauty." The *Tribune* had to abandon some of its spellings, including (strangely enough) *iland*, which will be familiar enough to readers of Donne and Hemingway.

The patriots have not all been on the other side of the water, of course. As Fowler says in his *Dictionary of Modern English Usage*, "The American abolition of *-our* in such words as *honour* and *favour* has probably retarded rather than quickened English progress in the same direction." Fowler's opinion is shared by Basil de Selincourt, who wrote (in *Pomona*, or *The Future of English*,

1928): "The Americans have dropped a *u* out of humour and other words; possibly we should have done so, of they had not." And there have been plenty of almost (Dare I say it?) psychopathic outbursts from English and colonial jingoists. "Surely the re-issue of English classics in the 'nu speling' from 'America' might be left to American publishers" complained C. R. Prance in the *Times Literary Supplement* for April 24, 1930. "Surely if it pays London to cater for U.S.A. readers, one might expect some warning for those who prefer the King's English undefiled." This defilement of the King's English (Did it really belong to him?) has also worried the Sydney *Triad*, which has complained that "horrible American inaccuracies are coming into common use" in Australian papers. "If it is correct or tolerable in English," it goes on, "to write *labor* for *labour*, why not *boddy* for *body*, *steddy* for *steady*, and *yot* for *yacht*?" (Well, why not?) In Canada, where both conventions exist side by side, patriotic bodies urge loyal Canadians to use the "English" spellings. One can only suppose that Ben Jonson, Shakespeare(a)r(e), and others were a sort of traitors. It can only be a matter of time before the patriots of the *Daily Worker* raise their voices against this dreadful Yankee desecration

of "our" great British heritage. At any rate patriotism is as impervious to reason in this matter as in others. It is useless for the Oxford English Dictionary to point out that *ax* is "better on every ground, of etymology, phonology, and analogy" than *axe*; *ax* is now Yankee and therefore horrid. The English revulsion probably accounts for the preference of English papers (except the *Times*) for *-ise* in words like *civillize*. And it was surely the spirit of retaliation that put the *y* into *tire*?

Spelling reform is not confined to America, nor is it new. One of the earliest reformers was Orim, a thirteenth-century monk who tried to revise the orthography of Middle English. There have been many of his tribe, known and unknown. One of the most recent and most well known was the late Bernard Shaw, who bequeathed money under his will to provide us with a new alphabet. "Nu alfabet" are a favourite with reformers, tho' some are content to rearrange the existing letters until English begins to look like a foreign language. The following specimen is an American attempt:

Qur Feqdr, hy qrt in hev'n: helwed bj dhqi neim.

In spite of its Arabic look, Christians should be able to recognize it. The most recent invention looked more like a Scandinavian language with its doubled

is (*fiit* for *feet*, etc.) and was sponsored by a certain Mr. Follick, an M.P. in the post-war Labour (or Labor) government, who brought in a bill intended to save us (compulsorily, of course) from the mental strain involved in trying to remember how many *rs* there are in *embarrass* and *harass*. Compulsion figures largely in all the reformers' plans: if Mr. Follick's bill had become law newspapers would have been compelled to print a proportion of their matter in the "nu speling" under penalty of a heavy fine, and teachers would have been compelled to teach it to their pupils, who would have been compelled to learn it.

As usually is the case, the reformers' motives are admirable enough. We can all sympathize with the intelligent child who learns that *h-e-d* spells *hed* only to find that *h-e-d* does not spell *head*. But if you want to spare him the frustration and waste of time involved in mastering the vagaries of English spelling there is no need to force upon him a new and outlandish alphabet or some arbitrarily decided rearrangement of existing letters: you could leave him to his own devices. Then it would probably not be long before *h-e-d* did spell *hed*, which, as every schoolmaster knows, is quite wrong, but which, as every intelligent five-year-old knows, is much more sensible. But that, of course, would be sheer anarchy, and we cannot have that, can we? EDWIN PEEKE.

Spider Men Seek Danger Pay From 40 Feet

THE "spider" men—construction workers who erect steel frameworks and do other dangerous work at considerable heights above the ground—are pressing for danger money to be paid at working heights in excess of 40 feet up.

At present extra pay is given only for work above 100 feet, but it can hurt a workman just as much to fall 90 feet as 110. The employers, however, have rejected the claim presented by the Constructional Engineering Union.

Jack Stanley, general secretary of the C.E.U. said last week that the steel erector's job was one of the most dangerous in Britain. "On an average," he said, "over the past few years, one in every four hundred has been killed and 95 per cent. meet their death by falls from 40 feet and less. Six men have been killed in South Wales in the past months by falls from considerably less than 100 feet."

But the employers are deaf to these

arguments, and at Scunthorpe (Lincs.) 300 spider-men have been in dispute with their bosses for over a month. At a steel-works there, a development scheme costing £14 million, has been the scene of a refusal by the men to work without danger money at heights of more than 40 feet.

The union claim that the situation is now a lock-out by the bosses; the employers say it is a strike. The men are getting full support, with pay, from their

Letter

"QUEEN OF THE ANARCHISTS"

Editor, FREEDOM.

I am naturally sorry that your reviewer fell foul of my novel, *Lover under Another Name*, since it is the story of an artist who was a natural anarchist, but leaving that aside I must ask you to correct the implication that I invented the description 'queen of the anarchists' for my old friend Emma Goldman. When I was writing my novel based on her life, *Red Rose*, I had access to a number of letters, and from them, and from conversations with people who knew Emma in the early days, I learned that she had this title in England at the time of her marriage to James Colton, and it was so he thought of her—and in the context of that marriage of convenience the title had great pathos. The story is told in *Red Rose*. Wimbledon, Nov. 23. ETHEL MANNIN.

NO MORE VIRGIN BIRTHS

The Reverend Father W. Dooner, a deputy of the Parliament of Ontario (Canada), has just recommended—so as to reduce the expense of maintaining illegitimate children that falls on municipalities—the "sterilization of unmarried mothers".

Come, come, Father. . . What is the good of sterilizing the unmarried mothers when they have already brought their little bundles into the world?

What needs to be done is to sterilize the girls before they have "sinned". As the Reverend Dooner probably does not know any more than we do how to divine which girls are going to become unmarried mothers, the best thing is to sterilize them all.

Agreed?

Le Canard Enchaîné, (Paris) Nov. 25.

BUT WILL HE FEED THEM?

To encourage Roman Catholic parents to have larger families, the Bishop of Nottingham, Dr. Edward Ellis, promised he would personally baptise every eighth child born to any Catholic family in his diocese.

He kept his promise at Nottingham Cathedral on Sunday when he baptised the eighth child for Mr. and Mrs. James McGlone, of Manton Crescent, Nottingham.

Malatesta Centenary

Continued from p. 3

based on the mechanistic interpretation of the phenomena which embraces all nature, not excluding the life of society", Malatesta opposes an interpretation "free from any kind of dogmatism and from every pretence of possessing an absolute 'social truth'."

"I am an anarchist"—wrote Malatesta⁵ "because to me it seems that anarchy would conform more closely to my concept of the good of all and to my aspirations for a society which reconciles the freedom of all with co-operation and love, than any other form of social living together, and not because it [anarchy] is a scientific truth and a natural law. It is sufficient that it should not be in contradiction with any known law of nature for me to consider it possible and to struggle to gain the support necessary for its achievement."

In his actions as well as in his writings Malatesta avoided both the *deterministic* and the *idealistic* approaches. We feel that he can be best defined as a *commonsense anarchist*. His life and thought were guided by certain principles from which he never wavered, but his approach to the many problems facing the revolution was scientific and human. He studied men as they are and refused to be lulled into simplifications of the social problem by idealising the "masses". He saw the dangers of mass workers organisations yet recognised their positive function in the struggle for better working conditions under capitalism. He combatted those who were revolutionaries in the negative sense only, pointing out that since life must continue just the

same during the revolutionary period it was pointless to destroy the existing institutions, and the machinery of production and distribution unless the workers understood clearly what was to take their place. Again though Malatesta believed that at some stage in the revolutionary upheaval the workers would have to use violence he could only justify its use as a means of defence; that the new social order should be maintained in being by violence was completely alien to his thought. Such an attitude permitted him to express his firm, unequivocal opposition to the Bolsheviks from the beginning, and against those few well-known anarchists who were seeking common ground to permit some collaboration with the Bolsheviks.

Yet Malatesta's *commonsense anarchism* was far from being a simplistic approach to the problems of today and of tomorrow. He possessed the art of saying profound things simply. He disliked rhetoric—much to the annoyance of some Italian comrades who complained that he had been influenced by the English in whose midst he lived for a number of years—and in his speeches and in his writings he refused to play to the gallery with a fine sounding phrase here or a false hope there. He expressed his thought fearlessly, and was the first to admit that on certain questions anarchists had not yet put forward a convincing solution. Indeed this was for him an incentive to probe all the more, ever eager to promote controversial discussion which might eventually lead to a clarification or a better understanding of these problems. V.R.

(To be continued)

A COURAGEOUS CHRISTIAN

THE death this week of Dr. Barnes, Bishop of Birmingham reminds us that within the Church there occasionally stands out from the normal run of dignitaries a fearless man, prepared to speak the truth as he conceives it, whatever the cost to his own position or the dogmas of his Church.

For him, Christianity was found in the principles of Christ—not in the dogmatic assertions and accommodating principles of the Church. This belief led him to his unswerving pacifism which he held even when it was unpopular to do so. His scientific understanding compelled him to declare from his pulpit that Darwin had destroyed the theological scheme, and urged the Church to make clear its acceptance of evolution. His understanding of the necessity for many people to limit their families gave him a rational attitude to birth control, contrasting with the encouragement by other sections of the Christian Church to urge people to have large families, regardless of health or happiness.

His book *The Rise of Christianity* in which he cast doubts on the validity of the Virgin birth, the physical resurrection of Christ and the miracles said to have been performed, brought the whole pack snarling at his heels and prompted that babbling Archbishop from Canterbury to declare that "if his views were mine I should not feel that I could still hold episcopal office."

His views on the U.N.O. contain a great deal of truth. Refusing to take part in a U.N.O. demonstration in Birmingham he declared: The United Nations based their strength on force, which was bound to fail them. "Two rival groups will develop within it. They will become suspicious of one another and war will result."

The writer has little sympathy with Christian doctrine as manipulated by Church and State, and sees certain contradictions in the stand taken by Dr. Barnes. Nevertheless, men like him are only too rare and deserve respect. M.

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

OPEN AIR MEETINGS

Weather Permitting
HYDE PARK
Sundays at 3.30 p.m.

TOWER HILL
Tuesdays at 12.30 p.m.

NORTH-EAST LONDON

DISCUSSION MEETINGS

IN EAST HAM

Alternate Wednesdays
at 7.30 p.m.

DEC. 16.—E. Priddy

THE ARTS & THE ARTISAN

GLASGOW

INDOOR MEETINGS

every Friday
at 7.30 p.m.
at 200 Buchanan Street.
Speakers: Mark Kramisch, Hugh McCutcheon and others.

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