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THE BRITISH



FASCIST OPINION.

DICTATORSHIP

SOME years ago a certain professor popularised a theory that a sick man can cure himself by repeating incessantly to himself that he is not ill. This art of carrying conviction by an incessant and parrot-like repetition, even in contradiction to the testimony of reason and experience, an art, the practise of which is one of the conditions of successful advertising, is well understood and practiced by our politicians of to-day. And thus in attacking Fascism its enemies have devised certain slogans, of which the most frequent and the most effective is the pronouncement, "Fascism is Dictatorship."

To-day there is a numerous and rapidly increasing body of genuine enquirers who ask, "What is Fascism? It appears to be increasing everywhere. There must after all be something in it. We Would like to know more about it." And the enemies of Fascism promptly give answer, "Fascism is Dictatorship. Dictatorship may be very well in foreign countries, the spirit of whose people has been broken by long periods of submission to the tyrannical rule of an absolute master. But the British have always resisted such tyranny, and resisted it successfully. They have always, been ready to fight if necessary in the defence of their liberties. If there are to be found here and there a few weak poor-spirited individuals; who are prepared to submit to the tyranny of a dictator, you at least have not so far lost that sturdy independence which has always characterised the people of this country as to entertain even the idea of a

dictatorship, You would never submit to such a surrender." And the enquirer replies, "No, certainly not." And that is the end of the matter.

And the reply; "Fascism is Dictatorship," has become a parrot-cry repeated mechanically by thousands who have no knowledge of Fascism and little interest in the subject but who are reluctant to admit their ignorance of a subject which is continually coming more arid more under the public eye.

The picture presented to the public is deliberately and dishonestly misleading and false.

On the One hand we are shown a picture of 'Western Democracy, with a free and independent people, prosperous and happy, actively and zealously interested in the government of the Country, in which every man has an equal voice; a government carried on by men who are at once the efficient agents and obedient servants of the great majority of their people, and whose beneficent activities are the reflection of the sum of the national will.

On the other hand, we are shown a Fascist State, with cringing Millions cowering beneath the lash of a brutal despot, a megalomaniac who has snatched the supreme power in order that he may strut in the limelight with inflated chest, whilst his slaves stand in countless rows with uplifted hands and vociferate "Hail" and all the implications of this menacing picture are summed up in the single word dictatorship, which is made to imply the most extreme form of moral, social, economic, and poetical damnation.

Let us turn from this fanciful fiction to the reality which exists around us today.

Does this thing miscalled Western Democracy provide a government which truly represents the majority of the people? Is it that "ancient time honoured institution of native British growth " that we are bidden to believe?

In this country, what more weighty political authority can we quote than our Mr. Stanley Baldwin, who issues forth periodically, nay almost daily, clad in the Shining armour of pure democracy, and heralded by the

minstrelsy of a faithful press, to give the final matador thrust to fell the fiery dragons of dictatorship.

"To the pure all things are pure," and Mr. Baldwin has never disguised that he considers himself the champion of "pure democracy." Amidst the eloquent periods of other politicians as to the threats to our ancient democracy, Mr. Baldwin reminds us that, "we have had a very short experience of universal suffrage, only fifteen: years;" and warns us that people have not yet begun to realise "the manner in which that change would influence the result of elections, In truth, what is, termed "our ancient democracy," has been exported wholesale to other countries, in all of which it has achieved a most complete and more or less expensive failure. Mr. Baldwin's explanation is that in those countries it was grafted on to a stem of absolutism, and this was not natural growth. Be that as it may, during its sojourn in those other countries the system underwent an extensive transformation, and so transformed has been re-imported into this country, of re-importation the result has been, in the words applied by Mr. Baldwin to the introduction of dictatorship, "to graft something completely alien on to the stem of an old oak." And of all the gardeners who have assisted in the grafting, Mr., Baldwin himself has been one of the most active. Not all the eulogies of those gardeners and their assistants over their handiwork can blind us to the fact that this alien re-import, masquerading, like much else, under a British label, is proving as complete a failure in this country as it has done in the foreign countries in which it was hybridised and produced.

Mr. Baldwin has given us a characteristic of what he terms a dictatorship. "Dictatorship," he says, "is like a giant beech tree, very magnificent to look at, but nothing grows underneath it. The whole tendency of, it is to squeeze out the competent and independent men and to create an hierarchy used to obey. Does not this description agree in many respects with the form of government from which we suffer today? To liken it to a giant beech tree would no doubt be a slander to one of the finest of our trees, and it is not very magnificent to look at. Under it the ground is entirely bare; scattered survivals of hardy

perennials planted in other days maintain a precarious existence amongst a choking mass of weeds. But the "tendency to squeeze out the competent and independent men; and to create hierarchy used to obey," is a description which fits our political system like a glove. Does Mr. Baldwin recollect that within the last few years one of our party leaders had the hardihood to announce that those members upon whose invariable loyalty their party leader was unable to rely must expect to find themselves superseded for promotion by others whom they may rightly consider to be less capable than themselves. There are none who take an interest in political matters who could not name Members of Parliament who by their ability, their knowledge, and their political integrity, are well deserving of Cabinet rank; but who, because they have refused to betray their loyalty to their constituents and to their principles and bow themselves before a political Rimmon; have been and will continue to be debarred from rendering their full service to their country. Had an infusion of some such men into the ranks of the Government been permitted, it might have prolonged the life of the present system sufficiently to have prevented the old tree from crashing onto the heads of those who strive to take shelter from the storm under its shade.

Under our present system the politician who would earn promotions must bend his back so frequently that by the time he reaches the seats of the mighty he has contracted a permanent curvature of his political spine, and is no longer able to stand erect. Those who have taken part in the devious manoeuvres to force the disastrous Indian White Paper scheme upon a reluctant country are not in a position to cast the imputation on others of "attempting to create a hierarchy used to obey." The beam is large in their own eyes for all the world to see.

And this spirit is encouraged even in the local organisations, where it flourishes exceedingly. A single example may suffice. The scene a Conservative Garden Party in the Provinces. The speaker, an ex-Parliamentary candidate a man successful in his career, popular, respected, and of good intelligence. He informs his hearers that conditions are going to improve because Mr. Baldwin has said that

they will and "if Stanley Baldwin says it, it must be so." Could the most absolute dictatorship desire more?

One of the most bitter and biting criticisms of our present system is that implied in the often repeated tribute to one of our party leaders; that he is "an honest man." How often has one heard criticism on this individual, met by the reply; "at any rate, Mr. X is an honest man." In the minds of the majority of his followers, this quality of unquestioned honesty pre-imminently distinguishes this particular individual from the average of the other prominent politicians. Whether the implied criticism in the public mind on those other politicians has much or little justification or excuse, or no justification or excuse at all; is quite immaterial to our present point. The fact remains that the public mind has so little confidence in the honesty, of the leaders of their chosen representatives, that when one can be found whose honesty is above suspicion, he stands out prominently from the rest, and that virtue is held to cover a multitude of political errors, if such errors these be. So much for the confidence of the people of this country in their elected representatives.

Sixth form boys have been reminded by Mr. Baldwin that when Sir Henry Wilson was shot, a man in the road with a shovel went after the gunmen; and were told that, "those things do not happen under a dictatorship. Those things are the result of freedom and responsibility."

That is not correct. They happened and happen under the inefficient dictatorship of Western Democracy, and are the result of licence and irresponsibility. They would not happen under Fascism. Fascism does not permit the existence of organisations which send out gunmen to murder a patriotic statesman and a great servant of his Country on the doorstep of his own house, nor does it consider that the prohibition of such organisations is an infringement of true liberty, but rather an enforcement of its principles. And if such an attempt were made, the pursuit of, the assassins would not depend on the chance initiative of a member of the public armed with a shovel.

Not only do we suffer from a dictatorship, and a weak dictatorship at that; we suffer from something immeasurably worse, a succession of short dictatorships, each of which reverses its predecessors' policy: thereby rendering impossible that continuity of policy without which there can be no permanent progress. In Industry as well as in Agriculture, and indeed in all matters and enterprises, there must be a period between the time of the preparing of the ground and the sowing of the seed, and the time when the harvest is ripe and ready to be reaped. And no man will give the care or the labour necessary to the preparation of the crop, unless there is some reasonable assurance that when it is ripe it will be gathered and garnered, and not trampled down in the mud or left un-reaped to rot and blacken where it stands.

Let us turn for contrast to those countries in which Fascism now rules in the Government. The enemies of Fascism call the heads of those States, "Dictators." In their own countries they are called, "The Leader" and they are rightly so-called. For the Fascist leader is not the boss or the master of the people. Unlike the Dictators of Western Democracy, who demand implicit loyalty from their followers, but give no loyalty themselves to any stable principle, the Fascist leader gives to a higher Authority the same loyalty which he expects from others; and that higher authority is the principle and the idea of Fascism. Both in Italy and in Germany, the vast majority of the people have a complete confidence in their great leader; they know the policy which he has set before him, and they know that he will follow that policy with zeal and with integrity; they know that he is not merely a merchant of words, making promises not intended to be kept; but a man of action, who promises what he intends to do, and that, by the Grace of God and the help of Fascism, shall he done.

Those who have seen with their own eyes what Mussolini's government has effected in Italy, must marvel at colossal achievements by the side of which the miracles of Moses in the wilderness seem small. Whilst in the short time during which he has been in control of Germany, Hitler has accomplished more than many an able statesman has succeeded in achieving during a long political career. In

other countries; persons who would indignantly repudiate Fascism are often heard to say, "What we want in this country is a Mussolini," or, "What we want here is a Hitler." The names of these two great men are used unconsciously, even by their enemies, as types of a supreme efficiency. And they are what they are because they have been able to sum up in themselves all that is soundest in the people of their respective countries. Nearly, a year ago, after reading a criticism on a Jewish anti-German book; the author of which criticism, also evidently a Jew; referred to Hitler as, "A person of inherent meritocracy, and the last hope of a lost generation," we wrote and printed this reply. "Hitler is more than a single man, and more than many men. He is a union of many millions of men, possessed by a common enthusiasm and united in a common cause. Hitler is Germany and Germany awakened. Like a great burning-glass he has been able to focus in himself the innumerable fires of a reborn nation and it is above all for that reason that he is able to stand where he stands to-day," And last month, after the oath of allegiance, there flamed in large letters across the front page of the "*Völkischer Beobachter*," the words, "Adolf Hitler is Germany. Germany is Adolf Hitler." What statesmen are there in the so-called Democratic Countries of whom such things could said? Would it be possible for any British paper to declare in large type, "Stanley Baldwin is Britain, Britain is Stanley Baldwin," or, "Ramsey MacDonald is Britain, Britain is Ramsay MacDonald." Would any French paper declare, "Daladier is France, France is Daladier" or some journal of the Left proclaim, "Leon Blum is France, France is Leon Blum?" And yet these little dictators claim to be the free representatives of a free people while the great leaders of Fascism, are misrepresented as arbitrary drivers of unwilling and resentful.

We cannot conclude better than by quoting the words of Lord Trent, uttered but a few weeks ago.

"When the Socialist government was thrown out, we did not appoint a dictator, but the people gave a blank cheque to a National Government--We started with the same men at the head of the rescue party as had been at

the head of the wreckers. In the absence of more resolute leadership the People have begun to lose faith. What the nation is looking for is not a Napoleon, but a team of leaders, men who possess drive and reforming zeal."

Such a team of leaders it is the aim and the privilege of Fascism to provide. And as every team must have a leader or captain, who allocates to each member of the team his place and directs his activities in such a manner that each member of the team co-operates with the others for the success of the whole; so the team of leaders provided by Fascism must necessarily, like every other team, have its captain or leader, who works himself with the team, but whose directions to each individual must be accepted without question, if the team is to work together as a team with success. The captain of the team is not a boss, in the sense, of our Americanised sense of values. He is essentially a leader of leaders, and his position and his authority are maintained, not by his power to eject any individual member from the team, but by the knowledge that that power is only exercised by him in the interest of the team's efficacy; by the fact that each member of the team of leaders, being a leader himself, recognises in its captain that quality which renders him the fittest to organise and control the team, so that it may best succeed in that contest for the purpose of which it has come together. We claim that such a team of leaders, under the control of a leader of leaders, has been found in those countries in which genuine Fascism has triumphed over its enemies. The measure of their success is given, not by spoken promises or by written programmes and projects; but by achievements actually effected. They have found the nations which they now lead floundering in the slime and sinking deeper and deeper in to bottomless swamps, and have taken them firmly by the hand and, set them where their feet are planted on solid ground. They have raised them from a position of inferiority and disregard to one in which their word is listened to with respect and consideration and the prospect of their enmity is an object of fear. They have seized and strangled the twin serpents of moral and political corruption. Where they found chaos they have brought order; where they found distrust they have brought confidence, and where they have -found despair they have

brought hope. With such leaders, freed from the shackles of antiquated prejudice and modern dogmatism, this great country, with its wide spread Empire and its magnificent possibilities which to-day staggers with uncertain steps on the brink of disaster, might be built up into a great rock in the welter of world unrest, from which Western Civilisation might set forth to still greater developments for the good, not only of our own people, but ultimately of all mankind.

We shall be asked, and we are often asked, "Where is your team of leaders, and where is your leader of leaders? We look at Fascism in Britain, and we see nothing but a number of separate groups, mostly of no great size; divided by differences of method or individual ambitions; each ploughing its separate furrow, with hardly an attempt at cooperation, a scratch collection of players of various merits, but with no sort of pretension to be considered a team:"

To that we could reply. As Fascism builds in the State, so Fascism must also build within itself. And in this country the building process within Fascism is still far from its final stage. In the course of that building there have been many errors, and it may be that there will be others before the final stage is reached: Stones which seem to-day to be ready for a place in the final structure may be found to be flawed or misshapen and set aside. At least we shall not waste our time with the mockeries of "Western Democracy," as exhibited in a certain European country, where, when the Government is found unworthy of confidence, a new government is formed by making the old Minister of Education into the Minister of Marine, the old Minister of Marine into the Minister of Justice, and the old Minister of Justice into the Minister of Education. As we progress our team of leaders will gradually take shape composed not of men who are moved by the desire to be leaders of a great movement, 'but of men who desire to see the evils in their country righted; who believe, fervently that Fascism is the means, and the only means, by which that cure can be effected, and who are trusted and obeyed by their followers because they are faithful servants of the Fascist ideal. And the greatest servant of that ideal shall be their leader.

It is easy to be critical of a movement that is still young in its development. Let those who would see Fascism strong in this country cease from expressing disappointment because it is not more strong or more united, and remember that if they and all such as they gave to it their ungrudging support, so far as their circumstances and their occupations permit, it would no longer be weak and it would soon become united. And to whatever position they may attain in Fascism, one certain reward will be assured to them; the reward which the true Fascist values more highly than any other--the consciousness of good work well done. **H. C. B. W.**

The Nazis and Christianity

Much publicity has been given in the English Press to the regrettable incidents caused by certain German Christians who wanted to do away with the Old Testament, and part of the New. But this was only used by our papers to attack Hitler and make out that his government wanted to set up a new religion of their own.

Therefore a brief account of the real position may be of interest.

According to the "Official Nazi Party Programme," written by order of Adolf Hitler; by Herr Gottfried Feder, point 24 of the twenty-five points of the Programme; he states:--

"We demand liberty for all religious denominations in the State as far as they are not a danger to it, and do not militate against the normal feelings of the German race. The Party, as such, stands for positive Christianity, but does not bind itself in the matter of creed, to any particular confession."

It is quite clear from this that the Nazi government stand for Christianity. Again on page 49-50, Herr Feder says:—

"One may well blame the Church for meddling in politics, and all good Christians will disapprove the cruelties practiced in the name of the Cross by the Inquisition, and trials for witch-craft, but it is wrong to abuse in general terms the greatest phenomenon in human history for the mistakes and depravities

of individuals: The Christian religion has raised and edified millions and millions and brought them to God by the way of suffering. Thus we must be careful to distinguish the inner spiritual kernel of Christianity from the various forms of excrescence which have appeared upon it in its passage through history. "However we may well treat the corrupting influence of the secret doctrines of Judaism as an object for public statements and attacks.

The same applies to all the stupid attacks on Christianity. Expressions such as "Christianity has only done harm," merely show that the man who says them has neither human nor political intelligence.

The German Christian Movement does not therefore, express the beliefs of Hitler's government, but the views of a few hot heads, who have come forward as a result of the great national upheaval, and will as quickly vanish away.

Germany stands to-day as a bulwark against the encroachments on Western Europe, of Russian Anti-God propaganda. **G. H. Woods.**

Current Events

The Watch on the Danube

PRECEPT follows upon precept, and pact upon pact. Throughout the years which have passed since the last war, the field of European politics has been studded with pacts, which have risen like mushrooms, and whose life, in the public memory, has been but little longer. Received at first with the reverential wonder of starving Israelites greeting the morning miracle of Manna, the plentiful and persistent supply of this angel food has gradually dulled the devotional fervour with which its daily appearance was hailed, and resulted in a sense of indifference and even of slight nausea.

Thus, the latest pact, the pact made by Italy with Austria and Hungary, has been passed by public opinion with no more than a few casual words of general commendation. Little does it appear to be realised that the signing of this pact places us in the presence of a

re-orientation of European policy, destined to shake the whole structure of Western civilisation, and profoundly and perhaps permanently to affect the future development of mankind. The space available in this section, or even in any section of an ordinary number of this periodical, would be quite inadequate to deal with the significance of this event, and to make even a cursory review of its potentialities and its probable consequences.

We propose, therefore, to issue an extra number, devoted exclusively to the Austrian problem and its various ramifications, which will appear some time during the month of May.

Meanwhile, the close attention of our readers is particularly recommended to any activities, however apparently insignificant arising from the policy of which this pact has given a timely warning to all whom it may concern.

The Far East

The accounts of the burning of a town in Japan, which appeared in the daily press during the fourth week of March, furnished a text upon which those, whose spiritual home is in Soviet Russia, and who therefore lose no opportunity of making verbal attacks upon Japan, have again trundled out their usual lurid picture of an immense and omnipotent Russia, before which an insignificant Japan is cowering in helpless consciousness of its inevitable doom. This preposterous figment is not even a caricature, for it is based upon a complete misconception of every aspect of the situation and of every element which affects it and even a caricature must have some sort of relation to facts, otherwise it ceases to be a caricature. We are bidden to remember that every Japanese city is "within flight of the Soviet frontier," while no Russian city of consequence is within flight of Japan. And it is suggested that the prospect of the inflammable buildings of their great cities being obliterated by colossal fires under the bombs of Russian airmen may make the Japanese reluctant to fight against Russia. Let those who indulge in these fantasies take another look at the map of Asia. Let them take note of the situation of the Russian Maritime province. Let them consider the length of the

Russian communications and their vulnerability to air attack. Let them remember that the whole material and personnel for a Russian attack will have to be accumulated in the Far East before the commencement of hostilities. Let them remember that the Japanese airman is brave and efficient. Let them remember that the Japanese psychology has nothing in common with that of certain young gentlemen who vote for certain notorious resolutions in the debating society of a certain ancient university. Let them realise that any menace in the air from the Russian Maritime province, so far from creating an inferiority complex in Japan, will rather stimulate her to deal with the situation in such a manner as to remove that menace permanently and completely on the first convenient opportunity.

And let them ask themselves whether such an opportunity will not arise when Russia becomes involved in a war in Europe. Let them work out the position arising from those considerations, and apply it to the world situation. If the result does not convert them to agreement with the view which we advocate, and in which we believe, that one of the salient features of our world policy should be a friendly understanding with Japan, it may at least enable them to have a better understanding of one of the elements on which that view is based.

Disarmament

The Disarmament Farce still drags along its grotesque course. On the 14th March Sir John Simon was reminded of Mr. Baldwin's recent declaration that if the attempts to reach agreement on disarmament failed, we should lay down plane for plane against the strongest Air Power within striking distance of our shores. Sir John. Simon replied that "the Government would act quickly, in any way that they could." Adding, that in his opinion "a bad agreement" on this subject would be a hundred

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