

CHAPTER EIGHT

CORRUPTION

"Many of the greatest tyrants on the records of history have begun their reigns in the fairest manner. But the truth is, this unnatural power corrupts both the heart and the understanding."

EDMUND BURKE, M.P., 1756.

THE collapse of democracy in Europe was the work of the fascist enemies of democracy. They took advantage of those weaknesses which must endanger every form of parliamentary rule.

These weaknesses are: unpopularity, inefficiency, corruption and Party violence.

In the preceding chapter we have shown the peculiar popularity of our Parliament—that there is for it a popular demand. It is not just another distant, aloof, bureau for making laws, but the last hope of the man in the street. It is poor ground for the fascist agitator on the supposition of unpopularity. The M.P. is used by his constituents not for political purposes alone but for every social event.

So much for the first weakness—not much of a weakness here. With inefficiency we deal in the next chapter, and with the grave danger of Party coercion and violence in Chapter X. Let us now consider the much advertised vice of corruption in high places.

Corruption, bad in itself, makes the best propaganda weapon for Fascism, since it must arouse mean jealousy and indignant virtue. The clever enemies of democracy, by rumour, shrug and innuendo, play on the jealousy felt by the ignorant masses for those in official position. "You put

them there," they say to the mob; "see what use they make of your trust." They can say it with safety of those who govern by democratic methods. Yet reason can best upset by unreasoning emotions—such as hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness.

The Fascists have two admirable forcing-grounds for emotional jealousy. (1) Corruption and luxury in high places, (2) spoils by favour of the Party. Can they but get the man in the street, the reader of their Press, or the emotional world, to believe: that Mr. Churchill's cigars are all presents from some sinister 'black hand' with which Mr. Churchill consorts at midnight in Soho; or that Mr. Roosevelt's name was Rosenfeld until the Elders of Zion selected and bribed him to destroy the American Constitution; that dallying with damsels from the demi-monde is the main pre-occupation of French Ministers—then the man in the street acquires a virtuous glow for himself, a contempt for those in authority, and a gentle regret that he has not at least been tempted to share in these strange delights.

In like manner the Fascists will show that those in power help their friends at the expense of the ordinary stupid citizen. For them the jobs, for them the houses, for them exemptions from service and taxation. Jealousy, that was used to denounce the rich, can be even more effective in denouncing those in power in a democracy. Can they but point to corruption, the Fascist game is won.

CORRUPTION OF TWO SORTS

Corruption in public life is of two kinds—the financial corruption of the elected Member, either by the foreigner or by the Executive or by vested interests; and the financial corruption of the electorate, by bribery or promised benefits.

If Parliament is seen to be an open door for acquisition of wealth, every Member becomes suspect to the electorate, jealousy is aroused, and rumour encouraged. Party Press exaggerates, and the bad example is followed throughout the nation—destroying all respect and honesty. The enemy Press has only to advertise the sickness, to secure the demise of such corrupt democracy. So may have died the French and Italian Parliaments. It has been our immense good fortune that, for the last hundred years, a plunge into British politics has been expensive rather than remunerative. The distinction and power given by a seat in Parliament is still adequate to attract the best people to Westminster; no bribe is yet needed to induce public work.

This was not always so, and may not endure. During the 18th century unreformed Parliaments were the paradise of paid hangers-on—so corrupt and so despised that we lost America. So corrupt was it, and so despised by America, that it resulted in the revolutionary Fathers of the American Constitution separating for ever corruptible law-makers from corrupting Executive.

DOES THE CAREER PAY?

Honesty may not endure here, because a Parliamentary career is no longer so unremunerative. Lord Baldwin raised the salaries of all Ministers of the Crown; the war has made it necessary to double the number of these Government offices; Mr. Chamberlain has raised the pay of M.P.s from £400 to £600 a year; State interference with trade, with business and labour has increased the number of vested interests dependent on Parliament; more than one Labour leader has set a bad example to a Party predominantly poor and specially susceptible to either good or bad example; Government directorships and other highly

paid posts outside Parliament, available on (or without) retirement, have multiplied.

At the same time, the growth of Party control has to some extent increased the unavoidable humiliations of a political career. Once we attract to Parliament those who aim at personal advantage, we lose those who intend only public advantage—they do not like the uncongenial company. We may compare this with a school acquiring a bad name, which disaster always ante-dates demise.

At present I see no evidence of bad name, loss of respect, nor lack of candidates from the best quarters. But the lover guards jealously the fragile reputation of his mistress. The collapse of democracy calls for an inquest, that we may reassure ourselves and reanimate others; in short, set a good example. Corruption is in truth easier to eradicate during this state of total war, when private gain has lost its main appeal.

I propose, therefore, to give examples—of what is commendable in our parliamentary life; what is tolerable, and what is intolerable, where personal financial gain is concerned.

THE GOOD EXAMPLE OF PARLIAMENT

Ever since 1905, all persons on entering the British Cabinet have resigned from the direction of any public or private company, and from any profession or business in which they were engaged, with the sole exception of agriculture. Writing for the Press is barred to them, though not broadcasting, for which they may accept fees. It is true that the management of the British Commonwealth is in any case a 'whole-time job', but the barrier was erected to prevent suspicion of interested motives and on grounds of public policy.

Many of these Cabinet Ministers went further. Lewis Harcourt told me that when he was made Secretary of State for the Colonies he drew up a list of his investments and instructed the permanent head of his Department to tick for sale all those which might in any way be affected by his policy in office. I quoted this to Sir Thomas Inskip, the Attorney-General, when he was made Co-ordinator of the Defence Services, an office which gave him power over great contracts and was wide open to every suspicion. He replied: "All my investments are in Government stock, and have been so since first I took office."

Junior Ministers and law officers all, I believe, follow the example of Cabinet Ministers. This 'self-denying ordinance' prevents the business man—a useful element in the House—from accepting an under-secretaryship; and Sir Robert Horne may have refused to return to Cabinet office because of the five highly paid directorships which he held. It is more probable that he declined to accept any lesser office than the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, which office he had held before. But even if one or two useful men have been lost to the public service by this bar, how can that loss compare with the advantage to the public service of the example, and the respect which comes from such example?

MINISTERIAL PENSIONS

The puritanical government of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman (1905-8) ended a further cause for scandal. Till then, ex-Ministers, whether of Cabinet or subordinate rank, might apply because of poverty for a certain limited number of pensions of £2000 or £1000 a year. Gradually the definition of poverty became nebulous. All the limited number of pensions were snapped up as soon as vacant; and George Villiers, in receipt of such pension, lived to ninety

and left £90,000, having held some minor office for twelve months forty years before! There were worse scandals when an ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer was induced to surrender his pension for the benefit of another; and Campbell-Bannerman, newly come to power, refused to continue the practice. For many years only Mr. Speaker and the Lord Chancellor received pensions; now, recently, ex-Prime Ministers get £2000 a year. In some cases loss of office without pension involved real hardship. A pension was refused to George Barnes, the Labour M.P., in 1923, though he had sat in the War Cabinet. It was refused by Mr. MacDonald and the Labour Government. Had it not been for the private generosity of Lord Davies and Mr. Baldwin, the most honest and respected of Labour leaders would have died in extreme poverty. Fortunately Mr. Andrew Carnegie provided in his will for both Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. John Burns.

Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Churchill were always able to earn large sums by writing, either for the Press or for publishers. But, deprived of office and salary, many ex-Cabinet Ministers accept directorships in the City and are thus placed under a quite undesirable obligation. I do not think we have yet solved the problem of what to do with ex-Cabinet Ministers who are 'playing'. But I am quite certain that the poor man who gets into the Cabinet, and changes his style of living in consequence, is laying up trouble for himself. He loses caste, self-respect, and happiness. I have watched such men trying to get back to office, and it is a humiliating spectacle.

THE FINE EXAMPLE OF LABOUR

But let us look at some others—Mr. Bonar Law, when Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1916 or 1917, observed that his shipping shares were bringing him unexpected wealth,

and therefore suggested the Excess Profits Tax to prevent that sort of thing. Mr. Baldwin, when Secretary to the Treasury outside the Cabinet, anonymously donated to the State £150,000, from the unexpected war-prosperity of his family steelworks. This would never have been made public had I not seen in the exposure advantage for democracy and for our reputation. Recently a Scottish Labour M.P. was made Secretary of State for Scotland, the salary being £5000 a year. Tom Johnston declines to take any salary beyond the £600 a year he gets as member of Parliament. Two other Labour Members are Deputy Regional Commissioners. It is usual in those posts to accept considerable emoluments—the Labour Members for Flint and Chester-le-Street decline to take a penny. These examples of disinterestedness are partly due to the war-spirit of unselfish service, and partly intended to maintain the morale of the Labour Party inside and outside the House. The Members in question always were of the working class, and they prefer to continue to live among their own, without arousing jealousy and with assured respect. As long as such men are our type of political Labour leader one need not be anxious for British political life.

THE CASH VALUE OF A SEAT

To illustrate the unmercenary spirit in which men enter Parliament, I cannot do better than cite the cases of Lord Robert Cecil and Noel Buxton from the answers to my Questionnaire. Lord Robert, then aged 38, was earning £4000 to £6000 a year, mostly at the Parliamentary Bar. An M.P. may not practice at the Parliamentary Bar; he therefore gave up some £3000 a year to enter Parliament as an advocate of free trade. Noel Buxton was a director of his family brewing business, drawing as such £1000 a year.

But he was elected as a Liberal at a time when the brewing interest and the Liberal Party were bitterly opposed. His politics cost him his directorship, and at that time Members were not paid.

These are perhaps exceptional cases. Normally, a seat in Parliament does help a professional man. The lawyer gets more briefs and promotion; the solicitor gets more clients; the doctor, architect, engineer, professor, journalist, takes a higher rank in his profession and speaks for his fellows in public. The "M.P." secures publicity, if not higher fees.

It used to be supposed that M.P.'s were besieged by company promoters anxious to get their names on the prospectus of doubtful flotations, in order to attract the injudicious investor. I am not personally repellant; any offer to me will always be considered! Yet in all my 36 years in Parliament I have only twice been invited to join any board of directors, and on both occasions judgment got the better of appetite.

The fact is, we all have to be trebly cautious in matters financial. We are constantly under the searchlight of Press and opponents; so that a man risks losing his seat as well as his money. But, worst of all, one risks ostracism by one's fellow Members, who hate having the House 'let down' by an M.P. 'getting into the papers'. It is permitted to sell a man a foundered horse, or go off with a man's wife, but not to get into the Press over jiggery-pokery in the City. One of my friends once wrote a testimonial for publication with portrait complete. He could never hold up his head again. They did not jest, saying, "Whose soap do you recommend today?" They said, "My God! He has got to make money like that!" and looked the other way. There are many very poor M.P.'s and many very rich ones; but it is better for both to avoid disclosing the matter. "It isn't done" to talk

of such things. Only in virtue of your representation or ideas are you of interest to your fellow Members.

No doubt it is a curious sort of club, but emphasis may rightly be laid on the futility of joining it in order to get rich. There is so little point in getting rich, when the consideration and power (which are the main objects of wealth-hunting) can be attained without worry and may be lost just because of a hunt for money. We wish our wives would not bother us for the stuff—and few of them do. I will not pretend that our Prime Minister when out of office was not delighted to get 200 guineas for an article, or that I am not equally delighted at getting one tenth of such a fee; for it shows so clearly our (respective) popularity and brilliance!

In the House, therefore, our community existence and wide interests and enthusiasms spoil the market for corruption. At the same time the public opinion of the House requires from each Member certain restraints demanded by that community opinion. We all find it most unpleasant to 'let down' the House. Shady conduct receives a salvo of kicks in the pants. The House of Commons is 'this honourable House'; and the new Member is rapidly taught to conform and acquire the tone.

THE LIMITS OF CALUMNY

Any 'corruption' must therefore conform to the tone and to the standards of the House. There is great latitude. One may accept reward from Government, travelling expenses, briefs, office, promotion, honours. One may accept a proffered directorship, and speak for the United Bottlewashers' Association—or Trade Union—so long as the House knows one is in their pay. Sir Frederick Banbury always stated: "I am speaking in the railway interest; I am a director." We know that Members for dockyard towns are bound to urge

Government to pay more to their constituents. We can smile and walk out, but we do not think the worse of Bertram Falle or Lady Astor. "Thank God I do not sit for a dock-yard constituency!" is the only comment.

Above all, one may accept expenses and a bit more for speaking, even for one's own colleagues in their constituencies. Brotherhoods and Pleasant Sunday Afternoons and Non-conformist chapels are even more generous to Labour M.P.'s. Arthur Henderson, a pillar of Non-conformity, used often in his less affluent days to manage three chapels near each other in one week-end, with appropriate fees from each. There was a blissful period when Ethel Snowden could command a hundred guineas for a speech. I myself never managed more than \$100, and that was in America. Indeed, I often reflect that in England I have to pay an audience to come and listen to me, while in happy America it is the other way round. Once the Southampton Brotherhood—the biggest and best—wrote asking me to speak. "Choose your own subject, you can get back to town the same day. We pay 1st class fare and ask you to accept an honorarium of ten guineas," so they said. I replied that I did not usually speak on non-political subjects, but that I could not resist a fee of ten guineas. Perhaps that was not just a tactful reply; at least, by return of post the secretary apologized, saying they had meant the invitation for Mr. Wedgwood Benn!

Speaking and journalism were the main support of Labour Members before payment of Members was adopted. Now the budding M.P. would be better advised to leave journalism alone, lest his competition with the profession should incur reproach. If, however, you have a 'cause' and wish to get your views across, there is no better way than amateur

journalism; and in that case all will be excused, though little will be accepted.

So far, I claim to have painted a true picture of the unmercenary M.P.—never a plaster saint, but little tempted to corruption by gold. What stories are there to the contrary? There was Mr. Lloyd George and the 'Marconi scandal'. Mr. Lloyd George, while President of the Board of Trade, had played the Stock Exchange, buying Marconi shares on a margin, on the advice of his friend Sir Rufus Isaacs, who had once been on the Stock Exchange. He lost his margin and had to pay up. For the life of me I cannot see what was wrong in that, or why a solemn Committee should have been set up to enquire and report.

But, of course, there are bad eggs! There was Horatio Bottomley. He was a swindler who got money from fools on a bonus investment scheme. He was expelled and went to prison quietly. There was a man who got news of the Budget from a Minister and gambled on a certainty on the Stock Exchange. They had to go. So did another Member who drew a free railway ticket for himself and allowed his wife to use it. Quite recently an Under-Secretary got into grave trouble on the mere suspicion of being invited to take a commission on money he had recovered for a Czech refugee before he was made a Minister. I name these cases to show the immediate reaction of the House of Commons towards any suggestion of financial corruption. There have been no other cases in all my political life of 36 years; and if these are the worst, we may be excused if we call the House of Commons relatively free and absolved from that particular vice.

FEMALE CORRUPTION

No doubt some of us could 'do with the stuff'; there was once a yellow crook, Trebitsch Lincoln, who for a passing

season disgraced Darlington. The trouble is that nobody wants to corrupt those from whom all shrink; this man could have been of no use, even to Caligula or Hitler. As for the more picturesque corruption by feminine charm—I have known a lady willing to suffer ‘worse than death’ to get out of me information I had not got, all for the supposed benefit of Michael Collins. There! I doubt if other M.P.s have even one such delightful and ridiculous memory. We are all despairingly open to temptation, but it never comes. We are not worth it. “To get a job for ‘hubby,’” perhaps! But who would put himself into ‘hubby’s’ hands (or shoes) like that? Alas! all those beautiful spy stories remain romances, so far as the dear old gentlemen in Parliament are concerned. Of course I know that when Esmond Harmsworth went, almost vice-regally, to Budapest, the Mayor told him quite frankly that he had a hundred countesses prepared to sacrifice all for their country. I need hardly say that Esmond Harmsworth did not succumb to the temptation. We others may be naturally immoral; but we are all so cautious. Even Cabinet Ministers remain impervious to the most lovely secretaries, and in the Press photographs are always shown greeted by their wives. I feel that we must be the despair of Fascism.

But abroad, of course, all is different! Those worthy Social Democrats of the Weimar Republic were, doubtless, corrupted by the gold of Stinnes! Karl Liebknecht led a double life! Walter Rathenau, who was shot down in his motor-car, was a Jew, and why doubt the infamies of Jews! *Action Française* and the French Press have demonstrated to France and the world what French politicians were. Every politician had his forged certificates, or his blackmail in a black box, concealed by a corrupt police trained in assassination. All Ministers kept at least a brace of mistresses who

directed national policy, and the Black Mass was the normal procedure of Lodges of the Grand Orient.

As for America, where the unknown over the telephone replaces or supplements the labours of the pure Fascist Press, one gathers that Congressmen and Senators, not to mention Presidents, all have Teapot Dome scandals in their past and Tennessee Boulder dam contracts in their pockets. The multiplication of their wives does not so much matter in view of the conveniences of Reno.

The fact is, enemies of democracy 'play up' corruption in order to arouse jealousy and cupidity in the Fascist mob, which just shows what the fascist mob consists of. Any of the wretched monarchies of a hundred years ago could give points and a beating to modern democracy in every variety of financial and sexual corruption. For the free Press of democracies can see and say and guess, where those who live in fear of the police are more prudently silent.

ANTI-SEMITISM

The great discovery of Fascist reaction has been not the moral or financial corruption of politicians but the corruption of blood and race. If all else fails, if in some freedom champion one can find neither mistress nor black-box, at least one may discover that his grandmother was a Jewess. The blood is tainted and corrupt! Roosevelt's name was Rosenfeld, Churchill's mother was a Jerome, which is short for Jeroboam, if not for Jeremiah. The Jews batten on Christian children, plot to destroy the world, and are the origin of all evil. Anyway, Hitler does not like them; and it is quite safe to rob and murder Jews, and quite profitable to stir up fools to see everywhere the hidden hand of international Jewry.

Hatred of strangers, disgust at the habits of aliens, resentment at their competition, are indigenous in the brute creation, and always affect islanders more than continentals with open boundaries. The Greeks regarded all as barbarians, fit only to be the slaves of the free Greeks. The Roman Empire and the Roman Church were more catholic, and changed the exclusiveness of the Greeks to a toleration of the widest Roman citizenship and religion. African and Gothic barbarians, even coloured gentlemen, became Emperors; Stilicho and Narses led their legions; the bishop of Rome became the Primate of the civilized world.

In this island, no sooner had the English ceased to be the serfs of the alien Norman than every other alien became utterly obnoxious. At different times it was the alien churchmen, the Jew, the Flemings, the Welsh, the Irish, the Catholics, the French, and Doctor Johnson's friends dared even to despise the Scots. The London mob enjoyed impartially the Lord George Gordon riots, the Popish Plot and the Fascist sub-war in Whitechapel. The more brutal the mob, the more they howled. "'E's a stranger! 'Eave 'alf a brick at 'im!" was ever the motto of the brute creation.

When I was young there was no anti-Semitism in England, because there were few Jews other than a handful of ultra-respectable Sephardic gentlemen of old family. It was after 1890 that Jewish refugees from Russian pogroms began pouring forth from Russian ghettos into America and our East End, bringing with them a vile jargon, conspicuous poverty, and a determination to get out of the gutter. Liberal England of Mr. Gladstone's generation spoke well of them as honest, industrious, and charitable; and the Liberalism of those days contrasted our 'right of asylum' with the monstrous persecution of Captain Dreyfus in France.

Even now, in my own country of North Staffordshire, there are but a handful of Jews, and so little anti-Semitism

that my conspicuous care for refugees from Hitler only enhanced my useful reputation for humanity. I found admirable political results in a wise substitution of a Jewish refugee for myself in addressing chapel audiences. You will find no hint of anti-Semitism in Sir Walter Besant's account of East End life in *All Sorts and Conditions of Men* which resulted in the People's Palace. In fact it was their competition with the sweated workers of the East End which provided the seeding-ground for the crop of anti-Semitism we see today. The ground was watered and stimulated for political reasons, race-hatred being so useful a substitute for argument and reason.

So useful has anti-Semitism been found, first for Conservative and later for Fascist politicians, that, reading the daily papers now, one must suppose that the British people are innocent of all crime, mean or violent—that every race-tout, lounge-lizard, racketeer, swindler, blackguard and bankrupt is either a Jew or an Irishman. Since people tend to act as is expected of them, that is no doubt good for Englishmen, but pretty bad for Jews and Irish. The same tendency is shown in all complaints about evacuee children. The savage, dirty and dishonest are always either Jews or Irish, from the slums of London, Manchester and everywhere else. 'Give a dog a bad name and hang him!' Moreover, the religious and civil leaders of these pariahs get so disheartened by the unanimity of disapproval that the injustice of it eradicates any desire to attempt improvement. "Expel the black sheep from the community? What is the good? We are all 'black sheep' in the cruel eyes of the Gentile!"

By the torture, prolonged from age to age;
By the infamy, Israel's heritage;
By the Ghetto's plague, by the garb's disgrace;
By the badge of shame, by the felon's place;
By the branding-tool, the bloody whip, . . .

we all create our own Jews; and even we have better Jews than we deserve. For there is no doubt that anti-Semitic prejudice is fellow to corruption in the fascist armoury for use against Parliament. Another yelp in the same agitation is 'The Godless State'; another the Freemasonry of the Grand Orient, the *bloc de la Juiverie*, as they termed it in France. Corruption, Jews, Freemasons, Bolsheviks—all are piled up together in denunciation of 'government of the people, by the people, for the people'.

DISHONESTY AND SLACKING

Quite as serious as the grosser charge of corruption made against public men, politicians and officials is the less-advertised charge, but more serious fact, of dishonesty and slacking. This charge is not so much made as encouraged by Fascists. Most people are honest, because they would not like their wives and relations and friends to find them otherwise. It is public opinion more than law, tradition, or even conscience that keeps one straight.

Now, in war, people old and young are taken away from their families and friends, so that the normal restraints on conduct weaken. In war, new State restraints and State property and State employment affect all; and robbing the State, or swindling a State employer, has always appeared to many to be a lesser form of vice, hardly amounting to dishonesty. Soldiers on active service always tend to have increasingly peculiar views on the sanctity of private property; and even in peace-time wangling an extra 6 pennies a week out of Government has attracted all ranks. 'Expenses' are what will be 'passed', not what was spent, and the former nearly always exceeds the latter. In total war we all tend to come down to the soldiers' standards in money matters.

There is less shame, and, being away from home, nobody to know.

It is this moral deterioration, caused by the absence of normal checks and vastly increased opportunities, that produces the shoplifting, looting, racketeering, swindling and robbery with violence among young and old, male and female, that we see today. Exactly the same cause accounts for much of the idling and absenteeism in the workshops. But idling and slacking of the working class come mostly (as in the upper classes) from having too much money and no fear of losing your job. Neither we nor they ever blamed the master, manufacturer or farmer for taking a day off for hunting or partridge-shooting; so they take a day off for the 'dogs',¹ or for a cold in the head—'just like master'. Where there were formerly two men for every job, there are now two jobs for every man, and 'master' had better understand that his best war-work henceforth is to set a good example.

Here indeed is something for the Fascist orator to bite on, for in dictator countries moral deterioration secures the immediate attention of the police, and punishment takes no account of slackened standards or temptation. Fascists, however, do not complain of dishonesty and idleness under democracy, having too many leanings in that direction themselves. But we who value democracy had better recognize the danger and consider how best to stop it.

Slacking in the workshops is met in Russia by altogether admirable publicity and persuasion. In each workshop is a large diagram divided into a dozen columns, at the head of each a picture: an aeroplane, a railway engine, a motor-car, a pair of skis, a droshky, a gig, a wagon, a donkey, a cat, a caterpillar, a snail—each representing different rates of progress. Each week, according to output, each worker's

¹Dog races. M.S.

name is entered under the appropriate column. No one likes being in the snail column. One sees at once sport, humour, and competition. Who could resist it? Not the British working man, if he could get into his head that he is not working for Mr. Jones but for his country.

I would not rebuke magistrates for punishing too lightly such crimes as shoplifting, minor looting, etc. But in every case I would ensure adequate publicity for the name and home address. The object must be to cover them with such shame that they do not repeat the venture. At present, too many find a sort of glory in petty crime and in the punishment. There was a great deal to be said for the old-fashioned stocks. To exhibit folly is to cure it.

Of course we have been told that this lawlessness and low morality is due to Godless education and Communist teaching. The Irish Roman Catholics have a completely religious education, free from any Communist taint, but I do not think they are better citizens than the rest of the population. Probably bad morals (like bad manners and bad language) come from bad leaders, whether at home, or at school, or in the Army, or Civil Defence. If I were asked to cure the rot, I should enquire how they cured it in Soviet Russia after the revolution. Then they were faced with the same problem of children run savage, and a whole population living by what they could scrounge.

It is advisable to cure the rot, for not only is it a blot upon democracy, but these unsocial pests are just the breeding-ground for Fascism.

FASCISM AS SALVATION!

Whence comes this insatiable desire to destroy democracy? The answer must be the fear of socialism. This fear is mainly felt by those who enjoy established wealth and dread

losing it. A considerable cause of the last war was the Kaiser's fear of his Social-Democrats in the Reichstag. He sought, by attacking Russia, to distract his people's minds from socialism. After the war Bolshevik-Communism was even more terrifying to established wealth and power. It seemed inevitable that the 'have-nots', being in a majority, should take from the 'haves'. Half the Continent smouldered with revolution from the Left, making 1919 far more dreadful than 1914.

Then arose the blessed Benito Mussolini, armed with propaganda for dividing the mob and thus save established wealth and power. All the good and great sighed with relief as he proved the wisdom of Commander Sin:

Whatever happens, we have got
The Maxim guns, and they have not.

It will be remembered that this ineffable truth enabled Belloc's *Modern Traveller* to keep his niggers in order. It enabled modern statesmen to do the same with nigger-socialists. It opened the eyes of all who thought the Cause was lost. Everywhere established wealth took heart and joined the New Order in which they found their old place at the table.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

In this matter High Finance preceded by very little the Church of Rome. It is the aim of the Church to keep out of mundane and national politics. The Roman Catholic in England owes spiritual allegiance to Rome, and worldly allegiance to his native land. But it is not easy to separate things spiritual from things temporal. There were strong Catholic political parties in France and Germany, which looked to Rome for secular guidance. The new Irish Sinn Fein Party had as open an orientation. Before Mussolini's

'March on Rome' a strong Catholic Party had arisen in Italy also, under Dom Sturzo, a political priest. The Catholic Church was, in fact, trying to co-operate with democracy in the Old World, as successfully as she was doing in the Province of Quebec.

But with the crowning mercy of Mussolini's victory a much easier way became obvious. Instead of co-operating with democracy, the Church could safely withdraw from politics. Dom Sturzo was thrown over, his party was disowned, and the Vatican came to terms with the destroyers and autocrats.

Portugal was rescued for the Church by Dr. Salazar's rule. There was hope in Austria, and the Viennese democracy was smashed by Dr. Seipel, Cardinal Innitzer and the Vaterland front. Von Papen joined Hitler—though the *Centrum* did not do so in time and Hitler slew his new allies without scruple or gratitude. The alliance with the Endeks in Poland was hardly more remunerative, owing to Pilsudsky's egotism. However, democracy died all right in both countries.

Abyssinia was a windfall. But most of all were Spain and France to be saved. The best weapon to win all was the bogey of Bolshevik Russia. The Crusade against the Spanish Republic took two bloody years to consummate, bequeathed only a ruined Spain and a hostile Falange, and injured throughout the world the good name of the Catholic Church. Democracy went down to a flaming and immortal end, and carried down with it a world in flames.

For France, democracy was killed by the fall of Spain. Then died the Popular Front—then arose the Cagouards and Col. de la Roque's *Croix de Feu*. These were copied by the Fascists of *Christus Rex* in Belgium (encouraged by a calculating King); by Fascists in Holland, in Brazil, in all

America south of the Rio Grande, and by Father Coughlin, who spouted in the citadel of democracy itself.

Wherever the Church was against democracy, democracy fell at the first push of tyranny. The Fifth Column established Franco in Spain, Pétain in France, Seipel in Austria, and maybe more to come. Fascism would not have succeeded by itself. It has been the alliance of the authoritarian Church with the authoritarian State which has broken democracy, or beaten it back into the northern wilds and outer islands; Britain is in the balance.

THE HISTORICAL PARALLEL

How similar are these last thirty years to the last thirty years of the 16th century! For fifty previous years, Protestantism in the 16th and democracy in the 19th centuries had spread with hardly a check, even into Italy and the Spain of the Most Christian and Most Orthodox rulers. Then, in the 16th century, came the Counter-Reformation, inspired by the fanaticism of Jesuits and Franciscans. Back went the cause of individual judgment and liberty—out of Spain and Italy, out of France, out of Hungary and Bohemia and Poland, out of Belgium to the last dikes of the Seven Provinces. Scandinavia and Scotland hardly escaped. Germany and England became a battleground, one ruined, the other triumphantly rejuvenated.

Just as and where the Reformation went back, so there goes back democracy today. It has been the alliance of Fascism with the authoritarian teachings of the Church of Rome that has been and will yet be fatal. Rule by democracy and rule by the Church of Rome are incompatible.

THE CHURCH AND APPEASEMENT

We may suppose that the same influence has been active in this country and has affected our own policy. That was

noticeably true of our half-hearted action over the oil sanctions against Italy and the use of the Suez Canal at the time of the Abyssinian rape. Some were bluffed by Mussolini, but most were either pleased to appease him or afraid that if we fought him Italy would go Bolshevik. The same sentimental attitude, coupled with fear of the Catholic vote, caused that ridiculous 'non-intervention' in Spain, which placed the Spanish coast on our sea routes in the hands of our enemies. The whole appeasement policy, from the destruction of the socialists of Vienna down to the fall of Prague, has been in accordance with the wishes of the Vatican.

Those guilty of the appeasement now have the effrontery to allege that we were not then adequately armed to fight. 'Give us two years more to arm' was ever their cry, and each year we fell further *behind* the rearming of Germany. We should have been a better match for them in 1935 than in 1939 *and* might still have had some friends. The one-by-one policy sank us all and (temporarily) lost us Russian aid; but it has not yet gained for democracy the help of the Roman Church.

ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN PROPAGANDA

There is no direction in which Catholic influence is more obvious than in our propaganda, whether from the Foreign Office, or Ministry of Information, or the B.B.C. There, key-men are placed and supported by their Church with infinite care. The propaganda, whether to enemy countries or neutrals, is diametrically opposite to that coming from Russia. The Soviets try to stir up active revolt and sabotage from the Left; we urge patience till 'the day' and hope for revolt from the good people of the Right. Anyone listening to our broadcasts to Austria would suppose that no socialists had ever

existed in Vienna or Linz. While the Italy of Mazzini and Rienzi is forgotten, we may listen to the burble of the Dante Societies. Hardly a line from *Soviet War News* passes over our B.B.C., and, when forced to allow us the Internationale, they invent new words and mangle the tune. One must suppose that to the Catholics of the Foreign Office and B.B.C. it is still disreputable to have for our ally one so displeasing to the Vatican.

FASCIST RECRUITS

We may say, therefore, that the effective allies in the fight against democracy were originally the wealthy, fearful of socialists, and the Catholic Church, fearful of politicians. Even such a union could not have been successful had it not been able to collect and appeal to vast numbers of discontented people. The 1919 peace left such people everywhere; inflation and, alternatively, unemployment swelled their ranks to immense proportions. The reason for their trouble might be obscure, but was clear to those who might turn it to useful account. Let agitators scream loudly enough that the cause of all trouble was Parliament-men, chain stores, bankers, moneylenders, Jews, Freemasons, British and—best of all—the Bolsheviks, and all the discontented would rally to the New Order. Always it was to be the fault of the other fellow, so Fascism could move the audience to hate, frenzy, and hero-worship.

They surpassed the wildest Communist on his own ground. They collected in every fascist movement all who were dissatisfied, and they pictured democracy contemptible, Russia hateful, and Jews both. They soon got beyond the control of their originators, so that Thyssen, the rich, fled in vain to France, and Cardinal Innitzer found his Canossa at Schwarzenburg, but without pardon.

While both the discarded patrons—Finance and Church—have now forsworn Fascism, this new world-wide creed still retains the original idea. Church and wealth both had an overwhelming interest in stopping Communism: Fascism, equally interested, can still cry ‘Corruption’, ‘Jews’, ‘Capitalist Society’, ‘Godless State’. But Fascism *plus* Gestapo *plus* invincibility is now terrifying the Church and many States. The Church now prays success for another version of more gentlemanly protection—that of old Marshal Pétain—in the shape of a virtuous, dutiful peasantry, worshipping God, such as may still be found in the Tyrol or in Canada. But there is not much chance anywhere in this total war for ‘Family, Faith and whatever it is’—least of all in France and Spain and Italy, where hope of vengeance is all that is left.

It is difficult even to estimate what proportion of the British Union of Fascists was pure ruffian or Irish Republican Army. The Home Office have the name of some 8000 who were paying or paid members of the Union at the outbreak of war, but will not publish the names. From my abuse-mail, which covers a wide field,¹ I should suppose that well over half must be both Irish and illiterate; all seem equally anti-Semitic.

How is such a Party recruited? Apart from love of pageantry, emotion and submission, its recruits are drawn from three allied sources: those who have not been ‘treated fair’ by the Labour Party; those disgusted by the neglect of the Conservative Party; and egomaniacs for whom their country has no longer any use. The grievance-gang is the backbone (or tool) of every anti-democratic movement.

But they are not for long welcome members of any movement. I have two in mind who for some twenty years have

¹ I include, of course, the considerable contribution made to my collection by the parallel ‘America First’ organization in the United States.

oscillated between grievances against the Labour Party, the Conservative Party, the Communist Party; they are always ready to come back to any Party willing to salve their self-esteem, but so boring with stories of their importance! Their intelligence rarely extends beyond 'Up Mosley' scrawled on the walls. Fascism is in fact an old-fashioned form of faith. The British Union of Fascists is the exact equivalent of the Catholic League which followed the Duc de Guise through the Parisian slums of the 16th century.

METHODS OF CORRUPTION

However unsavoury the British Union of Fascists in this country, or the Fascist movement generally, may be, it would be as well to avoid supplying these gentry with ammunition. Most of us cannot avoid being either British or Jew—but we can avoid being corrupt, untruthful and disingenuous.

The art of corruption is as old as the ages. The lady is most readily seduced by admiration of her person, the statesman by admiration of his speeches. Admiration of their minds is more subtle and almost as effective. The admiration may be genuine, the seduction mutual, honourable, and even beneficial and blessed. Corruption can be perfectly achieved by praise. At the other extreme is hard cash paid for services to be rendered.

This last is now regarded as dishonourable to both parties, but was not always so. Louis XI of France paid pensions to the Ministers of Edward IV of England, and the King's Chamberlain, Sir William Hastings, was wise and honest enough to have the payment recorded. Louis XIV did the same by King Charles II and his Ministers. Ambassadors, at all times, have been the recipients of favours and presents from the Court of the Sovereign to whom they were ac-

credited. However, it would not do nowadays for Mr. Churchill to receive more than an autographed photograph from President Roosevelt or Comrade Stalin, though a miniature or an Order set in brilliants might, in old-fashioned style, be accepted from the Queen of Holland. Whatever were the relations between M. Laval and Signor Mussolini, we may take it that for the last 200 years no British statesman has taken money from a foreign government. It is not done; it would not be understood!

What is done still is entertainment. I protested against Sir Austen Chamberlain, when Foreign Secretary, allowing himself to be entertained by General Pangalos in Greece, chiefly because I did not like the General, who had made himself dictator. I protested against the Czar being entertained here in 1906, Mannerheim in 1919, Mussolini in 1922, and the German Fleet in 1934. It is obvious now that I was right to object and protest; but not on the ground that we might corrupt them; rather the other way round.

PAYMENT OF EXPENSES

Hitler's invitations to and entertainment of Members of Parliament was far more deplorable. I suppose that not less than 50 British Conservative M.P.s visited Germany under such circumstances, to return singing Hitler's praises and to advertise his respect for English 'gentlemen'! Mussolini did the same on a smaller scale. When the poor but honest Labour M.P. goes out to Poland, or Roumania, or Hungary, or Egypt, or India, at the expense of his hosts (who have invited him), to see for himself what is wrong, collect information and report, eyebrows are raised all over the House of Commons. "Not exactly bought, you know, but . . ." they seem to say. "In any case, we need not pay attention to what he says on the subject."

When I have visited America, Holland, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Roumania, South Africa and Palestine, to speak for the Zionists or the Single Taxers, they have always paid my expenses in the country, and often the fares out as well. But I was not, on those occasions, reporting to the House; I was merely a lecturer. I took good care, on visiting India, Egypt, Greece, Hungary, Bulgaria and Austria, even when reporting only for the Labour Party, to be free of all pecuniary obligations to anyone; and wherever, as in India, they insisted on paying my hotel bill or railway fare, I sent the equivalent to some local hospital or charity. Everybody, on both sides, is so suspicious in India. Some such rule for himself should be made by every M.P. Where work is done for an organization, or for one's own Government, one ought not to be out of pocket; but where a report is made to Parliament, get above suspicion even at a considerable personal sacrifice—and recoup, if possible, by articles in the Press or reviews.

Any change in our standards of what is honourable should be considered here on practical grounds. How far does such a change lessen the respect for Parliament and give Fascism a better ground for criticism? Standards do change—hitherto, I think, for the better. Let me instance the looting of India by the servants of the East India Company in the latter half of the 18th century. All the despised British Nabob did was (in accordance with Eastern practice) to accept and to expect presents. The rulers of Bengal gave Clive or Hastings a free run of their treasuries. Every Rajah and Zemindar bought protection from some Colonel or Collector, who then returned home as a millionaire 'Nabob'. What the native Indian princes bought was the privilege of continuing to extract for themselves 'presents' from their subjects.

So the farmers of the taxes in Bengal got translated into landlord Zemindars; and all the Princes acquired the right of owning land instead of owning serfs. 'Clemency' Canning, as a great act of grace, permitted the Talukdars of Oudh to remain like landlords because they had behaved like gentlemen.¹ The State which had owned all the land of India gave away half and considered itself generous instead of foolish.

Statesmen would not act so foolishly now, of course; but standards change for the better, even in India. When I was young the visitor to an Indian Prince was formally presented with the portable furniture of the rooms he occupied. His servants packed the hairbrushes and carpets as a matter of course. Nowadays he leaves the sheets, and merely fills his cigarette-case in a moment of absent-mindedness. It is impossible to understand Eastern life without realizing that presents take the place of taxes, rent, revenue—and income. All is customary and often reciprocal; and has nothing whatever to do with British law. It had a most demoralizing effect upon the honest Englishman. Nelson did well out of the King and Queen of Naples; but I am quite certain that no British Admiral in this war is making anything out of the King and Queen of Egypt.

Fox and Pitt graciously allowed friends to pay their debts. Nowadays Baldwin gives £150,000, and accepts an honourable pension from the State.

HONOURS EASY

Honours may be a means of rewarding the virtuous, and promise thereof persuade the intransigent. But the more common charge is that the bribery was the other way—that the politician bought his honours and paid for them with a

¹ During the Mutiny, 1857-8.

cheque signed in the name he proposed to use when in enjoyment of the peerage. Of course the money went only to Party funds. Nowadays the Parties are less hungry, 'honours agents' less accredited, and if any benefactions will secure a peerage, the beneficiaries are hospitals, universities and cathedrals. There is not much in all that for Fascists to seize upon. Their own leaders, in happier days, did not shrink from the thought of inducing sitting Members to resign in their favour. Other safe seats have been resigned for similar reasons, and the man in possession has given up his £600 a year for well-understood rewards with which intrinsic merit has little to do.

It may be that, so far as our Parliament is concerned, corruption offers little scope for Fascist denunciation. Local government is a little less clean, because contracts go often to local people and the ordinary councillor is concerned directly, with the executive, in the placing of contracts and the employment of labour. Also, there are fewer on any council than there are Members in Parliament, wherefore each one is more important for the job in hand. The Staffordshire County Council, on which I sat for many years, had as clean a record as Parliament itself; and I imagine that most county councils are better than city or borough councils just because the councillors are further removed from the cousins and friends who seek an unduly helping hand.

If, however, the permanent officials are crooked, whether at Westminster or in the provinces, then they may try to conceal their wicked ways by 'nobbling' inconvenient critics of their misdeeds. This, of course, can be done quite easily in the boroughs, by finding jobs for incompetent sons and daughters, whose chance of keeping the job depends on papa's future conduct. This method is unworkable at Westminster—first because the permanent officials fear the Press more

than the few M.P.s who have special information, and secondly because one has to pass stiff examinations (in normal times) to get into the Civil Service at all, and, once in, cannot easily be turned out.

FASCIST PROPOSALS

The proposals of Fascism, or National-Socialism, intend the destruction of government by the people in order to substitute government by a Party, that Party having a leader, *Führer*, *Duce*, or *Caudillo*,¹ whose will is law and whose decisions are uncontrolled. The leader is intended to have advisers, selected by the leader, from all the various organizations and corporations—manufacturers, merchants, accepted Trade Unions, professions, services, etc., which build up a Corporative State. These may even be elected by the various Fascist corporations, but the advisers are responsible only to the Party Leader and are to have no executive power save what he shall depute to each or any of them from time to time. In fact the Corporative State assembly meets only to listen to and applaud the speeches of the Master, when he desires to inaugurate a policy and requires acclaim as evidence of popular support. More and more the Masters prefer to use the wireless or the great annual meetings of the Party rather than this sham Parliament which might remind the people of other days.

All foreign trade is operated by the State, by means of barter with any other country embraced in the New Order. All foreign exchanges are regulated by the State; all consumption is rationed; all the Press controlled; all activities outside the corporations are prohibited; all correspondence is subject to inspection; all legal safeguards concerning jus-

¹ It is strange that, while the German or Italian is content to be led by the nose, the Spaniard prefers to be kicked in the pants.

tice and individual liberty are subject to police permission; and the secret police control both the bureaucracy and the public. All education teaches the duty of obedience to the Master. All magistrates hold office only during 'good behaviour'. All strikes and lock-outs are illegal and wages are fixed by the various corporations, subject to the approval of the Master. There has never been anything like it in the world before, because no Emperor, King, or Dictator in the past ever had such police forces at his disposal to ensure obedience or chastise rebellion.

The citizen has no rights as against the State, no redress for wrong, no channel through which complaints can pass, and yet the majority of the German people presumably approve of what their *Führer* has done in these last ten years. Possibly they are hypnotized by his military success, but they seem satisfied also with the efficiency of order and discipline as contrasted with the dispute and disorder of liberty. Whether the Italian and the Spaniard and the Portuguese still prefer Fascism to liberty is more doubtful. Indeed, we cannot be sure even in the case of Germans, so fearful are they all of giving offence to the police-rulers. Let the critic imagine what he would do if a German, living in Germany today.

The essential feature of all Fascist rule is rule by the police through fear. The Master depends on the police. All the police have to fear is the Army, and then only when discipline breaks down. For the Army chiefs are as fearful of the police as are the plain citizens. One whisper and they vanish from command, if not from the sight of men.

THE POLICE STATE

In such a Police State, the only check on the bureaucracy is the omniscience of the Master and the police, themselves

part of the bureaucratic rule. No free Press, no Parliament, no free Courts of Law exist to protect the subject or his property. Indeed, the subject becomes himself the property of the Master, to serve as and where required. Ostensibly he is given security of maintenance during pleasure in exchange for liberty—or as Fascists would ecstatically put it, in exchange for liberty to starve.

In such a State the whole bureaucracy must become incredibly corrupt, as in Czarist Russia. All promotion, being unchecked by any but Party or personal considerations, must produce both sycophancy and inefficiency; and every town and village will be lucky if its petty tyrant can, in any way, be 'liquidated'. In Italy the Church may exercise some restraining influence over the petty tyrant, the priest being still immune from tyranny. But in Germany and Spain even that check will be absent.

It is inconceivable that even the B.U.F.¹ should wish to inflict such a Police State upon Britain. I suppose that Mosley hopes he could replace Parliament by a Corporative State Assembly, and rule through that Assembly without requiring control of our lives through police interference. He would allege that control of the education of youth in schools (and later in the Army) would produce such discipline that subsequent control would not need to be so severe as to amount to serfdom—that the perfectly trained citizen would be purged of all thought other than that acceptable to the State. "Give me the children," he would say, "from five to twenty. Their parents will die off and my trained disciples will need no other discipline, and know no other example. I will make of them a warrior race equal to the heroes of Germany and Japan—happy, contented, and worshipping me."

¹ British Union of Fascists. M.S.

Of course I think a race of such robots, whether they talked English or Choctaw, ought to be in a lunatic asylum. But I am convinced that such a picture is pleasing to Fascist sympathizers of the governing class—so pleasing that they think we here, and Germans, Italians, etc., might quickly dispense with the Police State and revert to Arcadian simplicity. Mosley as the modern Cincinnatus hardly strikes me as well cast, and his police would be even more reluctant to suffer defenestration.

WHY FASCISM AND LIBERTY ARE INCOMPATIBLE

There have been more reasonable advocates of the Corporative State who would not have tolerated the idea of the Police State. Horatio Bottomley was always in favour of a Business Man's Government. He, was shocked at the stupidity of professional politicians who objected to raising money by promises of lottery bonuses, and demanded a government composed of business men without constituents or conscience or responsibility to Parliament. Bottomley always had a very great 'Gallup Poll' following, till he defaulted on his lottery shares; and I always picture his Business Man's Government as resembling Mr. Bottomley.

Others have advocated that a reformed House of Lords should include representatives of all the professions and corporations, instead of representing noble families. There Bevin and Sir Walter Citrine would sit beside Mr. Montagu Norman and the President of the Chartered Accountants, and their authority would enact legislation beneficial to each trade and profession in turn; while no one would care to refer to the unfortunate consumer. The House of Commons is neglectful enough, but I fancy that our business chiefs, getting together 'in a huddle', would be ten times worse, whether called Corporative State or Syndicalists.

In any case, you cannot have your corporative State without an argus-eyed police force using DORA (the Defence of the Realm Act) in every commercial transaction. The essence of Corporation is that all in each Corporation should crystallize their existing practice, poach on no other member of the Corporation, sell at prices fixed by the Corporation, to people registered with the Corporation, and that anyone who blacklegs (*i.e.* breaks the Corporation's rules) should be called a racketeer and sent to gaol. The 'smelling out' of racketeers would certainly require an adequate police force whose operations, becoming ever more intimate, would qualify them to tie us all up in the final Police State.

Possibly the Fascist philosopher, if such there be, will reply that my objections to the policing of the Corporative State apply as strongly to all the P.E.P. (Political Economic Planning) of the various socialist schools of thought. Quite so; they do. But there is this to be said for the organizers of P.E.P. as distinguished from the organizers of Fascism: they do leave us a free Parliament to contrive checks on the police, and a free Press permitted to give publicity to their methods. It is the *dragonnades* of the Fascists, uncontrolled and working in darkness, from which one is most anxious to save one's fellow countrymen.

I have spoken of the possible Fascist philosopher. The remarkable fact is that there seems to be no philosophy in the British movement at all—neither love of wisdom nor love of anything save hero-worship. 'Up Mosley, *ruat coelum*'¹ is their first and last constructive aspiration. The rest is all hate and destruction. I cannot be wrong on this point, for my mail is both eloquent and conclusive. It is no protection that my grandmother was a Mosley of Rolleston.

¹ 'Up Mosley, though the heavens crash.'

So we are back where we began this chapter. Fascism attacks, or infiltrates through, any weakness in the democratic ranks. It is our supreme advantage in this struggle that we offer the enemy few weak spots, that the cries of corruption, of the Godless State, of Jew capitalists, still ring hollow in our ears. All prefer our old form of representative and responsible democracy—would that it could be more efficient and less a sham battlefield for Parties! We are also fortunate in that we are actually at war with Fascists, and they are doing their best to kill us. Such activity tends to make the other fellow's point of view unpopular.

BRIBERY OF THE ELECTORATE

We turn from contemplating the corruption of the politician to an examination of the corruption of the electorate by the politicians. Naturally Fascist indignation is less vocal. Fascists do not object to promising a new heaven and a new earth; that indeed is the professed aim of Fascism. They do not object to an open-handed candidate, or to the open purse of their Party. That the political worker is worthy of his hire, and a bit more in hand till he can take more by conquest, is the settled policy of the Fascists. No! the corruption of the electorate is a danger to democracy, for it causes honest democrats despair.

Let me say at once then that direct bribery by a candidate in order to get elected either to Parliament or to a Council has practically died out in my lifetime. In 1906 my borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme vied with Stafford, Shrewsbury, Worcester and Falmouth as the most corrupt in England. Men still told with some regret how, in earlier days, a £5 note lay on every freeman's breakfast table on election day. 'Clerical expenses' covered an extensive field in the expense return of my agent. Local elections were just

as costly. All that has vanished, being quite useless with the immense increase in the numbers of expectant voters who would have to be accommodated. Election petitions have ceased to interest politicians and to employ lawyers. A change in habit has released political life from the curse of centuries. I doubt if even the Conservative Party now employ paid¹ canvassers; for they never get their money's worth at that game. Money spent by the Member between elections is not held to be bribery in law, wherefore football and allotment clubs still make certain calls and publish subscription lists.

The delightful legal distinction between 'bribery' by a candidate and 'generosity' by a Member was well illustrated when Sir Henry Buckingham, being M.P. for Guildford, gave a tea-party to cement his seat. Two days before the happy day Parliament was suddenly dissolved. Sir Henry became a mere candidate, but he had ordered the goods. The sandwiches had to remain uneaten, lest a rash mouthful should convert hospitality into bribery.

But real bribery died a peaceful death during the non-Party truce of the last war. It is most unlikely to be revived; and is the unexpected and satisfactory result of the widening of the voting franchise.

BRIBERY AT THE PUBLIC EXPENSE

If the increase in number of the *plebes* has put *panem et circenses* (bread and circuses) beyond the reach of the privy purse, it has rather stimulated both candidates and Members to efforts in the same direction at the public expense. Personally, I believe what the bulk of the working class want is justice and not charity; and that promises to increase the

¹Always illegal, but frequently winked at.

dole¹ destroy both others' self-respect and one's own chance of re-election.

There has been so far no text-book printed on *How to Get Votes*. Yet, obviously, that is a question of prime interest both to democracy and to politicians. I commend the subject to the professors of Social Science, working in co-operation with the Gallup Polls. As one who has been exceptionally successful in the matter of collecting votes, let me give a few hints for the furtherance of the study.

(1) Fear is more potent than hope, as witness the 1924 'Red Letter' election and the 1931 'Inflation' election. Most people vote Conservative, through fear of Socialism; that is why the Tory Press always called the Labour Party the 'Socialist' Party. If you tell your electors crudely that you will double the Old Age Pension you do not get more votes; for those who are afraid are more numerous than those who are pleased. It is likewise stupid to hope to get votes for the taxation of Land Values by threatening landlords with the doctrine of 'ransom'; for, immediately, thousands are afraid. Any plunge into the unknown must always lose votes to the plunger who bases his argument merely on the expediency of benevolence.

(2) Justice is more potent than expediency; for indignation ranks next to fear in psychology. Indentured Chinese labour on the Rand was dubbed 'Chinese slavery' and indignation swept away the Conservatives in 1906. Two minor Acts of recent Parliaments which were manifestly unjust did not indeed wreck the Governments that passed the Acts because the unjust results were smothered under the gush of sentimental expediency, but both lost

¹ Relief payment for unemployed. M.S.

votes to the authors (and gave them to me as opposer). One was an Act to levy a special drainage rate on people who could not possibly benefit from the drainage. This did not directly affect any in my constituency, but the injustice did. The other was an Act to destroy slums and pay no compensation for the building, but only for the value of the site, which was not destroyed but left to the owner! This Hilton Young Act was so unjust and ridiculous that the Act became a dead letter.

(3) The moral appeal is more potent than the material. When Mr. Lloyd George offered 9*d.* for 4*d.* in his Health Insurance Act, it was his enemies who shouted 9*d.* for 4*d.*; and Mr. Lloyd George, swiftly changing his ground, argued the moral duty of the State and employer to contribute the 5*d.* to the increased efficiency of the State and of the worker. No temperance legislation has any chance when not advocated on moral grounds; and the moral wickedness of war was the main argument used by the 'appeasers' both in Britain and America, while the material side of the expense of war was kept carefully in the background.

(4) Altruism is more potent than the selfish appeal; as witness the whole anti-slavery and aborigines protection movement. The desire to help Abyssinia and the Spanish Republican Government, which finally wrecked the 'appeasers', was purely altruistic. We do our best to convince people that this war is to free humanity and to prove that we intend no material advantage to the United Nations. Hence the Atlantic Charter. Free Trade *v.* Protection was best advocated on grounds of morality.

(5) Sincerity is more potent than oratory; or

(6) Honesty is more potent than ridicule; or, indeed,

(7) God is more potent than Mammon.

Obviously I could continue in this strain to extol the British electors, and inspire budding politicians with virtuous resolves, and guide the author of *How to Get Votes*. Honesty, however, compels me to admit that my wish that it may be so is all clouded with a doubt as to whether electors do reach these high levels. Mine did, of course; but possibly elsewhere education has not yet penetrated far enough into the thick heads of the thoughtless.

Perhaps it is enough if the reader will say to himself: "Well, I hope he is right." Because that would mean that he wants democracy to survive. It cannot survive if I am wrong in believing that we move in that direction: that the Briton, long schooled in politics and morality, is more advanced than other electors, that education in Government of the people, by the people, for the people, does improve us all—through reason, in an atmosphere of freedom.

I am more likely to become right in my estimate of electors if other politicians seeking votes will judge electors according to my hints. For even electors tend to think and behave as others expect the best of them to react. Then we might even come to agree that faith is more potent than demagoguery.

If demagoguery is more potent than faith, Hitler wins. Fascists can beat us at that. They can debauch electors just as easily as the virtuous can raise their moral tone. Fortunately socialists are generally virtuous. When, waiting to rise and illumine the audience, I have to listen with mounting indignation to inexperienced comrades promising the moon, I prick their stuff with a parable, thus:

THE COW STORY

Count Leo Tolstoi once said: "I see all mankind as a herd of cattle inside a fenced enclosure. Outside the fence there lay green pastures and plenty for the cattle to eat, but inside there was not grass enough for the cattle, so that they trampled what there was under foot and gored each other to death in their struggle for existence! Then," said Tolstoi, "I saw the owner of the herd come to them, and when he saw their pitiable condition he was filled with compassion for them and bethought himself of everything he could do to improve their lot. He called his friends together and asked them to help him cut grass from outside the enclosure and throw it over the fence to the cattle—and that they call Charity."

Then, because the calves were dying off and not growing up into serviceable cattle, he arranged that they should all have a pint of milk given them for breakfast:—Feeding of School-children. Because they were giving each other such terrible wounds in the struggle for existence he screwed corks on to the horns of the cattle so that the wounds they gave each other might be less dangerous:—Factory Laws. Because the cattle were dying off in the cold nights he put up beautifully well-drained and well-ventilated cowsheds for the cattle:—Housing Reform. He even went so far as to set aside part of the enclosure for the old bulls and cows to retire to in peace after they were 70 years of age.

"In fact," said Tolstoi, "he did everything he could think of to improve the condition of those miserable cattle. But when I asked him why he did not do the one obvious thing—break down the fence and let the cattle get out—he answered me: 'Because if I let them get out I should no longer be able to milk them!'"

That parable never fails to secure the tumultuous approval of a Labour audience and the silent discomfort of my 'constructive' colleagues. On the first of many occasions on which I told that story to the House of Commons Mr. James Keir-Hardie, the Socialist who wore a deer-stalker cap in the House to emphasize his politics, happened to be present. When I sat down he came across the floor to me, patted me on the shoulder and said: "Very good, young man; but you should remember that cows always come home to be milked." "Jamie," said I, "that is because they are cows. Suppose we put the brains of men into the heads of the cattle, and then leave them to look after themselves." Keir-Hardie was a Scot before he was a Socialist, and never bowed the knee to the Fabian Society.

There are two morals I would draw from that story. First, that the British working class do not like the kindness, care and attention of those politicians who seek with equal persistence both to do them good and to win their votes. Secondly, that the education of the electorate is the only key to advance. I would add that it is the only salvation from Fascist retrogression.