

the modern tendency in political controversy, of which we have lately had so much, would appear to be in an opposite direction; we seem to be passing from the criticism of method to the criticism of motive; and the evil inherent in an opponent is a frequent text, even in high places. To call a person a Tory is in some minds synonymous with accusing him of being incapable of any real sympathy with the working man, whilst to know him to be the possessor of capital or the owner of land is to believe him of necessity an oppressor of the poor. The number of people who really held these views is extremely small; the number who preach them and the harm they do is incalculably great. The huge majority of the well-to-do are deeply concerned in the welfare of their poorer fellow men; employers individually and as a class are anxious to secure content and happiness for those who labour for them; to profess the contrary is to accuse oneself of an incredible conceit. At present, however, the working man refuses to believe this, and he is supported in his disbelief by his leaders. When once the truth is realized a long step will have been taken towards an enduring peace. "οὐκ δὲ μέλει πᾶσι, ἁπλῶς, ἀγῶνη, τὰ τρία ταῦτα, μέλουν δὲ τούτων ἡ ἀγῶνη." But love, to find its fullest expression, must be recognized on both sides.—I am, Sir, &c.,

GORDON W. GOODHART.

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[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—The two letters which head your correspondence columns last week gain immensely from their close juxtaposition, so widely divergent are their points of view. Both writers seek for causes. Sir William Forwood, however, is concerned more with the reason for the violent methods, disregard for authority, &c., displayed in the recent strikes than with the cause of the strikes themselves. It is not clear, indeed, whether he would or would not have disapproved of the strikes if conducted in an orderly manner. For an explanation of the methods actually adopted he finds ready to his hands the words and deeds of the present Ministers. This is not fair. The Limehouse utterances—to take the favourite type of Ministerial indiscretion—if their tendency really was to set class against class, can at the most only be blamed for this result: that they inspired the industrial class with so much divine discontent that it was led to strike for better conditions. No harm in that, surely. But it is not reasonable to blame Mr. Lloyd George for the methods of the strikers, unless violence is a necessary and foreseen concomitant of a strike, which it is not, or unless he expressly preached violence. Again, when Sir William Forwood points to the guilty measures, past and prospective, of the present Government, and asks triumphantly, "Why do you wonder if the masses go one better?" it is also pertinent to ask, "Are not a large proportion of industrial workers good, honest Radicals, to whom Sir William's 'coercive methods' would not appear in that light at all, but merely as the regular steps in constitutional procedure? How, then, could they find here any incentive to violence?" It is rather disappointing to find that a Liverpool magnate has no more serious contribution to offer towards the solution of this grave question. As for Miss Markham's really beautiful letter, I would that it could reach the eyes of every upper and middle class citizen. Here breathes the true spirit of sympathy, born of close contact with the condition of the workers. Too truly does she blame us for our lack of understanding and sympathy. If we never take the trouble to consider a strike from the point of view of the striker, but merely foam at the mouth, when we recall its inconveniences and incidents, we need expect no finality to these disastrous stoppages. The problem is for all of us. But let there be no political mud-throwing. If we must throw mud at each other, we must do it as citizens and men, and a good deal will stick.—I am, Sir, &c.,

B. W.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—In your article on strikes last week you say, "The working man is almost exclusively concerned with thoughts of his wages," and you conclude, "Discontent is almost divine if it leads men to desire more than they desired before, and to raise the standard of comfort. The standard of comfort cannot be raised without more light and beauty coming into a man's life." Is it not clear that in our time strikes are

more a question of manhood than of wage? Has not this light and beauty already come into the life of the worker (thanks primarily to the better education afforded by the employment of trained teachers in our elementary schools for the last twenty years), so that the souls of nearly 100,000 railway workers who earn less than £1 a week cry out under the soul-killing effect of such a wage on a man's life? And is not this the great lesson of the social upheaval of this twentieth century that has only but begun?—I am, Sir, &c.,

WORKER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—I think I cannot be the only reader of the *Spectator* who has been disappointed to find in your columns a brief and misleading reference to the claims which at this moment most urgently need advocacy. Union men can take care of themselves and capitalists can take care of themselves, but those who desire to work as mere citizens and owe allegiance only to the State are almost defenceless. A Commission is appointed representing the interests of their deadly enemies, of men from whom you allow "that a very large number of cases could be cited in which ferocious intimidation was carried on against the men who remained at work," and these victims of intimidation are to find no representative in a body whose decisions are to affect legislation. You state their case in terms which ignore its urgency and belittle its importance. "We should not say" something you have just said "if we thought the unions would be allowed to use recognition to make it impossible for free labourers to exist outside the unions." Do you really think that contingency improbable? No human being doubts, I suppose, that this is what the unions desire. It is the aim of what you elsewhere describe as that "energetic, well-organized," you might have added unscrupulous, "minority," whose will, you assert, always prevails over that of the majority. If the consideration condensed in these two quotations do not convince you that the danger you dismiss so lightly is no small one I make bold to say they are enough to convince all your logical readers. As a Free Trader and one who has done something to place a Free Trade Ministry in office, will you not defend Free Trade in the only commodity all men have to dispose of? As a Liberal, will you not lift up your voice in defence of the liberty of the majority of workers? You may reply that you have distinctly expressed your opinion as to the justice of their cause; but, Sir, it is of little avail to assert that a cause is just if in the same breath we deny against the fact that it is imperilled.—I am, Sir, &c.,

JULIA WEDGWOOD.

[We wish with Miss Julia Wedgwood that free labour were represented on the Royal Commission, but we must remember that the Commission was appointed in haste, and, as we said in effect last week, we were disinclined to prejudice its labours by discussing its difficulties for the present. We cannot agree with Miss Wedgwood, however, that the "recognition" of the men's unions by the railway companies need make the position of the free labourer impossible. The free labourer remains free largely because he does not believe in professional representation, but that need not prevent those from enjoying it who believe in it. We certainly should never fail to denounce any system which put indirect or illicit pressure on non-union men to come into the unions. Our readers will see from our leading articles that we are not behind Miss Wedgwood in insisting on the importance of safeguarding free labour.—ED. *Spectator*.]

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—A recent circular from the Home Office points out that although peaceful picketing is legal intimidation is not. Both magistrates and the police were well aware of this. They know that fines up to £20 or imprisonment up to three months, with or without hard labour, are the penalties for intimidation and kindred offences, and most of them would agree that the punishment is sufficiently severe. Why then, asks the man in the street, does the fear of this not discourage the commission of such offences, and why have there been so few prosecutions of offenders? The law seems strong enough; why isn't it carried out? The answer is, *the law is unreal*.

To render punishment certain you must not only prove the commission of an offence, but you must identify the offender. So long as "peaceful picketers" are allowed by law to