

## JOSIAH C. WEDGWOOD IN HUNGARY

(From an article contributed to the "Westminster Gazette," June 25th.)

Ten days ago I was in Hungary. Since then anything may have happened; but this is the position as I saw it in those six days of wandering.

The country is most prosperous—good crops, more cattle than before the war, a wealthy peasantry. The town, and there is only one town in Hungary to count, is lying idle, workless, unable to buy the overflowing food of the country because people have nothing to give in exchange. All this is not the result but the cause of Communism, Bolshevism, or whatever you choose to call it.

There were features about the Communism that I liked. I liked to see the rich cafés filled with "Proletarian," drinking black coffee from rich cups, and listening to the bands from plush armchairs. I loved the complete absence of rich men and women; the complete freedom from class distinctions. Even though all shops were closed and the Government stores alone distributed, at least the streets were without prostitutes.

But though Communism is tolerable, at least to look at, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat is as horrible as the Dictatorship of a Czar—only the masters are different. It is impossible for England. Think of a country where only Government newspapers may be printed, only Communist books sold, only Marxian meetings held; where all letters have to be posted open and inspected; where no man may leave his district without a pass; where every man is afraid to speak; where all men are afraid from morn to night and night to morning.

There are, of course, countries where Communist newspapers may not be printed, nor Communist books sold; where Bolshevik meetings may not be held; where their letters are opened; where they are spied upon, denounced, ruined, and deported. I suppose in those countries—but they are a long way off, and we will not suppose.

When I got to Budapest, to the Soviethaus in the great Hotel Hungaria, as may be imagined I rubbed in my point of view. The answer was simple. "We cannot do it without a Dictatorship; no Government could rule without one." I said: "You have destroyed liberty." He answered: "We have established order." It seemed to me to be the order of cowed animals, so I said: "I prefer rebels to cabbages," and he answered: "You are a follower of Bakounin. I believe in Karl Marx." That is exactly the trouble. They believe too much in Karl Marx.

But when it comes to practical politics, I found them moving in the right direction. They have given up the idea of taking the land away from the peasants and putting those innocents on to drive the State steamploughs. Instead they intend, or intended, to tax land values and leave the production in private hands. To help out the new attempted Communal production in the factories, as well as to give men a vested interest in the Revolution, they were wisely contemplating giving out the land round Budapest in acre gardens to the townspeople. In that way they would at least produce some food for themselves. In that way the parasitic town might begin to empty and the free-peasant State emerge. One Commissary admitted that he saw the only practical rôle for the State in banking, exchange, transport and distribution—serving the peasant State. But they have got to get the peasant State first—2,000,000 people to empty out of Budapest.

At a sale of farm properties at Sittingbourne yesterday a fruit farm of 20 acres made £162 an acre. Grove End Farm, of 250 acres, was bought by the Kent County Council for experimental purposes at £56 per acre.—*"Daily Chronicle," July 12th.*

## THE SCOTTISH RADICAL COUNCIL

In a Manifesto issued by the recently-formed Scottish Radical Council the following very admirable sentiments are expressed:—

"The desire for a definitely Radical organisation has long been keenly felt by many Scotsmen. Prior to the outbreak of the European War it was felt that many of the nominal leaders of Scottish Liberalism were no longer in touch with the more active and advanced members of the Party. The organisation in Scotland has largely fallen into the hands of men who rarely took any active part in propaganda, who showed no political initiative, and who were too ready to allow Scottish interests to be side-tracked at the request of the Party Whips. During the war, and more especially during the last election, many of these men openly allied themselves with the reactionary parties in the State. At present Liberalism seems to have no definite policy, and the recent speeches of Party leaders have done nothing to dispel this impression. As a result, many of the most advanced thinkers of the old Liberal Party have had to ally themselves with other parties in which their principles and aims seem to them to find more effective expression."

"The Scottish Radical Council has accordingly been formed in the hope of concentrating and strengthening Scottish Radical opinion and of creating a fighting force that will take a fitting part in the work of reconstruction that is now so urgent. It is hoped that the retrograde features of recent Liberalism will thus be eliminated by organic changes within the party itself, but the Council reserves the fullest rights of dealing with any situation that may arise, including the support of, or opposition to, any political candidate, regardless of party ties, with a view to making the Council's policy effective. The Council may even be forced to dissociate itself from official Liberalism if that course in the end seems desirable."

The Programme of the Council is thoroughly radical. The reconstruction policy includes the following items:—

Nationalization of the Land (which includes all natural resources) by Taxation of Land Values, and removal of all taxation from houses and improvements;

Pending Nationalization, acquisition of land and other natural resources, as required for public purposes (including housing) at a fixed number of years' purchase of the annual rating value thereof.

State Ownership of Monopolies—Railways, Canals, etc.

Complete Free Trade, including the consequent abolition of the Breakfast Table Duties.

The Hon. Secretary of the Scottish Radical Council is Mr. D. N. Mackay, 93, West Regent Street, Glasgow.

TWO NEW PAMPHLETS

### JUSTICE THE OBJECT—TAXATION THE MEANS

(An Address by Henry George)

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