

the bullet, for men, women, and little children. The responsibility of this inhumanity belongs to him, and to him alone, for autocracy must accept the burden which the position imposes.

But the end is not yet, and, in deploring the present massacre, students of history will realise that very little progress has been made in the past without the sacrifice of human lives, whether laid down amid the crash of arms, or in the daily martyrdom which kills more slowly, but none the less surely. They will know also that the blood which has made red the snow of St. Petersburg has not been shed in vain. It will surely fertilise, and the result of its fruition will be the future greatness of a free Russia, for Russia is destined to be great, and no enslaved nation can rise to this position. The death of the martyrs means no less than the ultimate liberation of their nation.

Wise legislators and men worthy of power are those who are possessed of the imagination and the power of sympathy by which they are able to appreciate the spirit of the age before coming into collision with it. In this way they are able to direct progress instead of being overwhelmed by it. Had the Czar been able to understand this, had he come out of his palace and met his people as man to man, his name would have been illustrious for all time. There remains now for Russia disaster, and for its ruler execration; nevertheless, she will work out her own salvation, even though in so doing she has to descend still deeper into the abyss.

### Annotations.

#### THE STATE FEEDING OF CHILDREN.

The State maintenance of children attending public elementary schools was last week considered at a National Labour Conference at the Guildhall, London, at which Sir John Gorst, M.P., presided. Many delegates from trade unions were present, and the conference was briefly welcomed by the Lord Mayor. Sir John Gorst said he was not in favour of the maintenance of all children, but only of those in need. Every child born into our society had the right to be maintained, by its parents in the first instance, and, in default of the parents, by the State. To refuse this maintenance was to rob the child. There was no such thing as a pauper child. Children had legal rights to relief, and injustice to children in this respect was working out its own punishment. The cost

of maintaining starved children in after-life was tremendous. They filled the hospitals, asylums, poorhouses, and gaols. The few pounds saved by cheating children of their maintenance cost hundreds later on, and the weakening of the Empire and the nation was the result.

Dr. Jonathan Hutchinson proposed that all children on their arrival at school should have a glass of warm milk and some bread, whether they had had breakfast previously or not, and that in the middle of the day they should have a free dinner, the preparation and service of which could be utilised as a means of instruction for both boys and girls.

Mr. W. Thorne (Gasworkers' Union) moved a resolution declaring in favour of the State maintenance of children as a necessary corollary of universal compulsory education, and calling on the Government to introduce such legislative measures as would enable local authorities to provide meals for children attending the common schools, to be paid for out of the National Exchequer. He said that of the six million children attending elementary schools two million went every morning without breakfast or were underfed during the day.

On the resolution being seconded, Mr. Macnamara, M.P., moved an amendment calling on the Government to pass such legislation as would put into operation the recommendations of the Physical Deterioration (1904) Committee, and declaring that local education authorities should be empowered to provide food for the children and to recover the cost from parents or guardians when desirable. He estimated that to feed needy children would put a half-penny in the pound on to the rates. A resolution in favour of the universal State maintenance of children would frighten the better classes out of their wits.

The amendment was defeated, and the original resolution carried unanimously.

The feeding of school children is a difficult problem, but at least, if it is undertaken, the charge should fall on the national, not the local exchequer. The State should not allow children to starve because of either the poverty or the ignorance of their parents.

How many parents who are able to support their children know the relative value of food stuffs; what will form bone, nerve, muscle, in a growing child, and what is useless for this purpose? All too few. Teach the children this in the schools, and the next generation will be stronger, saner, more physically fit than the present one.

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