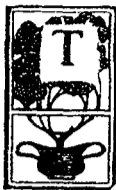


PEOPLE I HAVE KNOWN

DEATH and VICTORY

The Execution of Sacco and Vanzetti on August 23, 1927

By Elizabeth Glendower Evans



HEY laid their bodies in a little undertaker's place in the North End of Boston where the Italians live in great number, and for three days and late into the night an endless file passed between the coffins and the wall, the space so narrow that time was allowed for scarce more than a glance. There were mounds of flowers upon the coffins and in the corners of the room, and masses of them outside in an entrance room, red flowers and streamers with letters in blazing gold. On Vanzetti's noble face death had already set its seal. But Sacco looked young and beautiful. There was a sense of peace upon his face, of unity of purpose, of oneness with his own inner life, that was supreme. "Let me die for the proletariat," had been his recurrent cry. Now was his sacrifice complete. No trace of his long suffering was upon him. He lay a victor whose bitter struggle was as completely swallowed up as if it had never been.

Outside in the city, the State which these men had challenged marshalled its forces, on foot, on motorcycle and on horseback, in immense array, as if prepared to quell an insurgent host. FEAR became an all-pervading presence. One got a glimpse of the immense cost of guarding our so-called civilization against these authorities to be allowed to march past the State House, in their funeral parade. This was finally yielded at the price of foregoing every banner and slogan; not even a band should play a dirge as they carried out their dead. And at the last moment this permit was revoked, and guards blocked the State House route. The long line which followed the dead out to the Crematory at Forest Hills, eight miles away, walked silently in a drizzle that became a pelting rain. At various points some of the marchers were diverted by the police, so that scarce a handful were assembled for the closing ceremonies.

Met Death Majestically

BOTH Sacco and Vanzetti believed in Revolution which they thought of as very near at hand,—near enough perhaps to even open their prison doors. Thus they conceded reluctantly to the legal battle which their friends put up, and which they feared, and feared rightly, served only to lengthen out their torments. Toward the last, they sent out a cry to the Revolutionists of the World to rescue them. And when, suddenly, all failed and they faced the electric chair, they must have tasted Jesus' agony—"My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Nevertheless, at the very end, they both of them met death quietly and majestically.

Sacco "was very pale," when he entered the death chamber—he had undergone a thirty-day fast,—and he was silent as he sat in the chair. Then, as they started to adjust the straps upon his leg, he cried in a loud voice, "Long life Anarchy!" his final confession of Faith. A moment later he said in broken English, "Farewell, my wife and children and all my friends." As the strap was being fastened across his face, he lifted his eyes and said to the standers by, "Good Evening," and then "Farewell, Mother." He was pronounced dead at 12:19 on the early morning of August 23rd 1927.

Vanzetti died seven minutes later. As he entered the Death Chamber he reached out and shook hands with his two guards. "I wish to tell you," he said, "that I am innocent, and never committed any crime. I thank you for everything that you have done for me. I am innocent of all crime, not only of this one, but of all. I am an innocent man." Then, as the guards were about to place the strap across his face, he added, "I wish to forgive some people for what they are doing to me."

Sacco's Letter to Son

JUST three days before he went to his death, weak from his hunger strike, Sacco wrote a most poignant letter to his son Dante,—nam-

Vanzetti to Judge Thayer

(At the Date of His Being Sentenced)

If it had not been for these things, I might have live out my life, talking at street corners to scorning men. I might have die, unmarked, unknown, a failure. Now we are not a failure. This is our career and our triumph. Never in our full life can we hope to do such work for tolerance, for justice, for man's understanding of man, as now we do by an accident. Our words—our lives—our pains—nothing! The taking of our lives—lives of a good shoemaker and a poor fish peddler—all! That last moment belong to us—that agony is our triumph!

The Verdict of History.

ed for Italy's greatest son,—grown from a little lad to "my big giant," as he called him when a few days earlier he had been brought to the prison to take farewell. The letter, written at intervals, is too long to quote in full; let these few sentences suffice.

"Charlestown State Prison,
Aug. 18, 1927.

"My Dear Son and Companion: Since the day I saw you last I had always the idea to write you this letter, but the length of my hunger strike and thought I might not be able to explain myself, made me put it off all this time.

"The other day I ended my hunger strike (the physician was about to begin forcible feeding) and just as soon as I did that I thought of you to write to you. But I find that I did not have enough strength and I cannot finish it at one time. However, I want to get it down in any way before they take us again to the death house, because it is my conviction that they will electrocute us right after midnight, on Aug. 22. Therefore,—here am I, right with you with love and with open heart as ever I was yesterday.

"I never thought that our inseparable life could be separated, but thought of seven dolorous years makes it seem it did come. But then it has not changed really the unrest and the heartbeat of affection that has remained as it was.

"More, I say that our ineffable affection reciprocal is today more than any other

Prayer for Remembrance of Sacco and Vanzetti

This dark hour will pass—
The horror grow a little dim each day.
I'll sleep tonight more quietly—
Not wait with dread,
Knowing that while the night was young
with us,
On eastern towers the midnight neared.
This hour will pass,
This numb and nauseated sense of horror
done
In last night's dark.
I'll sleep tonight—and then tomorrow and
tomorrow night
A little more secure.
Life will go on!
But while it last, O God,
While hate and greed still walk abroad,
While prejudice arrayed
In legal robes, can rule the earth,
Let not the memory of this horror fade!
—Mary Katharine Reely
Morning of August 23, 1927

time, of course. That is not only a great deal but it is grand, because you can see the real brotherly love, not only in the joy but also and more in the struggle of suffering. Remember this, Dante. We have demonstrated this, and modestly apart. We are proud of it.

"Much we have suffered this long Calvary. If I stopped my hunger strike the other day, it was because there was no more sign of life in me . . . "Well, my dear boy, after your mother had talked to me so much and I had dreamed of you day and night, how joyful it was to see you at last, to have talked with you like we used in the days—on those days. Much I told you on that visit and more I wanted to say, but I saw that you will remain the same affectionate boy, faithful to your mother, who loves you so much, and I did not want to hurt your sensibilities any longer, because I am sure that you will continue to be the same boy and remember what I have told you . . .

"So, son, instead of crying, be strong, so as to be able to comfort your mother and when you want to distract your mother from the discouraging soulness, I will tell you what I used to do. To take her along walking in the quiet country, gathering wild flowers here and there, resting under the shade trees, between the harmony of the vivid stream and the gentle tranquility of the Mother Nature, and I am sure that she will enjoy this very much, as you surely would be happy for it.

"But remember always, Dante, in the play of happiness, don't you use all for yourself only, but down yourself just one step at your side and help the weak ones that cry for help; help the prosecuted and the victim, because they are your better friends; they are the comrades that fight and fall as your father and Barto (Vanzetti) fought and fell yesterday for the conquest of the joy of freedom for all the poor workers. In this struggle of life you will find more love and you will be loved . . .

"Therefore, whatever should happen tomorrow, nobody knows, but if they should kill us, you must not forget to look at your friends and comrades with the smiling gaze of gratitude as you look at your beloved ones, because they love you as they love every one of the fallen persecuted comrades. I tell you, your father, that is all the life to you, your father that loves you and saw them, and knows their noble faith (that is mine), their supreme sacrifice that they are still doing for our freedom, for I have fought with them, and they are the ones that still hold the last of our hope that they can still save us from electrocution.

"It is the struggle and fight between the rich and the poor for safety and freedom, son, which you understand in the future of your years to come, of this unrest and struggle of life's battle . . .

"Yes, Dante, they can crucify our bodies today as they are doing, but they cannot destroy our ideas that will remain for the youth of the future to come . . .

"Dante, I say once more to love and be nearest to your mother and the loved ones in these sad days, and I am sure that with your brave and kind goodness they will feel less discomfort. And you will also not forget to love me a little, for I do—Oh, son, thinking so much and so often of you.

"Best fraternal greetings to all the beloved ones, love-kiss to little Inez and mother. Most hearty affectionate embrace, YOUR FATHER AND COMPANION.

"P. S.—Bartolo sends you the most affectionate greetings. I hope that your

and economic ideas of a people. The education of the youth of a country depends on the social values and the vision of the adults who control and direct the educational system of a country. Therefore adult education, the education of parents and teachers is an inevitable corollary to any fundamental changes in the education of youth. The two movements must go forward together. This is the way they are working in Austria and Russia.

Russia Omits Examinations

A YEAR AGO Dr. Lucy L. W. Wilson, who is principal of the S. Philadelphia High School for Girls, visited Russia. She went entirely on her own initiative, not on the invitation of the Russian Government. Her guide while she was there was a member of the bourgeoisie and violently anti-Bolshevik in her sympathies. This, as Dr. Wilson dryly remarked, was a wholesome aid to critical observation. However, so impressed was this able educator from the conservative city of Philadelphia, that after this conference she is returning to Russia to continue her study of the educational work there. The following is a brief summary of the extraordinarily interesting account she gave:

"We are separated from Russia by language, and by political, economic and religious views. But we are united to Russia by our attitude toward the child in the view that education is the one holy cause. We have failed in our generation—the future lies with children. The Russians have a program of education which looks to the psycho-physical moulding of a new generation where creative self-activity may work co-operatively in a socialized environment.

"When they wanted to individualize their education they sent experts over the world to study what was happening elsewhere. They were not interested in criticising—they were interested in studying all methods and taking from each whatever would yield the most constructive results in Russia. They decided that probably the Dalton plan fitted as well as anything for their high schools. After a year of study they transplanted the parts of the scheme which they thought best suited the Russian situation. They gave this to the head masters of schools and asked them to try it out and report. From these reports they found out what value this tool had for them and adapted and took what fitted.

"The Russians believe that every child needs both city and country and that it is the business of the state to provide the opportunity for both to all children. They have Creches in the country during the summer and also near the factories.

"Their educational program has three main tenets:

1. Children shall know nature.
2. Children shall know what work means.
3. Children shall have an understanding of human relations.

"Examinations are forbidden except for the bourgeoisie and aristocracy who wish to enter the higher schools. Instead of examinations several times a year the children give an outline of their work and the teachers do the same. If the teacher is doubtful whether a child should enter the next group she gives a collective test. There are parents' associations and adult education forms an important part of the program."

Dr. Wilson's talk was illustrated by lantern slides made from photographs which she had taken, and as the hall was dark for a part of the lecture it was impossible to take complete notes. But the talk supplemented by the visual testimony of the pictures made it seem even more incredible than before that a country which is carrying out such an intelligent constructive program of mass education should still be placed by the United States in the category of unrecognizable governments!

Austria's Marvelous Progress

ANOTHER outstanding feature of the Conference from my point of view was the exhibition of the work of Viennese school children and the talk on the Austrian Education program given by Dr. Glockl. In 1921 I visited Vienna, which then seemed a stricken city bereft of all hope for the future. It was therefore with amazement that I listened to Dr. Glockl's thrilling account of how, out of the abject misery that prevailed there after the war, a new city had been born, and a complete reorganization of the whole educational system achieved. Dr. Glockl spoke in German—and my German is rusty from lack of practice. He is a great orator, in the finest sense of the word, endowed with the power of constructive ideas living and vivid; even a

fluent command of the language in which he spoke would not permit of an accurate report of his presentation of the work that has gone on and is going on in Vienna. Imagine a vital and vigorous man who, though he has reached middle-years, seems the very incarnation of youth. He speaks rapidly, as if his ideas easily formulated themselves into words. There are courage and grace in dealing with his subject—for it is a complex and subtle task to discuss what has come out of war and revolution before an European audience. But he is a Viennese, and wit and geniality are his birthright. His first phrase wins his audience and they listen spellbound as he proceeds:

"Here we speak different languages, but an idea unites us—the idea of faith in youth—the youth that is being prepared for a time which we ourselves do not know. We need new men, cleverer and abler than we are. Youth must furnish them. We can only prepare the way of opportunity for youth.

"After the war Vienna was in misery. People thought that Vienna was going to be a dead city where people would come to visit the ruins of the glories of the past, that Vienna would be another Venice. But Vienna is not another Venice, Vienna has become a new city, a living city, a worker's living city. It isn't all done, but we are on the way. You will wonder how we have been able to do so much in so short a time. We realized that criticism of the old schools was not enough. We had a constructive plan for new schools. Theoretical research went on side by side with practical experimentation. This gave parents an opportunity to see what was actually being done. They didn't have to support a phantom. We threw the bureaucracy overboard. We carried on educational propaganda through parents' associations and teachers' associations. This educational propaganda has awakened the interest of parents and teachers so that these associations transcend political parties. And our work is supported regardless of the various political differences of parents and teachers.

"Our program includes construction of buildings where housing conditions are healthy and agreeable. You cannot separate living conditions from school conditions in a constructive program of education. Education is not merely a problem of schools, it is also a problem of homes, for education goes on in the home; it cannot be divorced from the home. Today in Vienna one hundred thousand people have the opportunity to live in good dwellings. These new buildings which provide good home conditions are of enormous importance to children.

"Health examinations and free medical care are the fundamental basis of our education program—that is the starting point. Everything else is adapted to the health of the child. This is the basis for all activities and educational programs that follow.

"Freedom is not enough—in a democracy there must be education for responsibility. Education is the bridge between the leaders and the people. The people must understand the aims of the leaders if the leaders are to carry out a constructive program."

People I Have Known

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mother will help you to understand this letter, because I could have written much better and more simple if I was feeling good. But I am so weak."

Nightmare of the Workers

TO HIS little daughter, Inez, born after he was shut behind prison bars, he wrote a letter haunting in its sorrowful cadences. "The nightmare of the working classes," he had said, "has saddened very badly your father's soul."

For the liberal class who championed Sacco and Vanzetti as innocent of the sordid crime for which nominally they died, what is left? They may have no belief, perhaps no understanding of the highly idealistic code which at a stroke would banish "the exploitation of man by man" from the Earth, and replace it by Brotherhood and justice as world rulers. For them there is in sight the class war quickened a hundred fold by their ashes, blown to every quarter as live seed to kindle revolution into flame. Perhaps it will be their fate to be trampled under foot by two opposing armies

which they sought in their day to interpret the one to the other. If that be so, so be it. "When my bark sinks, 'tis to a deeper sea." Meanwhile, let us who looked on, near at hand, bear witness to what we have seen. Let us affirm that these two champions of revolution were men of exceeding gentleness, of self abnegation and of loyalty. They had beauty of character and of mind. Vanzetti was a deep student. Sacco with his poetic nature was like a living flame. "The kindest and tenderest men I have ever known,"—so spoke one of their counsel who sought access to them just before they went to the electric chair.

Doubtless, many of those who own the Earth or who aspire to own it, felt a new security when they learned that on August 23, two rebels against the present social order had died in the electric chair. The institutions of Law and Order, forged it is said to defend Freedom, had functioned smoothly, when put to a most monstrous use. But for Massachusetts? "Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem, if thou hadst known, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace! But now are they hid from thine eyes."

Dedicate La Follette Park at Kaukauna

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consent of Congress which under the constitution has exclusive power to declare war.

Inspiration From His Work

THE 1926 elections increased the numbers and added to the strength of the Progressive group. In the next session of Congress we hold the balance of power in the Senate as we did in 1922 and '24. We are a fighting force. Public opinion will support our efforts to preserve government for the people, to eradicate corruption in elections, to make an end to spoliation and graft in administration of public affairs, to ensure just and reasonable transportation rates, to restore agricultural prosperity, to control credit and markets, to keep waterpower and other natural resources from the tyranny of private monopoly, to halt the course of imperialism. These are some of the grave problems that confront us. They must be met with courage and determination without delay and without compromise.

On this day let us take inspiration from the life of Robert M. La Follette devoted to constructive accomplishments which have made this state and nation a better, happier place to live in. Let us pledge ourselves to carry on his work for humanity.

The people of Kaukauna have named this historic piece of ground "La Follette." It is dedicated to public recreation and enjoyment. At the same time it becomes an emblem of public service, a symbol of human progress.

POTASH IN PALESTINE

A brand new industry is expected to bring a fresh lease on life to ancient Palestine. The historic region about the Dead Sea is bustling with life these days as two concerns, recently granted potash concessions by the British Colonial Office, prepare to extract this commodity for export.

It is said that the potash supply in Palestine is inexhaustible and if it can be produced at not too great a cost, a prosperous future is probably in store for all those who are interested in the new venture. Heretofore the Valley of the Jordan has been without a single valuable export and the balance of trade has been all one way. Now, with money from the potash sales coming in, the country may find its financial condition greatly altered.

The one difficult problem in connection with the production of potash in Palestine is said to be transportation. Motor trucks are the probable solution and a fleet is now being put to work to carry supplies in from Jericho and potash out to the port of Haiffa.

Glacier National Park, in Montana, contains more glaciers than any other area of the world of equal size outside of the north and south pole zones. There are over 60 great moving ice masses, the Blackfoot glacier alone being five square miles in area. In Iceberg lake, cakes of ice float all summer.