

# CURRENT OPINION

*October, 1921: p. 430*

## The Fascisti

**T**HE Fascisti is a name given to a political party in Italy. Political parties, and indeed almost all organizations, as has often been pointed out, hold together and get their strength by hating something. The Fascisti hate the Bolshevists, Communists and the like.

It is not hard to understand this movement. Everywhere the war encouraged revolt against existing wrongs. This spirit found its extreme example in Russia, where Bolsheviki went to the limit, and beyond.

They went too far. (All popular movements go too far, somewhere, by their own momentum. Then comes reaction. Progress is thus by waves.)

Going too far, they alarmed people. For people are after a chance to live and produce, not to massacre and destroy.

People do not want, first of all, to progress. They want "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," and they only accept progress as a means to this end.

Hence when progress threatens to bring the whole structure of society down in a crash, the people revolt against revolt.

That is what made Napoleon possible; the extremists of the Revolution scared the people.

There is, after all, just a balance of probability for comfort in favor of the present state of things. That state may have its evils, in fact always does have, but at least we know what they are. The proposed new plan, whatever it may be, will doubtless also have its flaws,



## Fascisti

which are more to be feared because we don't know what they are.

So there is always a reactionary party, and it is not without its uses.

For the main thing with men and human society is Life, it is to Grow, it is to preserve its Organism. And the only way to keep alive and grow is not to lose what we have so far gained.

Socialism, or any other idealistic program, is not going to convince the people until it shows that we can Grow into it and not imperil the gains we and our fathers have gained at such great cost and pains.

It is not enough to see the millenium; it is quite as important that we see the bridge by which we can reach it without breaking our neck.

Hence Bolshevism is the greatest enemy of Socialism and of the Proletariat hope. Because it has alarmed the world by its intemperate excess. Socialism was spreading mightily in Europe; and it is the violence of Russia, that would cut down the tree to make it bear more apples, it is the rampant Red, and not the repression of rulers, that has set back the Socialistic aspiration thirty years.

The Fascisti is the form this reaction has taken in Italy. It is characterized by the Italian temperament, but it is the same frightened recoil against Bolshevism that can be found in all other countries.

If there had been no Bolshevism every country in Europe would probably be run by Socialists to-day.

