

Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

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NOTES.

The War's Real Objects.

The President of the Board of Trade, Mr. Runciman, has made a speech wherein he vividly displayed the real objects of the war. We have said times out of number that this is a war for trade supremacy, and that the talk of Belgium's independence and Germany's violation of sacred treaties was but a side issue, a handy pretext. Now a Cabinet Minister has endorsed our words. He said: "I think so far as commerce is concerned Germany is a beaten nation, and it is our business to see that she does not get her head up after the war is over. . . . It would be the business of the Board of Trade to see that commercial men of this country were given every advantage that the Government could place at their disposal." The *Daily Telegraph*, commenting upon that speech, says: "Language like that would have drawn cries of indignation and horror from many of Mr. Runciman's supporters before the war; now it is taken as a matter of course, as though self-interest must always have forbidden any other policy." And it needs a gigantic war with its countless horrors to enable one pack of exploiters to seize the trade of another, and the workers, who will be exploited either way, are doing the fighting on both sides. It is as clear as daylight now for whom Governments and armies exist.

The Derby Scheme.

With the closing of the Derby scheme of recruiting on December 12, there closed also one of the vilest and most hypocritical actions of a disreputable Government since the war began. It was undoubtedly a piece of colossal bluff, and the enormous rush in the closing hours serves to show how many there are who can easily be gulled and frightened if only the Press shriek loud enough and long enough. We say it was colossal bluff, because, although the cry was "Attest to retain the voluntary system," we are firmly convinced that the compulsionists are determined to have their own way whatever the figures may be; and Asquith's pledge, which both sides, compulsionists and anti-compulsionists, are using to prove opposite things, has been the driving force toward Conscription. To say to married men, "The single will be called up—or fetched—before you go," is to gain the support and enlist thousands of married men, who have no desire to take an active part in the war, but who can be relied upon to make a public opinion for the conscription of single men so as to save their own skins. Another significant feature of the scheme was the attestation of munition workers and others essential to the war, which clearly shows the intention to be to get the workers under military control, rather than larger armies for the fighting line. The whole scheme was a piece of skilfully manœuvred humbug, and the bullying of the workers in the workshops or on their own doorstep, where they were peremptorily commanded to present themselves forthwith for attestation, was the worst of all. And they still call it a voluntary system! However, whilst so many thousands were rushed in, there is still a formidable array whom all the wiles and threats of Derby's satellites have not been able yet to coerce. And it is to these that we look to fight Conscription to the bitter end regardless of consequences.

Socialism and Conscription.

The idea to centralise power in the hands of the State is an essentially Social Democratic proposal; and although these Socialists postulate the practical control of the means of life by the State as a corollary to national service, we fail to see how they can logically oppose conscription. They must either accept this or practically abandon their ideal for one of a free autonomy of the peoples. A Manchester I.L.Per., to wit, one comrade Robinson, recently gave a lecture in which he said:—"There

will be, you may depend on it, a strong minority in those days [under Socialism] fighting hard to retain its privileges, or perhaps conscientiously opposed to the collective idea of the State. What is to be our attitude towards rebellion, then? Are we to recognise the Anarchist right of every man, or group of men, to set up and establish a little State of their own—a State within a State?" Whilst disclaiming that Anarchists desire, or would desire, to "set up a little State of their own"—a paradox in itself—we nevertheless agree that the minority has full right to ignore the State; and, judging from the attitude of Social Democrats in excluding Anarchists from their International, we have little doubt as to what the attitude of a Socialist State would be towards an independent minority. As the famous French Socialist once said: "The first act of a Socialist Government would be to hang all the Anarchists." Socialists cannot run with the hare and hunt with the hounds with regard to conscription. The national ownership of workshops and the Munitions Act are inseparable. Conscription is but a step further to consolidate the power of the State, call it a citizen army or what you will. Only the Anarchist position of complete State negation is logical. The Socialists must either embrace conscription or take up our attitude whole-heartedly. There is no middle-of-the-road view for them.

Sheep and their Shepherds.

The solemn conclave of the Labour leaders to discuss *their* attitude towards Conscription leaves us amazed. We should imagine that it is the attitude of the workers themselves that counts, and the aplomb of the leaders in formulating some decision or other and asking (or not asking) the workers to ratify it, is going the wrong way about it. We well know that secret bargainings take place between these leaders and members of the Cabinet with regard to the last South Wales miners' strike. What transpired at these meetings none but the leaders know themselves: the workers were merely told that they could go back to work and all would be well. We imagine their attitude towards compulsory service will be of a like character. The capitalist Press suggests that the Labour leaders will base their attitude on Asquith's double-jointed verbiage and the number of resignations from the Cabinet. That this suggestion should be made as an accepted—if not welcome—fact, and that Labour itself should not be consulted or be dreamt of being consulted, shows that these leaders commend themselves to our tyrants. These prancing shepherds who are so "statesmanlike" are not above playing sheep-dog to drive Labour into the abattoir of the capitalists. Working men should refuse to be regarded as sheep, and assume their own right to act and think for themselves, irrespective of these backstair compromises settled between their leaders and the masters. The idea must be abandoned that these servants of the Trade Unions can settle "out of court" the uncompromising class war that, willy-nilly, is yet with us.

Lloyd George at Glasgow.

If we were to believe the ordinary Press reports, Lloyd George's descent upon Glasgow to smooth over the Clyde workers was a triumphant procession, finishing with an enthusiastic meeting on Christmas morning. But other sources of information, whose veracity we can more faithfully rely upon, give us a different tale. Lloyd George and A. Henderson visited Glasgow for the purpose of discussing the imperative need for the "dilution of labour," and in order to convince the munition workers how important a part they must take in the settlement of the issues involved in this great world-conflict. We are told they visited certain shops, but we are not told that they went to only four, in one of which the men refused to discuss with them, and in another they were told the men viewed them with suspicion. It is a healthy sign that this great glib hoodwinker of the British worker is not being valued at his own estimation, but rather by the value of his works. He mentioned a committee upon which

were several Trade Unionists, and swift came the answer, "We don't trust Trade Union leaders!" Lloyd George's speech was a charge by innuendo against the British worker of being responsible for the enormous casualties. He has said it before. He has charged them with drunkenness and laziness, and now he attacks them for sticking to Trade Union rules and offers them a roseate picture of the glorious dawn of the morrow of the war. "I beg the skilled workmen of this country," he said, "in whose keeping are the destinies of labour, to lift up their eyes above the mists of distrust and suspicion and ascend to the height of the greatest opportunity that ever opened before their class, and by so doing there will emerge after the war that future of hope which the great leaders of democracy in all ages have pictured in their dreams." We have heard all this so often before that its picturesque beauty as an oratorical effort is lost in the recollection of Lloyd George's black record in the shackling of Labour. The rare and refreshing fruit has not ripened yet, and neither will his future of hope. But the Scots are "canny" and have his measure.

Under the heading of "War Finance and Labour after the War," Sir Daniel M. Hamilton, J.P., M.P., gives us some interesting facts:—

"The base of all credit is labour—the labour of masters and men—and what labour produces; and to talk of the Empire's finances being in a serious condition when only six millions out of the 370 millions of people who comprise the Empire are engaged in war labour, affords clear proof, not that our credit is in danger, but that the financial advisers of the Government do not know how to mobilise it. The credit of Lombard Street is limited, and can provide only a limited amount of money. The credit of the Empire is practically unlimited, and can provide, free of cost, more money than will ever be wanted for the war. Government has blundered in depending on Lombard Street instead of drawing on the credit of the nation or the Empire."

That labour is the basis of all credit is an economic fact that Anarchists have always insisted upon; but will Sir Daniel explain what difference there is between the credit of Lombard Street and that of the whole nation, seeing that in the last resort it is always Labour that foots the bills contracted by the wise men who govern us? But we thank our friend for his frank admission that the 370 millions comprising the Empire's population represent unlimited credit. Wage-slaves would do well to realise that even after a disastrous war, if we possess the courage to repudiate the gigantic debt contracted by our masters, we could speedily realise the wealth represented in those 370 millions. To those who see nothing practical in this suggestion, let them imagine a state of society where all the drones and exploiters have been abolished, and labour organised freely by the workers themselves. The wealth that could be thus realised might well stagger those high financiers who consider their function indispensable to any well-organised community. It is time we gave up paying taxes for things which are not only useless but actually harmful to us, and took a hand ourselves in the enjoyment of the wealth we are still content to go on manufacturing for other people, for history has no parallel to such foolishness.

The following taken from the *Daily Chronicle* proves the attitude of the master class during the war towards its wage-slaves, and is yet another indication of the amount of freedom possessed by those who are so willingly slaughtering each other on the field of battle. In a recent case heard before the Metropolitan Munitions Tribunal at Caxton Hall, a workman charged with being an absentee from work produced a medical certificate in support of his contention that he was not fit to work on the dates specified:—

"The firm's representative said that it was easy for a man to get a medical certificate. He could describe symptoms which the doctor could not check, and the medical man had to take his word for it. The chairman said that as there was no means of checking the certificate by the doctor's evidence, the Court did not feel that they could go behind the certificate. While there was the greatest suspicion, the Court must dismiss the case."

It is very obvious that in this case the man was only saved by the chairman's fear of the Medical Association, the strongest, as was proved over the National Health Insurance Act, and the most protective Trade Union in the country.

One of the greatest scandals of recent times was brought to light when Mr. Asquith, on December 10, announced in the House that an arrangement had been made whereby Law Officers of the Crown would receive a lower remuneration for their services during the duration of the war. When we consider the present holders of the two offices and their official salaries—Attorney-General, Sir F. E. Smith, £7,000; Solicitor-General, Sir George Cave, £6,000—we must add our protest against depriving these gentlemen of their means of subsistence. But worse is to follow. The nominal salary is not half the full remuneration received. Their "fees" for 1913-14 brought the remuneration of the Attorney-General up to £20,000 and the Solicitor-General's "loot" to about £18,000 for that year. Small wonder, then, is it that there is universal sympathy expressed for these gentlemen, who are thus being victimised by a patriotic Government. When we learn, however, that a large number of naval prize cases contributed towards these "emoluments," the toll exacted from these gentlemen becomes only a form of commission paid to the Government brigands in return for favours received. With the facts before us we desire to see whether the victims develop symptoms of slow starvation before proceeding with the erection of a suitable monument to these persecuted heroes.

The transition of China from one Monarchy to Republicanism, and thence to a second Monarchy is of little importance in itself; the point is whether the peoples as a whole enjoy their full measure of liberty. An armed revolution deposed the old Manchu dynasty and set up Yuan-Shi-Kai as a species of President-Dictator. The same parallel can be seen in the case of Julius Caesar, Alexander, Constantine the Great, Charlemagne, Napoleon Bonaparte, now that Yuan has proclaimed himself Emperor. Whether this accession of an ambitious parvenu will later result in a dream of world-conquest remains to be seen. At present the two most powerful European nations are trying to throttle each others aspirations of *weltpolitik*; but should the new star in the East rise to its zenith, there is no doubt but that they will be ready to cry a truce to crush the new intruder. So far, however, Yuan-Shi-Kai's assumption of Imperial dignity has stirred the breezes that may well forecast the tempest. A rival claimant has arisen in the South-West, and the provinces of Yunnan and Kwangsi are said to have seceded. There is further a revolutionary pother brewing in the Shanghai and Canton provinces. Details are meagre, but we imagine that some of the driving force is supplied by the small band of revolutionaries gathered by our late comrade Sifo, whose efforts to spread ideas of freedom among the people cannot have failed to bear fruit. The seizure of the cruiser "Chao-Ho" is on a parallel with the "Potemkin" episode, and, as in the case of this Black Sea warship, an arsenal was attacked. Both failed for the same reason, that the sister ships remained "loyal" and disarmed the mutineer. The moral is this, that a small minority cannot bring in the social revolution, and that such a transition to a free life must be the work of the great mass of the people themselves, the minority always being the driving motor. Force against force must fail unless the Army and Navy are permeated with revolutionary opinions.

Our Government, following the lead of the United States, has decided to recognise the Government of Mexico, now bossed by General Carranza. A "man of position and education," declared Lord Robert Cecil. Why, we wonder, did the Foreign Office so far forget itself as to previously favour the claims of the unscrupulous adventurer General Huerta, who now appears as a German agent? It is difficult, indeed, to see behind the juggling and chicanery practised by those that pull the strings of State, but we will all sleep more peacefully at night now we are given to understand that the United States, "now enjoying abounding prosperity, will advance money for loans for railway construction and other development works in this harassed land." More blessings of civilisation scattered with an open hand by our exploiters in order that the oppressed inhabitants may realise the value of government to the full, and with tears of thankfulness, we suppose, patiently labour to produce the necessary dividends for the British and American financiers.

The British Press makes much of the "potato-bread" spirit of the German masses, but one hears very little about the "oleaginous" courage of the British workers, as testified in their inexplicable preference for margarine. But he is a brave man who can get behind the British and German censors and their mountains of lies.

OUR BEAUTIFUL GOVERNMENTS.

There is one faith, and one only, which has withstood the assaults of war, and that is the faith which we hold—Anarchism. What has become of all those who were so fond of shouting "Freedom!" before the war, and of bidding us fight for freedom when the war was begun? Gone to the hell of hypocrites, every one of them. Fight for freedom? We have none for which to fight; even what little pretence of it there was has gone. Our speech is gagged, our Press is gagged—which, perhaps, does not very much matter, as it seldom told the truth; our comings and goings are regulated; we are told what work we shall do, and how, and where; and militarism rides rampant and roughshod over us all. England the home of the free! Hooray! Labour leaders, Tories, Liberals preached freedom, and Christians prattled of peace; and now they are all busy Prussianising us in order to fight—Prussianism! If it were not a tragedy, it would be a rare farce! As usual, the capitalists have won all along the line; they know what they want, and do not care who pays so long as they get it. The Tory capitalists were annoyed with Asquith, Lloyd George, and Co., who, while they did them no great hurt, did occasionally put difficulties in their way, and did rouse a certain amount of wicked discontent among the workers. But now the lions and the lambs are playing at Government together, and Lloyd George has allowed himself to be made a cat's-paw to down the workers. Does he think he will reap his reward? He will not; his own party has found him out, and the Tories won't want him after he has done their dirty work for them; then he can go and howl in the wilderness, and no one will give him heed.

There is one faith, and one only, which has withstood the assaults of war—Anarchism. It stands unshaken and unshaken because it is built on a foundation of truth and justice. Anarchism can know no compromise; it does not play for votes or seek after the sweets of office. Its influence is, we believe, daily increasing; and the war has shaken so many other faiths that thousands are despairingly seeking for some creed that is clean and straight. We can guide them into the way of peace. Especially is the worker asking whom and what he can really trust, without fear of being befooled. He knows now that he cannot trust his so-called leaders, shepherds who prey upon their sheep. He knows now that he must not put faith in State Socialism, which, supported by "Compulsion" of every description, will only render him a more helpless slave than ever. He is beginning at last dimly to realise that he has one foe—the capitalist, and one friend—himself; to realise that until he frees himself from the rulers and leaders who batten upon him he cannot ever be a free man. All his old idols are busy proving themselves to be false gods. Hear what Hervé says: "The dogma of class conflict is now dead; after the war there will only be national Socialist parties, and the new 'International' will be a federation of national parties, or will not be at all." Far better be not at all than be a means of continuing and supporting national rivalries and hatreds. The class conflict cannot be dead because it has hardly yet been born. Out of the throes of this bloody war the class war may be brought to life; the workers of all countries may awaken to the fact that nationalism and patriotism are among their most deadly enemies, and are the most powerful allies of their enslavers—the capitalists.

It is worth while reading even our present gagged Press, for every now and then truth makes herself heard and a ray of light is thrown across the darkness. Some of the piffle talked by State Socialists is illuminating. Says Adler, of the Austrian Social Democratic Party: "Everybody is now beginning to realise that the defensive task of the war has been accomplished, and that the war goes on only because the Government does not know how to start negotiations for peace." What paltry rubbish! The war is a war of defence; defence of the rights of property and of the ambitions of the rich against the rights of the worker. A pretty war to be backed up by Socialists. The Governments do not make peace because there would be no profit in doing so yet awhile; that is all. As soon as the war ceases to pay the capitalist, so soon will it cease to be a righteous war, and peace will be found to be easily possible. Later on this eagle of a man gives himself away badly, as thus: "We, Social Democratic wage-earners of Austria, have readily borne all the burdens which were the result of the necessity of defending our country." What a tissue of lies! What necessity was there? Defending their country against what? Against

wicked, domineering Serbia? What stake have the wage-earners of Austria in their country, which is not *their* country at all? Lies, stupid lies. Then, what are the Social Democrats of Germany doing? Squabbling among themselves; that is all. What are the State Socialists of France and Italy doing? Spouting Patriotism with a big "P" and playing the game of their rulers. What are most of the Socialists in this country doing? Nothing, unless they get the chance of a job, and then they pocket whatever insult is offered them.

It is because the Government well know that the Labour Party, etc., do not mean to back with deeds their words that they have dared to bring in Compulsory Service. That is all there is to it. Also, *this* is worth remembering: Carson and Co. armed themselves to oppose a law they did not like, and they went scot-free. If a Labour leader dared preach the doctrine of armed resistance to Compulsory Service—where would he be? Need we answer the question? One law for the ruler and another for the ruled—so it has ever been. Here again there is a ray of light in the gloom; it may be that this Compulsory Service climb-down will awaken the workers to the fact to which they have so long been blind—that their leaders are the blind leading the blind. One other point concerning Compulsion. Does the worker believe the lie that it will be for the duration of the war *only*? Not a bit of it; the Tories have long been reaching out after this weapon against the worker; they will not drop it unless they are compelled to do so. Who will compel them? The workers, who will promptly be put under martial law if they dare to resist. When the war is over, we shall be told that Compulsory Service must be retained for some years to come, for the nation must be made so strong that those wicked Prussians will never dare to attack us again. Quite simple. Moreover, there are the armament firms and so on to be reckoned with; *they* do not want an unarmed nation or a prolonged peace—that would not pay dividends to the good Christians who hold their shares. Christians making profit out of war! Stupendous! Unspeakable!

A nice little item this: "A Budapest message states that the sweating of Hungarian war widows by Government contractors is providing great discontent." And the poor fools think that the dear, kind Government will help them! Is there any limit to human credulity? Seemingly—none. But we must not laugh at our neighbours; we are equally credulous. If the British worker were not a credulous fellow—well, there would be no more Government, and, *therefore*, no more war, no more exploiting, no more sweating, no more grinding of the faces of the poor, who are kept poor because unless there are poor there cannot be any rich. Credulous! Well, the politicians know we are so, or they would cease their lying.

DEMAND PEACE.

Both Germany and Britain have been busy during the past month martyring their peace "cranks," as a scornful and bribed Press loves to describe them. And those who have been busy celebrating the nativity of the Prince of Peace have been loudest in their denunciations of these traitors to their commercial interests. But the people, the poor, the oppressed, and the starving in each country, quietly, stolidly await their deliverance from the war they are heartily weary of. How long, we wonder, shall the few raise their voices unheeded; how long will the great mass of people in each country take to discover the very simple truth that when *they* are unanimous and united, they are omnipotent, and no juggling governmental criminals prating of Empire can prevail against them. Demand peace, and those who would stone us will in turn become afraid; demand peace, and those who have hesitated will line up. Only let us close our ears to the impostors who cheat us with their eternal chant of Empire, Empire; only let us refuse to become the thing, spineless and shameless, which the recruiting sergeant demands; only let us press on with our peace and anti-conscription propaganda, and the peoples of the martyred countries will arouse from their torpor and enforce a peace which will not be the one desired by the German Emperor's henchmen or the bosses of Empire in Britain. Our will shall be law because we are the sinews, the brain, and the muscle of the country; and we can, once our resolve is taken, put our hand upon the lever of the murder machine and paralyse the Governments of Europe. To our German and British comrades equally we say, the time is not far off when this course must be taken lest we sink down into a degradation such as we have not yet suffered. Comrades and workers, all whose dear ones have been sacrificed to the hideous war-idol, this is the one revenge left to us; how long will their voices cry to us in vain?

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Workers Must Fight Conscription.

The decision of the Labour Congress to oppose Conscription is the most inspiring piece of news since the war began. The workers have been so tricked and betrayed in the last eighteen months that many were our doubts as to whether they would not be tricked again. Even now the battle is not won, for the wily politicians in their ranks, in spite of their resignations, are sure to do all they can to gain their ends, which are to keep in favour with the Government that can give out such nice fat jobs.

The campaign for Conscription has been most astutely worked. Its advocates have not stuck at any lie which would keep the people quiet whilst the plot was being worked up. When the Registration Bill was introduced, it was suspected by many to be the forerunner of Conscription, and questions were asked in the House as to whether that was the Government's intention; but both Asquith and Kitchener said it was not, the latter saying definitely, after it was passed, that "there is no ground for the allegation that the National Register is being used with the idea of indirectly introducing Conscription." Now we know that it was introduced for no other purpose than Conscription, the facts and figures obtained under the Registration Act being quoted again and again by the Conscriptionists. Before the war began the idea was boomed by Lord Roberts under the name of "National Service," but it did not make much headway. The war, however, gave the Conscriptionists their chance, and they have left no stone unturned to force compulsory military service on the workers. Although recruits have rolled up by millions, they were never enough. "We must have more men!" they shrieked, and led by Northcliffe and Lloyd George, the reactionaries now see victory almost within their reach. But "there's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip."

But why are they so desperately anxious to force Conscription on the workers now at the risk of "dividing the nation" and losing the war? The answer is simple: because they think peace may come at any moment, and they wish to get the workers well under control, so as to be able to have cheap and productive labour in the fierce commercial struggle which will take place when the war stops. The Munitions Act was a step in that direction, but the action of the Welsh miners showed that a large body of men could defy it with impunity. Military discipline, however, has terrors for the average man which the law does not breed; and the action of Briand in France, where a railway strike was broken by calling the men up as reservists and compelling them to work on the railway as soldiers, was a lesson our capitalists soon learnt, and they wish to have the same power in their own hands. In their greed for dividends, they would enslave the workers and keep them in chains if possible. How the Conscriptionists would use compulsory service is roughly foreshadowed by the following taken from *Engineering* of December 3:—

"The Trade Union spirit is only quiescent, and emerges almost daily in many of the munition works. There seems to

be a lack of that governmental control which is essential to the development of the will to succeed. For this reason alone many would welcome the compulsory attestation of all of military age. By selection all could then be divided into two classes, one being those indispensable to the manufacture of war munitions and of articles and works necessary to increase our exports; the others would be those whose services could not contribute directly to munitions or indirectly to winning money to carry on the war. Obviously their duty would be to add to the necessary number of fighting men. In this latter category it would be possible gradually to embrace men who had not the will to do their best in manufactures for the prosecution of the war."

It is an open secret that when Lloyd George discussed the provisions of the Munitions Bill with the Trade Union officials before introducing it, he proposed what really amounted to Conscription in the workshops; but a few stalwarts stood in his way. However, his legal training enabled him to circumvent the men's representatives by cunningly worded sentences, and his Munitions Act is being used by employers to tie workmen to their benches. In many places, notably on the Clyde, the workers are in revolt; and Lloyd George got a bitterly hostile reception when he went to Glasgow at Christmas, the men openly jeering at him and his supporter, Henderson, the Labour man in the Cabinet. This brought matters to a head. When he came back to London he and his fellow intriguers evidently determined to force Conscription at once—nominally for the Army, but really for the workshops, because as Minister of Munitions it will be for him to decide whether a man is "indispensable" for munition work or not. By this means he will hold a constant threat over the "agitators" that if they dare to kick against the conditions in the workshops, or even against a reduction of wages, he will withdraw their certificates of exemption and force them into the Army.

This is a plain statement of the position at the present moment, and shows the dangers of the situation. If the Military Service Bill becomes law, the workers, whether in or out of the Army, will be under military discipline, and every scrap of liberty they possess will be taken away. Our rulers know that once the principle of Compulsion is admitted, it will be comparatively easy to extend it. Single men to-day, every man to-morrow. And death or imprisonment to those who disobey. To say compulsion is wanted only for the war is a lie. It is wanted principally for industrial purposes—to hold the workers down while they are the more easily fleeced.

This plot of our rulers can easily be killed if the workers recognise the danger. To-day they have been cunningly divided into two classes—married and single—the more easily to be defeated. But if the married men allow themselves to be used as tools to force Conscription on the single ones, they will live to regret it, for within a very short time it will be forced on themselves, even if they do not feel its effect in the workshops at once. Let them remember they were told that this war is being fought to "preserve our liberties." All the sacrifices of their countrymen will have been in vain if this cursed system of Conscription takes root. Fight it now, fight it immediately, follow up the words of the Labour Congress with deeds, and it will be crushed. Should the Bill pass, in spite of your protests, then down tools! It is more important that you should defeat your exploiters at home than that you should defeat the Germans. If you do not defeat British Militarism, it will be useless to crush German Militarism.

But in defeating it, remember that so long as you allow private property in land and the means of life, this struggle with your oppressors will continue. Remember also that it was your own Government—the State—which tried to fasten the chain round your necks. Therefore, to be free, you must abolish both private property and the State which exists only to protect it.

An Appeal for "Freedom."

Owing to the war, our income has been seriously affected, and we ask comrades and friends to help our Guarantee Fund to the best of their ability. Funds are urgently needed to produce FREEDOM regularly. We hope for a good response to our appeal.

TWO ATTITUDES.

(From the French of PIERRE CHARDON.)

At the moment of the outbreak of the great conflict of nations, each State mobilised its intellectuals, men of science, journalists, and teachers, for the preaching of falsehood and hatred, obedience and sacrifice. The attitude of these persons was no surprise to us. We knew them to be self-interested worshippers of the Golden Calf, puppets and flunkies of the commercial class, slavish tools of the State.

Similarly we expected to see the Socialist tribunes following in their steps, for the patriotic declarations, those of Jaurès and of Bebel alike, had taught us that the real guiding principle of their sham International could be formulated as follows: *Workers of all countries, slaughter each other at the command of your masters!*

But we should never have thought that unchangeable opponents of the State, fierce despisers of authority, would also begin to howl with the wolves; that they would invite us, voluntarily and without reserve, to assist in "National Defence."

In spite of that, let no one imagine that the majority of Anarchists have followed the propagandist vedettes who have made common cause with their rulers. On the contrary, many have remained anti-patriots and anti-militarists. If the military power has seized and crushed them, they have not sought to justify, to legitimise that power which they formerly hated, which they hate still more now that the facts have confirmed their anticipations; now that they have seen actually at work this formidable grinding machine constituted by the militarism of every State.

That is clear. For years we have awaited the advent of the plague that is now devastating the world. The severity of the nations' struggle for "a place in the sun"—the modern form of conquest and expansion—was inevitably bound to bring about a conflict between the various Fatherlands; seeing that they are nothing but so many associations of social criminals, whose sole aim is exploitation and domination. The conflict was inevitably bound to end in warfare, since two groups of nations found themselves face to face: those who had divided between them the colonial territories of the world, and those who desired to drive out the conquerors in order to set themselves up in their place. Moreover, the crisis of intensive militarism that has existed in Europe for twenty years had placed the rulers in the alternative position of ending in positive bankruptcy; each nation hoping that the vanquished would be crushed to such an extent as to allow of reduction of armaments without fear of retaliation.

Since all these things were known to us, and since we are aware of the fact that the struggle between nations is only the enlargement of that social and individual struggle which forms the basis of capital society, our opinions could not suddenly be modified, at the outbreak of war, by the forms under which it presented itself—the methods that it adopted. When a man has seriously considered the social problem and can discern its causes; when he understands that private property produces nearly all the conflicts of mankind; when he is not a humbug, a dabbler, or a creature of impulse; he cannot modify his convictions according to circumstance, nor can he throw upon one caste alone the responsibility of the war.

We are revolted by the horrors of war, but we know that the only way of putting an end to them is to attack the real causes of armed conflicts, and not to lend willing aid to any nationality, whichever it be.

Declamations concerning "the horrors of invasion" cannot induce us to become "good soldiers and good Frenchmen," for we are aware that in every war each side seeks to carry the conflict into the enemy's country.

When two or more Empires clash together, dragging after them as many large and small allies as possible, in turn purchasing or violating neutrality, we know that we are witnessing the encounter of two opposing Wills to Greed and Domination—not the struggle of Law against Barbarism.

Above all, what most disinclines us towards official justifications and patriotic solidarity is that these things are thrust upon us. Which of the Fatherlands can claim to be defending Liberty, when all of them seize upon the individual like ghouls greedy for human flesh, entrain him like an animal, without his being able to consider or discuss the matter, and send him to the slaughter, regardless of his choice.

We know that some feeble-spirited persons would delude themselves into the belief that they are acting in accordance with their own wills when they adapt themselves to the public

opinion which proclaims that "war is a necessary evil," and affirms the necessity of "fighting to a finish" in order that the workers may thereby derive some supposed advantages, direct or indirect. But we prefer to keep our ideal unsullied. Militarism may seize our bodies: our minds it can never subdue.

Though we cannot elude authority, though we recognise our powerlessness and numerical inferiority, we do not voluntarily co-operate or acquiesce in the deadly work. An idea that is impotent because it cannot yet enlist a sufficient number of supporters to make it a social force, is not necessarily a false one. It may represent the future, as the unextinguished embers on the primitive hearth represented the possibility of procuring fresh fire.

We know that if we were to admit to-day the necessity for "National Defence," we must to-morrow admit the usefulness of the Militarism that prepares and ensures it. If we were to join the Holy Alliance, we could not afterwards speak seriously of the spirit of revolt or the class-struggle. So we prefer to keep silence, gagged as we are by Democratic martial law and censorship. Between our activities of yesterday and to-morrow we are unwilling to raise the barrier of a positive contradiction.

As for those who have joined the war party, their tongues will be tied by their utterances of to-day. As they have admitted that a man ought—being propertyless—to engross himself in his "National Inheritance," to the degree of voluntarily sacrificing his life to preserve it intact—they will be compelled to bow down before the frightful political and economic Nationalism whose reign after the war can be foreseen. To the boldest and most combative it will be given to resist "the renascent hydra of Clericalism." While they are wasting their time in cleaving "the Sacred Heart," the traffickers of the sacristy and the cloister will consolidate their economic power by taking advantage of the distress which will be prevalent after the war, when Capital will, at the expense of the workers, recoup to itself the milliards that have been squandered in fighting.

For our part, we shall use these terrible economic results in our work of social criticism, and we shall point out that men have suffered this abominable butchery because they have not adopted our position; because they have preserved that institution of Private Property which we condemn, have respected and considered necessary that Masterdom, that Authority, against which we struggle.

There will be greater need than ever for an earnest propaganda, unhampered by professionals and pseudo-intellectuals. Ceasing to fasten our gaze upon Paris and upon distinguished writers; applying rational decentralisation, localism, federalism; seeking to create in every district one or more autonomous centres of active, systematic, and unflagging propaganda; we shall resume our task of criticism, undermining, and education.

For now (the proof of this is not lacking), in our militarised, priest-ridden communities, misery, suffering, and death do not produce lasting and fruitful activities on the part of the people unless there is previously a firmly-rooted ideal of resistance to the rapacious and tyrannical Master; an ideal that may be worked out by reason and not merely by the driving force of sentiment; a slowly-matured ideal, a definite and clear objective founded upon real Liberty, secured by true Equality of conditions; only realisable by the suppression of authoritarian Masterdom.

When we resume the work of propaganda, if we are asked what we were doing during the war, we shall reply:—Some of us, being unwilling to champion a cause which they deemed was not theirs, evaded their patriotic obligations, others would not or could not follow their example. But, whether fighters or defaulters, we have remained true to ourselves in all circumstances: for what constitutes the superiority of the Free Man—the Anarchist—over his environment, is that he knows how to uphold the integrity of his thought and his dignity, and to defy to the end the blind force that crushes him.

Being without illusions, we shall not sink into whining pessimism. We depend only on time, and on effort guided by reason, for the struggle against illusion, against clerical or lay Religionism, that bulwark of malevolent Authority.

October, 1915.

(Translated by T. S.)

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HERVE'S SOMERSAULT.

Gustave Hervé, who before the war was the best known anti-militarist in Europe, has entirely changed his opinions, and now breathes fire and murder against the Germans. When the Welsh miners went on strike he said they were traitors to the cause of the Allies, and his writings have been gladly quoted here by the capitalist Press, which always welcomes a renegade from the ranks of the workers. On January 1 he changed the name of his paper from *La Guerre Sociale* to *La Victoire*—it is very significant that he does not call it *La Victoire Sociale*. In a recent issue, replying to Jean Longuet, who criticised him severely at the National Socialist Congress just held in Paris, Hervé writes:—

"Don't laugh at those who make volte-faces. Our entire party will have to make one, after the war, if it wants to survive. Just as I predicted the war to you in 1905; just as I predicted to you in 1911 that the question of Alsace-Lorraine was as dangerous after 44 years as on the morrow of the Treaty of Frankfurt; just as I predicted to you that war was coming on us by way of Serbia, I predict to you to-day that the 'Internationale,' founded on the dogma of 'class-warfare' dear to your grandfather, is dead and doubly dead; that after the war there will only be national Socialist parties, and that the new 'Internationale' will be either a federation of national parties or nothing at all."

But the best reply to this outburst is Hervé's own words, written after he had predicted this war. His arguments are as strong to-day as ever. It is Hervé that has changed, not his arguments:—

"Let us try to see coolly what loss would accrue by a German annexation, not only to the French proletarians, but to the mass of small shopkeepers and land-owning peasants. . . .

"Would they lose their property? Those who possess nothing, not even the right to work, have nothing to lose. As for the small landed proprietors and the small shopkeepers, would a change of Country take away from them their parcels of land or their small businesses? Does, in the twentieth century, a war amongst Europeans involve such consequences? When annexing Alsace, did the Germans take the fields, the houses, the shops, the factories of the Alsacians? As a matter of fact, after the annexation, the large manufacturers remained large manufacturers, the small shopkeepers remained small shopkeepers, the small landowners remained small landowners, and the beggars remained beggars. . . .

"Would they lose their temperament, their personality, the originality of their race, providing race characteristics be as pronounced as they like to make out? It is no more likely. Let half of Germany be annexed to-morrow, and the annexed Germans would nevertheless remain Germans with all the qualities and all the defects of their race, with their methodical disciplined spirit, their ardour for work, a certain heaviness of mind, and an exaggerated worship of force and authority. If to-morrow half of France were annexed to Germany, the annexed French would nevertheless remain Frenchmen, with all the qualities and all the defects of their temperament, their vivacity of spirit, their ironical rapture, a certain artistic taste, and also their light-headedness, their lack of seriousness and their indiscipline, if, that is to say, those are really the native qualities and the real faults of the two races, which is not at all demonstrated. . . .

"The political differences between republican France, monarchical Germany, England, and Italy, are not as great as the republican bourgeoisie of France or our French patriot Socialists would make them out to be. They bewilder the French proletarians with the idea of a German annexation by telling them, without a smile, that, once German subjects, they would find themselves deprived of their liberties of thought, of meeting, of the Press, of their trade union liberties.

"This is a poor joke.

"They would have very nearly the same liberty of thought as in France; they would read their Socialist papers as in France; they would go to their political meetings as in France; they would see there on the platform the police officer, more often than in France it is true, but as he is sometimes still seen in France, as a thousand hearers could see him in the year of our Lord 1904 in France, at St. Etienne, under a Socialist municipality; in a town which sends to Parliament three Socialist deputies; they would learn from time to time that one of their propagandists has been sued in the law courts, as in France; they would go to barracks as in France; they would unite themselves in their trade unions as in France; they would strike as in France; the police would 'move them on' as in France, and if the police were powerless, the army would shoot them down as in France.

"Under German rule, as under French rule, the proletarians changing their Country would meet with the same insolent and rapacious master class, the same administration hard on the small man, the same officers, and the same haughty non-commissioned officers, the same law courts pitiless to the poor, with from time to time, as in France, a humane master, an intelligent officer, and a just magistrate.

"The French proletariat would lose nothing by it, not even honour.

"Besides, what honour are they talking about when they tell us that we would be dishonoured by becoming Germans, that there are cases when one must fight for dignity, for honour? Yes, what honour?

"National honour? There is no national honour where there is no national sentiment, and the class spirit has killed all national sentiment that ever was in us.

"Is it our honour of man, our personal dignity, which commands us to oppose ourselves to aggression, to all violence of any group of men upon the group to which we belong? It is precisely our personal dignity which forbids us to fight for interests which are not ours."

THE RIGHT OF THE STATE.

Just now we hear a great deal about the right of the State to take action for the protection of society. So-called democratic government is held up as a wonderful thing, and different to all other government. We are told that democratic government is government by the people, and for the people; that the Government has the responsibility of safeguarding the interests of the community, and has the right to impose its will on the individual for the interest of all. One of the outcomes of this teaching is the present agitation for conscription.

The doctrinaire advocates of government authority say that the Government represents the people. It is false. All Governments in communities divided into classes and castes represent the governing class only; that is the class which controls the industrial, commercial, and intellectual institutions of the community.

No Government can represent all people. But the classes the Government represents claim the right to rule the rest of the people. The Government claims the right to conscribe and proscribe any section of its citizens as it thinks fit.

And the people the Government is most anxious to sacrifice are always the people which it does not represent.

The Government is concerned about the safety of the "intellectual elite" and the commercial aristocracy.

Government is of no use to people who have nothing to protect; it does not represent them. Government represents the State.

The State is an entity, a system in which a certain section is at the top, exploiting the resources controlled by the Government, while another section is made to serve the interests of the governing section.

It is in the interest of those who gain nothing by the maintenance of the State to defy the State.

But in democratic countries the majority rules; the people get the kind of government they want, we are told.

It is untrue. Before a man can get into a position in which he can influence the Government of the modern State, he has to leave the ranks of the people. He comes to belong to another class, and has to serve the interests of another class.

But suppose the Government did represent the majority of people. Would that entitle them to wield despotic power over the minority? Could it order the minority to go to the battlefields to be slaughtered in the interest of the majority?

Majority despotism is as bad as monarchical or oligarchical despotism.

The majority may be ignorant, superstitious, egotistic, and vicious. A stupid majority has no right to order an intelligent minority about.

If a Government tries to coerce individuals, it should be resisted. Murder is murder, whether committed by monarchical or democratic Government. To say that a Government has the right to impose conscription on the people and make people fight for something they do not believe in is abominable.

It is time we should inquire into what is the business of Governments and what is not.

If Government is to be permitted to dispose of all its subjects as it thinks fit, to send such and such to fight on the battlefields of the world to kill and be killed, to send others to the mines and factories to toil in degradation and slavery, and to exalt others to distinction and luxury—then Government will be worse than the Juggernaut itself, enabling a few to sacrifice the many for selfish reasons.

The idea that a few class representatives called a Government have the right to commandeer the lives and liberties of a whole community is not likely to gain ground.

Do not let yourself be misled by specious phrases. Our Trades Hall leaders will tell you that they do not believe in conscription "under the present system." If conscription is unjust under one system, it is unjust under all systems.

Some day, perhaps, we shall have a Government which claims to be a Socialist Government, and which will ask you to come and fight for them, because now you have got something to fight for. It is a lie. No Government is worth fighting for. All Government is evil, but as long as it only attempts to place equal opportunities in the hands of everybody it may be tolerated as a necessary evil.

Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. You have got the same right to defy the Government as the Government has to defy you.

H. CHRISTOPHERSON.

In *International Socialist*, Melbourne.

ANARCHY.—A social theory which regards the union of order with the absence of all direct government of man by man as the political ideal.—*Century Dictionary*.

MOWN DOWN.

[“The Third Light Horse Brigade charged out from the trenches on the Nek in the grey dawn of August 7—charged out and never came back. . . . The best part of two regiments went forward in three lines, and each line as it rushed that fatal thirty yards was mown down as grass is mown by a scythe. Only one man, so far as I know, came back alive.—CAPT. C. E. W. BEAN.]

Mown down, mown down, mown down, wild swathes of crimson wheat,

The wild-eyed charge, the blast, the terrible retreat,
The blood-greased wheels of cannon thundering into line
O'er that red writhe of pain, rent groin and shattered spine,
The moaning faceless face that kissed its child last night,
The raw pulp of the heart that beat for love's delight,
The heap of twisting bodies, clotted and congealed
In one red huddle of anguish on the loathsome field,
The seas of obscene slaughter spewing their blood-red yeast,
Multitudes pouring out their entrails for the feast,
Knowing not why, but dying, they think, for some high cause,
Dying for “hearth and home,” their flags, their creeds, their laws.
Ask, ask if they understand
How both great grappling armies bleed for their own land;
For in that faith they die. These hoodwinked thousands die
Simply as heroes, gulled by hell's profoundest lie.
Who keeps the slaughterhouse? Not these, not these who gain
Nought but the sergeant's shilling and the homeless pain!
Who pulls the ropes? Not these, who buy their crust of bread
With the salt sweat of labour! These but bury their dead,
Then sweat again for food!

Christ, is the hour not yet come
To send forth one great voice and strike this dark hell dumb,
A voice to outcrash the cannon, one united cry. . . .
One voice from dawn and sunset, one almighty voice,
Full-throated as the sea—Ye sons of the earth, rejoice!
Beneath the all-loving sky, confederate kings ye stand;
Fling open wide the gates o' the world-wide Fatherland.

ALFRED NOYES.

Is a Communist Colony Possible in Western Australia?

To those tired of the dull monotony and vicious surroundings guaranteed by wage-slavery, to those in revolt against the crushing of initiative and the burden of a day that brings no respite, no hope or promise of a real life lived as Nature would impel—to all these our comrade H. Banks brought a message of hope on December 9 and 16, when he lectured at Marsh House on “Pioneering Life and other Facts from Western Australia,” and “How Can a Communist Colony Successfully Develop in Western Australia?” Life in that part of the world, he said, held out greater inducements to those desirous of working for themselves than many other places which might be selected, because not only was land comparatively cheap, but the climate, though hot in the summer, was equable the greater part of the year. After four years' experience on the land in this part of Australia, he was bound to confess the advantages far outweighed the disadvantages.

Our comrade gave a graphic description of a settler's life, but deprecated the ways of the average settler, whose interests were mostly speculative. Farming methods were bad, as instanced by continuous cropping of one cereal, with very little variation. With irrigation and scientific methods, anything could be grown and a community be made self-supporting in a short time. Such a life, he urged, even though it meant hard work, spent in the companionship of other comrades, would open up individual possibilities such as life in a town or even a rural district in older countries could not offer. When he surveyed the squalour, ugliness, and dirt which was the perpetual inheritance of the wage-worker, he marvelled at our stupidity in not getting away from it. As there was no immediate prospect of Anarchist Communism being realised, he desired to do his share towards the formation of such a community. To ensure the success of the scheme it was not necessary to possess much money, but it was essential that only those should join who were able and willing to undertake outdoor work and who desired to acknowledge no master, high or low, but who would demonstrate their own mastery of the soil by taking the whole product of their labour. He sincerely believed that though other Communist schemes had failed, yet a community such as he had outlined contained within it all the elements of success, if all were imbued with the same ideals and all conscientiously endeavoured to give practical expression to them by their labour. He had some experience of the country, and that would be useful when the community started, although it was also necessary that comrades intending to join should acquire what practical knowledge was possible, preferably in Western Australia, before making a start, as they would at the same time be able to save the necessary money. He hoped to be ready to return to Western Australia in six months' time, to make the initial arrangements for the community; and would be glad to hear from those comrades whose inclinations and experience led them to support the scheme.

“DEFENDING THE REALM.”

The Seizure of “Forward.”

Our despotic rulers have excelled themselves in their zeal for Defending the Realm by the suppression of *Forward*, the Glasgow Socialist paper. The case is, perhaps, the worst of its kind, and deserves to be made public far and wide. The Government have stated that the action was undertaken by the competent military authority of Scotland at the instigation of the Minister of Munitions (Lloyd George). This is important to remember. Briefly their crime is this: When Lloyd George and his attendant satellites visited Glasgow for the purpose of impressing the Clyde workers with the necessity for the “dilution of labour,” elaborate arrangements were made through the Press Bureau that none but the official report (which was to be supplied) was to be published. Our readers will no doubt have seen that report, which paints the visit in glowing colours and makes of it a triumphant episode. But the contrary was the case, and *Forward*, always outspoken, published in full not only the speech, but the interjections and graphic details of the hostile reception awarded the party. They have published the truth about a Cabinet Minister's reception by the Clyde workers. For this their office and plant has been seized and the paper suppressed, fortunately not before it had been well distributed over the country. No charge is formulated against the editor, and the police are in possession. This is surely the limit of despotism, and a glowing testimony to the nervousness of our legislators, ever fearing the truth. Surely the time has come when the workers should rise against this monstrous dictatorship, which threatens to throttle not only our Press, but us as well.

Two Leeds Fighters.

In addition to the wholesale imprisonments already made under the Defence of the Realm Act, two Leeds men, T. H. Ferris and S. Overbury, members of the Brotherhood Church, have been sent to prison for six months for distributing a leaflet calculated to cause disaffection and discourage recruiting. The leaflet in question, so far from being of a revolutionary nature, was a demand for peace on religious grounds; but the fact that the publishers had the courage to put their names and address to it no doubt scared the jumpy authorities. One of the chief witnesses was a curate, who upon being asked whether he could find anything in the Scriptures to justify a defensive war, had to admit that he could not. The whole proceedings were, as usual, a sham, for the verdict was obvious from the beginning. The two men have started a hunger strike and one is being forcibly fed. We hope they will soon be out again, for though we may not agree with all they say, they have the courage to put up a fight against the iniquitous Act by speaking their mind, and can ill be spared now, when our native tyrants are flattering their Russian allies by imitating their methods of government.

Russian Political Refugee Sentenced.

A well-known Russian refugee and Socialist lecturer, Peter Petroff, has been sentenced at Glasgow to two months' imprisonment under the Aliens Restriction Act. Petroff lectured in Glasgow for the local branch of the British Socialist Party upon the “Working Class Movement in Russia,” and gave a splendid exposure of the Russian Government's methods against the working class movement. He was subsequently arrested and charged with failing to notify the police of his arrival in Glasgow. Seeing that there was a fair sprinkling of police spies and detectives at the meeting taking notes, there is good ground for believing that Petroff was charged at the instigation of the Russian Secret Political Police, lest the fair fame of Russia's gentle methods should be sullied by his exposure of these methods. It is not enough that we should copy the Russian Government's methods here, but the British police will work hand in hand with them to harass and pursue their victims in every way possible.

German Women Waking Up.

There is hope for the docile German working man, for the war has caused the proverbial woman-worm to turn at last and to discover her own importance. When what is left of the former bread-winner returns, and discovers (as will be the case with his English opponent) the women in possession, he is likely to get some nasty shocks calculated to get rid of the patriotic diet upon which he has been reared. In the process that must follow, reason may even overthrow docility and discipline, twin vices to be found in most working men of whatever nationality. It is heartening news, indeed, that the once-despised *hausfrau* is everywhere in Germany manifesting a spirit of unrest, and that her entry into what has hitherto been considered exclusively man's sphere has made her realise a little of her national importance. That women are claiming their right to discuss and criticise the policy of their country is good, but how long will it take before they refuse to bear children who ultimately become and potentially are so much cannon fodder?

TO W. O.

DIED OF WOUNDS, DECEMBER 3, 1915.

War's raiment e'er was red, but not so deep
It seemed, till Death with unrelenting grip
Seized thee when lying on a Red Cross ship
And dragged thee under to thy last, long sleep:
Tears will not come; e'en Pity cannot weep,
But only anger at man's will to kill:
At kings and statesmen who men's blood can spill,
And for their scheming reckon life so cheap.

Is it the end that Life shall be one Lust,
And that a peaceful man shall murd'rer turn
And die to make a merchant rich and great?
Better by far it were that swords should rust
Within their scabbards, and that we should spurn
The Gods of war, than one should meet thy fate.

NORMAN YOUNG.

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(December 3—January 6.)

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