

Freedom

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NOTES.

Hunger May Stop the War.

Peace talk has been the all-important topic of the New Year, and, despite the new regulation regarding pacifist literature, the daily press has been allowed to express itself not only freely but forcibly. The Russian and German peace proposals, the declaration of war aims made by Mr. Lloyd George following hard upon the war aims memorandum of the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress (which undoubtedly helped to force the issue), and President Wilson's speech to Congress, have all helped to unmask the annexationist imperialist belligerents. Lip service was, of course, paid to the Russian formula of no forcible annexations and no indemnities, but unfortunately for the Governments concerned the mass of the people are at last getting not only impatient but highly critical. There is no longer the chance of disguising the fact that the peoples of Europe are hungry and restive. They have come to believe with the Russian Bolsheviks that force may not be the only weapon. As a writer in the *Nation* so aptly states, "Ideas are in the saddle and force will learn its limitations." For the incredible has happened, and a new dawn has drawn the eyes of the West to the Eastern horizon, and it may be that the peoples of all Europe will soon be liberated from the Frankenstein that has been oppressing them for so long. We are assuredly on the brink of important happenings, for it is now very certain that the ideals of the Russian Bolsheviks have penetrated to all corners of the globe and have compelled admiration and a desire to go and do likewise.

Secret Diplomacy Doomed.

The attack on secret diplomacy having been considerably strengthened by the publication of the Secret Treaties existing between the Allies has undoubtedly led to the doom of the old system of diplomatic relationships between States. To quote from the *Manchester Guardian* of January 4:

"What, it may be asked, is the mark of the old diplomacy? Its first principle is that foreign affairs are the affairs of diplomats, not of peoples. From that principle flowed as necessary consequences secrecy, the idea of world-relations as a balance of power, the tendency to treat lands and peoples as material for barter. If Brest Litovsk establishes itself as a precedent, all that is now in mortal agony. What is to replace it? . . . The business man would be the right kind of diplomat if the task of diplomacy was to conceive the world as so many markets for commercial exploitation. Is that the task of the new diplomacy? Assuredly not. It must look upon the world neither as a balance of rival Powers nor as a group of markets for competing industrial groups, but as a fellowship of human societies . . . pursuing the common labour of civilisation."

Let the Peoples Decide.

Yet another factor is the very embarrassing appeal of the Russians right over the heads of the German Government to the German people, and indeed to the people of all the belligerent nationalities, for even the capitalist press is discovering that the Russian Socialists stand for freedom in every State and not merely in their own. It is this fact that has led to a clear-cut issue between the exploited people in all countries and their respective Governments. The capitalist Governments veil their annexationist policies by talking about democracy and the freedom of small nations. But the uncompromising Bolsheviks have exposed this sham, and invited the peoples themselves to decide their own destinies and arrange the only just and equitable peace possible, that is, one founded upon the free self-expression of all nationalities and liberation from capitalist exploitation.

Marching Orders for the Cabinet.

As proof that even the wage-slaves of Britain are under the spell of new ideas, we have only to quote from the report of a meeting of Sheffield strikers engaged in munition works and held on January 4. The Chairman declared that "they had no quarrel with the workers of Germany or any in the known world, but it was up to them to set themselves to give the Government Departments and the War Cabinet marching orders." In a resolution which they subsequently passed, they "protested against a further comb-out being applied until the Government gives a guarantee of its intention not to continue the war longer than necessary to secure the policy laid down by their brother democrats in Russia." Thus do we get some indication of the breeze that is beginning to agitate all Europe.

Labour's Sectional Outlook.

The new man-power proposals have given rise to much heated discussion, both inside and outside Parliament. The large Unions have opposed the Bill, and are preparing to show fight, but the point they have apparently overlooked is that the present proposals are only the natural outcome of the Government's policy. In the beginning of the war certain promises were given to Labour, and were, of course, broken. The whole course of events has been as we predicted. Our masters were wise enough to "divide and conquer." Whereas if the workers had been class-conscious and had possessed a clear conception of their duty towards their own class, a stand might have been made when the war broke out, and we might thus have been spared the unthinkable horrors of the past few years. Even now the position might be saved by means of solidarity and united action. But the tragedy of the British workers appears to be the impossibility of looking beyond the very narrow confines of their own little craft unions. When they realise that every trade and industry is inter-dependent upon the other, then even the stolid English may begin to make history in this country.

C.O. Done to Death.

Yet another conscientious objector has been done to death in prison. At the inquest on Arthur Horton, who died from bronchial pneumonia in Shrewsbury Gaol, the usual evidence as to the harsh prison regime was given, and the usual indifference to the facts was displayed by the coroner. The jury appear to have been more sympathetic, for the foreman was anxious that "they should say something of the complaints alluded to," but the coroner replied, "That had nothing to do with that inquisition." This case, like the one previously reported, is remarkable in that it demonstrates the extreme law-abiding nature of the British. In marked contrast was the inquiry into the circumstances attending the death of Thomas Ashe, when the jury severely censured both the Dublin Castle officials and the Mountjoy prison authorities.

Meaning of Democracy.

Mr. Lloyd George's interpretation of democracy is an exceedingly quaint one, for it is apparent that when he uses that particular word he really means government. When replying to a question as to the desirability of holding an International Workers' Conference, which was put to him at the recent Trade Union Conference on "Man Power," he stated that it had "been a matter for discussion between various countries, and they came to the conclusion unanimously that in their judgment whatever negotiations are conducted must be conducted between the representatives of the Governments in each country. That is the view taken by President Wilson. . . . It was the view taken by the French democracy. Those two great Republics took that view, Italy took that view, and we took that view." So the whole matter is finally disposed of. The War Cabinet does not desire an International Socialist Conference, and therefore democracy does not desire it.

THE LABOURER'S SHARE.

(Conclusion.)

We have seen in the previous articles that the history of the labourer has been but a record of exploitation in all its most horrible forms. The "good old days" of the Anglo-Saxons saw the labourer a serf—despised and oppressed by his master. The coming of the Norman only introduced new legal forms that bound him more firmly to the soil. Then slowly through the ages, as a result of repeated revolts, we see a slight betterment in the lot of the peasant until the force of industrial evolution becomes too strong and he emerges a wage-slave, freed from the soil, it is true, but landless and forced to sell his labour for a miserable pittance.

In following thus the whole tragic history of Labour, one central fact stands out with prominence—that Labour (with one or two notable exceptions) has consistently lacked breadth of vision. The labourer's birthright has again and again been sold for a mess of pottage. Often in history he appears to have been on the threshold of great things and momentous changes, but has repeatedly sunk back again into his former condition. This has been made possible by the fact that the true meaning of private property has never been adequately grasped. For, as Kropotkin tells us in "Fields, Factories, and Workshops": "As long as society remains organised so as to permit the owners of the land and capital to appropriate for themselves, under the protection of the State and historical rights, the yearly surplus of human production, no such change can be thoroughly accomplished." The labourer has been but a pawn in the industrial scheme of things, a being often of less importance than the very beasts of the fields. Lowly in thoughts and aspirations, he has allowed himself to remain a relic of feudalism, with merely a bread-and-butter theory of life and a perplexed notion of some sort of compensating after-life.

The so-called industrial revolution in England which took place just after the middle of the eighteenth century was only focussed in his mind as an evil thing, for had not devil-made machinery displaced the labourer equally in the field as in the factory? To him all such labour-saving appliances were of an evil nature and a standing menace to his existence. The nightmare of a still barer existence confronting him, with always the vision of the poor-law overseer and a pauper's grave to haunt his waking hours, it is little wonder that his revolts should have been rather blind, unreasoned movements than organised attacks on the whole social structure.

No vision came to him of a free England where agriculture and industry would exist side by side, where the tiller of the field might also tend the loom, and in life's work gain happiness and harmony from the companionship of comrades. But if Labour lacked vision, so also did the plutocrats who haggled in the world's markets or sat in pompous state in the gilded chamber of the legislature. Their waggon was hitched to the star of profit, and all England—as indeed was all the world—but as so much land capable of yielding a golden harvest. Thus two opposing camps have always been apparent throughout history. On the one hand the rich, the smug, the respectable, and on the other hand the outcast, labouring poor. Yet Christianity sat in the seats of the mighty and made unholy compacts with the State, whereby the chains should remain on the exploited serfs. The French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars came, and only had the effect of prolonging the agony of Capitalism, which took to itself a new lease of life. Trade developed, workmen bartered with their employers through the medium of their Trade Unions, and thought themselves passing happy and rich when they secured a shilling increase on their weekly wages, forgetting always the enormous profits they had produced for their masters to spend.

But all the time capitalistic expansion had been approaching a severe check. Competitive industry, with its consequent over-production and chronic underfeeding and poverty, was nearing the crisis which fell upon the world in August, 1914. Men have spoken of it as a great catastrophe, as some unforeseen phenomenon instead of the inevitable result of the blind production of the nineteenth century, with its hunt for markets, its secret commercial treaties, its crises, and the final crash of arms between the rival imperialist annexationist Governments.

The result of war, and modern war at that, has brought no vision of happier things to the obedient labourer, ready as ever to shoulder a gun in defence of his master or his master's patch of earth. He has possessed the instinct of the faithful dog, and the British House of Commons, in a fit of rare generosity, has decreed he shall henceforth receive a wage of no less than 25s. weekly, the value of which is now something less than 12s. 6d. weekly at pre-war rates. The Whitley Reconstruction Committee sits and ponders the weighty question of the rebuilding of industry after the war, but which only spells the prolongation of the life of Capitalism. And the starving labourer sees the plenty of the

earth around him, and still does not heed the message, for the curse of work is still upon him and the exploiter's hand is in his pocket.

So the one vital fact emerges from all the welter of war that unless the labourers in town and country rise up to prevent it, industry and agriculture will be remodelled along the old Capitalist lines though on a more scientific basis, which will allow for greater speeding up of the individual worker. All the wise officials, the Labour leaders, reformers, and politicians, who exist in order to lead the workers along the path of so-called salvation, are at present hard at work trying to square the circle of Capitalism, so that it shall go on smoothly exploiting in the future as it has done in the past. But the myriad hands and brains that toil cannot, must not, help in the inglorious task of setting up the Capitalist humpty-dumpty again.

Let us unite co-operatively in an endeavour to build for ourselves, as Kropotkin puts it, "not those factories in which children lose all the appearance of children in the atmosphere of an industrial hell, but those airy and hygienic and consequently economical factories in which human life is of more account than machinery and the making of extra profits . . . factories and workshops into which men, women, and children will not be driven by hunger, but will be attracted by the desire of finding an activity suited to their tastes." The potentiality is within us, and the bounty of the earth lies very near our hand. It is ours for the taking, and when we have dared to break with the old traditions, shibboleths, and customs that have fettered us, the joy of life may indeed be ours, and the hated memory of the past years be but as an evil dream. Our deliverance lies solely in our own hands, and only ourselves can achieve it. Let us dare to act now, to join hands—workers in the field and the factory—in the fight for freedom and life. For behind us is the pledged word of the great British legislators promising 25s. weekly—before us lies life and liberty.

M.B.H.

TROTSKY ON THE "SACRED UNION"

The French Parliamentary Socialists have received a long telegram from Trotsky, the Bolshevik Foreign Minister, in reply to one from them protesting against a separate peace. In it he speaks of the extreme representatives of Russian Imperialism which the bourgeois Revolution of February last brought into power:

"These cavaliers of international brigandage were quite at home with the representatives of the Stock Exchanges of Paris, London, and New York. They sought to harness the Revolution with its passions and its hopes to the car of Allied militarism. That is why we declared on them implacable war. We made and we make no distinction in principle between the Imperialists of the Central Empires and those of the Allied countries. The attempt has been made to persuade us that the Allied countries are in a state of legitimate defence, and to draw the conclusion that the Allied Socialists are obliged to march hand in hand with the bourgeoisie and even Tsarism. That is the basis of the Sacred Union. But in the trenches on the other side the German and Austrian Governmental Socialists have also declared that their countries are in a state of legitimate defence, and have made the Sacred Union with their monarchists. Thus the proletariat of Europe has been sundered into two political camps. . . . The moment that the war broke out the powerful pressure of the bourgeoisie subjected to its influence the Parliamentary and opportunist leaders of the Labour movement. The international proletariat was long crushed and impotent. Three years of war have shown that no issue from the war is to be found in the war itself. . . . The Russian Socialists have sought an issue from the war by the way of Revolution. . . . Our aspiration is a general and democratic peace. We have shown that by our whole struggle, but such a peace can now be obtained only by an heroic attack of the proletariat of every country on its national bourgeoisie. The Sacred Union excludes the possibility of such conflict, and hands over the proletariat, bound hand and foot, to be a passive weapon at the disposal of the bourgeoisie."

This brilliant exposition of policy exactly coincides with that pursued by Anarchists since the outbreak of hostilities.

Equality creates an atmosphere which kills imitation and is pregnant with originality; for everyone acts out himself, having nothing to gain by imitating anyone else.—Edward Bellamy.

You cannot have the security of conventionality along with the self-respect of sincerity.—G. B. Shaw.

CORRESPONDENCE.

COMMUNISM.

(To the Editor of FREEDOM.)

Dear Comrade,—I read with great pleasure Henry Addis's article in January FREEDOM, and I agree with him when he says that Communism is a subject about which there is much confusion and misunderstanding. On this account I think it necessary to discuss it more fully in order to make it better known. In this way these discussions will be an opportunity for comrades who share the same ideas to become acquainted and perhaps allow them later on to work together. This is my principal reason for writing this letter. As "H.A." says, there are two kinds of Communism propagated to-day, hence the confusion of thought and the necessity to state that when we speak about Communism we mean Anarchist Communism, based on free association of producers and consumers; and that our first aim is the destruction of exploitation (not its amelioration). The description given by "H.A." of Anarchist Communist life was very good, but I take it for granted that many people, after reading this description, will regard it as a dream, a wonderful dream, as compared with our present life. Yes, it seems like a dream, and yet I am sure to those who long for more freedom the question often arises, "Why could not this dream become a reality?" Instead of spending our energies in theorising only, should we not try to materialise our ideals?

I believe there would be no confusion if we were truly convinced that freedom cannot be attained without a struggle, and that our greatest obstacle is a lack of self-confidence. This is why we remain dreaming all the time in our separate corners. With a beautiful ideal in our minds we are living a life full of self-contradiction, and we suffer the consequences because we feel how inconsistent we are. We Anarchists claim that exploitation is the evil of our present system, and yet we do not strive to free ourselves from it. It is not because we fail in imagination, but that we never dare to take the first step.

Since our controversy on this question I can see that some are afraid of being conquered by the money-making system, and this is so true that I have often heard people say: "Any attempt at Communism is doomed to failure because it will be obliged to compete with the Capitalist system." Does that mean that we shall be obliged to accumulate money as capitalists do? This idea comes from those who never had very strong convictions, and I am certain that those who understand Communism as "H.A." does are aware of this argument. Here is a more general mistake about Communism: Our ideals being high, we cannot tolerate the gradual evolution of our scheme; and, instead of applying all our activities and perseverance to accelerate its realisation, we simply say it is too difficult and go no further. This is the cause of our weakness. Therefore, let us have the courage to recognise our mistakes, let us determine to modify them, because we must not forget that those who are opposed to us are doing their utmost to strengthen their system. Our plan of future society does not trouble them so long as we only speak about it. There is indeed a long step between promise and fulfilment. Difficulties are inevitable, but if we have in our minds the temper without which the hint of a free life is a delusion, we ought to be able to entertain the conception of its possible realisation.—Yours for freedom,
MAURICE.

SYNDICALISM AND THE ANARCHIST WORKING-MAN.

(To the Editor of FREEDOM.)

DEAR COMRADE,—Belief in Anarchist-Communism is common to all classes. From among scientists, men of letters, professors, civil servants down (or up) through all the ranks of skilled and unskilled labour come these converts to the idea of a non-authoritarian form of society. Syndicalism, on the contrary, is essentially a working-class movement recruiting its converts exclusively from the ranks of the workers, and it is those Anarchists who come within the scope of this latter movement to whom this appeal is directed.

There are many of these purely working-class Anarchists up and down the country who are engaged in strenuous efforts to further the cause of Revolutionary Syndicalism, but there are others who stand aloof from this necessary work, and, where they are members of their respective Trade Unions, are so under protest. By virtue of *force majeure*.

Is this attitude a wise one? It is granted readily that the individual has a perfect right (theoretically) to order his own life in such manner as best suits himself, but as we have not yet reached that stage of social development wherein it is possible for

all to so order their lives, and as, on the contrary, we are as yet engaged in the battle to secure that state of affairs, is it not wiser that the individual discard for the time being his ultra-logical attitude of non-participation in all authoritarian movements in order to take part in this struggle which will, at least, mean one step towards a brighter era?

It will be urged that no true Anarchist would so far belie his ideals as to voluntarily submit himself to majority rule as exemplified in Trade Union organisation. If such a contention be sound then no Anarchist can logically take part in capitalist production; which he does every day he goes to the factory, shop or mine. Work is compulsory if one is to live. Membership of a Trade Union, in many cases (Miners' Federation, per example) is compulsory if one is to work. But one is always a passive resister to the force of economic conditions, and it, therefore, goes without saying that your earnest Anarchist should take up the same attitude toward compulsory membership of a Trade Union. In a minority, powerless to live his own life, he remains a passive resister from A to Z.

If there were nothing more in the Trade Union movement of this country than what appears on the surface; if the organised Labour movement was nothing but the futile reformist body the behaviour of its self-styled leaders has led many to believe, then such an attitude would, without doubt, be correct. The matter is, however, not to be so lightly dismissed. There has been for some time past a live agitation amongst the rank and file of most of the Unions in favour of a principle which can be best defined as decentralisation. This agitation, which has made immense strides during the war, is in most cases the work of Syndicalists working within their respective Unions, and it can safely be asserted that at the present moment a very healthy, virile feeling of revolt against the old standards is permeating the rank and file of the English Trade Union movement.

Syndicalism—revolutionary or not—is not Anarchism, but surely the Anarchist worker, who is perforce a member of the Union appertaining to his particular industry or craft, can see his way with a clear conscience to aiding in this struggle against central authority, and in helping to convert the present emasculated Trades Unionism into live fighting Syndicalism. And the Anarchist worker who is still outside the ranks of the Trade Unions, surely he, too, now can forego his vigorously logical attitude and line up amongst those who are strenuously engaged in attempting to persuade organised and unorganised Labour to take what is, at the very least, a step in the right direction.

At this juncture it is more than ever necessary that Anarchist comrades helped to swell the growing volume of Syndicalist agitation. And this in order to keep Syndicalism itself (that is the English variant) in the straight and narrow way. It has become the fashion of late for exponents of Revolutionary Industrial Unionism (Syndicalism) in this country to describe themselves as non-political. Non-political, instead of anti-political, is but one more expression of the British spirit of compromise, and, like all shuffling, is doomed to bring in its train reaction and disaster. The man who has not the courage of his convictions invariably comes to grief. The movement which falls away from its original ideals has within it the germs of ultimate failure.

An aggressive movement, such as Syndicalism, which, while aiming at aggression, seeks to label itself non-this or non-that, puts itself in the parlous position of being "neither fish, flesh, nor good red herring." To display timidity at the outset of a fight is a tactical error. This shirking of the downright anti-political attitude, and all that such an attitude infers, is nothing but timidity, and, therefore, an earnest of coming defeat. It is illogical. While boldly proclaiming itself anti-State it is merely non-political. An arrant contradiction if ever there was one.

In whatever terms one may stigmatise such behaviour, the fact remains that an increasing number of Syndicalists in this country are describing themselves as non-political, and it is necessary for Anarchist workers to link up with this movement, wherever possible, in order to combat this growing evil. They should fight inside the Union to bring it into line with the Syndicalist tendencies of the day, and they should, at the same time, fight inside the rank and file movement in order to keep it out of the shoaly waters of compromise. In short, fight to line up English Syndicalism with the Revolutionary Syndicalism of the Continent.

Such a movement as Revolutionary Syndicalism (which is the only purely Labour movement to hold out a definite promise of emancipation to the workers) is worth an effort to preserve, even though that effort on the part of the Anarchist may involve, nay, does involve a temporary denial of his most cherished ideals and principles.—Yours fraternally,

WILLIAM MAINWARING.

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"RECONSTRUCTION."

On all sides one hears that blessed word "Reconstruction," usually followed by "after the war," and many people are busily engaged in drafting schemes by which they hope to put society on a firm basis "when the boys come home." But if we examine these schemes carefully we find that what their authors are aiming at is to build stronger and better defences for Capitalism. Consider the situation. A devastating and murderous war has set many workers thinking, and the example of the Russian Revolutionists may be copied by other nations—even by the British. At some mass meetings of workers during recent months the word "Revolution" has been heard much more frequently than "Reconstruction," and now the food question is getting acute a dangerous position for the wealthy classes has arisen. What is to be done? A member of the Reconstruction Committee says: "The greatest problem the country has to face is how to make the industrial classes contented." So with that idea in their heads they are pushing what is known as the Whitley scheme for the formation of Industrial Councils, on which Labour and Capital will be equally represented, and by means of which the workers will co-operate with their masters in the fierce economic war which will be fought when the present war is ended. No longer will Labour be looked down upon, but seated at the Council tables with Capital it will be in a position to make its voice heard, and demand greater advantages than previous to the war. So the workers are told.

In reality, however, this scheme is a continuation of the methods adopted by the Government as soon as the war broke out. Having declared that it was a national war of defence, they said all classes must unite in carrying it to a successful issue, and on all—or nearly all—war bodies Labour men were found sitting side by side with the wealthy and ruling class. Dukes and millionaires, duchesses and titled ladies, all beamed on Labour leaders and their wives, who tried to forget that they had ever spoken of the "class war." This mingling of the classes was very satisfactory for our rulers, who found it an easy and cheap way of keeping the Labour men on their side in support of the war. The latter voted for all the war loans, and if they opposed the Military Service Acts and other measures it was only on points of detail, such as whether boys should be put in the Army at 18 or 19, or whether men were fit for the trenches at 41. No Labour leaders, whatever their age, were called up for the Army, though they had no hesitation in sending others into the trenches. No one saw these important officials going "over the top" in France.

Another feature of the Whitley scheme is that the Trade Unions are to act as disciplinary organisations in enforcing the rules and regulations of the Industrial Councils. It really aims at building up an Industrial Army to fight the economic war, greater production to pay off the war debts, and speeding up to be maintained at war level. The Munition Tribunals fined men and women for losing time or playing when they should have been working. This is to be carried on after the war by the Industrial Councils, Trade Union officials helping in the work.

And this precious scheme is called "Reconstruction." It is simply "reconstructing" new and stronger chains for the old ones. After the years of danger and misery in the trenches, fighting the "war for liberty," the men will come back to find, not more liberty, but more slavery. There is no gratitude in a ruling class. They consider it the workers' duty to work for them and fight for them. They have no belief in the union of classes, as if there were only one class there would be no rulers, no wealthy men, no privileged. The "sacred union" of all classes may be all right in fighting wars, but when it comes to industry the profits of the master class must be preserved at all hazards. During the Boer War the workers were told of the wonderful prosperity that would come to South Africa when the unprogressive Boer Governments were defeated, but as soon as the war was over Chinamen were introduced because they were much cheaper than Britishers, and "Tommy Atkins" found it more difficult than ever to get a job. Let profits be made though the heavens fall.

An honest reconstruction of our social system must be approached without regard to profits. Human happiness will never be possible while Capitalism exists. All the evils of present-day society can be traced, directly or indirectly, to government and the exploitation of man by man. Therefore if we would abolish these evils we must abolish their cause—Government and Capitalism. When these are abolished only voluntary co-operation remains. Industrial Councils, as proposed by the Whitley Commission, will only mean that those Labour men who sit with the employers will help to regulate the exploitation of the workers. Capitalists will select a privileged few from Trade Union ranks to help in the working of Capitalism. This has only to be put plainly before the workers for them to repudiate it and all those who are in favour of it. The coming struggle, therefore, will be fought out between those who support Capitalism and Government and those who would sweep them away, and all the evils they have brought in their train—wars and other abominations. There is no half-way house to Freedom. There can be no "good" Government or "good" Capitalism. They are rotten root and branch, and must be cleared away before a better society can take root.

Let the workers beware of all schemes of "reconstruction" put forward by their masters, who have only one object—to protect their profits. These schemes will look very nice on paper, they will promise many fine things to the workers, but they will be designed to throw dust in their eyes and to prevent those revolutionary changes which must take place if men and women are to be free. The war has shown to everyone the horror which Capitalism brings on the world in its fight for profit. All those who support it must be looked on as enemies of the people.

Edison on Education.

"It [peace] cannot come until the time arrives when the people, as a whole, are not exploited by capitalists and politicians. Religion has played a great part in the exploitation of the past; now we must be careful in the education of the present and the future to see to it that business does not falsely educate for its own interests, just as religion used to educate falsely for its own interests. Good education is the hope of the world, and the ambition of the best people in every country is to try to see to it that the masses in that country shall have an opportunity for the best of education. But education has been used as a lever of oppression and a cloak for deceit oftener than most of us realise.

"Here in the United States our whole commercial system is the result of bad economic education—not ignorance, mind you, but false education. Much of government elsewhere has meant exploitation, and the heads of Government in such cases have been trained as exploiters. When, to such governmental heads, it has seemed likely to be profitable to start a war, they have told the people to begin to fight, and the poor simpletons have done it."—*Observer*, December 10, 1915.

Of Equality—as if it harmed me, giving others the same chances and rights as myself—as if it were not indispensable to my own rights that others possess the same.—*Walt Whitman*.

Why should one be so poor-spirited as to think nothing of oneself?—*Dostoevsky*.

THE REAL REVOLUTION IN RUSSIA.

As we have so often insisted, the land question is the dominating question in Russia. After reading the telegrams from Petrograd and Moscow one would imagine that chaos was the sole result of the Revolution, and that soon the people would welcome back their old rulers to put things straight and drive Lenin and Trotsky away, even if they did not hang them. But as a matter of fact, outside of the few great cities the peasantry are working out their revolution in a way that will do more harm to Capitalism than a hundred successful military victories. Russia is an agricultural country, and the peasants outnumber the factory workers by about fifty to one. Therefore, the possession or free use of the land is the most vital question. This was shown as soon as the Revolution took place, when hundreds of thousands of peasant soldiers deserted and went back to their native villages to seize the land. All the decrees and threats of the Provisional Government were useless. The peasantry had looked forward to this day and were determined not to miss the opportunity to free themselves of their landlord oppressors. How well they have succeeded is shown by Mr. M. Philips Price in a splendid series of articles which appeared in the *Manchester Guardian* in December. He deals specially with the situation in the province of Samara, which he says may be taken as typical of South-eastern Russia and the Lower Volga, where the production and export of corn to the northern and western manufacturing areas is the main industry.

Mr. Price describes how the Provisional Government (formed at the outbreak of the Revolution) tried to prevent the land question being settled as the peasants desired. The Cadets, the middle-class political party, are known to be in close association with Russian and foreign financial interests which look upon the land of Russia as a profitable undeveloped area of the earth's surface. Since the Revolution some of the landlords tried to sell their lands to foreign banks, so as to get international assistance against expropriation; but Chernof, the Minister of Agriculture, in spite of the opposition of the Cadets, passed a law prohibiting the sales of land. What happened in Petrograd, however, made little difference, for the peasants took the law into their own hands. "The expropriation of the landlords and the division of the land on a communal basis has been accomplished, and only awaits legal sanction. If this is not given, then, all the same, the land will remain divided as it is. The peasants, tired by delay, have presented the Government with an accomplished fact, and they know that the armed forces of the country, which are their own sons, will be on their side." It makes little difference now who triumphs in Petrograd as far as this part of Russia is concerned. All the local bodies elected under the old Tsarist regime have ceased to exist, the new organisations being termed the Council of Peasant Deputies. Mr. Price gives the following interesting description of the Council and of the political opinions of its members:—

The C.P.D. has gathered around it the rural democracy. In it is included 99 per cent. of the politically conscious peasantry, all the soldiers of the garrisons of the neighbouring towns (themselves the sons of peasants), and a few intellectuals. In the absence of urban factory workers it is clear that Marxist ideas are not widespread in the C.P.D. The chief interest of the members is in the expropriation of the landlords and dividing the land. Therefore the Socialist Revolutionary party is predominant in the C.P.D. The policy of the latter differs from that of the Marxist Social Democrats in the question of land division. The Marxists stand for State nationalisation, the capitalisation of the agricultural industry, and the proletarianisation of the peasantry. The Socialist Revolutionary party, on the other hand, see the rich possibilities for social experiment in the Russian peasant, just freed from mediæval serfdom and untainted with Western industrialism. They hope to utilise his native instinct for creating communal institutions, to modernise the latter, and so to lead up to a system in which the land is socialised by the local communes. The peasant, they say, must not be the wage-slave even of the State, as the Social Democrats want; nor a proprietor, as the Cadets want, but a member of a social unit with a right to work an area of

land and to reap the products of his labour upon it. To the social unit should belong the land, but to the peasant the products of the land. In order to meet the modern necessity for working industries on a large scale the Socialist Revolutionaries would make use of the agricultural co-operative movement.

But if the Socialist Revolutionaries who inspire the C.P.D. in the villages and the Social Democrats who inspire the C.W.S.D. in the towns differ on land distribution and the future of the agricultural industry, they are nevertheless united in their determination once and for all to abolish landlordism and the rights of private property. "The land comes from God, and can belong to no one," is an old Russian saying, and it correctly expresses the spirit of the peasant. The revolutionary democracy therefore in town and country presents a solid front to the Cadets, who talk about the sacredness of property and try to represent the Russian peasant as developing into a type like the British farmer or the French small proprietor. With this great mass of revolutionary opinion solid against private ownership it is certain that whatever else may happen the Russian landlord will become a thing of the past.

This result of the Russian Revolution gives it its enormous importance and explains why the foreign Press is so bitter in its attacks on everything Russian just now. They fear the spread of these ideas, and this fear may do more than anything else to bring the war to an end, as unless combated at once it means the doom of capitalism. Unless the workers of other countries fight their oppressors in the same way, a League of Governments (allies and their enemies) will be formed to stop the revolutionary wave. The way to help our Russian comrades is to follow their example in every country. Why not make a start in Great Britain?

Anarchism in a Nutshell.

The State is a mutual assurance company comprising the ruling classes—landowners, capitalists, high officials, and clergy; government is the directorate or executive committee of this association, whose object is to secure to its members their domination over the mass of the people, and the exploitation of its necessities for their aggrandisement. Even supposing that the State could be reorganised according to the theories of Social Democracy (Parliamentary Socialism), the most that could result would be the substitution of majority rule for minority rule; the one is just as much tyranny as the other. For my part, with Byron,

"I'd have mankind be free
As much from mobs as kings, from you as me."

The ideal of Anarchist Communism (Free Socialism) embraces complete individual liberty, the regulation by each of his own life, free association with his fellows in accordance with his own tastes and aptitudes, and recognition of the right of all to the world's wealth, to be used by each according to his needs and capacities. The Anarchist does not believe in Government nor Legality, therefore he cannot consistently advocate the capture of governmental power by the vote; neither is he so foolish as to hope to do so through the means of "constitutional" methods adopted and adapted by his enemies in order to perpetuate their baneful influence under hypocritical forms. Numbers, on which alone an election depends, constitute only one, and that by no means the most important, factor of success in any other kind of contest; ten brave men can overcome twenty cowards, a man of conviction is worth a dozen waverers, and a few intelligent men can outwit the stupidity of a crowd. Anarchists need not wait to convert a voting majority, but will assert their claims as soon as they feel strong enough; temporary or partial failures will not affect their determination, and the numerical force necessary will be in inverse proportion to its energy and enthusiasm.

H. GLASSE.

The Poet's Prophecy.

A brighter morn awaits the human day
When every transfer of earth's natural gifts
Shall be a commerce of good words and works;
When poverty and wealth, the thirst of fame,
The fear of infamy, disease, and woe,
War with its million horrors, and fierce hell,
Shall live but in the memory of Time,
Who, like a penitent libertine, shall start,
Look back, and shudder at his younger years.

—Shelley.

NEWS AND COMMENTS.

An old comrade, Mat. Kavanagh, who has done good propaganda work for the movement in Liverpool and elsewhere, has been arrested as an absentee and handed over to the military. The police described him in court as a Sinn Feiner, and said that he had "expressed himself as decidedly pro-German." Mat. says he is over age, but the magistrate in handing him over said the onus of proof was upon him.

A humorous incident in the courts is thus described by the *Star*: "Gentle Anarchist.—A Russian who appealed to the Tribunal on conscientious grounds said that he belonged to an Anarchist organisation in Russia, but had left that country to avoid military service. A member: But you know that part of the Anarchist creed is to use force and throw bombs. Appeal dismissed." Evidently we shall have to revise our literature.

The association of violence with Anarchists is an idea that suffers severely from Anno Domini; but now and again it crops up. The latest example comes from Barcelona (where all the Anarchists are born) and refers to a bomb exploding in one of the public highways. The police immediately arrested two ironworkers, "but," adds the press report somewhat inconsequentially, "they are not known to the police as Anarchists."

The baneful influence of Anarchism is held to account for a good many things. Charged at Bow Street with having contravened D.O.R.A., Anna Melk, of Dutch nationality, denied having attended meetings of Anarchists. She nevertheless got three months and a recommendation of expulsion.

A brief telegram announces that the appeal of our American comrades, Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman, has failed. They were sentenced, as we stated at the time, to two years' imprisonment and fined 10,000 dollars (£2,000) each for anti-conscription agitation. This brutal sentence was expected to be reduced on appeal, but our two comrades are to feel the full effects of the law. The American Ambassador at Petrograd reports that a group of Russian Anarchists have warned him that he will be held personally responsible for the safety of these two comrades.

In the United States the Postmaster-General has the power to refuse to carry newspapers at the cheap rate (1d. per pound), or even to refuse to carry them at all, if he thinks them not respectable. Since the U.S.A. came into the war almost every paper opposed to the war has been stifled in this way. *The Masses*, however, brought their case before a Judge, who decided that the Postmaster-General (Burleson) had not shown sufficient evidence that *The Masses* was treasonable. But Burleson still refused the paper the use of the mails on the ground that its publication had not been continuous (one number having been refused by him). Now the staff of the paper are being prosecuted for publishing treasonable and seditious matter. "Dora" might learn new tricks from Burleson.

The Industrial Workers of the World in the States are coming in for it like mustard seed. Whatever our opinions may be on the methods and principles of this organisation, it must be admitted that it has shown remarkable fighting powers in the real war—the war of the Have-nots against the Haves. The organisation is at present practically without a home, and there is a Scotland Yard touch in the following description of a raid on a "local" in Omaha:

"The Federal authorities found a veritable arsenal of weapons concealed in various parts of the house—to wit, a multitude of I.W.W. song-books, which anyone knows are as deadly weapons as the submarine; a lot of I.W.W. papers far more murderous than machine-guns; hundreds of pamphlets, any one of which would kill a person at sight; two typewriters, either of which could stand off an army; and last, but not least, by jemmying open the safe, the long-sought-for evidence was discovered—German gold! Seventy dollars!"

William D. Haywood and about 150 other Industrial Worker "big guns" are at present jailed in various districts, some being held "incommunicado"; one of their attorneys, who has been connected with their organisation for years is "missing," and his whereabouts cannot be traced; masked men are alleged to have spirited away and horsewhipped Dr. Herbert S. Bigelow, of Kentucky; Professor Scott Nearing was fined fifty-two dollars for reading a series of extracts from a book called "The New Freedom," in Minnesota. The author of the said book is one Woodrow Wilson. The above is a fair sample of what is

going on in the happy land which is determined to "make the world safe for democracy."

In the Broken Hill district, where strikes and persecutions and a good simulation of the brutally naked capitalist war as waged in the United States, have been taking place during the Hughes administration, a "bomb outrage" has been discovered. It appears that a bomb placed in the doorway of the *Barrier Miner* newspaper office exploded at midnight (fatal hour!) Considerable damage was done. Apparently no Anarchists were handy to put the blame on, so, as Reuter puts it, "The Independent Workers of the World are suspected."

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