

Freedom

VOL. XXXII.—No. 354..

NOVEMBER, 1918.

MONTHLY : TWO PENCE.

NOTES.

The End of Their War.

The military result of the war is now certain—Allied militarism has defeated German militarism. At the moment of writing, we are unaware of the terms upon which an armistice will be granted to Germany; but even if the new German Government refuses the terms, it will but prolong the agony for a few weeks or months. The terms of the armistice with Austria show the spirit of the conqueror, and the cry *Vae victis!* (Woe to the vanquished!) can be applied to Germany. The Peace Conference—if undisturbed by revolution—will decide how the peoples of the earth can be divided into convenient areas for exploitation by the conquerors. That was the real reason for the war—that is all it will decide. Now let us get on with *our* war!

The Coming General Election.

The political jugglers of the Coalition Government at last seem to have made up their minds that the present is an opportune moment for a General Election, so we shall probably be overwhelmed by election addresses and speeches this month, followed by the counting of noses later on. The party papers hint mysteriously of overtures between Asquith and Lloyd George for a reconciliation, but the Prime Minister knows when to cut old friends, and the proposed deal is off. Therefore the Coalition will appeal to the electors as the Saviours of Civilisation, and the only ones able to draw up a new map of Europe—not forgetting Asia and Africa. With the collapse of the enemy everywhere, the patriotic people will be dazzled with victory, and we may look forward to the return to office of Lloyd George and his supporters. The Labour Party and the I.L.P. expected to get many votes in Scotland and the North with the cry of "Peace by Negotiation," but with an armistice on all fronts that cry will be of no use, and they will find they have been dished by the little Welshman. Considering the awful state of Europe at the present moment every man and woman with a grain of pity for suffering humanity will do what lies in their power to prevent such horrors ever happening again; but these men and women will find their work lies outside Parliaments, which in the past have always supported the military and commercial adventures of the ruling class. Twenty million dead or disabled men is the price the world has paid for the rule of Capitalism, which is the rule and exploitation of man by man. We wish to sweep away this horrible system entirely. As Parliaments are part of this system they must go with it; and no Anarchist or true revolutionist will support any candidate, however revolutionary may be his election promises. Let us abolish, not change, our rulers.

An International Police Force.

Viscount Grey's outline of the League of Nations was interesting mainly for one thing—his suggested formation of an International Police Force "which should act as the police act in individual countries." Well, we find that the police—all police—act as the watch-dogs and protectors of private property and Capitalism. And that is the part they will play in this new force. The League of Nations will be formed by those in authority in each country at the present moment, and the International Police will be used to protect their interests. It will be a compact mobile body of men armed with all those beautiful weapons discovered or invented during the present war—liquid fire, poison gas, and similar civilising devices—and as soon as the capitalists' interests are endangered by a revolutionary outbreak it will be sent to the spot to act in the name of "law and order." The idea is not new, for we see it at work in Russia to-day. The Allies realised their financial interests were at stake as the Bolsheviks had repudiated the loans raised by the Tsar, so troops from all the Allied countries have penetrated Russia at Vladivostok and Archangel, and are working with Russian capitalists and military reactionaries in an attempt to upset the Bolshevik Government, hoping thereby to restore Capitalism and private property in land. Viscount Grey also suggests that the making of armaments and munitions should be in the hands of the Governments only. So now we see the

game. When the war is over the workers (at present called "heroes") are to be disarmed once more, and will be kept in order as wage slaves by the International Police, who can be drafted quickly from place to place by means of thousands of aeroplanes and submarine chasers. Some years ago H. G. Wells wrote a book, "The Sleeper Awakes," in which this idea is worked out. Those who have read it will remember how the "Black Police," who had just previously drenched the streets of Paris with the blood of revolutionists, were brought to London in immense airships to stifle the rebellion amongst the slaves. This is Viscount Grey's plan. But we would like to know why he speaks of "every Government in the League of Nations representing a free people." A slight mistake—just a slip of the tongue, perhaps.

Small Arms and Large Profits.

The report of the annual meeting of the Birmingham Small Arms Company on October 9 has many interesting features. The chairman announced that the profits for the year were £435,200, an increase of £7,000 on the previous year; but as the reserve fund had been enormously increased, and as he stated the reserves were really the accumulation of undivided profits, it is evident that the profits for the year were much more than the paltry £435,200 stated by the chairman. These companies are very modest when the question of profits arises nowadays. However, the shareholders, in addition to their dividends, are to have a nice little block of 1,150,473 new shares of £1 each given to them. This will help to hide the amount of dividend in future years if the employees asks for higher wages. But the company has a very nice argument against an increase of wages, for it seems that many of the employees pay their savings into the bank through branches established at the works, and according to the deputy chairman they have saved half a million; and it was obvious, he said, that "the total amount in excess of what might be termed a necessary living wage was very considerable." What simpletons these workers are! The blessings of thrift! The more you save the less wages you get. With such simple workers as these to deal with we are quite prepared to believe the chairman when he said that "their relations with all classes of the employees at their works continued to be good." No Bolsheviks there! But in case any miracles should happen in that respect the employers were ready with another trump card. "The influence of the National Alliance of Employers and Employed was rapidly extending, and they believed it would form the best protection against any possible spread of the revolutionary spirit which existed among a minority of the workers of the country." And the shareholders of the B.S.A. were so pleased with the directors that they re-elected them for another year.

Regulation 40D.

This Regulation under the Defence of the Realm Act is the worst that Act has brought forward. On the complaint of any soldier or sailor a woman can be charged with infecting him with venereal disease, and to prove her innocence she is practically compelled to undergo a medical examination. Over half the charges under the Act have been proved false, but the woman has no compensation against the soldier or sailor who lodges the charge. With the usual partiality of sex regulations soldiers or sailors who infect women are not liable to prosecution. We do not mean to suggest that if they were liable the regulation would be less obnoxious. It is a typical product of the official military mind, which regards soldiers and their women associates as being on a lower level than themselves and devoid of any feelings worthy of recognition. When recruits are examined for the Army or Navy they are compelled to strip naked and perform various antics to prove their physical fitness, and the military mind argues that if men submit to these indignities why should women object? The truth is that men and women are lacking in that sense of human dignity which would deny the right of any person to make compulsory examinations of their bodies. Anarchists maintain that every man and woman should have absolute control of their own bodies; when they recognise this claim many things besides the filthy Regulation 40D will be swept away.

SOCIAL REVOLUTION IN RUSSIA.

The Russian Revolution has afforded us several striking opportunities lately of judging the mentality of capitalist politicians and their Labour hangers-on. The Soviets have rendered an immense service to the better order of things which we can hear already knocking at the door throughout the whole of Europe by the capture and publication in their papers of various documents found in the State archives and at the offices of the various Entente officials. Amongst the letters seized and recently published was one written by the French Attaché, René Marchand, to President Poincaré on September 4. It seems he is also the Russian correspondent of the *Figaro*, a keen anti-Bolshevik, and a believer in intervention to fight the Germans. He reports a meeting he attended at the U.S.A. Consulate towards the end of August, at which the American Consul General, the French Consul General, and other Allied agents were present, and says he there learnt that an English agent (not an "Anarchist" or revolutionist of any school, but a firm supporter of "law and order" when it helps to maintain capitalist objects) had been making preparations for the destruction of the railway bridge over the Molchov river near Svanka, so as to cut off the food supply of Petrograd. It is along this line all its corn comes. A French agent explained that he had already tried to blow up the Tscherepovezer bridge with the same object. The discussion continued on plans for the destruction of various railway lines. One agent said he had bribed some railwaymen, but they would only agree to help in wrecking trains loaded with ammunition, and they might prevent destruction on a large scale. M. Marchand was convinced that it was not a case merely of isolated action initiated by a few individual agents. He comments on these plans that they would only hand Petrograd over to the inhuman agonies of starvation, which would fall almost entirely on the poorer and middle classes, since the well-to-do will always find means of getting to the Ukraine or abroad. He urges that the Entente have recently allowed themselves to be led away into the struggle against Bolshevism exclusively, and are engaged in affairs which are of no use whatever so far as the interests of the Entente are concerned, and which can lead to no other result than needlessly to enhance the sufferings and desperation of all classes of Russian society without exception, to increase anarchy, and accentuate famine and class war. He reports his annoyance at not finding one word said about fighting the Germans. He goes on to say Bolshevism is not the artificial Government of a few big towns, but has the support of the masses in the whole of Russia; the power of the Soviet Government grows in proportion as it is more violently assaulted, the more that it finds itself forced to increase its energy tenfold to avoid the dangers of anarchy. In such wise that the Soviet Government is raising itself to the level of a Government absolutely revolutionary—not anarchic nor impotent—but "revolutionary in the highest sense of the word."

Our capitalist and Government controlled press has also been publishing lately descriptions of a lot of ridiculous documents previously published by the American Government, which are intended to prove that Lenin, Trotsky, and other prominent Bolsheviks have all along been in the pay and acting under the instructions of the German Government. These Government officials, as well as the editors of the papers who have inserted them, evidently have a very low opinion of the general standard of intelligence of their readers.

It is reported from Moscow that Colonel Robins, the representative of the American Red Cross in Russia, warned Radek (one of the Soviet commissaries) last March, that a Mr. Sissons had bought from the counter-revolutionists for the price of 100,000 roubles certain documents that gave Colonel Robins the impression that they came from a lunatic asylum. He also told Ransome, of the *Daily News*. Some days after Colonel Robins was laughing about it amongst his acquaintances saying that Sissons had at a dead loss paid 100,000 roubles for rubbish that he could now get for a penny, as they were then being published by the *Petit Parisien* in Paris. But they were shown to be such clumsy forgeries that no further publication of them took place, and the whole "disclosure" fell very flat. However, Sissons was not prepared to cut his losses, and he telegraphed these documents in March to President Wilson, and it seems the American Government bought them. But until lately they had not dared to publish them. Recently they seem to have thought the political situation was suitable for their publication, and so they have gone the round of the jingo and capitalist press in America and here. When the Soviet published details about the counter-revolutionary plot that the English Consul, Lockhart, and his staff were working on, it appeared arrangements were made that when these plots had succeeded a series of forged documents should be published that it would be announced were found in the Soviet offices after their overthrow. It seems so much work had been expended on

the manufacture of these forgeries that our rulers thought it would be a pity it should all be lost, and they trusted to the ignorance and stupidity of people to swallow them.

The *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* for September 30, in the course of an article commenting on these documents, said: "But in spite of the unfortunate experiences connected with the earlier revelations, not enough has been learnt for the production of really misleading and plausible bits of work. Documents, circulars, decrees are found which people with even the most superficial knowledge of German affairs would at once perceive had been forged by an amateur. However, we venture to hope that the author of these archives will have attained greater skill before his next forgeries, for our barbarism does not prevent us from feeling sincere sympathy with him in his exposure as a laughing stock."

The Scandinavian paper *Politiken* on September 12, commenting on these and other Entente actions in Russia, said: "It is a dastardly drama which the Allied States enact in these days on the Russian stage. They have boasted of their humane, democratic, freedom-loving ideals. For these sacred ideals they sacrifice life and blood. In Russia they mock and insult their ideals. Their deadliest enemy could not besmirch them more than they do. Their action towards Russia is the worst possible crime against all that should be held precious by a democratic State."

But, of course, this is the opinion of neutrals. Here in England, as in other Allied countries, the capitalist and jingo Governments that do these things are supported by, and partly composed of, Parliamentary Socialist and Labour members. Yet even amongst them one is hardly likely to find anything more shameful than the action of Colonel John Ward, the Labour M.P. for Stoke. He has recently been throwing all his energies on behalf of jingoism and capitalism, with the assistance of the soldiers under his orders (can they really be English navvies or wage earners of any kind?), into killing and wounding Russian peasants and workmen, who are succeeding in establishing the first Soviet Socialist Republic. He is reported to have been successful, with the war machines in use to-day, in helping the Japanese to kill a number of these Socialists on the Ussuri front, and on October 16 he is to be found at this evidently congenial work at Zeme in mid Siberia, where the railwaymen were on strike and refused to work the lines for the invaders. He took possession of the town, arrested the leaders, and announced that every striker not at work the next morning would be court-martialled. During the night his troops occupied all workshops and public buildings, and drove men to work with his bayonets. These seem to be the folk the Entente are so anxious to save from the tyranny of their own elected Soviets. This was done not by a Hun or a Prussian militarist or a capitalist boss, but by a Parliamentary representative of British Labour. And yet even the *Herald* expects well-meaning people, instead of exerting themselves to found Soviets, should concern themselves about subscriptions to some precious Election Fund for this Labour Party. It would no doubt be a pity if John Ward and several of his colleagues who support these villainies were lynched wherever they showed their faces amongst workmen in any part of the world. But no doubt thoughtful working men and women everywhere will treat them with the scorn they merit.

The *Chicago Daily News* has recently issued as a pamphlet some of the cables sent by its Russian correspondent Mr. L. E. Browne, an anti-Bolshevik. He throws an interesting light on the little nests of conspirators that the Allied diplomatic and military missions in Russia were. These men, of course, failing to understand the real situation, acted on their general prejudices and made a regular muddle of the matter so far as their particular aims were concerned, whilst the influence and power of the Soviets steadily grew. He says the American Red Cross Mission in Russia became almost entirely a political body, intriguing with capitalists, militarists, and other reactionists to put down the Soviets. They evidently played a prominent part in the Kerensky-Korniloff plot to "down the Soviets" and secure Russian raw materials and trade for Allied capitalists. A tentative economic agreement was made to secure for American profiteers platinum and other metals, beet seed, flax, and hides in exchange for certain foodstuffs. After this plot hopelessly failed the Americans grasped the fact that the Soviets were too strong for a frontal attack, so they endeavoured to make friends with the Soviets in the hope of toning them down, but found in the end they were dealing with different material from the average Labour M.P.

They wanted to show to the Russian masses the fatuity of the Soviet programme—peace for the soldier, land to the peasants, factories to the workmen, bread for all—and to prove to them that the Hun was their only enemy. They applied to the American Government for one million dollars immediately and three millions a month for an indefinite time. Elihu Root had previously recommended ten millions for publicity. "Every dollar we spend in Russia now will return a hundredfold from foreign trade. Russia

is the world's largest market." They were quite up-to-date advertising hustlers. They began to work through a section of the Socialist Revolutionists, and laid plans for lecturing tours through the armies and villages by thousands of speakers with all the latest advertising devices, the broadcast distribution of millions of pamphlets, posters, placards, coloured cartoons, etc., etc. The American Government, instead of sending the money, sent a commission from their Public Information Committee, apparently as stupid and futile an organisation as the British Government's Propaganda Department, and they spent a lot of money in the usual senseless ways and with the usual lack of results.

Mr. Browne says Lockhart, the British Consul, made friends with the Soviet officials and was trusted by them until they found out on September 2 that he was organising a conspiracy to bribe Soviet troops to seize the State Bank, central telephone exchange and telegraphs, arrest the People's Commissaries, and proclaim a military dictatorship, after which they were to discover and publish a forged secret correspondence with the German Government and forged treaties, to discredit the Soviet officials, and enable them to renew the war with Germany. An order was to have been issued prohibiting on pain of death the holding of meetings until the arrival of the British military force. Some American troops were to help this by coming to aid in the removal of Soviet ammunition from Petrograd "to save it from falling into the hands of the Germans."

He gives several details of the Kerensky régime. The food difficulty was partly due to the fact that manufactured articles rose ten or twelve times their previous price, whilst food prices were kept at three times their usual amount, so that peasants refused to change their products for money; they would only barter them for absolute necessities, and stored the remainder. Kerensky, Korniloff, and the Americans arranged to deal with this position by appointing as Food Controller M. Batolin, a notorious profiteer, who, born in a peasant's hut, had made a huge fortune by speculations in wheat.

As to the Kerensky-Korniloff plot, he says: "As a *coup d'état* a more miserable fiasco was never seen. The movement was crushed in 24 hours. Everything went wrong. But the failure was no mystery. It was the Soviet, which, learning of the plot, sprang into activity, showing unsuspected depths of organisation. This was not accidental. It was the culmination of weeks of untiring and skilful leadership."

The peasant soldiers' views on the war that he quotes were true and to the point. They said: "We have our villages on the Volga. There is land enough for all. Why should we take Constantinople? It does not belong to us and we do not want it. Why should we fight our German brother who is forced to fight by his Kaiser war lord just as the Tsar forced us to fight? We have overthrown our oppressor. We will tell them how it was done. They will overthrow their Kaiser, and we will live happily side by side, two great peoples enjoying full freedom."

Mr. Browne says: "The Soviet organisation extends deep into Russian life. Literally the Soviet means a village council. Thus the modern Russian Soviet's origin is the ancient village Mir. The Bolsheviks perfected the organisation of a central clearing house for these thousands of Soviets. They used this organisation to spread their propaganda and won over to their point of view 95 per cent. of the soldiers and 80 per cent. of the peasant masses. They swept the country completely, coming to dominate the national organisation of the village Soviets. We find in Russia to-day the beginnings of an extensive democratic culture. The spirit of democracy extends deep in Russian life. It is intensely radical—almost unloveably so—but this democratic culture will automatically adjust itself to conditions as it grows older."

"There were rumours that German war prisoners in Siberia were arming themselves with the object of seizing the Trans-Siberian railroad. This was disproved by a special American and British Committee of Investigation. During the German drive on the Western front the Japanese (whose capitalists want various mining districts) suggested that an invasion of Siberia might cause a diversion of German troops from that front. Any sane military judgment would disprove this theory, yet the Franco-British General Staff requested General Pershing to use his influence in Washington to bring about the plan suggested."

These are the type of people and these are the kind of brains who are to regulate the terms for a sane and just armistice and start negotiations for a wise peace that is to usher in some mild version of the millennium according to the ideas of some rather simple souls.

But when we turn to the Soviets and their doings we seem to get into quite a different atmosphere, an altogether saner and nobler world. Whilst our politicians and reformers are talking around timid proposals for Home Rule in Ireland or India, and not even that for Egypt, the Soviets as soon as they came into power promptly informed their Asiatic neighbours that they renounced all claim to domination, all secret agreements, they

at once withdrew their troops and military instructors from Persia, informed China they renounced the annexations in Manchuria, and were re-establishing the sovereign rights of China in the territory through which the Eastern Chinese Railway runs, the property of the Chinese and Russian peoples. All military guards were at once recalled from their Consulates. They renounced the immunity of Russian citizens from local jurisdiction in China, Mongolia, and Persia, and renounced all contributions, only expressing the wish that these millions of the people's money should be expended on the educational development of the masses and on efforts to bring about an understanding between the democracies of Eastern countries and Russia.

The Soviet reports: "The events in Russia found an echo first of all among our Asiatic neighbours. The great upheaval awakened in them aspirations for a new and free life. This fact could not be concealed from us even by the official representatives of the capitalist Governments."

A Soviet movement is going on in Persia.

One of the leaders of the revolutionary movement in South China, the party which has repudiated the alliance made for predatory ends between Chinese and Japanese Imperialist Governments, said: "The fact that a Socialist Republic has existed in Russia for three months gives the peoples of the East confidence in the possibility of establishing in their own countries a similar stable form of Government." It is evidently having an effect also in Japan, where we hear of Socialist parties actively at work in spite of severe repressive measures by the Japanese capitalist Government, where the military censorship carefully suppresses all Soviet news from Russia, but works heartily with the counter-revolutionary refugees who have gone there.

The Soviets are reported to have sent the following Note to President Wilson on October 24: "As a condition for an armistice during which peace negotiations shall be begun you have in your Note to Germany demanded the evacuation of the occupied territories. We are ready, Herr President, to conclude an armistice on this condition, and request you to inform us when you intend to withdraw your troops from Murmansk, Archangel, and Siberia."

The *Times* admitted the other day that the Soviet rule was extending, and that nothing else could last a week after the Germans left the Ukraine, and that already Soviet propaganda has resulted in German soldiers going over *en masse* to the Bolsheviks, whilst there are evidently Soviet movements going on in Bulgaria, Roumania, Croatia and other parts of Austria, and in Germany. Even the official Parliamentary Socialist Parties in all countries but England and America are being steadily driven more and more towards the Left (revolutionary and freer ideas). All of which is alarming for the capitalist Governments on both sides of this disgraceful war.

It is understood some amongst them have been working out definite schemes which will result in finding Europe in the occupation of International troops when the war ends, so that thus they hope universal Social Revolution may be staved off yet awhile.

But a wave of revolutionary ideas seems to be spreading around the world, and the near future is looking particularly bright for all who want to see not a League of Capitalist Governments, but everywhere free men possessing "Health and Joy and Love and Beauty" living a "glad and free creative life" in a Free World.

F.C.C.

WHILE FORTUNES GROW.

The *British Medical Journal* says that between January 1 and August 31 this year the National Service Medical Boards examined 2,080,709 men, of whom not more than 36 or 37 per cent. were placed in Grade I.; that is, approximately, only one in every three had attained the normal standard of health and strength and was capable of enduring physical exertion suitable to his age. The men examined constituted a fair sample of the male population between the ages of 18 and 43, and a smaller proportion of the more fit between 43 and 51. The *British Medical Journal* points out that the ravages of industrial life, coupled with too little food, too long hours, too little sleep, too little fresh air, too little play, and too little comfort in the home are the chief factors concerned.

The same story comes to us from the United States. According to the *People's College News* for July, "when recently the Navy called for 106,392 young men, 70 in every 100 of those that did apply were rejected as physically unfit for service. A few months ago only 44 in 100 of the 1,300,000 candidates for the Army were admitted, 56 per cent. being rejected as physically unfit." It is estimated that there are in the United States 5,000,000 men between 21 and 31 years of age who are physically unfit for the Army or the Navy.

These are the fruits of Capitalism!

Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

Monthly, Twopence; post-free, 2½d. Annual Subscription, post-free, 2s. 6d.

Wholesale price, 1s. 6d. per dozen (13) post-free in the United Kingdom.

All communications, exchanges, etc., to be addressed to

FREEDOM PRESS, 127, Ossulston Street, N.W. 1.

The Editors are not necessarily in agreement with signed articles

Notice to Subscribers.—If there is a blue mark against this notice, your subscription is due, and must be sent before next month to ensure receipt of paper.

Money and Postal Orders to be made payable to **FREEDOM PRESS.**

THE FEAR OF REVOLUTION.

“Who listens hears the mutterings of Fate!”

—*Voltairine De Cleyre.*

Lord Milner, in the interview published on October 17, in the *Evening Standard*, said: “We do not wish to see Bolshevism and chaos rampant there” (in Germany). In this remark he summed up the fear of Revolution, which at the present moment is preventing the real enjoyment of their victories by the Allied Governments. From Japan to the North Sea the rumblings of Revolution may be heard, and Capitalism everywhere is wondering whether this is the beginning of the end. The inspiring example of the Russian workers and peasants is being followed by the disinherited and disillusioned workers in every country, and in a few weeks the bayonets of Allied troops may be called on to prop up the tottering Governments of Europe and Asia. The Peace Conference may draw up their new maps and say what Governments shall rule in the new countries they are carving out of the old ones, but Revolution scorns boundary lines. The dreaded word “Bolshevism” is whispered wherever the rulers meet, and they know that the coming Revolution, if successful, will not mean a mere change of Governments, as so many political revolutions of the past have meant, but will bring with it vast social and economic changes. No longer will it be a question of extending the franchise, or shortening the hours of labour, or raising of wages. It will be a fight between the Haves and the Have-nots, in which no compromise will be possible; it must be fought out to the bitter end—until Capitalism and Authority surrender unconditionally.

When our Capitalist Press speaks of the “danger” of Revolution, we can easily understand it; but where Socialist M.P.’s speak of it as a “danger” we wonder what their Socialism means to them. Mr. Philip Snowden, at Blackburn, on October 23, is reported as having said that “there was a danger that it (Revolution) might come, and only wise statesmanship on the part of the Government could avert it.” But do we want to avert the Revolution? The Government does—that we can understand. But we know also that all Anarchists and the great majority of the men and women in the Socialist movement have looked and worked for the coming of the Revolution as the happiest day in their lives and the only hope of getting rid of the horrors and despotism of Capitalism. Surely Mr. Snowden has heard hundreds of audiences give three cheers for the Social Revolution when meetings were breaking up! Why this nervousness now? Why seek to avert it? Does he think he and his friends may not be able to direct it and keep it within the narrow bounds of Parliamentaryism? Let Mr. Snowden put his mind at rest at once. The Revolution will be a law unto itself when it comes, and woe betide those who stand in its way. Those who are not for the Revolution are against it, and waverers had better make their choice ere it is too late.

Some fear a Revolution because it will mean bloodshed. That will depend on our rulers—not on us. Their Evangelical creed says: “Without shedding of blood there is no remission,” and they have always acted up to it. There is no hope that “wise statesmanship” will avert bloodshed by letting the Social Revolution take place without resistance on their part. We hate bloodshed, but we also hate, with an undying hate, the social system which has brought forth the horrors of the past four years. Therefore we cry: Down with Capitalism and Authority! Hail to the Social Revolution! Hail to Anarchism!

WOMEN AS M.P.’s.

The recent vote in the House of Commons in favour of women M.P.’s raises anew the whole question of the historic Women’s Suffrage agitation and its relation to economic evolution. It is notably a symptom of the times in which we live, of the utilitarian, opportunist, political chicanery which has been more than ever rampant during the years of war.

Looked at from a broad viewpoint such a decision as that just recorded was inevitable. Ever since the centralising of industry first became an accomplished fact it became a foregone conclusion that the break-up of feudal conditions would follow. Modern capitalism demanded certain material, and that women were forced by stress of circumstances to leave their homes and follow industry into the factories, workshops and offices was immaterial to the captains of industry so long as larger profits resulted from their employment. Capitalist evolution followed along certain definite lines, and the women’s movement followed as a necessary consequence. But, as though alarmed at the powerful movement they had unconsciously assisted to life, the men and women of the capitalist class combined and joined the suffrage movement with the hope of directing its activities towards the bolstering-up of a capitalist system of society.

The coming of the great war has merely accelerated this process, but it has made the defence of capitalism even more imperative to the capitalists. Hence the eagerness to capture women’s vote and organise it towards a certain end, and to keep the women at all costs. For our capitalist friends sanguine as to see the end of war once peace between belligerents is signed. They know that the four great powers of capitalism are tottering, and therefore a women’s representatives sitting in the holy of holies at Westminster prove a fairly efficient prop for the tottering structure.

The men who voted in the recent debate exhibit some symptoms. Most of them paid lip service to women, but extraordinary conversions to the women’s cause which have taken place among our worthy M.P.’s are neither spiritual or moral character. It has been merely a case of political expediency. Parliament as a political institution reflecting the capitalist basis of society must open its doors to the women or else take the consequences. It is a last desperate attempt to cheat and bribe the workers into believing that they really possess a stake in the country, just as the extension of the franchise was merely a sop in the same direction.

Those of us who attempted to expose the nature of the women’s suffrage agitation have been justified by results. One section of the party is endeavouring to out-junker our most notable junkers, and in full war array has rushed to the assistance of the Government. Another section has hitched its waggon to the star of the Labour Party, and is engaged in the usual political camouflage in order to enter the sacred portals and usher in the great reforms that will bring the Golden Age to the workers.

We confess that the debate and the subsequent decision has left us cold and uninspired. We are loth even to appear to agree with any devotee of our present blessed social system, but we are for the moment constrained to echo the words of Admiral Sir Hedworth Meux when he said that he did not consider the House a fit and proper place for a respectable woman to sit in. But we agree for quite a different reason from that evidently intended by Sir Hedworth. Our point of objection is based on the fact that whether it be a reformed or unreformed House of Commons in which the women will sit, it will still remain a bulwark of Capitalism, and those who consent to legislate within it must be classed as the enemies of the workers. The time has passed for any mere nice expression of political thought. A desperate bourgeoisie is even now preparing to win the battle against the workers once the world war is over and we settle down again within the prescribed limits which our masters have decreed for us. We object because the extension of the franchise to women and the decision to allow women to seek election for Parliament have been part of a widespread scheme to delude the workers and render them less dangerous. We cannot question whether women are fitted or unfitted for this high honour (?) or predict whether it will re-act injuriously upon them.

The Anarchist position is clear as to the absolute equality of the sexes—upon the need for the “two heads in counsel”—but it bases its objection to this political reform upon the grounds of utility. It contends that the day of Capitalism is nearly spent. The bureaucracy in our midst is one of the many symptoms of a decaying social organism, and inasmuch as Parliament is a factor in so-called representative government, and representative government is the counterpart of a capitalist system of organisation, then it is useless to endeavour to graft new skin upon a diseased body. Parliament must go, and with it the organisation from which it sprung. We have only to remember some of the horrors that

Parliament has either sanctioned or legalised 'in order to help in the task of giving it the "happy dispatch."

We must remember how the institution of Parliament was a useful weapon with which to crush the Labourers' Revolt in the early years of last century. We must remember how by helping to build up and nurture the factory system it became in part responsible for the diplomacy which made a world war possible. Throughout its few centuries of existence it has lent itself to the enslavement of the workers, and has valiantly kept up its reputation to modern times, when we see it but a meeting house of placemen, job-hunters and politicians devoid of conscience. We have only to remember that the very act of holding office has a degrading effect upon the morality of most people. To such an one (if we may parody Tennyson) the world has a habit of withering, and the individual becomes more and more. The people who are hypnotised into believing that they are "represented" lose all power of initiative and become the victims of those they have assisted to office.

As Anarchists we are fighting for political institutions that shall really reflect the will of a free people, and such a freedom we contend is only compatible with Communism. Therefore we are opposed to women entering Parliament, not because of any sex antagonism, but because their efforts would be better spent in demolishing Parliament and all it stands for.

1649.—1792. ???

The Britons' behaviour was hardly the thing
That it ought to have been when they killed their king.
Not a wink of sleep could his majesty get
On the night ere he paid his final debt;
For still through the window there rang in his ears
The noise at his scaffold, the taunts and the jeers.

And even the Frenchmen were scarce more polite:
In a four-wheel cab and a pitiful plight
They carried King Capet to meet his fate,
And allowed him no coachman or carriage of State,
Which a king, by the rules of the old etiquette,
Whene'er he goes driving, ought always to get.

But a still more unqueenly, undignified part
Had the fair Antoinette, for she rode in a cart;
And in place of her ladies-in-waiting she got
For her only companion a rough Sansculotte.
The widow of Capet thrust out in her scorn,
The thick lip with which ladies of Hapsburg are born.

But Frenchmen and Britons have never been blessed
With a scrap of good nature: good nature's possessed
By the German alone, who good-natured remains
When the worst and the reddest of Terrors reigns.
The German would always his Majesty treat
With the utmost respect, as is proper and meet.

In the grandest and royallest chariot-and-six,
Whereto the sad servants black trappings affix,
With the coachman flooding the box with his tears,
Will a German monarch one of these years
From all that might ruffle his feelings be screened,
And with loyal politeness be guillotined.

HEINRICH HEINE (1799-1856)
(Translated by J. L. Joynes.)

TO OUR READERS.

The answer to our appeal for funds last month has not been so satisfactory as we could wish. Perhaps some of our readers did not realise how great is our need. The truth is, our need now is greater than ever, owing to the fact that since our appeal was written our printers have had to considerably increase their charges again. The increase is exactly a third, making the cost now double the amount we were paying last November. We, therefore, ask all those who wish FREEDOM to continue to send us as much as they can spare—regular monthly contributions, if possible. Collecting sheets will be sent on application.

The following sums have been received to date (November 5): J. Cotton 5s. 6d., E.C.R. 1s., H. G. Russell 2s. 6d., E.A.J. 2s., J. Fisher 5s., R. Peddie 2s. 6d., T. Foxall 2s. 6d., Gateshead Sympathisers 12s., B. Black 5s., H. Combes 17s. 6d., G.B. 2s., Zekrin 1s. 6d., E.M. 2s., J. Thurgood 1s., F. Goulding 1s., A. D. Moore 1s., and T. Parry 2s. 6d.

FIGHT FOR A FREE PRESS.

The Socialist Labour Press have forwarded us copies of the correspondence which has passed between themselves and the Right Hon. G. N. Barnes regarding the closing down of their Press and the confiscation of their plant and paper. In acknowledging receipt of the S.L.P. circular Mr. Barnes says: "Your statement as to a despotic Government preventing free expression of opinion on the part of working-class movements doesn't carry conviction"; but the truth of this statement is known to every Socialist or Pacifist publisher. In a later letter, Mr. Barnes says the S.L. Press was closed by the police because the authors of two "serial stories" published by the Press—*The Young Rebel* and *The Revolution*—had concealed their identity, making it impossible to prosecute them, and the only course open was that which was taken. There was no question of the Government preventing free expression of opinion; they merely wished "to check the activities of persons who were working against the interests of the Nation."

In replying to this, Mr. Thos. Bell, the National Secretary of the S.L.P., was easily able to show that Mr. Barnes's letter was a tissue of falsehoods from beginning to end. *The Young Rebel* and *The Revolution* are not "serial stories," but periodicals which have been published for some time without any complaint having been made to the S.L.P. as the printers. And so far from the concealment of identity preventing prosecution, the editor of *The Young Rebel*, Mr. Jas. Stewart, has actually been prosecuted for an article which appeared in that paper and sentenced to one month in the second division. As to *The Revolution*, Mr. Bell says the police have interviewed the editors on several occasions, and the writer of an article in the paper was once arrested, but the prosecution was dropped. Therefore the suppression of the S.L. Press was undertaken for entirely different reasons, and undoubtedly their outspoken articles on industrial matters on the Clyde and on the Russian Revolution were the cause. Besides, Mr. Barnes's explanation does not explain why the printer of the September issue of *The Socialist*, Mr. E. H. Williams, of Bow, should have had his premises raided, closed up, and sealed. The fact is he has had to sign an agreement not to print any Labour journal before he can have his premises open again. The S.L.P. have been told that the suppression of their Press is to be permanent.

Our comrade Jack Tanner writes to say that in closing Mr. Williams's premises the authorities also stopped *Solidarity*, which was printed there. Scotland Yard officials state that they took exception to a certain article in that paper, but although they have been in communication with the Home Office on the matter, our comrades can get no further information. Jack Tanner says: "*Solidarity* is the only journal dealing with the movement exclusively from the industrial standpoint, and consequently is pronounced dangerous by the Government."

The following letter to us shows how the authorities have overreached themselves in the case of the *Tribunal*:—

DEAR SIR,—In your September issue a paragraph entitled "The Fight for a Free Press" appears, from which I gather that you are under the impression that the police are right in their contention that I am not the printer of the *Tribunal*. This is an entire mistake. I am the printer of the *Tribunal*, I own the press on which it is printed and pay the workers, and am accordingly the master-printer whose name must appear on the imprint. When the case was first heard at Bow Street the magistrate admitted that the names of the machinists and compositors are not the ones which must appear on the imprint, and virtually agreed with my definition of the word printer in the Statute. Nevertheless, he said he was "not satisfied" that I am the master-printer, and accordingly convicted me for publishing a paper with an illegal imprint.

At Quarter Sessions, on October 11, Mr. Justice Wallace, in spite of the fact that the chief witness for the prosecution entirely broke down under cross-examination and admitted that he had no evidence that I was not the printer, only "suspicion," upheld the magistrate in his view. He was, however, unable to enforce any penalty as the wording of the Statute under which I was convicted (the Printers' Act, 1869) only allowed for penalties on the printer, and, as Mr. Wallace reminded Sir Archibald Bodkin, they cannot have it both ways—either I am the printer or I am not. They regretfully admit that they cannot punish me, as the printer, for not being the printer. If Sir Archibald Bodkin wishes to press the matter further Mr. Justice Wallace has expressed his willingness to state a case for the High Court.

In the meanwhile I am placed in an extraordinary position. I am the sole printer of the *Tribunal*, and therefore my name

is the only name which can legally appear in the imprint, but the Courts, without producing anyone who is the printer, have decided that *I* am not, and that my imprint is illegal. The question is, can a legal decision make a printer not a printer, and if so, who is legally responsible for the documents printed by such a printer?—Yours, etc.,

JOAN BEAUCHAMP.

5, York Buildings, Adelphi, W.C.2.

OUR WAR NEWS.

The Australian Government have issued a proclamation declaring it illegal to fly the Red Flag. The Melbourne Trades Council have determined to defy the proclamation.

Charged with openly singing the revolutionary "Internationale," two French soldiers were condemned to a fortnight's imprisonment by a Paris court-martial.

At Niagara Camp, Ontario, Joseph Forst, an Austrian by birth, but a naturalised British subject, was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment under the Military Service Act. He was a conscientious objector and refused to don the King's uniform.

Roy Dempsey and Allen Wilson, members of the I.W.W., charged at Rockford, Illinois, U.S.A., with disobedience to orders with intent to evade military service, have been sentenced to 25 years' hard labour. The sentence has been approved by reviewing authorities at Washington.

At Madison, West Virginia, on complaint of the Madison Coal Company, several miners have been convicted under the new Must-Work Law. These men were discharged from the company's employ because they joined the Miners' Union. They are now "free" to work for the company as non-unionists or go to prison.

The *Labor Call* (Australia), referring to the paltry wages paid to teachers, says they are compelled to squeeze patriotic pence from the children daily—in a country which has declared against conscription. The teachers declare that promotion depends not on ability, but on willingness to act as tools of the Government.

Lord French, addressing the Dublin Boy Scouts, said they were living in a very wonderful time. "They had to drive out all those foul, rancorous ideas of sedition and rebellion from their mind. They should stamp on any form of rebel as they would on a poisonous insect." Of course, that is why he wants to impose conscription in Ireland.

The above paragraphs will give some idea as to what Allied statesmen mean when they talk of fighting for freedom.

CAPITAL'S GOD.

Of all sprawling, ridiculous, pig-headed monstrosities of pietistic folly, the latter-day god of the odious, swindling classes is the most inanely yet atrociously profane. The god who ordains the powers that be in church, state, and society; the god of pluto-pope and pluto-czar; the god who masses the select favourites of his bounty in Sandringhams and Chatsworths, and mansions on Nob-hill and Fifth Avenue; who clothes the loafers of the world in purple and fine linen, gluts them with Delmonico repasts, and by the same fiat of his supreme will dooms the industrious toilers of the globe to the slums and to the labour hells, and prostitutes their daughters upon the streets—that god, call him Jehovah, Jehovah-Jesus, or what we will, is but a concreted spectre-image, born from the rotted lusts and impudent mendacities of all dead ages, and projected as an omnipotent ghostly scarecrow, photographed upon the horizon of the Infinite.

It was a degradation of Zeus when he became the god of Nero and Heliogabalus. If the god whom these Romans worshipped was merely the excrement of a once divine idea, what is to be said of this other God, once incarnate in the Poet-Peasant, the divine Robert Burns and Victor Hugo and Shelley and George Fox, of Palestine, this Jesus, so-called of Nazareth? They trail the seamless robe of the Christ through all the sewers of nineteen centuries of robbery and profligacy, and with it they drape an image born of their own monstrous egoism. They kowtow before the idol or hide their faces in their hats and pray to it; then they say to the world: "In His name obey us; in His name slave; serve, feed, exalt us; degrade your manhood and prostitute your womanhood to us; or be torn to pieces by law in this world and be damned in the world to come."—THOMAS LAKE HARRIS, in "God's Breath in Man."

A PLEA FOR REVOLUTION.

"The history of Agrarian Reform upon the continent shows how vast was the interval of time by which some of the greatest changes in England had anticipated the corresponding changes in almost all other nations. But if the Prussian peasant, at the beginning of this century, remained in the servile condition which had passed out of mind in Great Britain before the Reformation, the early prosperity of the peasant in England was dearly purchased by a subsequent decline which made his present lot far inferior to that of the children or grandchildren of the Prussian serf. However heavy the load of the Prussian serf, his holding was at least protected by law from absorption into the domain of his lord. Before sufficient capital had been amassed in Prussia to render landed property an object of competition, the forced military service of Frederick had made it a rule of state that the farmsteads of the peasant class must remain undiminished in number, at whatever violence to the laws of the market or the desires of the great landlords. No process was permitted to take place corresponding to that by which in England, after the villein had become free copyholder, the lord, with or without technical legal right, terminated the copyhold tenure of his retainer, and made the land as much his own exclusive property as the chairs and tables in his house. In Prussia, if the law kept the peasant on the land, it also kept the land for the peasant. Economic conditions in the absence of such control in England, worked against the class of small holders. Their early enfranchisement, in fact, contributed to their extinction. It would perhaps have been better for the English labouring class to remain bound by a semi-servile tie to their land than to gain a free holding which the law, siding with the landlord, treated as terminable at the expiration of particular lives and which the increasing capital of the rich made its favourite prey. It is little profit to the landless, resourceless English labourer to know that his ancestor was a yeoman when the Prussian was a serf. Long as the bondage of the peasant on the mainland endured, prosperity came at last. The conditions which once distinguished agricultural England from the continent are now reversed. Nowhere on the continent is there a labouring class so stripped and despoiled of all interest in the soil, so sedulously excluded from all possibilities of proprietorship as in England. In England alone, the absence of internal revolution and foreign pressure has preserved a class whom a life spent in toil leaves as bare and dependent as when it began, and to whom the only boon which their country can offer is the education which may lead them to quit it."—C. A. FYFFE (Vice-president of the Royal Historical Society). *A History of Modern Europe* (London, 1895), p. 243.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS (not otherwise acknowledged).

(October 6—November 5).

"FREEDOM" SUBSCRIPTIONS.—F. Large, A. Clatworthy, J. W. Lumb, Mrs. C. H. G. Russell, J. Bedford (two years), E. Malatesta, R. A. Lown, B. Black (two years), W. M. Duff, E. Stephenson, H. Combes, A. McLaughlin, R. W. G., and W. Woodbridge.

"FREEDOM" GUARANTEE FUND.—See page 63.

BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS.

- ANARCHIST MORALITY. By PETER KROPOTKIN. 3d.
 ANARCHIST COMMUNISM. By PETER KROPOTKIN. 2d.
 THE STATE: ITS HISTORIC ROLE. By PETER KROPOTKIN. 3d.
 TALK BETWEEN TWO WORKERS. By E. MALATESTA. 2d.
 THE PYRAMID OF TYRANNY. By D. NIEUWENHUIS. 2d.
 LAW AND AUTHORITY. By PETER KROPOTKIN. 3d.
 THE COMMUNE OF PARIS. By PETER KROPOTKIN. 2d.
 THE CHICAGO MARTYRS. With Portraits. 2d.
 ANARCHISM AND OUTRAGE. ½d.
 WAR. By PETER KROPOTKIN. 1d.
 THE CONCENTRATION OF CAPITAL: A MARXIAN FALLACY. By W. TCHERKESOFF. 2d.
 DUTY OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE. By H. THOREAU. 4d.
 FOR LIBERTY. AN ANTHOLOGY. 6d.
 THE ANARCHIST REVOLUTION. By GEORGE BARRETT. 2d.
 APPEAL TO THE YOUNG. By P. KROPOTKIN. 1d.
 THE PLACE OF ANARCHISM IN SOCIALISTIC EVOLUTION. By P. KROPOTKIN. 2d.

Postage extra—½d. for each Pamphlet.

Orders, with cash, to be sent to
 FREEDOM PRESS, 127, OSSULTON STREET, LONDON, N.W.1.

Printed by the BLACKFRIARS PRESS, LTD., 30, Blackfriars Street, Manchester.
 and Published by FREEDOM PRESS, 127, Ossulton Street, London, N.W.