

Freedom

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NOTES.

May Day.

May Day this year brings a message of hope to all revolutionists. The war that was begun in 1914 to decide the Imperialistic aims of the Great Powers of Europe is now changing into a war between the forces of Privilege and Exploitation and the forces of Labour. The issue is gradually getting clearer and sharper, and those Socialist and Labour men who are now sitting on the fence will soon be forced to decide on which side they will fight. To talk of bringing about great social changes by "constitutional means" is to admit one's ignorance of the history and objects of Constitutions. The Russian Revolution has wiped out all those stale and musty party programmes which Socialist and Labour parties used to play with at their annual congresses, and the situation is now ripe for direct action of the most thorough and drastic character. Events are moving swiftly, and the workers are determined to throw off their chains and to build up a new society in which all shall be producers and consumers in common. The capitalists and the politicians see the danger, and are prepared to use force to the uttermost, but whereas their force rests on the number of workers they can bribe to fight for them, the strength of the workers rests on themselves. If the workers are true to themselves no force can resist them; and before another May Day comes they can put an end to wage-slavery and the exploitation of man by man.

The Peace Conference.

The "Big Four" in Paris, who thought they could sit down leisurely and calmly to decide the destinies of the nations of the world, have been rudely awakened by the rapid march of the Social Revolution in Europe, which they now regard, quite rightly, as a greater menace to their interests than even German militarism. They are now engaged in trying to erect barriers against Bolshevism and Communism, and for that purpose are setting Poles against Germans, Roumanians against Hungarians, and their own troops against the Soviets everywhere. The "Big Four" are not without a sense of humour. Having said the war was not a war of conquest, but wanting to keep all the territory they had conquered, they invented the system of "mandates" under the League of Nations, and now each country has a "mandate" to administer the territory they conquered. It's so simple, as the posters say. But the most cynical feature of the whole business is the secrecy with which the affairs of the Conference are conducted. After a war fought to "make the world safe for democracy," as we were told, these dictators in Paris are deciding questions involving the future of countless millions without their having a voice in the matter. The voice of the workers, however, will be heard when the Conference is over, and even now the "Big Four" and their satellites can hear a few mutterings which tell of the storm to come.

Housing the Miners.

The revelations as to the shocking housing conditions for miners, brought to light during the sittings of the Coal Commission, have aroused public opinion on the question of housing generally, and mine owners and landlords have been condemned in very strong language as being responsible. But we cannot but think that the miners themselves are as much to blame as anyone. How comes it that they tolerated such filthy conditions year after year without taking drastic steps to alter them? Surely it is difficult to believe that they could not have altered them if they so wished. The Miners' Federation is the strongest Trade Union in the country, and during the war its strength has been shown in wringing several increases of pay from the Government and mine owners. Yet during all these years many of the miners have been living in so-called houses in which the mine owners would not even shelter their horses or dogs. The miners have the power to change these conditions if they wish to do so, and it shows a great lack of personal dignity on their part that they have tolerated them so long. Let the miners leave off abusing the mine owners and use their own collective strength to remedy affairs. But whilst they are about it they might use their power to put an end to private

property in land and production for profit, and replace them with a society founded on voluntary Communism. It would not take much longer, if they had the will.

Anti-Anarchist Panic in U.S.A.

A comrade writes from New York: "In Europe the repression is beginning to let up; here it is just beginning to be felt. Intellectual honesty means prison in America to-day, and that is where most of the worth-while rebels are." This statement is perfectly true. In the "great free Republic of the West" there was more repression of free speech and press during the war than in any other country. Socialist and I.W.W. papers were suppressed, their editorial and publishing staffs thrown into prison, and many other members of those organisations brutally ill-treated because they dared to doubt the motives of the war-mongers. And now the war is over, a new campaign has been started to suppress all advanced ideas. Bolshevism has caused a perfect panic, and the reactionaries are taking advantage of it to pass laws and regulations which can be used against anyone who thinks aloud. The aldermen of Hartford, Connecticut, have passed an ordinance making Bolshevism and I.W.W. meetings unlawful; it also prohibits the display of red flags and the distribution of radical literature, under a penalty of a fine of \$100 and six months in jail. The New York Senate has also passed an Anti-Red Flag Bill, which makes it a misdemeanor for any person to display "the red flag of Anarchy." Whilst the Massachusetts House of Representatives thought the matter so urgent that they suspended the rules and rushed through a Bill, the aim of which is described as "to prevent the promotion of Anarchy." Under Section 2 the possession of any Anarchist or revolutionary Socialist pamphlet is a crime, and, like all other offences under the Act, is punishable by three years' imprisonment and \$1,000 fine. Yet we venture to prophecy that in five years' time Anarchist ideas will be more widespread in the States than before the passing of these panicky decrees. These people have a lot to learn.

After Twenty-Five Years!

Speaking at the I.L.P. Conference on Easter Monday, Mr. Philip Snowden said:—

In industrial matters the Parliamentary Labour Party was doing well, but it was disappointing in regard to such fundamental questions as civil liberty and economic and international policy. It had remained silent while conscientious objectors had been tortured in prison, while the Government had used its powers unconstitutionally to subsidise private commercial enterprise by a veiled form of Protection, while the military forces had been used to suppress the just aspirations of the subject-peoples of Egypt and India, while statesmen had been conspiring in Paris to deprive the people of the promised just and lasting peace, while the infamous blockade had been starving millions to death, and while the British armies had been employed to suppress the new European republics.

We have nothing to add to that condemnation of the Labour Party, except to say that it was the creation of the Independent Labour Party, which itself has advocated Parliamentary methods for over twenty-five years, and at the last General Election ran some of its own members as Labour Party candidates. The folly of voting is apparent to all but the blind.

Who are these Revolutionists? Mankind's worst enemies. What do they amount to? Nothing. Won't their suppression be difficult and expensive? How absurd! Our disciplined armies will scatter them as the summer sun scatters the morning mist. Thus they talked in French Revolution times, and France single-handed smashed them all round the ring for more than half-a-generation.

The towering fact is that several hundred million people are to-day in open revolt against the existing order, and that many other hundreds of millions, in Asia and Africa, would be if they dared. We don't wipe away that fact by proclaiming that it ought not to exist.—*Middleton Guardian*.

A FABLE FOR MAY GOSLINGS.

It was while investigating the history of my home-town that I came across the narration which follows. It is written in curious handwriting on the fly-leaves of a volume numbered M2/3, and is supposed by my friend Anthony Dustfull, F.S.A., to be a legendary account of the first housebuilding. Unfortunately, owing to the war, he has been unable to get into communication with German authorities on the subject, but it seems tolerably certain the story is Saxon, or maybe, Celtic in its origin. The first few lines of writing are almost illegible, though some reference to the setting of "crucks" on their foundation stones can be made out. There is mention, too, of a "pent roof," which curiously enough was the cover of a pantry or larder. Anyway, it will perhaps be better if I give a free rendering of the story in modern English.

It concerns a man, Adam by name, and his wife. He must not, however, be confused with the Biblical Adam, for this man had six stalwart sons. The whole of them appear to have become very discontented with the place in which they were living—a cave probably, as my friend Dustfull observes—and so the two oldest of the sons were relieved of their labours on the land "terra firma," in order that they might construct a house-domus. It appears that while the eldest son did the actual work of construction, his brother provided for him the tools he required. It is fairly evident, as my friend Dustfull remarks, the father, mother and the four other sons must have had to do much additional labour in order to supply the two who were housebuilding with the "requisite nutriment for their subsistence." "Johann" Adam, the father, appears to have been a cultivator of the soil; his wife was a spinner and weaver of cloth; the third son was a hunter, the fourth a fisherman, the fifth a woodman, and the sixth his father's helpmate. No hint is given as to what in normal times was the occupation of the two eldest sons. We must assume, therefore, they were, like their father, tillers of the soil, an assumption which is justified by the reference to their being relieved of their labours on the land.

Now we come to the really interesting part of the story. A storehouse or larder had to be provided, in which at the close of each day the various members of the family deposited the results of their day's labours. From this storehouse, each took what he required, and apparently the whole family lived very comfortably. In accordance with my friend Dustfull's theory, this storehouse or larder must at first have been a cave, in which, as he remarks, "moths do lurk, and the destructive maggot doth bring all to confusion."

But to get on with the narrative. The "crucks" are set up, the house is roofed, and the family take possession. On the first morning after, Johann arouses all his six sons that they may go to their respective labours. But there is mutiny about. Son Number One declares most emphatically his working days are over, and that because he has built the house, in which they all live, he shall have the right on all occasions to go into the storehouse and help himself to the best of what it may contain. And, he goes on, "not only shall I do this, but my son and his son unto countless generations, shall do as I because their father built this house with the labour of his hands." Son Number Two, after pointing out that had he not supplied the tools with which the house was built, it could not have been built, makes the same emphatic claim of access to the family storehouse at all times; this claim to be extended to his descendants unto "countless generations of them that come after me."

At this point the writing becomes illegible again. These extraordinary claims seem to have been acceded to—indeed a recent writer in the *Times* Commercial Supplement confirms this opinion, for not only does he restate the original claim, but affirms that legally it still exists and must go on existing.

Towards the end of the story there is reference to one, Soc—, who proposes that the idle brothers shall only be allowed access to the storehouse at certain times and that, to use a modern term, they shall be rationed. He further suggests, the right of access shall be extinguished at the end of three generations. But in its conclusion the narrative strikes a note of tragedy. A man there is who suggests each of the working members of the family shall have what is his own, and he goes on to point out the possibility of exchanging their products one with another. Then there is mention of a stake and a great fire, and the assumption may reasonably be made that this last character to be introduced was burned to ashes by the others.

At any rate, the story is sufficiently curious to warrant insertion in the well-known pages of FREEDOM. My friend Dustfull hopes to spend the next ten years of his life in preparing a legal treatise indicating the application this legend has to various countries and societies and justifying it by the aid of the theological formula which claims: "What is ancient must be morally right."

JOHN WAKEMAN.

IS GERMANISM BEATEN?

In the great struggle of "The State against the Man," Germany stepped out unhesitatingly as the champion of the State, as the uncompromising upholder of the dogma that men are born to be ruled; as the arch-rebel against the Christian teaching that institutions are made for men and not men for institutions. These theories she put deliberately to the great test of war, staking her very existence on the throw. In this, as is now self-evident, Imperial Germany has failed.

Let us understand, however, that greater by far than Imperial Germany is Germanism; that far longer than the reach of Germany's military arm is that of German thought; and the question of all questions to-day is whether Germanism has failed. As her armies file down into the Valley of Defeat will that enslaving philosophy for which they battled also pass into eclipse? Do we ourselves, for example, recognise that what Germanism conceived as strength is, in reality, a weakness fatal to all development; and are we ourselves resolved that our own path shall not be that along which Germany has plunged to ruin? With Germany's physical defeat now finally assured this becomes instantaneously—we repeat it—the question of the hour.

For our part we confess quite plainly that Germanism seems to us to have triumphed all along the line. That bureaucratic system which had put all Germany in irons, we ourselves have copied tamely, and both in the United States and here bureaucracy is now in the saddle as it never was before, booted and spurred for more ambitious conquests. Never was the governing machine so omnipotent as it is to-day, and, as an inevitable sequence, never did the ordinary citizen feel so utterly helpless as he does to-day. Without license from the authorities he may hardly employ himself; the manner in which he shall expend his earnings they largely decide; their arbitrary ukase determines the prices he must pay, and if he raises his voice in protest he puts himself in imminent peril of arrest. This trampling underfoot of basic human liberties is borne, as yet, because it is supposed to have been imposed on us by the necessities of war. With the passing of that phase it will be recognised as tyranny insufferable.—*Middleton Guardian*.

DAVE NICOLL.

(March 2, 1919.)

Brave Soul! Persistent to the end,
Through mental windings strange and dark,
Distorted by man's inhumanity.

But in thine ears
Were unknown strains of music,
And in the woodland temple, thou
Hadst audience with our Mother, Liberty.
(My envious longings lay upon thy grave.)

So let the earth once more bring forth its sweets,
Renewed by sun and air and frost and rain:
Birds sing, each lordly tree another greets,
Flowers bend in all their courtesy again.
The Revolution of the year shines in the mist
Of all our servile doubts, traditions, fears!
Yoke to the plough! The seed-sow as ye list!
Good of our work shall grow through endless years.

See where our comrade lays
His broken body down, and gives
To us his quenchless spirit—
While others die, he lives!

JOHN WAKEMAN.

THE REVOLT IN INDIA.

The revolt in India exposes to the world the hollowness of our politicians' florid oratory about the "right of self-determination" of all nations. Recently we were told with a flourish of trumpets that in view of India's loyalty and sacrifices during the war, many reforms leading up to self-government were to be introduced. But the Anglo-Indians, the swarm of parasites who suck India like an orange, determined to stop all ideas of reforms and to suppress the Nationalist movement. To that end they introduced the Rowlatt Laws, which give the Government of India (an alien Government) powers of life and death without the formality of trial. The following explanation of these Laws is issued by the National Council for Civil Liberties:—

By the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Bill, criminal intention is presumed unless the accused person can disprove it, previous conviction or association with persons previously convicted is admitted as evidence of guilt and, even after two years of imprisonment, the person so condemned is for a further period of two years in the position of a ticket-of-leave man. Where certain specified political offences are, in the opinion of the Governor-General in Council, prevalent, he may empower Local Governments to proceed against the persons charged by a summary, secret and speedy trial before three specially nominated judges. Where movements likely to lead to the commission of offences against the State are, in the opinion of the Governor-General in Council, prevalent, he can empower the Local Governments to order anyone whom they reasonably suspect of being concerned in such movements to enter into a bond for good behaviour and to live in a special area. They must then proceed to appoint an investigating authority to examine the evidence in a secret trial at which the accused may not be represented by a pleader. Nor may the accused himself appear before the authority, except at such stage in its proceedings as the authority chooses. This method is provided for cases where there is not sufficient legal evidence to convict or the Government does not desire to prosecute.

Where offences endangering the public safety are, in the opinion of the Governor-General in Council, prevalent, he can empower the Local Governments to make arrests without warrant, search premises, and impose imprisonment for 15 days without trial. Under this Act there is no right of appeal, orders cannot be questioned in any court, the ordinary rules of evidence and procedure are abolished, the accused is not allowed to bring witnesses in his defence and is often tried unheard. The effect of it is to enable the Government to take powers overriding all the ordinary laws whenever it thinks fit.

Although the people have revolted against these tyrannical measures, the Government of India is daily issuing fresh decrees, one of which states that no new newspaper can be printed or published without previous sanction by the local government, which is empowered to confiscate the printing press in the event of this rule being contravened. The Government seem to think the revolt is a form of rabies which can be cured by a general muzzling order, but the revolt is too widespread for such trumpery measures to succeed. If the British Government do not very soon grant some substantial measure of self-government to India, they will find her 300,000,000 inhabitants will take it, and put a stop to the robbery and famine which have been such prominent features of British rule.

"MORE ATTRACTIVE WOMEN."

The Government have just issued a White Paper on Bolshevik atrocities, in which they again print the now discredited tale about the nationalisation of women in Russia. But the British Government have nothing to boast about in their treatment of women, because for many years the Army authorities in India used to recruit women as prostitutes for British soldiers, these women being recognised as part of the equipment of every regiment, and being regularly inspected by the medical officer. On June 17, 1886, under instructions from Lord Roberts, then Commander-in-Chief, a circular memorandum was issued by Major-General Chapman, which stated, amongst other things, that it is necessary—

To arrange for the effective inspection of prostitutes attached to regimental bazaars, whether in cantonments or on the line of march.

To have a sufficient number of women, to take care that they are sufficiently attractive, to provide them with proper houses.—(Parliamentary Paper, No. 197, of 1888.)

These instructions were promptly acted on, for on July 9 the

officer commanding the Connaught Rangers at Jullender wrote to the Assistant-Quarter-Master-General:

The cantonment magistrate has already on more than one occasion been requested to obtain a number of younger and more attractive women, but with little or no success. He further urges as desirable that the cantonment magistrates should 'give all possible aid to commanding officers in procuring a sufficient number of young, attractive and healthy women.'

On the same date an application was made for six extra "young and attractive women" for the 2nd Cheshire Regiment; and as it was not promptly complied with, another appeal was sent saying that "some of the women now with the headquarters of the 2nd Battalion Cheshire Regiment are not very attractive," and asking that their previous application be complied with. On July 24 the officer commanding the Artillery at Jullender wrote: "There are not enough women, and they are not attractive. More and younger women are required, and their houses should be improved!" Another officer writes: "I have ordered the number of prostitutes to be increased to twelve, and have given special instructions as to the four additional women being young and of attractive appearance." During this year (1886) there are numerous references of a similar character, pointing out that the prostitutes provided for the British soldiers were not attractive enough or that the brothels were not sufficiently comfortable.—(Report of the Working of the Lock Hospitals of the N.W. Provinces and Oudh for 1886.)

These quotations are sufficient to show that the British Government helped in the degradation of these Indian women in a systematic manner, this arrangement in a modified form being carried out at the present day. One can therefore realise what damnable hypocrites the Government are in pretending to be shocked at anything that might—or might not—have happened in Russia. One can also realise why the Indian people hate their British rulers.

THE PARLIAMENTARY OATH.

Those people who expect revolutionary measures from Parliamentary action should read the Oath of Allegiance which has to be taken by Members of Parliament. It will be observed that the welfare of the people is not mentioned; the welfare of His Majesty fills the bill. We Anarchists never expected anything from "representative" government. Our quotation is from Rowland's "Manual of the English Constitution":—

I A. B. do swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to his Majesty King George, and will defend him to the utmost of my power against all conspiracies, and attempts whatever, which shall be made against his person, crown and dignity; and I will do my utmost endeavour to disclose and make known to his Majesty, his heirs and successors, all treasons and traitorous conspiracies which may be formed against him or them; and I do faithfully promise to maintain, support, and defend, to the utmost of my power, the succession of the crown; which succession, by an Act entitled "An Act for the further limitation of the Crown, and better securing of the Rights and Liberties of the Subject," is and stands limited to the Princess Sophia, Electress of Hanover, and the heirs of her body, being Protestants; hereby utterly renouncing and abjuring any obedience or allegiance unto any other person claiming or pretending a right to the crown of this realm. And I do declare that no foreign prince, person, prelate, state, or potentate hath, or ought to have, any jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm. And I make this declaration upon the true faith of a Christian, so help me God."

There are slight variations now for Jews, Quakers, Roman Catholics, and Freethinkers.

This Oath explains to us many sudden changes in the outlook of Socialists and Labour men after becoming Members of Parliament.

Tolstoy once gave it as his opinion that in thought on the Land Question the Russians were two centuries ahead of us, and this he attributed partly to their being an agricultural people, partly to their strong Christian antipathy to violence, and partly to their not having had the wool pulled over their eyes by what he called the "deceit of self-government"—the immeasurable humbug of pretending that the disinherited can remain disinherited and still be free. "For these reasons," he said, "the great revolution impending over all mankind, which can alone save it from its unnecessary sufferings, must begin precisely among this nation." The words quoted are from his "End of the Age," published in 1906.

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THE FIRST OF MAY.

May Day comes this year at a moment when the whole of the workers of Europe are in revolt against Capitalism or preparing to revolt. Russia has safeguarded her Revolution, in spite of the attacks of the gang of reactionaries, supported by the Allies, with men, munitions, and money. The present German Government looks to the Allies to support it against the Communists, who threaten to overwhelm it. In Austria, Hungary, and Bulgaria the Revolution is making great strides; in Italy it may break out at any moment; and in France the workers are preparing to strike on May Day on a scale that may bring them into collision with the Government. But in Great Britain—? This country must not lag behind when the moment arrives for co-operation with the workers of the rest of Europe.

The war has opened the eyes of all thoughtful men and women, who now realise the brutality of the system of society in which we live. Whilst men were shedding their blood on the battlefields of Europe, Asia and Africa, their capitalist masters at home were piling up larger and larger fortunes out of the necessities of the people. Lying politicians helped their friends to profitable contracts, and made secret treaties which contradicted everything for which they persuaded the soldiers to fight. And now the war is over, we find that nothing is to be changed. The landlords still own the land and refuse to part with it, except at highly increased prices. The factory owners still look forward to exploiting the workers, and are trying to speed them up, so that the increased production may pay the interest on the war loans. Paltry reforms are put forward, but such tinkering with social evils is useless, and most intelligent men and women now agree that only a Social Revolution will be of any use.

It is now recognised that it is impossible for us to bring about the Revolution by Parliamentary means, as Parliament was designed by the great landlords and capitalists to protect their interests. It is therefore necessary for us to build up our own organisations by means of which to carry on industry and agriculture when we have swept away the present capitalist system of society, in which men grow rich by exploiting their fellow men. Let us remember also that the new society must bring real freedom to all men and women. We do not wish to replace present-day Governments of capitalists by Governments of workers. We are working for a new society in which there will be real equality, and in which all men and women will be free to live their lives free from the interferences of those people who imagine they are born to make rules and regulations by which others should be bound. Of course, we shall make many mistakes, but we shall learn from our mistakes, and in this way avoid them afterwards.

So on this May Day of 1919 let us make up our minds to join with others in wiping out all traces of our so-called "civilisation," which brings riches and power to the few and misery, toil without hope, and bloody wars to the many. Let us realise how beautiful life might be in a society founded on Anarchist Communism, in which all the means of life would be at the disposal of all, and in which all would partake freely of the goods produced. A society in which we would call no man master, but where voluntary agreement would replace the present system in which we are bound hand and foot by laws made by men long since dead and forgotten.

May Day greetings to all comrades everywhere who work for the same ideal!

OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO RUSSIA.

"Civilisation, unless we save it, may be shattered," said Lloyd George in an expansive moment when he was trying to justify the vigorous prosecution of the war. It is, therefore, interesting to obtain a sort of bird's-eye view of the thing Lloyd George considered it desirable to save at the expense of so much wealth and so many millions of lives.

Civilisation, we were told, was threatened by German militarism, therefore German militarism must be crushed; but no sooner was Germany defeated than we were told by a high military authority at the War Office that the present regime in Russia is based on a military tyranny to which that of the Hohenzollerns is incomparable. Now the whole history of Europe for some years prior to the war goes to prove that the autocracy of the late Tsar did far more to bolster up reaction and repression in Europe than that of the German military party. That when all the European financiers and the French financiers, particularly in 1905-6, hastened to advance huge loans to Russia in order to crush the revolutionary hopes and aspirations of the people, we were certain that the capitalists recognised the danger to their citadel in a successful revolution in any one of the European countries. That is why William English Walling, writing in 1908 in his book, "Russia's Message," on the situation in Russia, declares:

"The issues of this revolution are greater than they were in France, the struggle is on a more extended scale, and the whole world is lending its forces to aid the Russian Government. The foreign influence that threatened the French Revolution through the English fleet and the Prussian and Austrian armies on the frontier, which finally forced the Revolution to choose between Napoleon's military dictatorship and extinction, is represented in the very heart of Russian life by the apparently inexhaustible supply of gold by means of which foreign money-lenders enabled the Government to provide itself with all the formidable machinery of modern warfare, and to hire an army of nearly 1,000,000 Cossacks to hold down the revolutionary movement. The Russian revolution is in no sense only a Russian question. It is against the financial powers of all the world that the revolutionists are fighting."

But just as the Russian people found themselves confronted with all the forces of reaction, so did it make them more determined than ever to overthrow the Tsardom and all it stood for, that is why the power of Bolshevism grows greater and refuses to be crushed by alien armies sent against it.

In the minds of the people lingers the memory of the long years of terror and the hateful police spy system. The victims dying in the snows of Siberia, and the incessant battle with famine, though huge stores of grain were being exported. Mr. Walling unfolds a fearful story of corruption and robbery. Of peasants using the most antiquated, worthless agricultural implements, because of their extreme poverty. Of reduced production as a result of this, and the levying of unheard of taxes in order that the corrupt police system might be supported. Mr. Walling calculated that the Russian peasant received about one-third the income of a poor German peasant, one-fourth that of a French. As regards taxation, it was calculated that from the poor province of Saratov, where the net family income was only 114 roubles, more than half went in the form of taxes to the Government. As with the Russian peasant, so with the poor sweated town-worker. His life was one long intolerable slavery, any revolt from which was punished with exile to Siberia, or death.

Let anyone anxious to know why Russia revolted against "civilisation" turn over a few of the pages of Walling's book, where particulars of wholesale massacres of people rebelling against the nobles or the Tsar's autocracy are recorded. He will also recall the fact that the awful story of how the late Tsar governed was significantly kept out of the capitalist Press. Instead of the publication of a White Paper by the then Government of this country, the arch-murderer, the Tsar, was invited here as the guest of the King. Yet in one year the Tsar was responsible for killing 26,000 of his subjects! The "Little Father" evidently found it necessary to uphold "civilisation" in this very characteristic fashion, and so won the thanks of the international governments of Europe, and the financiers they represented. For they knew that the doom of Tsarism meant the doom of capitalism. He was the bulwark against the free self-expression of the people that alone could guarantee a sane civilisation in Europe.

And the "Little Father" having passed from the scene, a thousand gallant Junker crusaders are ready to defend the sacred cause of autocracy in which he fell. No matter that this defence means an extra few millions of expenditure a day—the stakes are too great, the prize too high. At all costs the wage-slaves of Europe must be driven back within their slave compounds. But the Russian people cannot be conquered. Foreign armies may, at the

bidding of the capitalist governments, overrun the length and breadth of their land. Foreign police forces may strive to break the spirit of the workers. A people born to oppression that has consciously of its own free will achieved the almost impossible task confronting it, that has won freedom in spite of the conspiracy of active hate of the Governments of the whole world, cannot now be conquered and crushed. Russia is invincible. Armies may land at Archangel or on the Murman coast. Foreign money and food may be offered as bribes to the people. Bolshevik Russia will remain steadfast, conscious of her great destiny.

Something of the spirit of prophecy animates Walling when he writes of the heroic struggle of the Russian peasants and workers. Especially prophetic is he when writing of the much-traduced peasant:

"He will come to his majority in the twentieth century more freed from tradition than our own pioneers in the nineteenth. The Russian Revolution, bound sooner or later to end in his favour, will not only make him master of half Europe and Asia, and revolutionise the relations of the world powers; it will decide the fate of every democratic movement on the Continent, and give a new inspiration to the international movement for economic equality."

When we have grasped the reasons for the Russian revolt and the collapse of this particular brand of civilisation which our Junkers are so anxious for the workers of this country to save, we begin to understand the reason for the publication of the Government's White Paper containing so many white lies. We realise why it was considered impolitic for His Majesty to invite that spoiler of civilisation's most generous manifestations—Lenin—to appear at Court. Why it is necessary to retain Col. John Ward and his noble band of fighters in Siberia; and last, but not least, to starve the millions of unrepentant women and children by means of the merciless blockade.

But through it all shines one glimmer of light. The workers of this country have received Russia's message and know that if it were possible to crush the Russian Revolution, then our cause too would suffer; but in spite of our apathy, like a mighty tree she will stand, defying pests and tempests.

ANARCHISTS IN CONFERENCE.

A very interesting and useful Conference of London comrades was held on Saturday, April 19, to consider ways and means of improving our organisation and increasing the strength of our propaganda in London and the provinces. The original intention was to make it a national Conference, but the lack of time and cost of travelling made it impossible at the present moment. Comrades from all parts of London, together with three or four from South Wales and Stockport, joined together in friendly discussion, and many suggestions were put forward. The manager of Freedom Press stated that some of the best Anarchist pamphlets were out of print, and it was agreed that certain of them should be reprinted as soon as funds permitted. At the same time it was felt that new and less theoretical literature was required to deal with present-day facts, and for this purpose a Propaganda Committee was formed to issue such leaflets and pamphlets, and to collect funds for their printing. The Committee will also try to link up all the groups in the country for joint action. The Committee hopes to stimulate local groups to get out leaflets and other literature suited to local needs, in this way avoiding centralisation, which is the curse of so many organisations.

Some comrades said that too much attention was being devoted to literature, and that we should seriously consider what part we intended to take in the coming Revolution in this country. The time had arrived for action, and whilst we could not expect an Anarchist Revolution, we could greatly influence it. The anti-Parliamentary attitude of many Socialists and Communists was greatly due to our propaganda in the past, and good results would undoubtedly follow if we worked with them. Steps, therefore, are to be taken towards holding a Conference with the Communist League to consider a joint plan of campaign.

Now that many comrades have been released from prison, it is hoped that more energy will be thrown into the movement and the ideas of Anarchist Communism be spread throughout the land.

After the Conference, many of the comrades joined in the social at the Crown Hall; new friendships were made and old ones renewed. The gathering lasted to an early hour on the Sunday morning, many leaving with lighter hearts and lighter pockets, as a result of which FREEDOM funds are expected to benefit considerably. The success of the Conference and the social will be sufficient compensation to all those comrades who worked hard to ensure that success.

THE ANARCHIST REVOLUTION.

Our conception of the coming social revolution is quite different from that of a Jacobin dictatorship, or the transformation of social institutions effected by a Convention, a Parliament, or a dictator. Never has a revolution been brought about on those lines; and if the present working-class movement takes this form, it will be doomed to have no lasting result.

On the contrary, we believe that if a revolution begins, it must take the form of a widely spread popular movement, during which movement, in every town and village invaded by the insurrectionary spirit, the masses set themselves to the work of reconstructing society on new lines. The people—both the peasants and the town workers—must themselves begin the constructive work, on more or less Communist principles, without waiting for schemes and orders from above. From the very beginning of the movement they must contrive to house and to feed every one, and then set to work to produce what is necessary to feed, house, and clothe all of them.

They may not be—they are sure not to be—the *majority* of the nation. But if they are a respectably numerous minority of cities and villages scattered over the country, starting life on their own new Socialist lines, they will be able to win the right to pursue their own course. In all probability they will draw towards them a notable portion of the land, as was the case in France in 1793-94.

As to the Government, whether it be constituted by force only or by election; be it "the dictatorship of the proletariat," as they used to say in France in the "forties," and as they still say in Germany, or else an elected "Provisional Government," or a "Convention"; we put no faith in it. We know beforehand that it will be able to do nothing to accomplish the revolution, so long as the people themselves do not accomplish the change by working out on the spot the necessary new institutions.

We say so, not because we have a personal dislike of Governments, but because the whole of history shows us that men thrown into a Government by a revolutionary wave have never been able to accomplish what was expected from them. And this is *unavoidable*. Because in the task of reconstructing society on new principles separate men, however intelligent and devoted they may be, are sure to fail. The collective spirit of the masses is necessary for this purpose. Isolated men can sometimes find the legal expression to sum up the destruction of old social forms—when the destruction is already proceeding. At the utmost, they may widen, perhaps, the sphere of the reconstructive work, extending what is being done in a part of the country, over a larger part of the territory. But to impose the reconstruction by law is absolutely impossible, as was proved, among other examples, by the whole history of the French Revolution. Many thousands of the *lois* passed by the revolutionary Convention had not even been put into force when reaction came and flung those laws into the waste-paper basket.

During a revolution new forms of life will always germinate on the ruins of the old forms, but no Government will ever be able to find their expression *so long as these forms will not have taken a definite shape during the work itself of reconstruction* which must be going on in thousands of spots at the same time. Who guessed—who, in fact, could have guessed—before 1789 the rôle going to be played by the Municipalities and the Commune of Paris in the revolutionary events of 1789-1793? It is impossible to legislate for the future. All we can do is to vaguely guess its essential tendencies and clear the road for it.

It is evident that in understanding the problem of the Social Revolution in this way, Anarchism cannot let itself be seduced by a programme that offers as its aim: "The conquest of the power now in the hands of the State."

We know that this conquest is not possible by peaceful means. The middle class will not give up its power without a struggle. It will resist. And in proportion as Socialists will become part of the Government, and share power with the middle class, their Socialism will grow paler and paler. This is, indeed, what Socialism is rapidly doing. Were this not so, the middle classes, who are very much more powerful numerically and intellectually than most Socialists imagine them to be, would not share their power with the Socialists.

On the other hand, we also know that if an insurrection succeeded in giving to France, to England, or to Germany a provisional Socialist Government, such a Government, without the spontaneous constructive activity of the people, would be absolutely powerless; and it would soon become a hindrance and a check to the revolution.

P. KROPOTKIN

("Modern Science and Anarchism.")

THE SITUATION IN SPAIN.

The new general strike in Barcelona was caused by the "Captain-General" refusing to liberate the mobilised workers who had refused to work, and had been arrested. Hundreds of workers have been imprisoned. The employers, united to the military reaction, the government, and the clergy, wish to exterminate the rebels, but that is impossible.

Bravo Portillo the new chief of police to deal with the Anarchists and Syndicalists, who was arrested as a German spy, having been denounced with documents in *Solidaridad Obrera*, is now at the service of the "Captain General," and is the one who decrees the arrests.

Angel Pestaña, editor of *Solidaridad Obrera*, which was published daily, clandestinely, during martial law, has been arrested, no doubt owing to someone's treachery. Another militant was arrested and condemned the same day to hard labour for life. The military censorship does not allow the Press to publish any of its barbarities. The compositors of Madrid have also imposed the "Red Censorship," preventing the publication of anything that may prejudice the workers of Spain or any other country.

In many localities all prominent workers have been arrested. In Seville, amongst many others imprisoned is P. Vallina, well known in London, and no one knows where they are kept.

Maura, Ferrer's assassin, has replaced Romanones in the government, the latter having proved to be no better than the former. All this will not save the Spanish bourgeoisie, which is condemned to disappear shortly.

AN APPEAL FROM RUSSIA.

[The following paragraphs are taken from "Are You a Trade Unionist?" An appeal to British workers. By Lenin and Tchitcherine. Price 1d. Published by the People's Russian Information Bureau, 152 Fleet Street, E.C.4.]

In October last we, the workers of Russia, swept the capitalists out of power, and declared that Russia belongs to the whole of the Russian people.

We are not going to grow food for the rich to feed, or weave cloth for the rich to wear. The people will enjoy the product of their labour.

Can you wonder that the capitalists of all countries should hate us. We have shattered their dreams of the vast fortunes to be made out of the great stores of natural wealth contained in our country.

Besides, if they allow us to remain in existence, will not the workers in the other countries follow suit, and do as we have done?

They have decided therefore to crush us before we have time to consolidate our position. And you, English Trade Unionists, will be used for this purpose.

The Russian capitalists do not stand an earthly chance against us by themselves. But your capitalists know that their interests are the same as those of the Russian capitalists, and have come to their assistance.

Why do you not recognise your class interest in the same way? You as Trade Unionists are fighting your capitalists, we have settled our account with ours.

What are you going to do? Are you going to undo the work we have commenced? Are you going to do the dirty work of your enemies, the capitalist class? Or will you remain loyal to your own class—the working class—and support our effort to secure the world for labour?

Remember! By fighting us you are not fighting for your country, but for the capitalists whom your fellow Trade Unionists at home are fighting. By fighting us you are fighting your fellow workers. Every blow you strike against us is a blow against yourselves. If you crush us, you will only succeed in strengthening the power of your capitalists to rob you and exploit you.

Fellow workers, on whose side are you—the workers' or the masters'?

Willesden Freedom League.

A SOCIAL AND DANCE

Will be held at Leopold Road Schools, Church Road, Willesden, on Saturday, May 17. Commence 7 p.m. prompt. Admission by ticket, 1s. (tax extra). Buses No. 8 and 18 to Church Road. Tickets will be sent from FREEDOM Office on receipt of cash and stamped envelope.

PAMPHLETS RECEIVED.

An Eye-Witness from Russia. By John Rickman, M.A. 3d. People's Russian Information Bureau, 152, Fleet Street, London, E.C. 4.

Dr. Rickman's articles, reprinted from the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Labour Leader*, give one a clearer view of life under the Bolshevik's rule than any we have read. His sympathy and sense of humour enabled him to grasp the essential facts, and saved him from becoming a rabid partisan. He says that the majority of the peasants with whom he came into contact were quite prepared to accept the Bolshevik Government and allow it a fair trial; and Dr. Rickman's statement of the manner in which the Bolsheviks overcame many difficult situations proves the wonderful energy and insight of the Revolutionists. His profession as a doctor brought him into close touch with the peasants, a fact which gives his articles a greater value.

Housing and the Workers' Revolution. By E. Sylvia Pankhurst. 6d. (A comparison of housing conditions in Capitalist Britain and Bolshevik Russia.—*Rebel Ireland.* 3d. (Deals with the Easter Rebellion in Dublin and the Irish Convention in 1916).—*Hands off Russia.* 2d. (A Report of Mr. I. Zangwill's witty speech at the Albert Hall on February 8 last. These three pamphlets are published by the Workers' Socialist Federation, 400, Old Ford Road, London, E. 3.

Self-Determination for India. Published by the Indian Home Rule League Office, 1, Robert Street, Adelphi, London, W.C. 2. (A plea for Home Rule for India as a part of the British Commonwealth, with a status equal to that of all other parts.)

MONEY STILL REQUIRED.

The demand for our literature is steadily increasing, but owing to lack of funds we are unable to reprint the pamphlets most in demand. We really must have more cash to carry on our work, and meet the demand for Anarchist literature. Take up a special May Day collection for our funds, and let it be the first of regular monthly collections. And talking about "God and the State," by Bakunin—would you like to see it reprinted? Well, send us as much as you can spare and we will get on with the job. Received up to April 23: E.M., 2s.; H. W. Journet, 14s. 6d.; T.S., 2s. 6d.; F. Goulding, 1s.; Zero, 2s. 6d.; R. Hawkin, 5s.; T. Foxall, 3s.; W. S. van Valkenburgh, 4s.

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