

Freedom

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NOTES.

The War in Ireland.

The Government has decided to force a new Coercion Bill through Parliament, which will place Irishmen under the heel of the military authorities. The situation is moving swiftly to a climax, and at the present moment all the preliminaries of open warfare are taking place. On one side we see the people of Ireland united in their hatred of and opposition to the alien rule which has been their great curse for centuries, and on the other side the British Government determined to maintain the privileges of an alien clique by means of all the murderous instruments which science has placed in its hands. Even if the British Government should crush Sinn Fein and the Irish Labour movement, the history of past centuries proves that it can never crush the Irish desire for independence; and in a few years the movement will spring into life again. The Irish papers show that in the South and West the Sinn Feiners have driven out the police and organised their own civil and criminal courts, and to all intents and purposes the Irish Republic is already in existence in those parts. The sittings of these courts are carried through in the regular manner. One of their principal functions is the settlement of land disputes, their decisions being accepted by all parties concerned. This is not the Anarchist solution, as private property and profit-making are still recognised; but it refutes the old slander that if the British Government were to withdraw from Ireland chaos would be the immediate result. Parliament rises in a few days, and it is certain that the Government will then commence the "drastic" action at which Lloyd George has hinted.

The Boy Scouts.

During the first week of this month Boy Scouts from all parts of the world are joining in what they call an International "Jamboree" in London. At the inaugural luncheon on July 30 Sir Samuel Waring said those present were the representatives of twenty-one nations and a million of Boy Scouts. The object of the movement was to take hold of the boy when he was young and to train him into a good citizen.

"How many boys there were who, for want of discipline and example and good associations, drifted into evil ways, developed views antagonistic to the welfare and stability of society, and became the active enemies of ordered government! The Boy Scout movement was the best plan yet devised for averting this danger. . . . He regarded it as an effective system of national insurance against the subversive doctrines and wild nostrums for social inequalities which periodically swept over the world to the peril of civilisation itself. . . . A movement which formed a defensive wall round established institutions."

Thus do the wealthy classes use for their own purpose a movement originally started by Seton-Thompson purely for the purpose of teaching boys a love of Nature and the open air and kindness to animals. Although the movement is not directly under the control of the military authorities, the Boy Scouts were employed by them in many ways during the war, and sooner or later the War Office will capture them for its own evil ends.

The Communist Parties.

Two Communist parties are now in existence in this country. One was formed a few weeks ago by the Workers' Socialist Federation and a few smaller groups, and the other by the British Socialist Party and some members of the Socialist Labour Party, at a meeting held at the Cannon Street Hotel, London, on July 31. At the last-named meeting everything seems to have been carried out in conformity with a cut-and-dried programme, the delegates being tied down by the invitations to the gathering to accept the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the other items of the Third International of Moscow. The chief difference between the two parties is the advisability of using the Parliamentary tactics favoured by Lenin, Sylvia Pankhurst's party repudiating Parliament, whilst the British Socialist Party insisted

on it as a plank in the programme of the new party. We do not notice any change in the methods of the latter party, who evidently consider that Social Democracy has such a bad odour now that a new name is advisable. But they are still Marxians to the backbone, and still think that a Government is necessary to carry the Revolution to a successful issue. They decided, by a small majority, to apply for affiliation to the Labour Party, on Lenin's recommendation; but as he urged it on the grounds that thereby they could smash the Labour Party and take its place in the bosom of the workers, it is hardly likely that affiliation will be granted. Both the new parties' programmes mean simply a change of governors, and therefore we Anarchists can feel little enthusiasm for either of them. We do not wish for new governors; we simply wish to be free to work out our lives in our own way.

The Shadow of Hunger.

Everything points to hard times for the workers in the coming winter. From all parts of the country come reports of an increasing number of unemployed, both men and women. This gives the capitalists their chance of forcing a reduction of wages, which was impossible whilst trade was flourishing and workers were scarce. The building trade, the engineering trade, and the miners are in for stiff fights over wages questions, and it looks as if the masters are going to give battle all along the line. The food question will also be a cause of trouble, as owing to bad harvests and stoppage of exportation of wheat from South America there is likely to be a great scarcity, with a tremendous jump in prices of everything. What foolish people we are! Surely the submarine war should have opened our eyes to the necessity of growing our own food in this country, but nothing has been done in the matter. We are still dependent on other countries for our food, the supply of which might almost cease in the event of a war with America. It is possible to grow in this country all the food we require. Kropotkin, in "Fields, Factories, and Workshops," says:—

"If the cultivable area of the United Kingdom were cultivated as the soil is cultivated on the average in Belgium, the United Kingdom would have food for at least 37,000,000 inhabitants. . . . If the population of this country came to be doubled, all that would be required for producing the food for 90,000,000 inhabitants would be to cultivate the soil as it is cultivated on the best farms of this country, in Lombardy, and in Flanders."

But, of course, we would first have to get rid of our landlords.

Women Magistrates.

On July 19 the Lord Chancellor issued a list of women magistrates for England, Wales, and Scotland. In the list are the names of some women well known in the Socialist and Labour Movement—Dr. Ethel Bentham, Miss Margaret Bondfield, Miss Margaret Macmillan, Miss Mary Macarthur, and a few others. It is unnecessary to add that the bulk of the new magistrates are women from the upper and middle classes, who can be relied on to protect the rights of the propertied classes. The Labour and Socialist women may—or may not—think they can serve the interests of the workers by accepting the position of magistrate, but in our opinion the jobs have only been given to them to flatter their vanity and to give the impression that the rights of the workers will be looked after on the bench. As a matter of fact, however, they can do nothing for them. Magistrates have to administer Acts of Parliament which have been passed purposely to protect the interests of the wealthy classes, and their decisions are strictly defined by those Acts. Besides, magistrates seldom sit on the bench alone; there are usually several together, and the solitary representative of Labour will be outvoted every time. These women magistrates are intended to be props of the capitalist system, and those who hold their seats for any length of time may be safely counted as supporters of capitalism. Justice will never be rendered to the workers by courts of law, but by sweeping away the system of which they are a buttress.

Kropotkin says, Stop the War!

[The following message to British workers, by Peter Kropotkin, was brought from Russia by Miss Margaret Bondfield, a member of the British Labour Delegation, who visited him at his home at Dmitroff, near Moscow. His criticism of Soviet rule and his appeal to the workers to stop the war against Russia will be read with interest.]

I have been asked whether I have not some message to send to the working men of the Western world? Surely, there is much to say about the current events in Russia, and much to learn from them. The message might be long. But I shall indicate only some main points.

First of all, the working men of the civilised world and their friends in the other classes ought to induce their Governments entirely to abandon the idea of an armed intervention in the affairs of Russia—whether open or disguised, whether military or in the shape of subventions to different nations.

Russia is now living through a revolution of the same depth and the same importance as the British nation underwent in 1639-1648, and France in 1789-1794; and every nation should refuse to play the shameful part that Great Britain, Prussia, Austria, and Russia played during the French Revolution.

Moreover, it must be kept in view that the Russian Revolution—while it is trying to build up a society where the whole produce of the joint efforts of Labour, technical skill and scientific knowledge should go entirely to the Commonwealth itself—is not a mere accident in the struggle of different parties. It is something that has been prepared by nearly a century of Communist and Socialist propaganda, since the times of Robert Owen, Saint-Simon, and Fourier; and although the attempt at introducing the new society by means of the dictatorship of one party is apparently doomed to be a failure, it nevertheless must be recognised that the Revolution has already introduced into our everyday life new conceptions about the rights of Labour, its true position in society, and the duties of every citizen, which have come to stay.

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Altogether, not only the working men, but all the progressive elements of the civilised nations ought to put a stop to the support hitherto given to the opponents of the Revolution. Not that there should be nothing to oppose in the methods of the Bolshevik Government! Far from that! But because every armed intervention of a foreign Power necessarily results in a reinforcement of the dictatorial tendencies of the rulers, and paralyses the efforts of those Russians who are ready to aid Russia, independently of the Government, in the reconstruction of its life on new lines.

The evils naturally inherent in party dictatorship have thus been increased by the war conditions under which this party maintained itself. The state of war has been an excuse for strengthening the dictatorial methods of the party, as well as its tendency to centralise every detail of life in the hands of the Government, with the result that immense branches of the usual activities of the nation have been brought to a standstill. The natural evils of State Communism are thus increased tenfold under the excuse that all misfortunes of our life are due to the intervention of foreigners.

Besides, I must also mention that a military intervention of the Allies, if it is continued, will certainly develop in Russia a bitter feeling against the Western nations, and this will some day be utilised by their enemies in possible future conflicts. Such a bitterness is already developing.

In short, it is high time that the West-European nations should enter into direct relations with the Russian nation. And in this direction you—the working classes and the advanced portions of all nations—ought to have your say.

One word more about the general question. A renewal of relations between the European and American nations and Russia certainly must not mean the admission of a supremacy of the Russian nation over those nationalities of which the empire of the Russian Tsars was composed. Imperial Russia is dead, and will not return to life. The future of the various provinces of which the empire was composed lies in the direction of a great Federation. The natural territories of the different parts of that Federation are quite distinct for those of us who are acquainted with the history of Russia, its ethnography, and its economic life; and all attempts to bring the constituent parts of the Russian Empire—Finland, the Baltic Provinces, Lithuania, the Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, Siberia, and so on—under one central rule are surely doomed to failure. The future of what was the Russian Empire is in the direction of a Federation of independent units. It would, therefore, be in the interest of all that the Western nations should declare beforehand that they are recognising the right of self-government for every portion of what was once the Russian Empire.

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As to my own views on the subject, they go still further. I see the coming, in a near future, of a time when every portion of that Federation will itself be a federation of free rural communes and free cities; and I believe still that portions of Western Europe will soon take the lead in that direction.

Now, as regards our present economical and political situation—the

Russian Revolution being a continuation of the two great Revolutions in England and in France—Russia is trying now to make a step in advance of where France stopped, when it came to realise in life what was described then as *real equality* (*égalité de fait*), that is economical equality.

Unfortunately, the attempt to make that step has been undertaken in Russia under the strongly-centralised *Dictatorship of one party*—the Social Democratic Maximalists; and the attempt was made on the lines taken in the utterly Centralist and Jacobinist conspiracy of Babeuf. About this attempt I am bound frankly to tell you that, in my opinion, the attempt to build up a Communist Republic on the lines of strongly-centralised State Communism under the iron rule of the Dictatorship of a party is ending in a failure. We learn in Russia *how Communism cannot be introduced*, even though the populations, sick of the old regime, opposed no active resistance to the experiment made by the new rulers.

The idea of Soviets, that is, of Labour and Peasant Councils, first promoted during the attempted revolution of 1905 and immediately realised by the revolution of February, 1917, as soon as the Tsar's regime broke down—the idea of such councils controlling the political and economical life of the country is a grand idea. The more so as it leads necessarily to the idea of these Councils being composed of all those who take a *real part* in the production of national wealth by their own personal effort.

But so long as a country is governed by the dictatorship of a party, the Labour and Peasant Councils evidently lose all their significance. They are reduced to the passive rôle played in times past by "General States" and Parliaments, when they were convoked by the King and had to oppose an all-powerful King's Council.

A Labour Council ceases to be a free and valuable adviser when there is no free Press in the country, and we have been in this position for nearly two years, the excuse for such conditions being the state of war. More than that, the Peasant and Labour Councils lose all their significance when no free electoral agitation precedes the elections, and the elections are made under the pressure of party dictatorship. Of course, the usual excuse is that a dictatorial rule was unavoidable as a means of combatting the old regime. But such a rule evidently becomes a formidable drawback as soon as the Revolution proceeds towards the building up of a new society on a new economic basis: it becomes a death sentence on the new construction.

The ways to be followed for overthrowing an already weakened Government and taking its place are well known from history, old and modern. But when it comes to build up quite new forms of life—especially new forms of production and exchange—without having any examples to imitate; when everything has to be worked out by men on the spot, then an all-powerful centralised Government which undertakes to supply every inhabitant with every lamp-glass and every match to light the lamp proves absolutely incapable of doing that through its functionaries, no matter how countless they may be—it becomes a nuisance. It develops such a formidable bureaucracy that the French bureaucratic system, which requires the intervention of forty functionaries to sell a tree felled by a storm on a public road, becomes a trifle in comparison. This is what we now learn in Russia. And this is what you, the working men of the West, can and must avoid by all means, since you care for the success of a social reconstruction, and sent here your delegates to see how a Social Revolution works in real life.

The immense constructive work that is required from a Social Revolution cannot be accomplished by a central Government, even if it had to guide it in its work something more substantial than a few Socialist and Anarchist booklets. It requires the knowledge, the brains, and the willing collaboration of a mass of local and specialised forces, which alone can cope with the diversity of economical problems in their local aspects. To sweep away that collaboration and to trust to the genius of party dictators is to destroy all the independent nuclei, such as Trade Unions (called in Russia "Professional Unions") and the local distributive Co-operative organisations—turning them into bureaucratic organs of the party, as is being done now. But this is the way *not* to accomplish the Revolution; the way to render its realisation impossible. And this is why I consider it my duty earnestly to warn you from taking such a line of action.

Imperialist conquerors of all nationalities may desire that the populations of the ex-empire of Russia should remain in miserable economic conditions as long as possible, and thus be doomed to supply Western and Middle Europe with raw stuffs, while the Western manufacturers, producing manufactured goods, should cash all the benefits that the population of Russia might otherwise obtain from their work. But the working classes of Europe and America, and the intellectual nuclei of these countries, surely understand that only by the force of conquest could they keep Russia in that subordinate condition. At the same time, the sympathies with which our Revolution was met all over Europe and America show that you were happy to greet in Russia a new member of the international comradeship of nations. And you surely soon see that it is in the interest of the workers of all the world that Russia should issue as soon as possible from the conditions that paralyse now her development.

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A few words more. The last war has inaugurated new conditions of life in the civilised world. Socialism is sure to make considerable

progress, and new forms of a more independent life surely will be soon worked out on the lines of local political independence and free scope in social reconstruction, either in a pacific way, or by revolutionary means if the intelligent portions of the civilised nations do not join in the task of an unavoidable reconstruction.

But the success of this reconstruction will depend to a great extent upon the possibility of a close co-operation of the different nations. For this co-operation the labouring classes of all nations must be closely united, and for that purpose the idea of a great International of all working men of the world must be renewed; not in the shape of a Union directed by one single party, as was the case in the Second International, and is again in the Third. Such Unions have, of course, full reason to exist, but besides them and uniting them all there must be a Union of all the Trade Unions of the world—of all those who produce the wealth of the world—united, in order to free the production of the world from its present enslavement to Capital.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

France.

The latest issue of *Le Libertaire* announces a Conference by the Parisian Anarchists, and urges a National Conference. Italy is held up as an example of what can be done if the movement will but rouse itself from the comparative lethargy into which it has sunk during and since the war. It is claimed that the General Confederation of Labour (C. G. T.), in which Anarchists have been active, no longer affords a good field for propaganda, as it has fallen into politics and is dominated by the reactionary element. What is needed now is active self-assertion by the Anarchist movement as such; an uncompromising agitation that shall set clearly before the public our principles and programme, destructive and constructive, and the direct methods by which we seek to realise it. Nothing, for example, can be more deplorable than that a writer of Henri Barbusse's reputation and revolutionary instincts should be attacking Anarchism on the ground that, as a conception, "it has not the force required to resist bourgeois oppression, and offers no substitute to that oppressive system." Content answers him most effectively. Our entire contention is that the present regime of authority and compulsion, imposed by the privileged and powerful on the disinherited and weak, can be combatted successfully only by those who maintain the cause of freedom as against authority, mutual consent as against orders issued from above, and equality of opportunity as against the present law-enforced inequalities, which, by rendering the masses helpless, enable the artificially favoured few to rob them at every turn. Only such an uncompromising programme can cure the sickness now ravaging society, as Content shows. For the rest, of whom are the ruling classes everywhere, at bottom, most afraid? And what hope have they except that the public will be too stupid and too hidebound to accept this programme? *Le Libertaire* announces weekly sales of 18,000 copies, and is clamouring for a great increase.

In addition to its carefully edited reviews and foreign notes, *Les Temps Nouveaux* contains some thought-provoking articles worthy of serious study. Christien Cornélissen reminds us that the "councils of exploitation," through which the Russian workers were to manage their own affairs in factory and workshop, have been abolished officially, and that the "Soviets of workers and peasants" now exist only as a Parliamentary institution for the registration of the decrees issued by the central Government in Moscow. M. Isidine has an illuminative article on "Russia and Poland," in which he shows that Bakunin, Herzen, and all the great Russian revolutionists invariably stood for Polish freedom, and that the Russian Revolution's first act, after the overthrow of Tsarism, was to proclaim Poland's independence. Paul Reclus writes with what is apparently intimate knowledge of the Arabs. He regards them as almost hopelessly divided among themselves and ferociously eager to prey on one another. "Foreign conquest alone gives this people the idea of unity." Their antipathy to the foreigner springs not so much from the religious as from the land question. This he regards as being, with them, the knot of the social problem. Much space is devoted to a controversy between Malatesta and Pierrot, but it can hardly be called a controversy, so largely are they in agreement. "Strange as it may seem to him who has not grasped Anarchism's fundamental concept," writes Malatesta, "it is, in truth, the Socialists who stand for violence, while we are opposed to all violence, save when we are forced into it for self-defence. . . . We are opposed to Authority because, practically, Authority is the violence of the few as against the many; but we should be opposed to Authority even if it were, in accordance with the democratic Utopia, the violence of the many as against the few."

Mexico.

Carranza's assassination has raised interest in Mexican affairs once more to boiling point. The *Nation* (New York) devotes almost a whole issue to them, and innumerable publications dealing with this subject find their way to us. They present a maze of conflicting views

and facts through which it is impossible for the ordinary outsider to find his way. So long as this continues there cannot be either any public interest or public opinion worthy of the name. Yet the revolutionary movement which has been wracking Mexico for nearly fifteen years is of the first importance. We attempt here to simplify the problem, thereby showing its importance.

This movement began with the overthrow of President Diaz—a tremendous achievement, for Diaz was recognised as the most powerful military dictator in the Western hemisphere; and his rule had maintained itself, apparently unshakeable, for over thirty years. The first man to attack Diaz openly was Ricardo Magon, then a journalist in Mexico City. He did it at an anti-clerical convention, which stampeded in consternation. He was joined subsequently by his brother, Enrique Magon. The brothers were uncompromising Communist Anarchists, and for a long time their favourite method of propaganda was the circulation of Kropotkin's works. Their reliance was on Mexico's peons—the agricultural workers, who constitute the vast bulk of her population. Their advice to the peons never varied. It was always: "Take the land. Begin to work it immediately, that you may not starve; but work it with your rifles on your backs, for they will try to drive you off." It was sound advice, for the land question was everything—as it has been in Russia and elsewhere. It was humane advice, for it has saved Mexico from the famines which have crushed other revolutionary countries wherein rulers and dictators still persist in running the proletariat's own business for the proletariat's own good. Naturally, it brought the Magons into conflict with the authorities, and since then they have spent most of their lives in gaol.

Zapata, whose chief adviser was Palafox, a fanatical admirer of Kropotkin, took a similar stand. Himself originally a small farmer who had been ousted and punished most cruelly by Diaz, he was in closer touch with the peons than were the Magons. He established several millions of them on the land in Morelos and adjoining States, and, to the best of our knowledge, they are still there, in full and free possession. Everyone of the semi-Socialist Governments, from Madero's onwards, which succeeded Diaz made war on Zapata. Under Carranza he was finally defeated and killed.

The Mexican peon, like the Russian peasant, cares nothing for politics, being, like him, illiterate and unable to read his ballot. Nevertheless, like him, and unlike the mal-educated proletariat of our more "civilised" countries, the peon has still the commonsense to recognise that as a landless animal he cannot call his life his own. With that simple thought dominant, as it still is, he was able, again like the Russian peasant, to make a Revolution the tremors of which were felt throughout the world. It is often said that successful revolutions only follow a disastrous war, and Russia is cited as an example. Mexico made hers when no war clouds were in sight.

No man living has more stubborn tenacity of character than has the Mexican Indian, and the road on which he has started is the road he will pursue persistently. But it is as difficult for him to "get together" and enforce his will as it is for the Arab, and it may be that American plutocracy, acting directly or through its puppets in Mexico City, will crush him out of existence. It can no more afford to tolerate conditions as they have been, and are, in Mexico than British Imperialism can afford to tolerate Soviet rule and propaganda in Russia. East and West the problem is the same, and East and West plutocracy relies on the sword for its solution. Carranza, like all his predecessors, fortified himself behind an army which he strengthened and increased assiduously. His successor, Obregon, will follow suit.

Man is not a Commodity.

(To the Editor of FREEDOM.)

DEAR COMRADE—After reading our comrade Tamlyn's article, "Man is not a Commodity," I am of the opinion that our veteran comrade has had the wind put up him by the exponents of Marx when they affirm the scientific fact that labour-power is just as much a commodity as beef, potatoes, or second-hand clothes. Personally, I consider it absolutely necessary to demonstrate this fact in order to prove to any working-class audience the fallacy of agitating or striking merely for higher wages with a view to getting even with the master class, because, as we are all aware, wages mean simply the cost of subsistence and propagation of the slave class. Consequently, in order to dispel this will-o'-the-wisp chase, let us be candid and give Marx his due. In "Wage-Labour and Capital" he convinces me that the capitalist buys labour-power on exactly the same conditions as he does any other commodity, with just this difference, that whereas beef or potatoes are bought by the pound, labour-power is bought by the hour, day, or week; but in essence the contract remains the same, i.e., it is bought by the capitalist and sold by the worker, and by competition between the two the worker finds by bitter experience that, whatever he manages to wring from the capitalist, he has only just enough to keep body and soul together from week to week.

Really, I do not see why we should denounce Marx for merely telling us the truth. Commodities are helpless, says Tamlyn. Are they? Then the Russian Revolution must prove an absolute failure. But Tamlyn knows better. He knows that the Russian proletariat have risen like lions, and furthermore that, in spite of the international capitalists, they intend to hold their own. I hold no brief for the pseudo-Marxians, Germans and English, who went over *en bloc* to the master class. But, although a Marxian, I have been an anti-Parliamentarian for a number of years. To overthrow Capitalism we have to recognise that there is only one class necessary upon the earth, and to eliminate all other classes if they have not got the good manners to realise the position. This can only be done by the direct action of the conscious proletariat.—Yours fraternally,

F. H. WARNE.

FREEDOM.

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THE WAR ON RUSSIA.

At the moment of writing the British and French Governments are debating as to whether they shall declare open war against Soviet Russia in place of their thinly veiled war which has been in operation for the past two years. All the attacks of the Russian adventurers, as well as that of the Poles, having failed ignominiously, the capitalists recognise that only by war on the grand scale can they hope to crush the Red armies. They realise the magnitude of their task, and, what is far more dangerous for them, they realise the antagonism of their workers at home to a war on the Russian workers. Therefore the British Government is seeking territorial and business concessions from the Russian Government, and also guarantees against Bolshevik propaganda in the East, as their price for making "peace." The French Government, hounded on by its Jingoës, wishes to obtain the military control of Europe—which British statesmen are trying to prevent—and for this purpose are anxious to make Poland a French colony. The Polish army is really a part of the French army, officered and paid by the French. Both the British and French Governments want to smash the Bolsheviks, but each tries to do it by different methods and to suit their own ends.

Whatever happens, however, the war against Bolshevism or Communism must continue. It is foolish to expect that International Capitalism would ever tolerate a Communist Government. Russia is a standing danger to the profit-hunters and the wealthy classes, for its success in holding its own will stimulate the workers of other countries to follow its example. The events of the past six years have bred a fierce hatred of Capitalism in every country, and the memory of those who fell in the war has stimulated a feeling of revenge against those who were responsible for that world-wide massacre. The Governments of the world are cowering behind barricades of bayonets and barbed wire, knowing the fate that awaits them if those barricades are broken down.

This war against Russia is simply an intensification of the war which is always going on between the wealthy classes and the workers whom they exploit, and British and French workers must realise that Russia's enemies are their enemies. The capitalists of the world are seeking to refasten on the Russian workers the chains which they broke when Tsardom fell with a crash. For two years the Russian workers have appealed to the workers of the world to help them in their struggle. Now the hour has struck when the British workers must decide one way or the other. If they throw in their lot with their Russian comrades, it means they must work for a Social Revolution in this country. But if they refuse and allow all the horrors of a blockade and another bloody war to be suffered by the Russian workers and peasants, the British Labour movement will merit the contempt and execration of future generations.

If open war is declared on Russia, take no notice of the lies of the Press. From Land's End to John o' Groats the prostitutes of journalism will be mobilised to throw dust in your eyes. Martial law will reign, and unless you resist militarism will ride roughshod over all the petty "liberties" you have cherished in the past. Do not have any illusions about the humanity of your rulers. It will be war to the knife. If the capitalist class wins, reaction will reign supreme for many a long year; but if the workers win, the rotten edifice of Capitalism will be swept away, leaving the ground clear for building a society where co-operation will replace wage-slavery and voluntary agreement replace law and authority.

British workers, this very day you must choose! Choose wisely, but choose quickly! To-morrow will be too late!

THE PRESENT SITUATION IN AUSTRIA.

By A CORRESPONDENT.

The situation in what is now called Austria—a part of the German-speaking territory of historical Austria, dissolved in October, 1918—can best be described by saying that from a wreck this odd fragment of a country is rapidly becoming a derelict: there is no more hopeful way to mark an inevitable, fateful decline, a certain doom. One of the most elementary and essential conditions of life for any organism whatever is proportion, relative harmony between the different parts, their sources of strength, a fitting general *milieu*, etc. All this was granted with great care by the Paris Conference to the States which they wished to favour, Tchekho-Slovakia and others; they had the pickings of old Austria and took all that was solid and valuable, be the population ever so German-speaking. The leavings after this feast are necessarily an incongruous mass; they could have been saved from ruin by joining the large economic organism of Germany, to which country they had always been affiliated until 1866. This they were and are forbidden to do, and they are condemned to live a so-called independent life. Some may think that independence is, after all, a good thing not to be despised; I should say that if you abandon an infant in a desert spot or send your old parents from the house into the street, this is the kind of "independence" meted out to Austria.

These six millions here are excluded from modern life, whilst living in the centre of Europe; in most cases they are even unable to leave that country and try to find some other place anywhere on this wide globe. Local production is strangled, coal being doled out by the surrounding coal-owning States in quantities hardly sufficient for cooking, quite insufficient for heating, lighting, and industrial production. Foreign imports have to pay the tenfold, twentyfold, thirtyfold price, according to the relative value of money in the rich countries; German and Tchek imports cost the price multiplied by 4½ and by 3, and so on. If this excludes for most people the bare necessities of life, so much more it excludes all intellectual intercourse. Books and papers in the Western languages, nay, even all that is printed in the people's own language, in German, in Germany, are now luxuries; and if individuals are thus starved and stunted intellectually, this also applies to universities, scientific institutions, libraries, laboratories, etc., which are all at their wits' ends, unable to follow modern thought and research. Some of those thus affected try to get away by any means, others give it up and die off or sometimes hang themselves; others—still worse—sink and degenerate, the fittest evolving into a lower race. The talk of an evolution to a higher race is over here; that is left to the rich victorious or neutral countries—here a new lower race of adapted pariahs or helots is in the making. A short time ago a lawyer proposed, in the lawyers' weekly organ, the recognition by the State of the right to suicide: if a person was determined to leave this bright world, the State would authorise a doctor to facilitate his death. I call that socialisation of suicide, about the only hopeful socialisation I am likely to see; one may also call it the lethal chamber of the Dogs' Home for all. This may show people abroad how happy we all are here.

Necessarily the rich grow more grasping, the strong more brutal, and the weak go more to the wall. A small degree of misfortune and danger shared by all creates solidarity and mutual help; a large—a too large—degree of misfortune destroys every finer feeling and makes beasts of men. The controversy between Darwin's struggle for life and Kropotkin's and others mutual aid is really solved here before our eyes: in fair weather there is room and scope for mutual aid, in foul weather the struggle sets in and becomes fearful.

Thus this small mutilated territory is gradually further breaking to pieces, the richer districts repudiating solidarity with the non-agricultural districts and the towns, peasants and workers hating each other and arming themselves one against the other. Much of these struggles and intrigues is fought on the broad back and at the cost of Vienna, the secular accumulations of which city being the coveted spoils of all.

This centrifugal machinery, a country from which all would escape and to which all are chained now, is governed by a coalition of two parties which detest each other—by Social Democrats and by Clericals-Antisemites-Agrarians, the quintessence of all that is reactionary; Liberals, Radicals, non-Clerical Germans, etc., are rigorously excluded. As each of the two "coalised" parties strives for omnipotence, they get hold for their party friends of whatever they can get by their political power, to which the other "coalised" party promptly replies by seizing for themselves something of similar or larger value. This sharing-out goes on merrily—this is the local way of making retrenchments.

A "system" like this is necessarily the paradise of bureaucracy. The heyday of officials has come everywhere in this progressive age. They are heart and soul in favour of "revolutions," "liberations," new State creations of the 1918-1919 type. Break a State in two, in four, in six pieces and you will require twice, four, six times the number of State officials, and they will all have so much less to do; besides the new States will be so infinitely State-proud that they cannot have enough officials, old and new. The old ones will never leave, they will stay and impart the benefit of their experience (in other words, they will perpetuate the old system, adorning it with the waste, brutality, and grasping spirit of the new one). Thus all roads now lead to the

State, which is more powerful and—need I say it?—more wasteful, incompetent, hateful than ever.

This absorbs money which is turned out by the printing press, it is true, but which is also gathered in *con amore* from all those who are not yet officials; for the happy stage when everyone will be the others tax-gatherer or printer of money, in the Scilly Islanders' old way, is not yet reached. So when, in April, the officials wanted a rise of salary to the extent of two milliards of kronas, they got it, and railway fares and rates, postage, etc., were doubled; in May they got another milliard, which the printing press supplied. In June the tram workers got a rise of 43 per cent.; the tram fares, from 30 heller a year ago, have since gone up to 60, 100, 200, and now to 300 heller. Whoever wishes to cross one of the numerous new frontiers (where up till November, 1918, frontiers had not existed for centuries, and very often never at all) has to pay such enormous sums for passport expenses that two or three journeys, I am quite sure, will cost more on this account alone than a slave's ransom would have cost in the old days. And that slave would have been free, whilst we, searched and stripped at the officials' pleasure at these frontiers, pay but for returning to our slavery here at home or to hover like beggars in an adjoining country where our money has no buying power.

All this is decorated with glittering Republican and pseudo-Socialist phraseology, but it would be a libel on any reactionary State of old, a libel on the dark ages, to say that it is like the worst system ever known in history—for it is worse. Ruin us—ruined we are already; enslave us—slaves we are, since there is no name for anything more unhappy than slaves ever were; but do not stifle us, reduce us to permanent gasping for mere air like poor asthmatic sufferers—this is too cruel. It involves, besides the acute suffering, permanent, inexorable decline and degeneration. Think of the children growing up these last twenty months who have no recollection of anything better, whose minds are feeding on this spectacle, and who have but the alternative to shrink and go under or to grow as bad as possible to be on top of a range of exploiters, rich or poor; for rich and poor—whatever flatterers of the people may choose to say—are frightfully alike now in a common degradation.

To me it is a mockery to speak of Socialism under these circumstances and to expect anything of a social commotion or revolution. If the inmates of the high fever ward of a hospital excite themselves mutually to some common demonstration, the result would be quite as pathological and much more steady and logical perhaps than what could happen here. Social Democracy here was always so absorbed in electioneering and party aggrandisement that Socialism was only skin-deep and nominal. About four weeks ago the above-mentioned coalition of Socialists and Clericals went to pieces because the Social Democrats supported their Secretary for War, who, without consulting his colleagues, issued a decree that would make the new "army" more a party organism than ever, and the other parties will not stand this. To solve the very long crisis there were all sorts of devices, and even a day of mystery, namely, when a Social Democratic proposition had been made that was so important that it had to be kept secret. When the secret was unveiled it came to this, that by a new sharing of the ministerial spoils twenty-one secretaries and under-secretaries would be created instead of the existing nineteen, who are generally considered to be three times the number required for this country, the poorest of the poor. Twenty-one high officials instead of nineteen—Dr. F. Adler proposed this; in 1916 he shot one minister—in 1920 he wants to create two new ones, of whom without this momentary situation no one ever dreamed. This is an example of the want of seriousness, the spirit of waste and greed, the desire to dominate by all means, which pervades everything.

Is there no hope? I cannot see any way out until the last resources are exhausted, which are drained by the all-encroaching State and the powerful new speculators, the profiteers of the Republic and of the Revolution, into whom the war profiteers have metamorphosed themselves to a man. What will come after that? A dispersal of this community that has weathered a thousand years? Work for foreign owners and shareholders and also the Entente, who, if ever any surplus (??) should be forthcoming, will present their "reparation" bill as by treaty? The president of the Reparation Commission arrived in Vienna a week or two ago, but as he found no Government for some time to come and most probably no assets whatever, he is reported to have left on a motor tour through the provinces, the very best thing he could do. He might even go once or twice round the globe before he returns; he will not find things much improved by then.

It is terrible that men do all this to men in time of peace, with systematic, coldblooded, bureaucratic cruelty, behind which lurks the callous indifference of some, the revengeful national hatred and ambition of others—all this in the presence of a world of fellow-men who to a great extent understand all this, see through it, wish to help us, and do help us, individually and collectively, as far as their help can go, and who are yet powerless, it seems, before the new masters of the globe and their cruel, hate-inspired advisers. Let none of those who can make the voice of humanity heard lose patience with this poor country, but redouble their efforts—the people here are powerless to help themselves.

June 30, 1920.

AMRITSAR'S MORAL.

"Power, like a devastating pestilence," wrote Shelley, using language exactly, as great poets do. The lust to dominate the lives of others and enslave them to the dominator's will—this is the passion, born of slavish thought and leading straight to individual and racial death, against which the whole Anarchist movement and all Anarchist philosophy are one united protest.

Think of the evil it has wrought and still is working! Look at the history of mankind and the castes that have climbed into the seats of power, beginning always as the Saviours of the people and ending always as the Juggernauts that crush them, body and soul, beneath murder-driven wheels. Starting, of course, with the Priesthood, more vital than any Militarism, because mental cunning invariably gets the better of brute force. And every priesthood begins by proclaiming the dignity of Man, the worth of the Individual, the incalculable value of each soul, each personality, however poor and humble, as a pearl beyond all price! Then God, the great autocrat, appears; the priest, his mouthpiece, must be obeyed; the Pope is infallible, and he who dares to doubt is a heretic for whom no suffering can be too great. Meanwhile what has become of the individual soul, whose welfare was the aim of all this struggle? There, at the feet of Power, it lies, a mangled corpse.

Appears the King; and he also, as our own legalists even now insist, can do no wrong. Against him also, "ruling by the divine grace of God," no action lies, though he may drive millions to their slaughter and strew the world with wreckage. But against him, ruling too largely by brute force, revolutions now and again succeed. Kingdoms come and go; but priestcraft, yielding only to slower and more uncertain mental growth, still lords it.

Round central suns satellites cluster, each shining with reflected glory. Proud aristocracies, with those military retinues which form their inevitable train; financial and industrial magnates, strong in the power of the purse; and, in these latter days, the politician who, playing on the aspirations of the masses, wheedles them into making him their spokesman. These also claim that they are essential, and can do no wrong.

To business, on which the very life of the community is supposed to hang, everything must yield, though entire races perish in the process. With caste and special privilege there must be no trifling, for they are the cement that binds the social structure. The soldier turns his guns on unarmed natives, or drops his bombs on helpless villages, and feels no twinge of conscience; for he is acting under orders, and Authority which issued the orders can do no wrong. And all this, with the physical ruin, mental degradation, and spiritual annihilation they involve, the politician necessarily endorses; for he is the upholder of the Government, which is indeed the firmament in which all these suns are set. Whatever else may happen, that heaven must be protected against impious invasion.

Early last year General Dyer dispersed a meeting of unarmed Hindus at Amritsar by turning his guns loose and shooting until his ammunition was exhausted. He has been relieved of office by the present Ministry, whose action was approved, though with much bitter opposition, by its supporters in the Commons. In the House of Lords that verdict has been reversed, and nothing could be more significant than the unanimity with which wealth and power, the Raj as it operates here and the Raj as it operates throughout the Empire, rallied instantly to the general's defence. The great daily paper that, above all others, represents them crowned him immediately a "martyr," and opened on his behalf a consolation fund, to which some £17,000 have been now contributed by men and women whose avowed creed, as shown by their published letters, is: "Those in authority, as representing our Empire, can do no wrong."

Against that the entire spirit of a growing age is necessarily in revolt; and with that spirit we Anarchists are wholly, inseparably, and outspokenly at one. We recognise none of these Infallibilities. We bend the knee to none of these Sanctities. As plainly and as courageously as we can we send our message to men and women of every race and creed and colour. Our message is that only when they shall have shaken off their present servility to Authority, and dared to assert their own individualities, will they begin to live.

SENEX.

A REMARKABLE PROPHECY.

Behind all European Socialism, pressing it on, looms up Russia.

Russian Socialism believes itself destined to inspire and guide the whole European movement.

"There are only two real questions," said Herzen,—"the social question and the Russian question; and these two are one. . . . Socialism will unite the two factions, the European revolutionary with the Panslavonian."

In the same article, Herzen says: "The deserts of the Wolga and the Oural have been, from all time, the bivouac of peoples in migration; their waiting-rooms and places of meeting; the laboratory of nations, where in silence destiny has prepared those swarms of savages, to let

them loose upon the dying peoples, upon civilisation in consumption, in order to make an end of them. . . . The Russian question is the new apparition of the barbarians, scenting the death agony, screaming their *memento mori* in the ears of the Old World, and ready to put it out of the way if it will not die of its own accord."

For this regenerating task, Slavic philosophy thinks the Slavic force has been held back so long in the history of Europe. These peoples are to inundate Europe with their ideas, to build on the decadent social system of the old world their own new world. The fundamental Russian institution is the Mir,—the collective proprietorship of the soil, and its equal and periodic apportionment among the members of the community. On this basis, the Russian Genius is seeking to rear the superstructure of her society. The people are expecting now an ukase to divide among them the whole Russian soil, still largely held by the aristocracy. "Land and Liberty" is the significant watchword of the revolution. Working men in distant cities keep their membership in the native commune, model their industrial organisations upon the Mir, and aspire to "a confederation of autonomous communes." Russian influence, according to a remarkable article in the *Contemporary Review* for August, 1881, is gradually dominating European Socialism. That is what might be expected of the youngest, freshest, largest race of Europe. And Russia is Communism.

"Is there," asked Herzen, "in the nineteenth century any other serious question besides that of Communism and the partition of the land?"

No wonder that Cavour said, as reported of him, that the Russian Commune will create more dangers to Western Europe than any army.

—REV. R. HEBER NEWTON, in *To-Day*, March, 1885.

Getting Ready for the "Reds."

The "Labour News Service" issued by the Labour Party publishes these two confidential memoranda circulated amongst the Metropolitan Police:—

Confidential Memorandum.

May 14th, 1920.

EXPLOSIVES, PISTOLS, ETC.

Superintendents should send in as early as possible the names, etc., of the officers whom they recommend, and who are qualified to give instructions in the use of Pistols. In interior Divisions the Sub-Division may be combined; in exterior ones the tuition might proceed on Sub-Divisions as far as practicable. The enclosed list of rifle ranges have been returned by Superintendents as being suitable for firing with the .32 service weapon. Superintendents should arrange for the necessary practice at one of these ranges with the service weapons, but the .22 semi-automatic should be capable of use at any range certified for the .22 miniature rifle.

To Supts. A to 6th.

(Signed) J. OLIVE, A.C.A.

Confidential Memo.

May 22nd, 1920.

EXPLOSIVES, PISTOLS, ETC.

The officers recommended by Superintendents to act as instructors in the use of pistols are approved, and they are to be used in the discretion of Superintendents in order that the instruction in both .22 and .32 weapons may be proceeded with as quickly as possible. A supply of .22 ammunition for instructional purposes is now being distributed, based on the authorised strength. About 26,000 rounds are also available for sale to Divisions for practice, or for the use of rifle clubs. As this has been obtained by the Receiver from the War Department, it is saleable at the reduced price of 1s. 4½d. per 100 rounds, being the actual cost price, and orders for the quantities required should be sent in as early as possible to Superintendent Bassom, who will distribute it as equally as possible.

To Supts. A to 6th.

(Signed) J. OLIVE, A.C.A.

To Correspondents.

A. T. ROGERS.—As you say we have wasted valuable space in discussing the subject, which in your opinion is not vital, we have not published your letter. Still, we do not agree with you on that point.
S. COOPER.—Your letter is much too long. Very sorry.

"FREEDOM" GROUP.

Come to our Picnic & Tea Party

ON
Sunday, August 29th,

AT
Chiswell's Farm, King's Head Hill, Chingford.

Frequent trains from Liverpool Street to Chingford.
On leaving the Station, turn to the left—20 minutes' walk.

TEA AT 4 O'CLOCK.

Tickets for Tea—Adults, 2s.; Children (under 9), 1s.

From Comrades or FREEDOM Office.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

Irish Nationalism and Labour Internationalism. By Bernard Shaw. 3d. London: Labour Party, 33 Eccleston Square, S.W. 1.
Natural Rights. By A. G. Huie. 1d. *The Master Problem.* By James Dundas White. 1d. London: United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values, 11 Tothill Street, S.W. 1.
Proletarian Parodies. By A. B. Elsbury. 6d. London: The Proletarian Press, 28 East Road, N. 1.

ALEXANDER BERKMAN'S PRISON MEMOIRS.

A Committee has been formed in New York for the purpose of publishing Berkman's "Prison Memoirs" in Yiddish, in two volumes bound in cloth. We have received Vol. I., which contains a new portrait of Berkman. The Committee informs us that the price of the two volumes is \$2.50, if paid in advance. The second volume will be ready in September, when they will be obliged to charge \$3.50, as the advance price does not cover the cost of production. All orders, with cash, to be sent to M. Eleanor Fitzgerald, 357 Broadway, New York City, U.S.A. Orders will also be received at FREEDOM Office.

JACK TANNER TO LECTURE.

Our comrade Jack Tanner is expected to return shortly from Russia, where he has been on an unofficial visit to study labour conditions. He is prepared to lecture on his experiences in that country. Groups willing to book him for lectures are requested to write to M. Kavanagh, Solidarity Press, 10 Tudor Street, London, E.C. 4.

CASH RECEIVED (not otherwise acknowledged).

(July 4 to August 7.)

"FREEDOM" SUBSCRIPTIONS.—H. Gallo, E. E. Wilkinson, "Zero," A. Peters, P. Incampo, C. Cole, R. J. Davey, F. Nix, P. Mann, J. Russo, C. Y. Chi, Livimio (7 subs.).
"FREEDOM" GUARANTEE FUND.—G. Wood 1s. 6d., J. S. R. 3s., "Zero" 1s. 6d., A. Peters 2s. 6d., J. Tamlyn 2s., Sindo Ramos 6d., N. Duenas 1s., R. Peddie 2s., T. S. 5s., Bruno Goulding 1s., A. Sanders 3s., Picnic (July 18) £5 1s., A. D. Moore 1s., E. W. Lynch 1s. 6d., W. M. S. 1s., French Comrade 2s. 6d.

NOTICES.

WHITECHAPEL.—Clothing Workers Industrial Union No. 9 hold Open-Air Meetings every Sunday, 11.45 a.m., at the corner of Fulbourne Street and Whitechapel Road, E. Speakers welcome. Hon. Secretary, A. Gilbert, 35 Cephas Street, Mile End, E. 1.

CARDIFF.—Our comrade A. BANKS, 1 Carmarthen Street, Market Road, Canton, Cardiff, stocks FREEDOM and all Anarchist publications, and is willing to supply groups and branches with advanced literature of all kinds. Comrades calling will be welcomed.

PLYMOUTH.—JOHN TAMLYN, back of the Market, Sunday evenings, 6.30.

BOOK AND PAMPHLET LIST.

THE PLACE OF ANARCHISM IN SOCIALISTIC EVOLUTION. By PETER KROPOTKIN. 2d.
EVOLUTION AND REVOLUTION. By ELISEE RECLUS. 2d.
ANARCHIST MORALITY. By PETER KROPOTKIN. 3d.
ANARCHIST COMMUNISM: ITS BASIS AND PRINCIPLES. By PETER KROPOTKIN. 3d.
LAW AND AUTHORITY. By PETER KROPOTKIN. 3d.
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ANARCHISM AND OUTRAGE. 3d.
THE CONCENTRATION OF CAPITAL: A MARXIAN FALLACY. By W. TCHERKESOFF. 2d.
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AN APPEAL TO THE YOUNG. By PETER KROPOTKIN. 2d.
LIBERTY THROUGH ANARCHIST COMMUNISM. By H. OAKLEY. 1d.
ANARCHIST COMMUNISM IN PLAIN ENGLISH. By L. A. MOTLER. 1d.
THE ANARCHIST REVOLUTION. By George Barrett. 2d.
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Postage extra—½d. for each pamphlet.

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NEWS FROM NOWHERE. By William Morris. Cloth, 3s. 6d.; paper, 2s. 6d.; postage 3d.
WHAT IS PROPERTY? By P. J. Proudhon. Cloth (1 vol.), 4s. 6d.; papers covers (in two vols.), 3s.; postage 5d.
PAGES OF SOCIALIST HISTORY. By W. Tcherkesoff. 1s.; postage 3d.
SYNDICALISM AND THE CO-OPERATIVE COMMONWEALTH. By E. Pataud and E. Pouget. Paper covers, 2s.; postage 3d.
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