

TO MAINTAIN THIS PAPER.

Three hundred copies of this number of "Fellowship" are being printed and distributed at the cost of some members of the Free Religious Fellowship and others interested. The aim of the paper is to serve as a means of keeping in touch with absent members of the Fellowship, and also of spreading the knowledge of our principles. It will be sent post free to anyone who will take the trouble to write asking for it. In order that its usefulness may be increased, two things are needed—a wider circulation, and an increase in size. To increase the circulation, readers are asked to send in names and addresses of any people whom they think likely to be interested in "Fellowship," and especially of people in isolated districts. The increase in size will come whenever our resources will allow of it. Those who are willing to help in either of these directions are asked to write to Miss M. Agnew, 270 Latrobe-street, Melbourne.

"LOVE YOUR ENEMIES."

In the course of a discussion which has arisen on the subject of Christianity and War, it has been pointed out that the saying of Jesus. "Love your enemies," means; in the original Greek, "Love your personal enemies," not "the enemies of your country." It is true that both Greek and Latin use different words for personal and national enemies, and that in the Greek version of the Sermon on the Mount there is no explicit reference to national enemies. But as Jesus spoke neither Greek nor Latin, but Aramaic, in which language the distinction is not clearly marked, the appeal to the Greek does not help us very much. But the broad fact remains that the teaching of Jesus does not anywhere directly touch on the ethics of war. If we are to approach the subject fairly, we must abandon the method of arguing from isolated tests, and try to determine what attitude to war is most consonant with the spirit of the Christian teaching as a whole. This latter method is indeed much more difficult than the former, and will not give us any cheap and easy victories, but it will save us from relapsing into that bondage to the letter against which we have so often protested. Christianity cannot point us to any short methods for the settlement of distressing cases of conscience: it provides us only with some general principles, and leaves their particular application to the judgment of the individual. Only, in attempting to apply these principles, we must see to it that, in Arnold's phrase, it is the light, and not any private darkness, in the shape of passion or prejudice, that we are following.

GUILD SOCIALISM.

Under the title "National Guilds," some articles which appeared a couple of years ago in the "New Age" have been reprinted in book form. Those who read the articles at the time of their first appearance will hardly need to be told that they form by far the most important contributions to Socialist literature that has been made for some years. The object of this short notice is to send readers of "Fellowship" to the book itself. Unlike most socialist writings it is readable and human, and its authors do not lose sight of the spiritual nature of the problem of social reorganisation.

Many of us have long been convinced that the only hope of obtaining a human life for the mass of the people lies in the destruction of the wage system. More than this, our particular experience in various fields of activity—educational, religious, artistic, or other—has led us to the conclusion that the fate of all we care most about, and, in a word, of civilization, depends ultimately on the emancipation of the worker from wage-slavery. To speak of the wage earner as a slave is no mere piece of socialist rhetoric. The essence of slavery is the denial of human personality, and this denial is involved in a system which treats labour as a commodity, on a level with raw materials like ore and cotton, whereas labour, being the expression of personality, is something belonging to a greater category, and in its nature sacred. And just as, in the case of chattel slavery, no amount of improvement in the material condition of the slave emancipated him from degradation of slavery, or his owner and the community at large from the degradation of treating persons as things, so no amount of meliorist legislation can touch the problem of wage slavery. "If you treat servants as human beings," says Mr. Bernard Shaw, "it is not worth while keeping them." And if you begin to think of wage slaves as human beings, you will find the whole edifice of capitalistic ethics and economics tottering.

Convinced of the truth of all this, why have so many of us found it hard to keep alive our enthusiasm for Socialism, and to prevent ourselves from drifting into a sort of despairing acquiescence, tempered by cynicism, in the existing order? The probable reason, apart from motives of self interest and the inertia known as "settling down," is that the existing order is, after all, a sort of order. It works clumsily, indeed cruelly, with innumerable hitches and infinite waste: but it works. And though it may revolt our intelligence and conscience, and give the lie to our religious ideals, we have generally been forced to confess that when we had done criticising it, we had no very definite practical proposals for remedying it. We had no sufficiently clear answer to the awkward question, "What are you going to do about it?" We could not tell which was the first step to take in the direction of that saner and more beautiful order which our imagination so easily conceived. So, after floundering awhile among innumerable leagues and associations, it was no wonder if we were inclined to settle into a surly discontent which dreaded the reformer almost more than the conservative.

Twenty years ago, we, or our fathers, thought we had found the road of emancipation through political action. Those were the days when Socialists,

leaving their Utopian dreams, began to work for political representation, the creation of political Labour parties, the "permeation" of administrative bodies, great and small, with Socialist principles, and the expansion of State and municipal enterprise. The mistake was a natural one, and made in good faith. We had to learn a lesson which could not have been learned in any other way, that political power is in itself a mere shadow, if it is not backed by economic power, that, in the terse phrase of America, that classic soil of political democracy and industrial despotism, "Money talks." In one of Leech's "Punch" cartoons, two ragged Crimean veterans are discussing the contents of the newspaper. "I see," says the one, "they are going to give us all medals." "Maybe then," replies the other, "they'll some of these days be giving us coats to stick them on." The political privileges with which the Australian worker has been fooled to the top of his bent are the medals; economic power is the coat.

Twenty years of pre-occupation with politics have almost made the workers, dazzled with their medals, forget the original objective of their movement. That objective is, and must continue to be, the destruction of the wage-system. This is an entirely different thing from that process of tinkering with the wage system which has created Wages Boards, Arbitration Courts, Factory Legislation—and all the other so-called reforms which have left the worker even materially no better off, and spiritually worse off, by rendering him content with his slavery. To all reforms there is one sufficient criticism—they admit the right of the employer to exist. *Delenda est Carthago*: the wage system must be destroyed.

Economic power must precede political power. The struggle for the destruction (not reformation) of the wage system must be fought in the industrial (not political) arena. Such is the lesson which is enforced by the experience of the last twenty years. Recently the Socialist movement has branched off in two divergent directions. On the one hand political socialism leads to State Capitalism (in which the essentials of wage slavery are perpetuated): on the other, the movement known as Syndicalism, which has arisen from the conviction that political socialism has failed, does not reckon with the State at all, abjures political action, jealously avoids the interference of the politician, and aims at so strengthening the industrial organisation of labour, that the several unions will at last be able to seize control, each of its own industry.

Guild Socialism is a tertium quid. It agrees with Syndicalism in recognising the all-importance, at the present stage of the conflict, of industrial organisation rather than political action. A Guild is "the regimentation into a single fellowship of all those who are employed in any given industry." But, unlike the Syndicalist, the Guild socialist accepts the principle of co-management with the State. "Co-management must not be held to imply the right of any outside body to interfere in the detailed administration of the Guild; but it rightly implies formal and effective co-operation with the State in regard to large policy, for the simple reason that the policy of a Guild is a public matter, about which the public, as represented by the State, has an indefeasible right to be consulted and considered." For a development

of this scheme, and the details of its application to particular industries, the book itself must be read. Space does not permit of even a rough summary here, and where so many matters of detail enter, no summary would be either interesting or convincing. From Appendix III., consisting of brief replies to criticisms of Guild Socialism, one or two telling aphorisms may be quoted:—

"Workmen to-day have only one liberty more than the chattel slaves possessed: they have a choice of masters."

"The political right to strike is useless without the economic power to maintain a strike."

"We don't want democratic government, but democratic industry."

"Labour being the only possession of the proletariat, they can control that or nothing."

"Wages are the price accepted for forced labour in lieu of starvation."

"The difficulties in establishing the Guild system will be great, but they will be less than the difficulties encountered in establishing the wage system, for the latter runs counter to men's nature, but the former with it."

F.S.

FRIGHTFULNESS.

The Sydney "Bulletin," endeavouring to accommodate its new duties as recruiting agent to its old function as political and æsthetic adviser to the lower middle class, has recently hit upon the novel plan of reprinting some sentences from the Report on Alleged Atrocities in Belgium, with Australian place names substituted for Belgian. The object is, of course, to stimulate recruiting by applying, in a new and subtle way, the method of "frightfulness." Possibly, however, the "Bulletin" has overshot its own mark: for it is quite clear that there are many people in our midst, like Lowell's pious editor, whose sympathy and moral indignation are exhausted upon objects ten thousand miles away, and therefore are vainly invoked for the righting of wrongs nearer home. If, however, the "Bulletin" was merely looking for horrors, it might have produced something far more realistic and convincing by putting Lord Bryce's report on one side, and turning to the files of the Australian daily papers. Then, with a little manipulation, it might have produced something like this:—

"The sufferings of the Australian people under the present brutal regime of terror and compulsion are the best refutation of that peace talk which some amiable sentimentalists are still indulging in. . . . During the last twelve months, no fewer than six hundred Australians have died of miners' phthisis: it appears that these unfortunate men, with thousands more, are forced to work for subsistence wages in underground passages. . . . The worst feature of this holocaust is that it is deliberately sanctioned by the commercial governors of Australia, who dismiss as "sentimentalism" any protest. Ugly rumours, which seem only too well grounded, allege that attempts on the part of the subject population to improve their condition have been suppressed by the military. It is not for nothing that the governing class has for a generation been soaking itself in the doctrines of Nietzsche. At