

Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

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MONTHLY: ONE PENNY.

NOTES.

Our Weary Titans.

The adjournment of Parliament must have been the occasion of caustic comment to those who think or act without the aid of a newspaper. We would have thought by the earnestness with which these M.P.'s address themselves to their tasks, to criticism, questioning, and law-making that theirs was an essential vocation; but now they show us that they are mere figureheads of not nearly so much consequence as the coal hewer or rivetter, to whom they refuse one day's holiday, whilst they take six weeks. These weary Titans, who might suffer brain-storm if they did not rest from their well-paid duties, are proving a point which will be worth remembering when we are told that it is the people, through their representatives, whose voice decides matters of common weal. They prove that the existence of a Parliament, to nod its head to what a Cabinet says and does, is a sham; representative government is a foolish notion, and the power behind the inner Cabinet is a greater force than the people; for it is the mighty force of Capitalism for which this machine exists. The sooner Parliament is adjourned *sine die* the better, for we would perhaps then see what Government really stands for, and how little voice we, the people, have in the management of the country. They have proved this, and we hope they will keep on with their holiday and incidentally show what little use they are.

Stopping the War.

We do not propose to follow the lead of the *Spectator* upon the miners' strike in South Wales. That journal of light and learning sums up the incident in a dozen lines, and dismisses the matter with "The least said about it the better." We are glad that the capitalist is anxious to cover up his greatest defeat thus, but it will ever remain his "skeleton in the cupboard." We comment upon it elsewhere, but just here we say that the lesson of the miners' dramatic action, apart from the test which it applied to Government and its power, is the fact that the powers that be, by their hysteria, proved that the continuation of the war was more in the hands of the workers than in the hands of our diplomats. The action of the miners, if augmented by similar action by other classes of workers, would force the Government to seriously consider peace negotiations, for only by the willing co-operation of the workers can their dastardly business be continued. We commend this fact to those who are agitating for an immediate settlement, and seek their end through Parliament, as the miners have shown a more effective and surer way. The mass of the people are silently wishing for peace, but cannot see a way to force it.

Liberty in Practice.

Whilst the Munitions Act failed so lamentably in South Wales, it must not be supposed that power given under this iniquitous measure is not being used. True it is in isolated cases, for, without resort to the military machine, law is impotent when faced by a determined resistance. A carefully primed Press refrains from publishing reports of prosecutions of workers for such heinous offences as having a day off, leaving a job, refusing to speed up, etc. Details of many of these cases have come to hand from various sources, and our description in last issue seems quickly justified, for we then said it was voluntary enslavement, State tyranny, and villainous treachery, a description not by any means exaggerated. Perhaps our American friends who speak so highly of liberty in England will pause and find a definition for an Act which makes machines of men, and punishes with severity any who do aught but work. Truly, we are a wonderful nation. Are we not fighting for freedom?

Ladies and Women.

The women of London have had a special day out to demand the opportunity to work on munitions, and "release men for the firing line." We have been regaled with pictures of "My lady" arriving at the job in her car, and we thought of the other women—not "ladies"—who tramp daily to toil at the looms, in unhealthy factories, or at chain-making. This not in war time only, but at all times, and for a miserable wage. We can understand the wife or daughter of the capitalist—cultured, refined, and beautiful—being anxious that the war should be successful, for are not her fortunes dependent upon the power of the capitalist to continue to exploit in the widest market? It is not, however, a symptom of womanhood to assist in the prosecution of a barbarous campaign—but then we forgot, these are ladies, not women. We wonder would they go to Cradley Heath, and relieve women working during pregnancy? Would they care to live on their wages, or upon what they themselves could earn? Yet it would be more fitting if they did that than pretend to be busy making munitions. If they desire to show their womanhood, their chance is always at hand to help remove the conditions which make ladies of some and women of others. Let them be women.

God or Generals?

The Churches would do well to lay low and say nuffin' in these days. But, no, they still keep up the pretence of God guiding the armies and helping them in their slaughter. It is necessary, we quite understand, to keep alive the faith in a supernatural power—but what damned hypocrisy! The King and Queen attended St. Paul's, the Bishop of London held a drumhead service, and throughout the country the pretence of invoking Divine aid is being carried out. "We commend to Thy Fatherly goodness the men who through perils of war are serving their nation; beseeching Thee to take into Thine own hand both them and the cause wherein their King and country send them." This is an extract from one of the prayers in the Intercession Service, and this or similar sentences constitute the prayers of the German nation, the Austrians, and all who are engaged in this Christlike business. To follow even their own prayer they hand over to God the armies—why not dispense with the generals? It is the veriest cant to talk about God at a time like this. It is bad enough at any time, but now—we would have credited them with more imagination.

A Monopoly of Virtue.

"If the Allied nations were to fail there would be an end of justice, mercy, liberty, and truth throughout the world." Thus the *Daily Telegraph* sums up its review of a year of war. It is perhaps a consoling thought to some, the direct result of their narrow patriotism, that their country stands for all the virtues, leaving the vices to the other side; but history tells us that no country at war can claim a monopoly of virtue. Can we picture, for instance, Russia as the champion of liberty? Her prisons are full, and her hands are red with the blood of those of her people who have sought and fought for liberty. Siberia is her standard of justice and mercy. Belgium with her Congo, England with her Egypt, India, etc., and, on the other side, Germany and Austria have also their standards of liberty, justice, and mercy, whilst truth has long ago been buried by all the Governments. It is not possible to rule a nation by these ethics. To do so means the surrender of government, abolition of law, and force, and exploitation. No, the Allies, like the others, are fighting to maintain the capitalist system by securing it more firmly, and that means the continuation of tyranny, force, and falsehood.

ANARCHY.—A social theory which regards the union of order with the absence of all direct government of man by man as the political ideal.—*Century Dictionary*.

British Worker! Are You Pro-Prussian?

Your answer to the above question will doubtless be an indignant "No!" It would be well, however, to examine the facts of the case before making a hasty reply. This brings us to another question, which must be fully considered before the first one can be dealt with.

What is this Prussianism—or Prussian Militarism—of which we have all heard so much during the last terrible twelve months? In plain language, it is a system by which an army (composed of workers *compulsorily enlisted*) is used by the military class for the holding of the mass of the people in subjection, and for the conquest of foreign territory. Who, then, benefits by the existence and activities of the military class? It is the *few* who have made themselves the legal "owners" of the land and other means of producing food, clothing, and shelter, and all else that is needed by everyone in order to live. By "owning," and therefore controlling, the means of producing and distributing all the necessaries (as well as the luxuries) of life, a small minority is enabled to own and control the lives of the toiling wage-slaves.

In every land the Wage-Slave System finds its strongest support in the military class, and the lives of the workers are held of small account where the interests of Property are concerned: the military organisation is frequently employed when those interests are endangered by workers on strike for the rights of human life as against the so-called "Rights of Property." Again and again have soldiers been called out to shoot down their civilian fellow-slaves. And in every land the propertied classes—that is, the self-appointed owners of the "right" to dominate the lives of the masses—the propertied classes (through the School, the Church, and the Press) do their best—or rather their worst—to poison the minds of the workers against the workers of other countries—men and women who suffer similar wrongs at the hands of their "patriotic" masters.

"Prussianism"—or more correctly MILITARISM—is not confined to Germany: it exists in each country to the extent that suits the schemes of the dominant minority. The only difference between Continental militarism and British militarism is that, as yet, whilst all Continental workers, on reaching a certain age, are legally liable to be conscripted, only a certain number of the British workers are compelled to yield to the indirect though powerful appeal of Sergeant Starvation. However, there are in this country those who are trying their utmost to seize what seems to them an unrivalled opportunity of forcing CONSCRIPTION upon the workers. Several steps in this direction have already been taken, such as the Defence of the Realm Act, the Munitions of War Act, and the "National" Registration Act. (Beware of anything that is labelled "National"—it will usually prove to be thoroughly reactionary!). The next session of the House of Paid Palaverers will probably begin by the introduction of a Bill for the establishment of CONSCRIPTION. But it will not be called Conscription (in accordance with British traditions the pill must be sugar-coated), it will be disguised under the title of "NATIONAL SERVICE," or some similar mask. Nevertheless, it will mean that each available worker is to be forced into army or arsenal, or into such other groove as may be selected for him by the "powers that be": regardless of the judgment of the individual's conscience, he is to be compelled to further the ends of the Coalition of Bureaucrats, who have definitely refused even to state the terms upon which they are prepared to cease the bloody sacrifice of the flower of the present generation.

Fellow worker, if you are a man, will you tamely submit to be still further enslaved? Will you allow yourself to be dragooned into killing your fellow slaves, perhaps to be killed in taking part in the quarrels of Governments arising out of their rivalry for the capture of world markets—for the cause of Empire abroad founded on Slavery at home? If you are a woman, will you meekly consent to the sacrifice of your man or your brother for such a cause as this? If you are the mother of a boy, brought into the world in pain and perhaps in peril of your life, could you bear to see him coerced into apprenticeship to the hideous trade of slaughtering the sons of other women—is it your wish that he should pass through the fire to the modern Moloch of Militarism?

You who are a man, assert your manhood! Think for yourself—rely on yourself—act for yourself! Don't be deceived by paid politicians, don't be hoodwinked by the hireling hacks of a prostituted Press! Don't allow yourself to be made a dupe—a tool in the hands of the Anglo-Prussians! Take your destiny into your own hands; learn a lesson from the bold action of the

miners of South Wales, who, by sheer determination and by standing shoulder to shoulder, have gloriously won a battle in the ceaseless campaign against Property and its ally—the State! Remember that, when this disastrous European holocaust is over, the real fight for Liberty will still remain to be fought in every land—in the mine, the factory, and the field!

DON'T BE PRO-PRUSSIAN!
RESIST THE BLOOD-TAX!!
REFUSE TO BE A CONSCRIPT!!!

[This manifesto will be immediately reprinted in leaflet form. Copies can be obtained free on application to the Anti-Conscription League, 127 Ossulston Street, London, N.W. Donations towards the cost of printing will be gladly received.]

SOCIALISM AND AUTHORITY.

Before Socialism* can come, the workers must develop individuality enough to overthrow every vestige of authority. Before this, Capitalism may break down; but if the worker has not reached this point in his development, it will only mean the exchange of one set of bureaucrats for another. The worker must learn to think and act for himself, and must repudiate the claim of any little gang of experts to think and act for him. If I have not to think and act for myself, then why have I a brain? If you have a better brain than I, is that any reason why I should not do my own thinking? If my arm is weak, will the exercise of your arm strengthen my arm? And if my brain is weak, will allowing you to think for me strengthen my brain? Clearly not. Every man must grow strong by the exercise of his own muscles, and every man must grow wise by the exercise of his own brain.

So long as you set up a minority—Government, committee, or council—to do your thinking for you, their first step is to give themselves airs. They say we are the superior people, and are called to govern these common people. The next step of these superior people is to demand for themselves a superior life. By a superior life, they always mean one exempt from physical labour, and with an abundance of good things. Labour with all these gentlemen is anathema maranatha. The only hand labour they believe in is the continual washing of these same hands lest any of their set should come to think that they have degraded themselves by some sort of manual work. To keep up this thing, officials are multiplied, pomp and parade are extended, and the people are ground to the earth by taxation. The first move of every Government is to monopolise the land, give it to their creatures, and establish the institution of private property.

When State Socialists talk about the cause of social evils being private property in the means of life, they show that they have made no analysis of society worth mentioning. The cause is Government. Government created land and machine ownership; Government affirms land and machine ownership at present; and without the support of the forces of Government those who at present own them could not hold them twenty-four hours. Can any State Socialist deny this? The whole of the evils that we suffer from in society have not been brought about by mere economic relations, but have been brought about by that regulating official minority called Government. They have consciously and deliberately created the institutions which have brought forth the evils. They have set themselves to think and act for the people. On the other hand, the people have allowed them to do it, and all the rest has followed. And the same must continue until the people develop sufficient initiative to do their own regulating and run society themselves. No mere economic changes can make any steps toward freedom. Before there can be freedom the people must will to be free. So long as there is a thinking class and a working class—there can be no freedom, but only a society of bullies and slaves.

All Governments love to play the bully, and love to live the superior life. No State Socialist can deny this. If they could produce a Government that lived the simple life, and allowed the people to grow fat, there might be something to consider. But we are pretty sure they cannot. We all know by this time that all Governments grow fat, and their peoples wax lean. Government and its creatures have the palaces, and the people have the little houses or none at all. Government has the good

* By Socialism is here meant Socialisation thought out and carried out communally by the people; and not that bastard form put upon the people by a bureaucratic gang called the State.

food, and the people have the poor food, or none at all. And it is too late in the day to pretend that a Government calling itself Socialist would be any different. I have sat on a Socialist executive, and have found there the same arrogance, the same ambition and low cunning that I have found among the Liberals and Tories. Government is Government, and until the people develop the initiative necessary to manage their own affairs without any external authority the result must be the same.

It is a very simple problem when you get down to it. Shall we agree to do the right thing toward each other; or shall we have rulers and policemen to force us? If we decide for the rulers and policemen, we must keep them up. More and more rulers, more and more policemen, more and more bureaucrats, until the brain reels and the heart grows sick with the mention of them—all unproductive. As Loria says, a society based upon private property must go on creating officials to maintain its existence by absorbing the clever unproductive fellows to keep them from revolt. More and more officials until the workers can carry no more, and then revolt. Yes, but revolt will not bring freedom unless the workers will to do the right thing toward each other and abolish all Government from without. It will only mean a new set of masters for the old. The worker must will to be free, and think out every step of his social order, or there can be no freedom. We shall have without doubt (we have almost got) "the inevitable collapse of the economic forms of Capitalism." But this alone will not bring Socialism. The economic forms having broken down, if the workers have not developed the necessary independence and initiative to run society themselves, a new set of masters will take hold and a new kind of slavery will be inaugurated. The State Socialists run through the past slaveries—chattel, serf, and wage. Yes, but the main fact is that they were slavery. And as to improvement, will they affirm that the Greek slave Epictetus was inferior to the wage-slave of Capitalism, who goes in his thousands to see a few fellows kick a football? No. There is no progress so long as one class thinks for another. The tyranny and servitude merely change their forms.

That word "inevitable," used so much by economic Socialists, is a good word for the capitalist and ruler. "Don't you worry; take it lying down. Have patience; it's inevitable. It will all come right." And then, with his finger to his nose, "That's the way to cool him. It will last my time. After me the deluge."

I have been in prison a time or two for such a simple thing as the right of public meeting, and each time I had these economic Socialists up against me with a sneer. "Bah! don't be a fool! What's the good of being locked up. What's the good of being a martyr!" And such men write for Socialist papers, sit on Socialist councils, and call themselves Revolutionaries. Faugh! it makes one vomit—such time-serving and cowardice!

No! A change of economic forms may bring revolt and confusion, but a change of economic forms cannot bring Socialism. Socialism can only come by a people of thought and initiative, overthrowing all authority, willing to do the right thing toward each other without any compulsion; willing to run society by spontaneous discussion of their needs in their guilds and councils, without any minority sitting in a Parliament or upon councils and committees, and pretending to think and regulate for the people by mere talk and palaver, while their real life is cut off from the activities of the people and from their common needs. Such cannot really manage, and do not really manage. A poor woman who keeps her home of a husband and six children on the scanty means which Capitalism allows the worker knows more of real management than all these talking gentlemen. She has the sort of knowledge that must work right through from the heart of the people—the knowledge of real life and need. They who do the working must also do the thinking, and they who do the thinking must also share the working, and there must be no divorce between work and thought. This change can only come through the people consciously desiring it. And as soon as this desire is strongly felt the people will put an end to their slavery and move forward to a more intelligent and happier form of society than that which exists to-day.

JOHN TAMLYN.

"Indulgence of public men has been carried to the extreme in this country for many years past. A Minister fails dismally in this department or that, and yet, because he has a good cook or a nice smile, or because he is married to the daughter of this great man, or is the cousin of that one, he remains in public life until some new party Pharaoh, who knows not Joseph, shovels him impatiently into—the House of Lords."—*Standard*, July 21.

"THEN—WHAT?"

The London County Council has issued, for the benefit of the school children in its care, what the *Daily Chronicle* most justly calls a "practical" leaflet. Working-class children are, as everyone knows, an extravagant lot, and squander their father's large and easily earned money in the most reckless way. This leaflet is, therefore, most opportune, and it is to be hoped will rapidly reform the extravagant ways of these thoughtless young folks. The leaflet contains just exactly the words of warning necessary for the children of the workers. Let's have a look at the leaflet. Is not this a wise saying? "Children can make suggestions as to things that they could do without, and be no worse, or even better, for it." I don't quite know to what "it" refers. Then follows some examples of opportunities of saving: "picture palaces, sweets between meals, smart clothes, bus rides when they could walk, etc." Now, little ones, when your dad gives you two or three shillings pocket money, don't blow it straightaway on the entertainments of the picture palace (reserved seats, of course!), or the sweetstuff shop, and please walk to and from school instead of riding in a bus. And never, never take a taxi.

Later on comes this wise warning: "We can also mend things as soon as they want it." Mark that, my young friends, who never wear mended garments or translated boots, and whose mothers allow things to fall into disrepair knowing that at any time they can easily lay hands on the money necessary to replenish the lavish household wardrobe.

Later on is advice that the kiddies should take care of the farthings, and the pence will be taken care of by the motherly school bank. Then—"when you have saved 5s. you can lend it to the Government." Quite excellent, and doubtless thousands of the children of the overpaid workers of the country will be able to save 5s. in double quick time. After all, what is a mere 5s. to a rich working-class home, where money is squandered by the unthrifty housewife, who has so much to spend that as a rule she does not have to think out ways and means of making her man's money "go round."

The working man has much for which he should be grateful to our paternal Government, and this leaflet is an addition to the already heavy burden of his indebtedness to the underpaid members of the Cabinet, London County Council officials, and others who spend so much time, thought, and care in working out the salvation of the too highly paid worker. I sometimes think that the worker is a thoughtless, ungrateful person. There are striking instances of base ingratitude. When his children receive a free meal at a free school—even then he is not content, but actually on occasion demands that he be allowed to earn sufficient to be able to afford to feed his children in their home. But these base ingrates teach their children to be thrifty, and to save up five bob as quickly as possible. Then, again, when the charitable give clothes and boots and so forth to the workers' children, is he properly grateful? Oh, dear, no! He grumbles that he is not permitted to earn a wage which will enable him to clothe his children. Dear, dear, it is a naughty world, where the worker never ceases from troubling.

But one day, perhaps fairly soon, the worker will shut up his complaining, and won't "ask for more" any longer. Then—what? Maybe he will demand all that he has a right to have, and that all is the wealth—the goods—which are produced by him, and cannot be produced without him. Some recent events in the work-world should bear fruit, should prove to the worker that he can be free when he wills to be free, that the capitalist is dependent upon him, and not he upon the capitalist. Even the determination of war and peace are in his hands if only he knew it—without the aid of the transport workers, the miners, and the factory hands a nation cannot go to war. When the worker in each country realises that fact, and acts on his knowledge, then, and then only, an end to war. Then, and then only, freedom for all.

But I am straying sadly from my subject, which is that every worker must urge his kiddies to act upon the sage and timely advice offered in the L.C.C. leaflet, persuade them, and, if need be, compel them to forego picture theatres and too many sweeties, to give up their smart clothes, and to save up five bob as quick as maybe. Then—what? Give it to the poor Government, who are fighting so hard for the freedom of the working man. You naughty, extravagant children, do be good!

W. TEIGNMOUTH SHORE.

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First Year of the War.

The past twelve months have been the saddest and maddest, twelve months that the world has ever known. Half a dozen great nations have been engaged in killing and trying to kill each other as quickly as possible, and the resources of science have been utilised to the utmost in fashioning the most diabolical weapons of war that the human mind could imagine. Wonderful inventions like the aeroplane and the submarine have carried death through the air and under the sea, and gigantic guns and terrible explosives have wrought havoc and destruction on land. Smiling hills and valleys have been turned into vast cemeteries, prosperous towns and cities shattered into ruins, and millions of strong and healthy men either killed outright or maimed for life. The battles of the contending armies and navies have been fought in every clime and on every sea, and hundreds of vessels engaged in carrying the fruits of the earth from one land to another are now lying at the bottom of the ocean with their cargoes and crews.

As the months roll by, instead of the people being appalled at the awful slaughter and destruction, they are feverishly preparing munitions of war on a more gigantic scale than ever, so that the slaughter in the coming months bids fair to exceed that of the past. Other nations, also, which have hitherto kept clear of the carnage are gradually being drawn in, until it seems possible that, if the war lasts much longer, no country in Europe will remain outside the struggle. And even across the Atlantic some hot-headed Americans have urged their Government to join in. In fact, it seems as though the war has stripped from the nations the thin veneer of civilisation that distinguishes them from their savage ancestors.

Many of us had hoped that after long years of Socialist and antimilitarist agitation the workers would have fiercely resisted the call to arms last autumn; but when the summons came, they obeyed it at once, and marched off to the battlefields to protect the interests of their rulers, just as they had done for many centuries. In each country practically all the Socialist and Labour parties supported their Governments, some of their members joining the Cabinets, thus showing the value of their previous speeches about the never-ending class war.

At the moment of writing there seems no probability of an early cessation of hostilities, if the Governments have a free hand. But will the peoples of Europe allow them a free hand? Already there are signs of a revulsion of feeling in various parts of the Continent, and it would require very little agitation for it to spread quickly.

We know that the longer the war lasts, the greater the sacrifice of the workers. In this country, for instance, in spite of the fact that they have laid down their lives at the bidding of their rulers, the few liberties the workers possessed at the beginning of the war are being gradually taken away under the plea of "military necessity." There is no gratitude in a ruling class. During the Napoleonic wars, when we are told, England "saved Europe," the aristocracy in this country took advantage of the occasion to steal the common lands from the people; and now they are taking advantage of the present

situation to fasten legal shackles on the workers which it will be difficult to remove. Take a glance at the legislation which has been passed in the twelve months we have been at war, and it will be seen that in almost every case it restricts the liberties of the people. And now the cry for conscription becomes louder and more insistent, and he would be a bold man who would say it will not be introduced into this country before the war is over.

Thus we find that reaction has gained headway during the past twelve months, and the powers of the State have been enormously increased. In these circumstances, we must keep our ideals before the people, and point out to them that in every land their greatest enemies are their own rulers represented by the State, and until that vicious institution is shattered there will always be wars and rumours of wars.

THE MORAL OF THE COAL STRIKE.

"The Munitions Act has broken down absolutely in the first attempt to apply it. What are the Government going to do about it? Are they going to ignore it? If so, they can hardly apply it in any other case. The South Wales miners have broken it to pieces and set an example which others may follow."—*Times*, July 21.

The Welsh miners are to be heartily congratulated upon the outcome of the Coal Strike. They have gained solid economic advantages and have strengthened their position in their fight against the coalowners. But they have done more than this: they have come out on strike in utter indifference to the Empire and the war, and in so doing have set a magnificent example to their fellow workers in all other industries throughout the country. It is also important to notice that the weapon with which the fight was won was that of direct action. Superior Labour politicians are in the habit of sneering at the use of the strike as a weapon in the class struggle, because, forsooth, "strikes have largely failed in the past." They conveniently forget to look for the cause of any such failure in the fact that, in the majority of cases, they were themselves the "leaders" of these abortive strikes. Indeed, the Welsh coal strike would never have taken place if the patriotic Labour statesmen could have prevented it. When they were thwarted in this by the firm stand of the men, they worked quite as hard as Lloyd George himself "to secure a speedy settlement of this deplorable dispute in a time of national peril." Which simply means they constituted themselves official strike-smashers in the interest of the coalowners and the Government.

This strike reveals the temper of the workers at the present time. It shows that they are at last beginning to realise that the capitalists have seized the opportunity afforded them by the war, to steal as they have never stolen before. An example of this wholesale plundering of the nation, by these same coalowners, was given in the debate in the Commons on the Bill for limiting profits on coal. The maximum price above which, under the Bill, the coalowners may not exploit the hapless consumer is actually fixed at a higher figure than the present price of coal! This means that, under the pretence of limiting profits, the capitalists have the effrontery to legalise their action in squeezing an even higher rate of profit out of the people than they are stealing from them to-day. To limit profits, it would appear, in capitalist terminology means the same as thing as to increase profits.

The following extract is taken from the *Daily News* of July 23. It shows how the coalowners alone are going to take tribute from the nation by means of this precious "profit-limiting" (?) Bill to the extent of £37,000,000. The quotation is a gem, and worth preserving:—

"Mr. Jonathan Samuel stated [in the debate on the Bill], and Mr. Runciman apparently confirmed, that under this Bill to limit coal prices, the cost of fuel will be enhanced by £37,000,000 a year. There can scarcely be anybody so bold as to claim that any possible increase of prices in relation to a commodity drawn exclusively from our own island can really justify such a tribute as this, yet if this is the 'limited' price which we are required to pay for our coal, and which in the opinion of the Government we do wisely to pay, what would the toll become if it were not limited?"

Obviously, the "patriotic" coalowners are putting their profits before their country, whilst they coolly denounce the workers for putting their Trade Unionism before "their" country.

It is, however, safe to say that these facts about the coal thieves will not be mentioned at recruiting meetings, because it would scarcely inspire a man to lay down his life amid all the horrors of Flanders or the Dardanelles, to know that he was "doing his bit" to enable the coalowners to filch an additional profit of £37,000,000 per annum.

But in order to realise the full significance and the great importance of this strike, we must look further than to the advantages which the miners themselves have gained. This strike will ever be remembered in the history of the working-class struggle, because in it, as never before, was the impotent helplessness of the State revealed. The State demanded that the miners should work; they defied the State, treated the "royal" proclamation with the contempt that it deserved, and smashed the wonderful Munitions Act to pieces in one blow. The Welsh miners have shown that if only the people will unite and defy the Government, the State is not only powerless, but, as far as they are concerned, it ceases to have any real existence whatever. The miners have proved the case for Communist Anarchy up to the hilt, and that is the moral of the coal strike. That is the much-needed lesson which their action has taught millions of workers throughout Great Britain. "If we come out on strike," say they, "and we all stick together and refuse to go back until our demands are conceded, the Government have no power to make us do anything; but because they must have our labour at any cost to carry on the war, we have only to hold out long enough, and they will give us anything we like to ask, so as to get us back to work again." That briefly is the workers' general opinion on the situation.

It is only when one reads the comments of the capitalist press that one realises the magnitude of the blow that has been struck at the State. The Government will not be able to control and enslave Labour when the workers realise that the State has no power beyond that which they are foolish enough to give it. The following extract from the *Morning Post* of July 21 makes pleasant reading:—

"The victory of the men in defiance of the law is not satisfactory. It shows that some at least of our working men put their Trade Unions before their country, and that besides our national war, this nation is fighting an almost truceless class war, which is being fought, in some cases at least, without regard for the enemy at the gate."

But the workers generally and the capitalists are not the only people who have lessons to learn from this strike. It is to be hoped that the many well-intentioned Socialists who cling so pathetically to the quaint and illogical dogma of "nationalised industries to be controlled by a democratic State in the interests of the whole community" will be led to see the error of their ways. For years, now, Socialists have carried on campaigns for more State control. Well, comrades, you have got it, and I hope you are satisfied with it. You have not shown much enthusiasm over these Socialistic achievements—outside the pages of the *Clarion*. You have got the Munitions Act (at least what is left of it), and soon you will have the Registration Act, under which we are all to be served out with dog licenses with our names and ages duly inscribed thereon. But, seriously, does any Socialist—outside the Socialist National Defence Committee—regard these measures as steps towards Socialism? If the strike has not taught the average Socialist that the way to gain liberty is to destroy the State, and not to support it, he deserves to be—registered.

Let us assume that every industry be nationalised, and the "private" capitalist, as such, is dead. Will it then be such an easy matter for the people to get the means of production out of the hands of a highly centralised, all-powerful, capitalist State? Would it not be better to fight the capitalists by direct action, take possession of land and capital, and leave the capitalist to pass laws which no one would obey? If a section of the workers can break the law with impunity, as the miners have done, it is quite obvious that the whole of the workers could do the same thing. If it is objected that the workers would never become sufficiently imbued with revolutionary ideas to deliberately take over land and capital, then I must remind the State Socialist that such an argument is equally fatal to his theory that the community are in some unexplained way going to control the State, which is to control their means of life. For if the average worker is never going to understand the comparatively simple plan of direct action, it is hopeless to expect him to understand the intricacies of the Socialist State suggested in the writings of Macdonald, Wells, the Webbs, and Blatchford and Co.

I leave these ideas to the thoughtful consideration of the average Socialist, who has hitherto regarded Anarchists as harmless or dangerous lunatics, according to his point of view. I would urge him to seriously consider the relations

which exist between the workers, the capitalist, and the State. He will find that the State is the political expression of that industrial method whereby the worker is so efficiently robbed of the greater portion of the wealth he produces. The State is used as an instrument to govern, oppress, and enslave the worker by means of restrictive laws, and, in the last resort, by the use of the physical force of his fellow workers, disguised in fancy dress costumes, and labelled as "the armed forces of the Crown." It is against this that the miners have struck a great blow, and it remains for all the workers to go and do likewise.

OTTO LEROY.

Interned Comrades at Alexandra Palace.

The following interesting letter from our comrade C. Lahr gives us an insight into the routine of an internment camp. We are pleased to see that comrade Rocker is making the best of a bad job, and hope he will continue at his work of relieving the monotony of camp life and spreading the light among his fellow prisoners:—

"Alexandra Palace, July 21.

"Dear Comrade,—At last I am able to write to you. On May 15 I was interned on H.M.T. 'Royal Edward,' Southend. I anticipated a lion's den of 'hurrah patriots,' but was agreeably surprised to find a bunch of 'Reds' who grouped themselves around our comrade R. Rocker. Every Sunday evening Rocker held a lecture in the ship's post office, which was packed full every time. On my first Sunday he spoke on 'Kropotkin the Man,' next Sunday on 'Kropotkin's Works,' and on the last Sunday he spoke on 'Edgar Allan Poe.' On June 1 we were transferred to Alexandra Palace, Wood Green. In many respects we have gained by this transfer. Our food is better than on the ship. Thirteen hundred of us live in the Central Hall. We get up between six and seven, and have breakfast—bread (brown and white), cheese, and tea, as much of each as we like. From 8.30 to 12 we are in a barbed-wire-surrounded compound on the southern slopes of the Park. Then dinner—soup, meat, potatoes, and rice, peas, lentils, or beans. Once a week we also get bread pudding. Then we go out till four. Then tea exactly like breakfast. From six to eight out again. We also have an Italian garden, to which we have access all day, and where we smoke.

"Soon after our arrival we set about getting permission to have our lectures. The committee approached the Commander, and he allowed Rocker to speak on the subject: 'Six Characters in the World's Literature.' The announcement had already been officially signed and hung up, when one of our 'Juncker' fellow-prisoners told the Commander that the majority of us were against Rocker's lectures, and trouble would break out if they took place. The Commander believed him, and cancelled the lectures. We were indignant, and in a day got seven hundred signatures to a petition to the Commander to reverse his decision, which he at once did when he saw that we really wanted Rocker to speak. The first lecture took place on Monday, July 12, subject (as before mentioned). The second one on July 19; subject, 'Tolstoy, the Man and Artist.' Two thousand prisoners were present each time. Next lecture, July 26, is on 'Materlinck and Modern Mysticism.' I shall write again, and hope to hear from comrades."

THE CONQUERING CAUSE.

Come, fight ere the Law enrols you, a slave at its beck and call;
Come, fight ere your freedom is vanished: come death ere such fate
befall.

The liberties won by our fathers, when years rolled on in blood,
Were torn from the Law's grim talons, the youngest of Freedom's
brood.

They bathed in a crimson carnage the wreaths that you wear to-day,
And none but a nation of cowards would throw such wreaths away:
For fetters are always fetters, though gilded in golden sheen.
Are we fools and madmen, brothers; a nation ungreat and mean?

Shall we pray when they will not listen? Shall we beg when they will
not heed?

Nay, let us be men of action, in thought and word and deed.
Come, fight, for the State is dreaming of limitless power and wealth;
And it filches our freedom of olden by force and cunning and stealth.
The Throne and the Law and the Churches, with gallows and prison
and hell,

Are ready to seize and rend us; but who shall Freedom quell?
Let us stand as they stand—united: let us give them blow for blow:
We have faith and courage and numbers: their might rests on us
below.

Let us fight in the cause that conquers: let us fight the fight to day,
Ere the enemy by guile and cunning our rights shall filch away.
And the time to strike is the present, to win nor count the cost,
For the morrow may find, my brothers, our freedom for ever lost.

L. A. MOTLER.

SIDELIGHTS ON SOCIAL SUBJECTS.

The event of July was, of course, the victory gained by the South Wales miners, who not only brought the Government to their knees, but showed how impotent the Trade Union leaders can become when the rank-and-file really know their own minds. Throughout the debate on, and passage into law, of the War Munitions Bill these leaders had been more than eager to give pledges for the docility of Labour. It is amusing to note that after the appointment to the Cabinet of Labour men, and the wholesale adulation by the Press of their patriotic followers in the Commons, that they should have been treated thus contemptuously by the rank-and-file themselves. It was Mr. Hodge, leader of the Labour Party *pro tem.*, who but a short time back declared that during the continuance of the war strikes "are inconceivable and unthinkable." But the miners have proved that an ounce of practice is worth a ton of theory, for their action has given the Government a knock-down blow and discredited the traitors in the House. The promotion to the Cabinet of Labour men at a salary of something over £4,000 yearly, the suspension of Trade Union rules, the passage into law of the War Munitions Act, and sundry other incidents, all served to mislead our statesmen into believing that the workers were very much under the iron heel. Now the much-petted Labour leaders are helpless. It is possible that the *Daily Chronicle* interprets the Governmental opinion when, writing just prior to the strike, it referred to "the miners' leaders being placed in a very unenviable position. "For only a few days ago, when the Munitions Act was going through Parliament, they gave the Government, in return for being left out of the Act, a solemn assurance that there should be no strike in the coal trade. That such a pledge should be accepted and relied upon by the Government, was a step which raised the prestige of Trade Unionism and its claim to public recognition; that it should so quickly prove unworthy of reliance, is a step in quite the other direction." In face of this, "official Labour" certainly appears dear at the price paid for it.

The chief thing for the workers to note, however, is that no disapproval of the issue of the Royal Proclamation was expressed by "official Labour." This was a foregone conclusion, Arthur Henderson, as a member of the Cabinet, having sanctioned the application of the clause inflicting a fine of £5 per day per striker. The fact that such a penalty is absurd does not acquit this or other Labour members from their responsibility in the matter. The sum total of the usefulness of these men appears to be in their capacity to utter platitudinous nothings, such as that "the men [in not striking] were after all only sacrificing their material interests," for we in our ignorance have always considered such interests the rock basis of life. It is curious, too, that one enterprising mediator actually spoke of his willingness to urge the Government to take over the mines. We know from another State-controlled concern just how many grievances that would solve. So the miners are bitterly attacked for their lack of patriotism, men, according to the Press, who "while sharing all the benefits of citizenship, repudiate its most elementary obligations of loyalty." Strange that it does not strike our capitalist organs to question the loyalty of those coalowners who, as M.P.'s drawing £400 yearly, are opposing at every step the Price of Coal (Limitation) Bill. These men apparently are inspired by the very noblest of motives, and so do not merit the epithet hurled at the recalcitrant miners of being "traitors of our own household." The whole crisis has done much to make the miner realise his importance, a fact driven home by Mr. Runciman's statement that "if we could not export coal, we should have to export gold." Let him continue to demonstrate his value in this practical fashion, and then all the intrigues of a Labour Party will not succeed in robbing him of his right to a free life.

The Parliamentary War Savings Committee is, perhaps, the most grim expression of humour in which the Government has yet indulged. Engaged in waste upon the most colossal scale yet known in history, the British Government, in common with the Continental Governments, actually lectures its subjects upon the absolute need for economy, and we are told how vital it is to apply the principle of "doing without." When we consider the huge number of workers who have been forced

throughout life to do without, we are staggered at the Government's failure to understand just how many of its subjects live habitually on the poverty line, a condition of things the war has by no means remedied, but in point of fact rendered more acute. It is all very well for the commercial gentlemen who own the Empire to talk glibly about the necessity for decreasing our imports in order that we may still board our gold supply, and only in keeping with their character as profiteers; but we hope all wage-earners will have something to say about the deputation which recently waited upon the Premier, and which included Sir Felix Schuster, Sir Robert Balfour, M.P., Sir Frederick Banbury, M.P., Lord Midleton, and Mr. Harold Cox. This deputation urged the necessity for fresh taxation, Mr. Harold Cox suggesting that the income tax should be extended to all wage-earners. This, he said, would bring home to the masses of the people the necessity of economy. He also advocated further immediate taxation on sugar, tobacco, tea, and petrol. It was also pointed out by Mr. Machin that the Insurance Act offered the machinery by means of which an income tax on wages could be easily collected. It must be remembered that the victims of this dangerous Act were warned at the time of its passage into law of the insidious use to which it could be put; but apparently wage-slaves have yet to comprehend the full extent of their slavery. Meanwhile, let us oppose all Governmental dodges aimed at prolonging the life of this monster of Capitalism which is draining the life-blood of the nation.

Out of a total expenditure under the Insurance Act, of £25,000,000, the benefits paid amounted to £17,000,000, representing 67.3 per cent. of the whole sum, while working expenses accounted for 13.7 per cent.

The cost of living in Germany has risen from 25.12 marks in July, 1914, to 38.60 marks in July, 1915. The British figures should also prove of interest in showing that all the workers in the belligerent countries are suffering equally.

The Blue Book on Dockyard Expenses for the year ending March, 1914, issued recently, gives many interesting details showing the cost to the taxpayer of the Navy. The total cost of combatant ships on the strength is given at £174,166,488. The expenditure upon shipbuilding as seen in the votes for dockyards and ships has grown from £14,899,055 in 1889-90, to £48,732,621 in 1913-14. At this rate of increase, what will the sum be, say, in 1920, for the war is sure not to end in limiting but rather extending armaments?

Speaking on the National Registration Bill in the House of Lords, Lord Lansdowne frankly admitted that the Bill brought us nearer to compulsory service, for "if compulsory service comes, this Register Bill would greatly assist in introducing it, because it would shorten the interval to elapse between our decision to resort to compulsion and the actual application of the measure."

The Kaiser is reputed to be the largest shareholder in Krupp's, and it is said much of his enormous war profits has been sent to America for investment in American munition factories, so that he is now drawing large dividends from the supply of armaments to the Allied Powers. He is also said to hold shares in companies registered at Somerset House. These facts need not surprise the British or German workers, who have all along declared that the capitalists who rule us know no country save one capable of exploitation, and acknowledge no God but the God of Profit.

M. B. HOPE.

"It may be doubted whether in the whole history of persecution there is anything quite comparable, for sheer stupid ingratitude and cruelty, to the treatment of the Jews in Russia during the last six months."—*Daily News*, July 19.

"Compulsory service will immediately produce a sharp and bitter antagonism to the war, which will grow, and might easily lead to a revolution. It would be the first open admission that the policy of the war is contrary to national traditions, and can only be carried through by dragooning the country into submission."—*Economist*, May 28.

MOTHER EARTH.

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THE AGE-LONG MARTYR.

At the hour of dawn I found myself standing and gazing over a desolate plain. The soil was bare and blackened, not a blade of grass nor a flower appearing anywhere; at intervals bones and skulls were visible: stooping to examine some of these latter, I found to my horror that they were those of human beings—those of men, women, and children. Here and there the blackened earth was tinged with another colour—a dark reddish brown. I shuddered. . . . Looking eastwards, I saw streams of foul black smoke spreading themselves across the plain, these proceeded from the towering summits of several great chimney-stacks some distance away. My eyes followed the lines of smoke swaying in the morning breeze, when suddenly, afar off—silhouetted against the sky-line—I caught sight of what seemed to be a black pillar with a transverse beam near the top, and something that gleamed pearly-white against this sombre structure. I felt strangely moved, and hastened towards the spot, picking my way amidst the ghastly relics scattered upon the ground. On approaching the object which had attracted my attention, I was amazed and sickened to find that it was a huge cross of ebony, whereon hung the nude body of a woman, through whose limbs great nails of glistening metal had been driven into the solid wood. She was of surpassing beauty, having the perfect face and form of a Grecian goddess. The coils of lustrous jet-black hair were surmounted by a chaplet formed of steel spikes, piercing the classic brow at the points of contact. The eyes, of a vivid azure, emitted a wonderful light—a blend of radiance and tenderness. The face showed signs of protracted suffering, which, however, failed to mar its ineffable loveliness.

I stood motionless as if changed into stone. The wonderful eyes questioningly turned upon me their tender gaze. A thrill ran through the very depths of my being, such a thrill as I had never experienced before. I cried aloud: "Who art thou, and for what crime art thou thus terribly punished?" She answered not a word; but gazed upon me still more intently, as if to probe my inmost thoughts. I was as one seized with a frenzy; with my naked hands I tore at the gleaming nails that transfixed her beautiful limbs, but she stayed me with a motion of the head, and, in the deep tones of a rich contralto voice, thus broke silence: "Nay, thou wilt injure thyself, as others have done before thee"; then, as though speaking to herself, she added musingly: "yet were their efforts not wholly without avail." I cried again in anguish: "But *who* art thou, and why art thou tortured thus?" With a sad smile she answered: "No crime have I committed: Liberty is my name; and this evil was wrought upon me by my three enemies who leagued themselves together against me in the days of old, and who still survive to maintain my torment."

"Who are thine enemies?" I cried. She responded, in accents that were vibrant with passionate sincerity: "My three enemies are Law, Property, and Superstition; and of these the first-named is the chief, for he has ever been the sustainer of the others: by his aid, Property nailed my limbs—with nails fashioned of gold and steel—to his black cross that stands here in this now-desolate region, whilst the third miscreant stood by with hands upraised, blessing the vile deed in the name of the Demon to whom they three profess allegiance. They have builded the law-court, the mart, and the temple—places wherein my spirit cannot breathe. They have made the fair earth a place of mourning; they have drenched its soil with the blood of men, of women, and of babes; they have strewn it with the bones of their victims. In the gratification of their insatiable passion for power, their inexorable lust for lucre, they have starved and stunted the human personality. They are the perpetuators of Famine, of War, and of Slavery. They hate me because they fear my influence upon the human heart; because they are afraid for their lives. They hate me because I would make every man a king, every woman a queen—each unit of humanity the only sovereign of its soul: wherefore in derision they have crowned me with this coronal of steel spikes. They hate me because of the truths proclaimed by the children of my spirit: that these oppressors shall perish; that men and women, with the welcome offspring of their love, through me shall dwell together in harmony upon the fruitful earth, sharing the daily burden of labour—which shall then be light—and succouring each other in such trials and sorrows as are inseparable from life; that thus the selfhood of each one shall unfold and grow unto its unique perfection, even as a beautiful flower of the field; and life shall be enriched by the diversities of temperament and of talent, yet none shall say to another: I am greater than thou, or: Bend thou to my will for the service of my private ends!

"Now, if thou hast love for me (and indeed I see it written in thine eyes), thou too shalt be called one of the children of my spirit; thou shalt go with them and bear the truth to others, till ye shall be numerous and strong enough to wield the only instrument that shall suffice to tear away these cruel nails of gold and steel, to lift this steel-spiked chaplet from my brow, to destroy this accursed cross of Property—so that I suffer no more this age-long torture, and be enabled to bring joy unto all the sons and daughters of men. Fear naught, the strivings of them that love me shall not be in vain, for I am deathless while mankind endures!"

"Tell me," I cried with eagerness, "what is the mighty instrument whereof thou speakest?" "Its name," she answered, "is Revolution!"

She smiled serenely, and the wondrous eyes again thrilled me to the very depths of my soul: then the scene faded, and I knew no more.

* * * * *

A dream? Perchance, I cannot tell: you, O reader! must judge for yourself concerning the matter. *But this indeed I know—I am an Anarchist!*

T. S.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"INTERNATIONAL"—OR "UNIVERSAL"?

(To the Editor of FREEDOM.)

DEAR COMRADE,—The letter of Comrade R. S. Wood in the July issue of FREEDOM (under the heading "The New International") voices a question that is indeed timely and of vital importance—the question of reorganisation. I suggest, however, that in our thoughts upon this weighty matter, and in our subsequent resulting actions, we Anarchists should be careful to profit by, and not to perpetuate, the mistakes of the past.

I shall here attempt (as briefly as possible within the limits of a letter) to indicate the events leading up to the present situation, and then to formulate an idea which appears to me to be worthy of the careful consideration of all comrades.

The old Socialist International having failed, the modern Parliamentary Socialist International came into being, and has likewise been found wanting; and now the Anarchist International has practically broken down. The last-named manifestation of the ceaseless struggle for individual liberation, though greatly in advance of the one which preceded it (in that it recognised and proclaimed the futility of "Revolution by Act of Parliament," and of fatalistic reliance on so-called "evolutionary forces"), nevertheless had, in the manner of the presentation of its ideas, one factor in common with both of its immediate precursors—the factor of Internationalism.

Now, he who is an Internationalist must first, necessarily, be a Nationalist. Then the question arises, "What is Nationalism?" Some will reply that it consists in an attachment to the language, customs, and characteristics appertaining to the land of one's birth. These things, however, are maintainable by the direct action of the people, without (and sometimes in spite of) Governmental action; but the real, and noxious, Nationalism represents the unity *under Government* of the inhabitants of a certain area of land. This latter concept is a purely bourgeois ideal, expressing itself in the absurdity of "frontier lines" and in such empty formulas as "the right of a people to choose its own rulers"—about as useful a "right," incidentally, as would be that of a householder to select his own burglars.

My contention is that the holding (conscious or unconscious) of this false ideal—Nationalism—has given rise to the present appalling spectacle of Socialists fighting and slaughtering each other *at the bidding of their oppressors*. By artificially dividing, and creating dissension between, the workers, whose interests are the same all over the world, the Nationalist "ideal" helps to ensure the continuation of their enslavement by State and Capital.

It remains, therefore, for our comrades in the world-wide Anarchist Cause to sweep away *for ever* the fetish of Nationalism (and with it the pseudo-ideal of Internationalism), and to reorganise the struggle for emancipation under a new title which shall be more nearly expressive of our aim: it remains for Anarchists to uplift in every land the banner of the UNIVERSAL Anarchist movement.—Yours fraternally,

T. S.

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL.

(To the Editor of FREEDOM.)

DEAR COMRADE,—Some months ago a group of Anarchists and rebel Socialists in Glasgow started a Socialist Co-operative Society—no dividend, no interest—and have succeeded in establishing themselves. In your correspondence columns in the July issue, I observe a letter from Comrade Wood, on the "New International," in which the writer forcibly and well expresses the views of most of us who have not been chloroformed by the political sagacity of the Labour leaders. But why a "New International," Comrade Wood? Since when had we an old one? Is it not the case that the so-called International was controlled by State Socialists, who were inspired by their expert knowledge of capitalist politics, as witness the number of them that have taken office in the various Governments responsible for the present organised slaughter on the Continent?

I believe our miserably slow progress is due almost entirely to the fact that we have devoted ourselves almost exclusively to theories of that wonderful time "when all shall be better than well": we have made no attempt to test our theories by practical demonstration. Why not Communist groups working out their economic salvation, in ever-expanding circles, by producing and supplying ourselves with the goods we require? We hold that our philosophy is superior to the modern doctrine of every man for himself, and that it will prove its justice before all men in the court of experience. Let every group try the experiment here and now, and find out if the faith of each man will carry him past the grocer's shop to which the wife has gone regularly for a long time. In the beginning you will discover things; you will find out the real crusted conservatives, the men who don't like to give up an old friend, even if he is only a barnacle.

Along the lines suggested we might found *The International*, by

federating these locally controlled organisations. One of them has been brought into existence in Glasgow, and we hold out our hands to our British, French, German, and Russian comrades, believing that if the comrades of our own and other lands see the dry bones of propaganda galvanised into life, they will come and help us to build a road from the capitalist wilderness into the land of our inheritance.

Our store is situated at 94 George Street, City; we give you welcome, comrades. Political Socialism is bankrupt; why, like Micawber, waste away the golden hours?—Yours fraternally,

Glasgow.

THOMAS HAMILTON.

An Appeal for "Freedom."

Owing to the war, our income has been seriously affected, and we ask comrades and friends to help our Guarantee Fund to the best of their ability. Funds are urgently needed to produce FREEDOM regularly. We hope for a good response to this appeal.

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