

Freedom

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NOTES.

Voluntary Enslavement.

The Munitions Bill introduced by Lloyd George reveals what is the greatest piece of villainous treachery on the part of the Trade Union leaders, and at the same time demonstrates the truth of the saying that it is "hard to push the British worker, but easy to lead him." That is the principle upon which the whole scheme is to be worked, and by the agreement to suspend Trade Union rules and principles, many of which have been obtained by great sacrifice in the past, the worker is to enter into a voluntary enslavement which will bind him more surely than anything we know. The cry of co-operation in the country's hour of need is so much balderdash, for how often have the workers in *their* hour of need, when fighting a soulless boss, realised that behind the boss the forces of the State, the military and the police, were waiting the call to help him to defeat them? Where, then, lies the duty of the worker? Is it to help those who shot his fellows at Tonypandy, Llanelli, Liverpool, Dublin, and Johannesburg? No, his duty, whatever his "leaders" may promise on his behalf, is to himself. By this Act he can be shifted from one job to another, he may not leave his job, he must not ask for higher wages or shorter hours. He must not take a holiday. In short, he must do nothing but work and sleep, else the supply of implements for murder will suffer, and the interests of the master class be placed in jeopardy. It is not conscription. It is worse. It is State tyranny, which we have always foreshadowed as being the condition of things under State Socialism. Maybe the workers will reflect long and deeply upon the conditions their leaders have thrust them into, and, thinking deeply, act accordingly.

Lloyd George's Vision.

"London one big arsenal"—this is the ideal of Lloyd George, as given out in his speech upon the Munitions Bill. What a striking commentary upon twentieth century civilisation. The greatest age man has lived through, when by the efforts of Christianity and a benevolent State the highest point of civilisation is supposed to have been reached; and the ideal held up before the people is that they shall all be working upon implements for the destruction of life. Is not that sufficient for all clear-thinking individuals to at once determine that this fearful business shall cease? No other argument is necessary when we remember that one-half of the world is providing the means for the other half to slaughter each other with.

Registration and Regimentation.

The Bill for the registration of all men and women between the ages of fifteen and sixty-five has been presented to the free British public. It is the sequel to the Munitions Bill. The chief demand is for information as to willingness to render national service. What this may mean we are not quite sure, but presumably either service with the Army or work on the production of munitions. To us, it is but the preliminary step to a bigger scheme of conscription. We do not, however, anticipate a definite scheme of full-blown conscription just yet; but we can see quite plainly what is behind the move. All who are not willing, for one reason or another, to perform national service, will be known. The strength of the anti-conscription movement will be easily judged, and upon those statistics can easily be formulated the future plan so far as conscription is concerned. It is a piece of true British statesmanship, and we hope none of those who are opposed to compulsion will be misled by its apparent simplicity, for in it is contained the very essence of regimentation and State domination. It is the thin edge of the wedge.

Liberty of the Press.

Nearly the whole of the London morning papers are carrying on a campaign of innuendo and invective against the anti-war movement. The idea is, of course, to gag and bind all publications that are opposed to the continuance of the war. The *Standard* has specially directed its efforts against the VOICE OF LABOUR, and the *Morning Post* has been the means of closing down the offices of the Stop-the-War Committee. We are glad to say, however, that the Committee's work is by no means scotched. For our part, we intend to continue our efforts in the direction of opposing both the war and conscription, military or industrial. The Northcliffe press has been asking for the truth. We intend to give the public the truth wholesale. The *Standard* calls us a pro-German party. We ignore this invective. We are confident that our German comrades are working resolutely toward the same end as we are. Prancing Junkerdom will stop neither them nor ourselves. Our purpose shall have been accomplished when the people are united in the bonds of a lasting peace. This will only be when they have disposed of their respective masters, and established Anarchist Communism. This is the real way to end the war, and indeed all wars.

Repression in Ireland.

Ever since the war started, the Government have found Ireland a hard nut to crack. The subterfuge by which Home Rule was shelved convinced the rebellious section that they had nothing to hope for from the rulers of this country. They have, therefore, done their best to hinder recruiting, and to prevent Irish workers losing their lives in other people's quarrels. The Government, in return for this, have suppressed Irish papers, and imprisoned their editors. Men have been charged under the Defence of the Realm Act, and although juries refused to convict, the prisoners have not been released. A well-known rebel, Sheehy-Skeffington, was charged with making anti-recruiting speeches. Although he put up a strong defence, he was sentenced to six months' hard labour; but he refused to take food in prison, and eventually the authorities had to release him. Others are still waiting their trial, and fresh arrests are being made every week. We hope they will continue to resist, as they can have nothing but contempt for a Government which includes their arch-enemy, Sir Edward Carson.

Social Democracy Unmasked.

Anarchists have often been charged with exaggerating the evils they foretell under Social Democracy, but that we have not been guilty of exaggeration is proved by the manifesto issued by the Socialist National Defence Committee, which includes among its members such shining lights as H. G. Wells, Robert Blatchford, and A. M. Thompson. This manifesto calls for national industrial mobilisation, control, and administration. It says:—

"Under universal control there would be no need for strikes. Misconduct and indiscipline hindering the productivity of the willing and capable workers would be summarily punished in the workers' general interest by their own representatives. There would be no sympathy, public or private, for slackers, shirkers, and wastrels dismissed under these conditions, and, as they would find it extremely difficult to obtain a livelihood elsewhere, they would gravitate naturally and quickly to their proper sphere of usefulness in the fighting line."

In other words, "Work according to our orders, or be shot!" That gives the game away with a vengeance. Why, even a reader of the *Clarion* can never charge us with exaggeration after reading that paragraph.

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*.

THE PATRIOTISM OF THE GOVERNING CLASSES.

We have shown that "the country" is a sonorous word designed to induce the workers to defend an order of things which oppresses them. We shall see now if the "love of country," this "holy sentiment," this "love of the soil which is born in every one," is so deeply rooted in those who make the declaration; whether it rises from purely subjective causes, as among the workers, or from purely material causes, from vulgar preoccupations of mercantile interests. It is among the writings especially published by themselves for their own use that we must search for their innermost conviction. It is edifying.

To hear them when they are addressing the workers there is nothing so sacred as the country; every citizen should be ready to sacrifice his life or his liberty for the defence of the country. In fine, according to them, the country represents the highest degree of the general interest; to make sacrifices for it is to sacrifice for one's own and one's self. We have only to rummage among their treatises on political economy to convict them of lying; to see that all these high-sounding phrases, these sentiments which they parade, are nothing but bluffs for the benefit of the simpletons who let themselves be duped by the like, masks which they take care to leave in the dressing-room when among their intimates. Here is what one of their political doctors, whose authority is officially recognised, says:—

"It is the interest of the governing classes, of the preponderance which they hold and for which they are indebted precisely to a continuation of the state of war, which artificially maintains that state among civilised peoples."*

Could anything be neater? And our good capitalists, who declaim so loudly against the frightful Anarchists that have the audacity to demonstrate to the workers how their interest is antagonistic to the interests of the bourgeois class, make no mistake among themselves in properly defining this antagonism, in order to find a basis for their governmental system. But here is a still more damaging admission:—

"Motives or pretexts are no more lacking under the new régime than they were under the old; but under the one as under the other, the true motive of every war is always the interest of the class or party in possession of the Government—an interest which must not be confounded with that of the nation or the mass of consumers in the body politic; for as much as the governing class or party is interested in the continuation of a state of war, so much is the nation governed interested in the maintenance of peace."

As to the advantage which the governing class finds in the continuation of a state of war, the same author goes on to tell us:—

"War without implies peace within; that is to say, a period of easy government, during which the Opposition is reduced to silence under pain of being accused of complicity with the enemy. And, what is more desirable, above all, when the Opposition is troublesome, and its forces nearly balance those of the Government? In fact, if a war be unsuccessful, it inevitably involves the downfall of the party which undertook it; but if, on the other hand, it be successful (and it is not undertaken unless some favourable chances are assured), the party which engaged in it and carried it to a satisfactory issue acquires, for a time, a crushing preponderance. How many motives are there, not to speak of the small profits to which it opens the way, for not letting a favourable opportunity to make war escape!"

As to the "small profits," here is an enumeration of them:—

"But, up to our own day, it has been the inferior classes, those whose influence counts the least, who have generally furnished the common soldiers. The wealthy classes have escaped by a money sacrifice; and this sacrifice, ordinarily very moderate, has been more than compensated for by the market which the state of war offered to members of the said classes, upon whom the proscription of foreigners and the obligation of passing through the military schools (access to which was, in fact, impossible to the poorer classes) conferred the monopoly of the remunerative offices of the military profession. Finally, if war be cruel to the conscripts who, according to the forcible popular expression, furnish 'meat for the cannon,' the departure of these impressed troops, brought up to farm labour or in the workshop, by diminishing the supply of

hands, has the effect of increasing wages, and thus palliating the horrors of war to those who escape military service."

This is categorical. We see that the "sacred love" of the metaphysical entity, "country," is nothing more than exploitation and "small profits"; but the avowal is complete; it is a triumphant retort to those who would object that "there is a public opinion of which the governors are forced to take account," that "a war may be just and obtain the assent of the public," that "it is wrong to declaim against war in general," that "there may be cases into which rulers are dragged in spite of themselves," and moreover that "war is a consequence of the existing social state," that "one may declaim against it or deplore its necessity," but that "we are compelled to submit to it."

Let us continue to quote:—

"Nevertheless, whatever be the power of the men who decide peace or war, and the influence of the class from which the political, administrative, and military staff is recruited, they are, as we have just observed, obliged to reckon, in a certain measure, with the much more numerous class whose interests are involved in the various branches of production, to whom war is a nuisance. Experience all the time demonstrates that the resisting force of this pacific element is in nowise proportionate to its mass. The vast majority of the men who compose it are absolutely ignorant, and 'nothing is easier than to excite their passions or lead them astray as to their interests.' The enlightened minority is less numerous; and besides, what means would these latter have of getting their opinions to prevail, in the presence of the powerful organisation of the centralised State?"

Thus our capitalists do not hide from themselves the fact that they see nothing in war but a means of continuing their exploitation of the workers; the massacres which they organise serve to rid them of the surplus which encumbers the market. To them armies are created with the sole view of furnishing place and rank to those of their dependents by whom they would otherwise be importuned. To them, finally, these wars which they pompously call "national," making the hollow, sounding words "country," "patriotism," "national honour," vibrate in the ears of the naive—to them these wars are but pretexts for "small profits."

War upon "small profits"! War upon all the wars undertaken in the name of the "country" or "civilisation"! For now that patriotism is beginning to decline, this new mockery—"civilisation"—is used a great deal in launching the workers on a crusade against inoffensive peoples whom the capitalists would exploit, and whose sole offence consists in being behindhand in reaching that degree of development which we have agreed to call present civilisation.

Ostensibly it is to punish a band of imaginary marauders and secure our national preponderance that wars like the expedition to Tunis are undertaken, while the real object is to open up a new country to the rotten financial operations of a few dubious schemers; it is to secure a free field to these parasites upon the social revenue that the money wrung from the workers by taxation is expended in armaments; it is to realise "small profits" from the offices created in the conquered countries that these new markets, which enable the capitalists to get rid of their stale products, are opened with cannon shots, that a robust youth is impoverished, that a multitude of young men is sent to perish in an unaccustomed climate or be massacred by people who, after all, are at home, and are only defending what belongs to them.

War upon these "small profits," these expeditions to Senegal, Tonquin, the Congo, Madagascar, for ever being undertaken in the name of "civilisation," which has nothing to do with such expeditions, that are brigandage pure and simple! We exalt patriotism at home, and shoot or decapitate, as brigands or pirates, those who are guilty of nothing but defending the soil on which they live, or of having revolted against those who have imposed their rulership upon them in order to exploit and enslave them!

But we shall have to return to this question in a special chapter upon colonisation; let us confine ourselves for the moment to the patriotism of the governing classes. Recent events have laid it bare in all its hideous reality. The secrets of our armaments and defences betrayed, through the complicity of the employees of the bureau of the Minister of War; the most disgraceful intrigues, operating with this whirlpool of billions to the detriment of the taxpayers' pocketbooks and the security of the country! The Government, instead of hunting down the guilty, sought to cover them up, and throw a veil over the most shameless turpitudes! We behold the great manufacturing metallurgists—Deputies for the most part, having old

* G. de Molinari, "Political Evolution in the Nineteenth Century."

military officers at the head of the list—becoming furnishers of arms, cannon, armour-plate ships, powder, and other explosives, to foreign nations, and delivering to them the latest engines of destruction, without concerning themselves that these may one day serve against our army, and contribute to the massacre of those of our compatriots whom they, in their capacity of governors, will have sent to the frontier to be pierced by bullets. Is it not the Grand International Swindling Association of Jewish and Christian Bankers which owns our railways, holds the key of our arsenals, and has the monopoly of our supplies? O bourgeois! Talk no more, then, of your patriotism! If you could parcel out your "country," and sell it in shares, you would do it speedily!

What did you do in 1871, in the Franco-Prussian war, which terminated for us, as everybody knows, in paying an indemnity of five billion francs? To whose interest was it to pay this indemnity if not to that of the bourgeoisie alone in order to remain sole master of the power to exploit the "country"? Now, in order to pay this indemnity, upon whom did they "draw at sight"? Upon the workers! A loan was made, reimbursement for which was guaranteed by the taxes which had to be levied, and which the workers alone have to pay, since they alone work, and since work alone is productive of wealth. Let us pause to admire this sleight-of-hand trick. The bourgeoisie, having to pay the war indemnity, in order to get the Prussians out of power, and pocket the taxes themselves, had to borrow the money necessary to pay it; but as this money was not immediately in the pockets of the famishing workers, the capitalists alone subscribed to the loan, thus lending to themselves the money which they needed. But the workers alone will have to toil for ninety-nine years to repay this loan, principal and interest, which never entered their pockets. Behold capitalistic "patriotism" in all its splendour!

After this, let anyone deny that "virtue is always rewarded."

—JEAN GRAVE, in "Moribund Society and Anarchy."

BIRTH CONTROL IN AMERICA.

There appears to be a movement on foot at present in America which if successful will be the first vital step toward the overthrow of Puritanism, as well as the slow but certain downfall of Comstockery in that country. It is the Birth Control movement, and it has grown so rapidly in favour and strength during the past few months that in New York City alone there are two separate Birth Control Leagues—one consisting of members of the medical profession, and the other mainly of feminists and people of feminist sympathies.

It is now over forty years since there were placed on the Statute Book of the United States Government laws rushed through an uproarious and hurried Congress in the last hour of March 3 (new Administrations assume duties March 4), known as the "Comstock Laws," which prohibited any matter passing through the mails which, in the opinion of Anthony Comstock, was "obscene." This implied a religious as well as moral opinion.

Robert G. Ingersoll and his followers arose at once to strike a deadly blow at the religious part of the law, and succeeded so well that a few years later the law was modified, and religious prejudice was removed. Let it be understood that it was not removed from the Statute Book until after there was no use for it. Ingersoll's propaganda against the Church and religion was so effective and widespread that by direct action and education he undermined the Church at its very foundation, and left the stupid law hanging in Washington like the dried shell of a tortoise. When there was no use or no further interest in the law, the lawmakers secretly removed that portion of it. But they tightened their grip harder than ever on the moral side of it, and in case the word "obscene" should be too vague, they stipulated its meaning, and combined the causing of abortion and the prevention of conception under one title, "obscene," and threatened five years' imprisonment and a five-thousand dollar fine for any one who was found guilty of this offence. The consequence has been that though many have broken it by sending through the mail papers, magazines, etc., with nude figures in their pages, and have been prosecuted for "obscenity," only one besides myself has openly defied this outrageous law on the prevention of conception. This was Dr. Elliott, an honoured member of the medical profession, who, seeing the suffering of poor and miserable women, stated he would defy the law and give out this information to those who needed it. A few days later he received two letters from different towns asking for his advice—one writer saying she was the mother of nine children and had a syphilitic husband, the other saying she had ten children and a husband out of work through illness. Dr. Elliott sent the necessary information to both writers. The following week he was arrested, dragged off to gaol, and confronted by a woman, a Comstock spy, as the one who had written to him in both cases. He was tried, found guilty, and

sentenced to five years in the Leavenworth Penitentiary for each letter, and a ten-thousand dollar fine. He got the limit of the law. He served six years, but through some agitation recently aroused, he has been "pardoned," and allowed to go free.

Broken in health and spirit, with his professional standing practically gone, his case has stood like a giant rock for the authorities, and held the medical profession and others alike at bay.

I had no desire to become a martyred Dr. Elliott, but I harboured a burning desire to undermine that law, not by waiting to vote it out of existence, but by crushing it out by action, for direct action will bring results that a generation of political action could never do.

In March, 1914, I brought out a monthly paper, the *Woman Rebel*, which had on its banner, "No Gods, No Masters," and had for its motto, "Working women, build up within yourselves a conscious fighting character against all things which enslave you." It claimed that woman's first right is over her own body, to be a mother or not as she saw fit; but such rights involved a knowledge of the means to prevent conception. The columns were thrown open for opinions, and letters poured in thick and fast from all over America. Seven out of nine issues were suppressed and confiscated by the Government, and in August the Federal grand jury returned a verdict against me of three indictments on twelve counts, or a liability of twelve years' imprisonment. But I had no intention to undergo imprisonment for simply discussing a subject. There was already printed, and waiting in storage in various parts of the United States, a pamphlet giving direct information on family limitation. The authorities heard of this, and were anxious to push my trial on the pending indictment, and hoped to frighten or discourage me from doing any further work on the subject. The trial came up in October, and I asked for a postponement to prepare my case. The Judge refused it, saying I had had time enough to prepare it. I then took my own postponement, and left for Europe. Three days later there were one hundred thousand pamphlets on family limitation passing through the mails into the various industrial sections of the country.

The fact that I am a middle-aged, motherly, harmless-looking person, led the Judge to allow me to go without bail, so that my leaving the country made the authorities quite furious. They cleverly laid a trap by sending a man calling himself a "comrade" to Mr. Sanger's studio. This man showed great interest in my work, and after a second call of friendly interest got Mr. Sanger to give him one of the pamphlets on "Family Limitation." He left the studio, and in a few minutes returned with Anthony Comstock, who had a warrant for Mr. Sanger's arrest, and a warrant to search his premises, which was done.

They then tried to induce him to tell of my whereabouts and my plans, on the promise of leniency; failing that, he was taken to gaol and locked up until bail could be found for him. His case is still pending. The Free Speech League has taken it up, and are trying to get it tried before a jury. It will no doubt be held over until the October Court opens. A few weeks following Mr. Sanger's arrest, some person or persons entered his studio, and a box of private letters written to him by me from Europe were mysteriously missing.

In the meantime a tremendous indignation swept the country at Mr. Sanger's arrest, and brought with it an overwhelming interest in the subject of birth control. At last the great conspiracy of silence on this subject was broken, and the capitalist press took it up from all sides. One conservative daily has offered a prize of £5 for the best letter on the subject of family limitation.

As I near the conclusion of the work which I came to Europe to do, the thought naturally comes to me, "Shall I return to America, and stand trial for these indictments?" We who know the State and its machinery, know that it is not built upon reason, or justice, or upon a desire for human welfare. We know it maintains its hold upon us by force, and for me to return and expect to reason with a Government which knows no reason, seems a childlike act.

On the other hand, there is the danger of this movement being transferred from the control of the State to the control of the medical profession, which in reality is only an exchange of high priests—another Church which the workers must pass through with bended knees before they can get the knowledge that rightly belongs to them. It is my desire that such knowledge should be available to every adult man and woman, but especially to the *working* men and women.

There have been so many letters come to me these last few weeks urging my return, and requesting me to take up the working class side of the fight, and fight the case against a growing tendency of class liberty and class privilege, that I have decided to return to America in the latter part of the summer, and stand my trial.

I am not fooling myself by thinking that the same magazines and press which are advocating the idea of birth control by legal means are going to stand behind any one who defied and deliberately broke a sacred law and advocated it by direct means. I know too well the methods of the cowardly press, and expect little from them. But in a country where there is the latest scientific invention, and most up-to-date machinery, if there exists by its side laws which execute ideals, and burn at the stake those who dare to speak and act for freedom, then it is time such places were exposed, and their much-boasted freedom and liberty challenged.

MARGARET H. SANGER.

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Reaction in Full Swing.

If the people of these islands, previous to the war, were not aware of what was meant by the term "Prussian Militarism," they certainly have no excuse for such ignorance now, as their rulers are steadily adopting all the most hated methods of the ruling caste of Germany. The teachings of Bernhardt and Treitschke were held up as awful examples of what the doctrine of State worship would lead to; but instead of trying to avoid such evils, a brood of Bernhardtis and Treitschkes have been hatched in this country, and the air resounds with their cries. "The State is everything, and everybody and everything must be devoted to the service of the State! We must have conscription for the Army; conscription for the manufacture of munitions, and conscription for all industries required by the State!" A member of the Cabinet says: "The State needs money, and by one means or another, if the money is here, the State will have it." And a freak organisation called the Socialist National Defence Committee, which includes the egregious Blatchford, declares that "the State has a right to our lives." Well, it seems to us that even Prussian militarism could not go farther than that.

But if we examine these proposals closely, we find that they are all aimed at the workers, who are to do the fighting and the working. They are to be drilled in the workshops like their fellows are drilled in the Army, and in the name of the State they are to be drafted about from one place to another just as the officials in charge may dictate. When Asquith declares that "We shall fight to the end, to the last farthing of our money, to the last ounce of our strength, to the last drop of our blood," he means to the last drop of "our workers' blood."

The War Loan which is being floated with such a flourish of trumpets shows that the capitalists do not intend to spend their "last farthing" on the war. In reality, it is a gigantic bribe to the financial class and the middle class. Those who have plenty of cash will have their incomes almost doubled by investing in the new loan. Even in the muzzled House of Commons a protest was raised. One Member said that "the conditions were extremely favourable to financial interests," while another told the House that "the people who were benefitting under the scheme of option were people in a large way of business, and the small investor was absolutely out of it altogether." Of course he is; but the big financiers are in a position to insist on a "war bonus," and the Government will see they get it. At the Guildhall meeting Mr. Asquith said that "we" have something like £4,000,000,000 invested abroad, and these investments might be drawn upon to finance the war; but he scouted the idea, as he said that "if we were to pay for the war in this way, we should end it so much poorer." So it is quite plain that they do not intend to pay for the war if they can help it. And yet we remember the Premier in the early days of the war saying that no price was too high to pay when freedom was at stake.

As the cost of the war must be met by somebody, our rulers evidently intend to squeeze it out of the workers; and for this

reason they have persuaded the Trade Union officials to suspend the rules and regulations which protect the workers, however slightly, from the rigours of exploitation; and nothing now stands in the way of speeding them up. Their hours and conditions of labour will be decided by compulsory arbitration, with a so-called impartial chairman appointed by the Government; and if the pressure should prove intolerable, and they should dare to go on strike, imprisonment will be their lot. A clause in the Munitions Bill says that Trade Union rules and regulations shall be restored at the end of the war; but that clause will be a mere "scrap of paper" unless the workers are strong enough to enforce it themselves.

The truth is, that all the reactionary gang are taking advantage of the war to forge fresh chains for the workers, who, unless they realise the danger in time, will find that while they have been straining every nerve to produce material for the "fight for liberty" abroad, their enemies at home have succeeded in planting the "Iron Heel" firmly upon their necks.

WHAT IS THE STATE?

The State! what is the State? Political Socialists, Labourists, Liberals, and Conservatives have the word for ever on their tongues; but never do any of them attempt to explain it. That is not their business; their business is to get their hearers to swallow the State pill, not to examine it. It is one of the words with which they conjure, while their dupes stand with mouths agape, mesmerised by their rhetoric. "All down the ages," saith the immortal Bakunin, "mankind has been crucified upon the altar of abstractions." The State, the Government, the nation, the community—these are some of the words for ever uttered by the orators, but never explained by them: often heard, and never understood.

When we do set ourselves to fathom the word "State," we find it turns out to mean the gangs of officials who sit on committees, boards, councils, and in the Parliaments, and who devote their lives to so manipulating the wealth produced by mankind that the working bees get the mere wax, while the idle get the honey. This and nothing more. All the gigantic labours of these gentlemen on boards and in Parliaments have not succeeded up to the present in giving every man three square meals a day and a clean shirt, for the simple reason that, so limitless is their maw, when they have done swallowing in superfluities there is very little left to the common people for necessities.

Well, these gentlemen are the State. This State is the new saviour, and the people are calling upon it to feed them, clothe them, house them, marry them, and bury them. If these gentlemen, the State, possessed all the wisdom and virtue which the average mind sets down to them, there might be some reason why a people born of mothers who work in factories up to the eighth month of pregnancy, and sapped by vile town surroundings, should give up what vestige of freedom remains to them in exchange for a well-regulated animal existence. Unfortunately, these gentlemen are among the most greedy, arrogant, and unscrupulous of their kind. All history teems with their villainies. If the Church has been bad, the State has been worse; if the priest has been bad, the politician has been worse. The State has always bought the Church to further its designs upon the people. The politicians have always captured the idealism of the priests to make the people submissive, that they might the easier enslave and rob them.

But at this point a school of philosophers comes forward (a few of them sincere, but most of them well-known agents of the politicians) and argues that the State is not the officials who run the people, but the collective will of the people themselves. But when this collective will is examined it will be found to be another abstraction, another figment of the brain. It is very true that in some countries, to keep up a semblance of this collective will and to make the poor silly people believe that they have some real power in the Government, they are given votes. But lest they should develop any will of their own in the matter, the official gentlemen, the State, are very careful to thoroughly settle beforehand who the people shall vote for and what they shall vote about. First of all, the Parliamentary candidate is not chosen by the people, but by some caucus of a party—Tory, Liberal, Labour, or Socialist. Then the people are called upon to vote for the selected candidate. But lest the people should develop any real will in the matter, every device

is practised by the corrupt political bosses to prevent the people thinking their own thoughts, and to make them think what they, the bosses, would have them think.

The people, however, need not trouble about this, for little as is their freedom in the matter, their Member has no more when he gets to Parliament. First of all, he has to vote as the whips tell him; next, the whips take their orders from the leaders, *i.e.*, the gentlemen on the front benches; these, again, take their orders from that strange, mysterious body, the Privy Council; and this Privy Council takes its orders from the money-bags—the capitalists and great financiers. And there you have the great political game unveiled.

The Privy Council sits behind closed doors; no one knows what it talks about. It may be discussing a question of peace or war; it may send out an ultimatum of war to some foreign Power. The people will not know, the talking gentlemen in Parliament will not know, until it is all settled. Then they will be told that they have to fight and to pay. That is their share in the State, that is their function in the so-called collective will—to fight and to pay! They have no will at all in the matter. It is all done by the gentlemen behind, sitting on boards and committees and councils. These hang together to defraud and deceive the people. So it has ever been; so it must ever be, so long as there are gentlemen sitting upon boards and councils, as experts engaged to run the affairs of the people, instead of the people, as of old, ordering their own lives by their free, spontaneous, open councils.

So when you think of the State, you must bring before your mind's eye the men who at present are the State and their doings. Mr. Lloyd George and his insurance quackery; the same George and Rufus Isaacs and their Marconi gamble; Mr. Asquith giving his political pals £400 a year as a minimum wage, while denying colliers five shillings a day.

Do not for a moment think that if you put into Parliament your most immaculate Socialists that they will turn out one whit different. Once there, they become a part of the vested interests; once there, they become a part of the Government; once there, they have to run the Constitution, based upon private property and wage-slavery. They may patch and mend this Constitution, but if they attempt to call in question its basis, they will be soon put outside. And by this time the best of the workers know that it is the basis alone that matters, and that so long as the capitalists own the land and tools of labour, and pay them a wage, no reform can secure to them more than a bare subsistence out of the wealth they produce. So what is the use of sending men to waste time in sterile tinkering with a system wrong at the root? What is the use of political action?

Furthermore, Marx long ago proved in his book on "Capital" that political power is an illusion. All power is economic; it is power of money and property. So that the politicians have only power in virtue of the money and property that lie behind them. So that if you, the propertyless workers, should return a large majority of the 670 Members of the House of Commons, you would not by this act gain power. The financiers, the capitalists, and the landlords would still have the property; they would still be able to buy the soldiers and the policemen. They would not surrender to you by virtue of votes or talk or parchment; they would suspend the Constitution and fight you in the streets.

As politics only leads to this, why then waste more time with politics? Why not turn and instantly begin the serious business of preparing to fight them? I do not by this suggest the fight as an immediate thing; I do not even suggest haste; I do not say that it may not take years to get our organisation perfect. I only say that as it is bound to come, we are fools if we allow our masters to proceed with all haste with the perfecting of their organisations to enslave us, while they waste our time in the wilderness of politics. Let us realise that politics is the game of our masters, while our business is to organise industrially to overthrow their Government and free the land and machinery from profit, for use by the people.

My last word about the State is, that we Anarchist Communists do not want any State or Government to feed, clothe, house, marry, and bury us. We want the abolition of present society, and once more gain free access to Nature. This achieved, we are conceited enough to believe that we will be able to feed, clothe, and house ourselves better than any Government could do it for us. We further believe that we will be able to do the right thing toward each other from the light of our own conscience, without the force of soldiers, policemen, judges, and lawyers; if for no other reason, for the simple one that we will know that soldiers, policemen, judges, and lawyers are luxuries that cost money, and we will have to be taxed to pay for them;

while they in their turn not only produce nothing, but are always plotting against the freedom of the people.

Nature abhors the game of man governing his fellow man, and never fails to visit it with decline, decay, and death. Her law is, thou shalt not grow wise by thy fellows' wisdom, thou shalt not grow strong by thy fellows' strength; thou shalt use thy own brain, thou shalt exercise thy own muscles. When peoples depart from this law, they divide into two classes—hand workers and thinkers, doers and directors, governors and governed, bullies and slaves. The Governments are always the bullies, the governed are always the slaves. Nature makes each pay the penalty for disused functions, and brands the society so split asunder as corrupt. Every man should work, and every man should think. Woe to the society that contains a class of hands and a class of brains. Both of them are damned, and the society is damned by both.

JOHN TAMLYN.

SIDELIGHTS ON SOCIAL SUBJECTS.

The newspapers have been laying much stress upon the plight of the Germans, and the excessive increase in the cost of living in Germany, and figures have been quoted to prove their assertions. But the same papers unfortunately quote the war prices of articles of consumption in England, by which it is seen that there is little to choose between the British and German war prices, which have fallen heavily upon the workers in both countries without a corresponding increase in wages. England must, therefore, cease to hug the delusion that she is especially favoured in this respect. As if to emphasise the importance of this matter, the grim pages of the Return of the Registrar of Births just published confront us. There we find that children have been dying in London during the past thirteen weeks at the rate of 200 a week above the rate for the corresponding weeks of last year. During 1914-15 it actually reached the enormous total of 50,209. Is it mere coincidence, we would ask, that these precious lives should have been sacrificed during a period when the demand for women's labour has reached a pitch never before attained? The mother forced by sheer necessity into the industrial arena, eking out a miserable existence making officers' uniforms at something less than 2d. an hour, or helping to "save" the Empire by making shells to blow men into fragments, is heedless of the fact that the sands of life are running out in her own wretched home, that the babies are being slaughtered in a more horrible manner than by the shells themselves. Yet the women shell-makers and others have been called patriots, and, possibly because it is not sufficiently picturesque, no one has shown up the scandal of this fresh horror, which must be laid, together with the war itself, at the door of Capitalism.

Since the astute plan to create Labour Ministers has been put into practice an ominous change in the attitude of the Government towards Labour has been noted in the daily press. The nervousness exhibited as recently as March and April has now given place to such statements as that which appeared in the *Daily Chronicle*. "Lock-outs, strikes, and all incitements to them are to be prohibited, and there is to be compulsory arbitration with an impartial tribunal. The other point is the need for greater mobility of labour. This is to be met by the organisation of a special 'mobile force' of workmen. The force will be recruited voluntarily; its members will be subject to a special discipline. . . . This last principle—the combination of a voluntary recruitment with a discipline which can be kept strict because it has been voluntarily accepted in the first instance—is one of considerable promise. It will be seen throughout the scheme voluntaryism prevails, and the co-operation of the men's own organisations is used as much as possible." Only too well do we know the voluntaryism here referred to. Starve or enlist as an industrial conscript. That is the alternative. No need for Lord Joicey, the well-known North Country coalowner, to regret that the Munitions Bill does not give power to deal with men as well as with munitions. That has now all been nicely arranged with the Trade Union leaders, who, in return for the Governmental favours heaped upon them, remind the workers that they have got to be citizens before they are Trade Unionists. No revolutionary ideal here, but only the orthodox barking of the sheepdog. Another Trade Union leader informs us that important as Trade Union conditions were, national honour and integrity were greater and more important still; and, if necessary, the former must give way. Meanwhile the babies are dying of hunger, and the mothers are losing their husbands by the thousand. But not a single

prophet has yet arisen among the workers to expose the crass stupidity and immorality of the whole business.

Labour, therefore, being duly shackled with the connivance of the Labour Party, the Government has things all its own way, and promptly dispenses with even the semblance of legality it decently observed in the past. Being a-law unto itself, it has made haste to pass several little emergency Bills in order to safeguard its own erstwhile uncertain life. One of the most recent achievements is the passage of an Emergency Bill to suspend the statute requiring newly-appointed Ministers to seek re-election. As one newspaper points out, this particular statute has often proved irksome, but was useful enough in past times as a check on Court influence and political jobbery. We can only suppose, therefore, that the political atmosphere at Westminster has become so purified that the continuance on the Statute Book of such an Act constituted an indignity entirely unmerited, and not to be tolerated longer.

So profitable has the production of armaments proved since the outbreak of war that the report of Messrs. John Brown and Co., armament engineers, shows an increase of net profits from an average of just over £200,000 to £521,000 for 1914-15. Other firms have profited from this grim game of human slaughter to an equal extent. Contracts are also booming across the Atlantic, the Westinghouse Electric Company having secured an order for 2,000,000 rifles, and are expecting another for nearly as large an amount. So lucrative has the armament business proved that the firm is considering entering permanently into the rifle and ammunition supply business, the impression being that increased armament, rather than disarmament, will be the sequel to the European war. A surmise that is more than likely to prove correct unless the workers speak out and act with decision, for surely the day is coming when they will find it far more profitable to till fields for themselves than to make shells and rifles for their masters.

President Wilson, we observe, has been fulfilling his mission of upholder of constituted authority and governmental order by issuing a warning to Mexico. His memorandum states that that country is "swept by civil war as by fire," and while disclaiming any desire to interfere or acquire any Mexican territory, it calls upon the Mexican leaders "within a very short time" to organise a Government with which "the Powers of the world can deal," otherwise the United States will be constrained to decide what means it can employ to "help Mexico to save herself and serve her people." We should have thought that with the spectacle before his eyes of the awful carnage caused at the dictates of the European Governments, President Wilson would have hesitated to urge the need for a Government to restore tranquillity. But his point is fairly plain—only Governments can save the people from themselves; and even if it should only be effected by fire and sword, why then how much better to be legally slaughtered by Governmental authority than risk death during a revolution! But Wilson, as the representative of American capitalists, only takes up the orthodox attitude towards revolt. A successful Anarchist revolution would have invoked a similar threat; and in the last resort it must be remembered that Mexico is a country rich in oils and minerals. In these circumstances, American interference would partake somewhat of the nature of a sacred act for the good of the suffering fraternity of financiers.

M. B. HOPE.

"THE CHURCH MILITANT."

How they buzzed round the fires at Smithfield,
The black, perverse, froward, reverend clergy!
(Like June beetles round the hall lamp),
Teaching the Gospel and knowing not the first word of it—
More cruel, revengeful, bloodthirsty than the ignorant mob
they instructed—
Blind, malignant, pompous leaders of the blind!

And so to-day round the fires of war—the flash of artillery
and glance of bayonets
(But at safe distance, impotent),
Again the dismal brood swarms—hysterical, smirking, grimacing—
Still as oblivious of all their Master taught,
Still going further than the thoughtless populace in their lust
and frenzy,
Still impious, blasphemous, sacrilegious, profane—
Gloating like harpies over the nation's sins.

ERNEST CROSBY.

"THEN—WHAT?"

If a man hasn't any money; then—what? Well, as affairs are now arranged, he has a pretty poor time of it. What's the price of anything? Why, something, and, usually something more than it ought to be. What's the need for money? Why, just not any need, if only men and women behaved in a reasonable way. What do we spend our money on? What are we compelled to spend our money on, or else go without? Rent, for one thing; but there is no necessity for landlords; rates of one kind and another, but there is no reason why we should not get on quite comfortably without mayors, aldermen, borough councillors, poorhouses, hospitals, etc., and no need to charge each other for providing gas, water, electric light and power, and so on. Mutual aid would do away with rates. Then we pay taxes, direct and indirect, which are expended by a close circle on an entirely useless Civil Service, on the Army and Navy, on the Foreign Office, which misconducts in secret and unchecked our international affairs, and on a monarch and Royal Family, which are a picturesque and ineffective survival of the bad old days, which, however, were no worse than these present times. We spend money on postage, a handsome profit being made out of the sale of stamps and other postal facilities, thanks in part to underpaying and overworking the staff. Other main calls upon a man's income are food, drink, clothes, on all of which profits are made by manufacturer, sellers of raw material, engineers, mine-owners, transporters, middlemen, shopkeepers, and others, incidentally, of course, as always by landlords and other parasites. Here it may be well to remind ourselves once again that goods should not be made for profit, but simply to supply needs; that public service should be rendered not for reward, but in order to meet needs. Men should work to live and let live, not live to work. It is not necessary to go into further detail of the ordinary expenditure of the ordinary man—of the man who is a worker; enough has been said to show that the present need for money is almost entirely factitious. Money is simply a token given for the output of work done or for service rendered, and is in turn exchanged for the output of others, or for the service given by others. The foolishness lies in this fact, that the vast majority of men do not receive the tokens which are their due, and are compelled to give for what they need tokens which represent far more labour than that which has been or should have been put into the goods or the service they purchase.

Some years ago, long after I had reached what I believed to be my years of discretion, I was annoyed by a friend who asked me if I really ever had thought out any important matter for myself. I indignantly replied, as would most men and women, that of course I thought out things for myself. But by a series of simple questions he soon made me aware that, as a matter of fact, I was basing almost the whole of my ways of life upon sheer convention, some of which were no doubt good, but most of which were—equally without doubt—seriously bad. He made few statements, and expressed few opinions, contenting himself for the most part with the use of that admirable little word "Why?" Why did I believe this, why did I accept that, why did I do t'other thing, eventually awakening me to the fact that I was leading an utterly unthinking existence. Among the other "whys" which he put to me was, "Why do you grind out your soul working for money?" To which foolish question, as it then seemed to me, I naturally replied, "I need money." Then he said, "Why?" And I soon found myself floundering in a sea of unreason, and he left me *thinking*.

I don't want to be proud and count myself as unusual or eccentric in my want of thought. Evil is wrought by want of thought is a phrase glibly used, but not many of us fully realise how great and injurious is that evil. Indeed, there is little of evil in the world which is not the outcome of want of thought. We readily accept the state of affairs which exists around us because it is very difficult to think of the possibility—we easily realise the desirability—of that state being radically altered. Men work out their lives for a weekly pittance, because they have not thought whether there should be any need for money. They obey their rulers without thinking out whether there is any need for any rulers. They pay rent, rates, taxes, and exorbitant prices for necessities and decent comforts and luxuries without thought.

When the majority of workers begin to think, then—what? Then the revolution. But, as Ruskin pointed out, before there can be a revolution in things, there must be a revolution in thought. It is the duty of each one of us Anarchists to start that revolution in thought whenever opportunity offers, or whenever—which is more frequent—we can make an opportunity.

W. TEIGNMOUTH SHORE.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL.

(To the Editor of FREEDOM.)

DEAR COMRADE,—Surely the time for the reorganisation of the Anarchist International movement has arrived. At the present moment the ruling classes of Europe are busy trying to obliterate all signs of civilised progress. This mad holocaust must stop, or at least a repetition of the same must be rendered impossible, and that is the business of the Anarchists and extreme Socialists of the world. Secret diplomacy wrecks these plans for peace. Therefore, the fatal impediment of Communistic progress must be swept out of existence. Blind patriotism at the present time impedes the development of the finer sentiments of humanity. The lust for revenge, the inordinate hate of the workers towards others of different nationality, is a source of disappointment to all comrades. Many are pessimistic enough to think that the International is a complete failure. Surely if it is a failure, nothing else can succeed, for only through the International movement can we see the realisation of our ideals.

When I say that the Anarchists and Socialists of the world must revolutionise the present system, I mean they must broaden their propaganda. Before the war much was said and written of the strength of the International movement. Many comrades reposed their confidence in its power and ability to cope with political and industrial emergencies, yet when the crisis came the International movement tottered and fell. The result is that many Social Revolutionaries are denouncing their comrades in other countries for their traitorous weakness in failing to stand firm for the cause; but I hold that we comrades in the fight for freedom are nearly all to blame. Fraternal greetings and German or British Anarchist manifestoes are all very well; but why so late in the day? Why were the comrades not agreed upon a concerted form of action? Such as had a premeditated course to pursue were too few to stem or even hinder the tide of swiftly moving developments that led up to the war. It is the opinion of many comrades, including myself, that while pursuing local and national propaganda with admirable energy, we left the International movement behind. While inside our local groups and national leagues the organisation was good, we forgot, or at least very much neglected, the principle of International co-operation and combination. We must entirely regenerate and reorganise the International Anarchist and Socialist movement, and rear upon its fundamental principles and ideal an aggressive industrial fighting force.

We comrades and industrial producers must be citizens of an united world, and ignore any official authority or tyrannical State. Under prevailing conditions, not only do we understand that we must slave to live, but our masters and slaveowners intend that we shall only live to slave. Laws and proclamations are always detrimental to our liberty. The State is the chain that binds us down, and laws created and enforced by the State compose the pyramid of tyranny we suffer under. How can we have freedom while we have States? It is impossible. As the workers only retain their ideas of nationality through delusion, we comrades must dispel the delusion, for no matter what his race or colour, the worker plays his part in production, and in doing so earns the right to live, and not exist. Let us banish the distinction of colour and nationality. We are workers. We are comrades in a common cause, exiles in the land of our birth, and brothers in bondage. Let us unite, not only locally and nationally, but internationally. Our liberty has been withheld from us too long. The time is ripe, and the moment fitting for the overthrow of Capitalism and wage-slavery. Let us as workers use the power we have to establish permanently the Co-operative Commonwealth of the Workers of the World.—Fraternally,

ROBT. S. WOOD.

THE ANARCHIST PRESS.

(To the Editor of FREEDOM.)

DEAR COMRADE,—In your report of the Conference some mention is made of "the urgent need of reprinting many pamphlets." In an article in a former issue of FREEDOM I referred to the matter, and I suggest again that those especially dealing with the basic principles of Anarchism be radically revised and couched in simpler language. A glance at some of the old FREEDOM pamphlets, such as Kropotkin's "Appeal to the Young," Malatesta's "Talk between Two Workers," and others, will immediately show that they have been unfortunate in the matter of a translator. André Girard's "Anarchy" is, however, excellent in every respect. For propaganda purposes we need well-spaced, readable matter such as this; and I must also congratulate the publishers of the "Last War" and "The Anarchist Revolution" on their excellent type and readability.

Touching the matter of the Anarchist press, I should also like to urge the immediate necessity of the movement having a printing machine of its own. At present we are too much dependent on the goodwill of the average printer. We should be able to print our publications in our own time, and instances could be quoted where immediate publication was necessary, but unobtainable. I have broached the matter with other comrades, including George Barrett, and they all agree that this is a point which cannot be too strongly urged. The initial cost of the machine and the running expenses would be easily covered if the various groups sent up their printing

orders. Such things as pamphlets, leaflets, programmes, social tickets, etc., are always in demand. Furthermore, the movement would be amply repaid by doing away with the too-frequent passing round of the hat for funds to run the Anarchist press.

In conclusion, I should suggest that particulars of Marsh House, the lines on which it is run, etc., be printed and circulated in the movement, so that we might have many such examples of communal living in the provinces, as well as here in London. This practical working out of Communist ideas (as far as is practicable with the order of things that be) on these lines is to my mind as good propaganda as any I wot of.—With fraternal greetings, yours, etc.,

LEONARD A. MOTLER.

PROPAGANDA NOTES.

COWDENBEATH.—The members of this group claim that their band of enthusiasts is unique. In other districts any association of workers has some prominent figure as centre of attraction around which members revolve and have their being. We have no outstanding personalities in our circles, no geniuses, no Demosthenes; in our discussions no one individual utterance carries more weight than another. Therefore, to ourselves we have demonstrated the feasibility of Anarchy in matters not directly concerned with production. Our Sunday open-air meetings also show that more progress can be made with Anarchist propaganda among the workers when the meetings are run in accordance with the theory of Anarchy. Our method is for one comrade to start a discussion, and allow members of the audience absolute freedom of expression; we show our fellow-workers we are there to discuss with them, not to lecture at them. Although not advertised in the usual manner, we have had attendances of over a hundred at meetings held outside of small mining villages.

A student of the genesis of present-day gigantic working-class movements would recognise in our movement many characteristics familiar to him as peculiar to the objects of his study. Taking the Trade Unions as a concrete instance; they were born in a hostile environment, the authorities aggressively antagonistic; the pioneers of Trade Unionism had initiative, and did not rely on men of another class to fight the masters; and, lastly, the actions of the first Unions were consistent with their basic principles.

Our social activities have for their guiding principle mutual agreement. In this mining district the first Monday of June is an idle day, and a demonstration is held to commemorate the institution of the eight-hour day by the Fifeshire miners (before politicians recognised this period of time as a legal working day). This year, leadership having long since obliterated all traces of the spirit which impelled the miners to extort from the coalowners a shorter working day, and economic factors proving too strong for the legislation enforcing the eight-hour day, the leaders vetoed the demonstration; but our group, disclaiming responsibility for any of those factors, arranged a motor drive to Crieff. Any alteration in the prearranged programme was settled by mutual agreement, and this added materially to the pleasure, as every one admitted. Perhaps by thus giving workers a practical example of how communities can settle disputed points, without either majority or minority rule, we have done more good than any amount of speechifying. We are not unmindful of our comrades in other countries, although devoting most of our leisure to local propaganda; and with the aim of destroying at least one of the barriers to free intercourse between different nationalities, we are learning Esperanto, to enable us to correspond with groups who for similar motives have also learned it.

R. SELKIRK.

INTERNATIONAL MODERN SCHOOL.

Liberty No. 3 has proved quite a success, judging from the number of complimentary letters received. If you have not got one, send to-day, or we shall soon be sold out entirely. We are now busy setting our house in order to accommodate the little ones. We need chairs, tables, etc. The young bloods have done remarkably well since they have taken over the responsibility of their own school, and it is up to the adults to encourage them in their stand for ideas Anarchistic.

We thank our comrades for their help in lending Marsh House for our social, the "irresponsible kids" succeeding in making it a success.

Our rooms are open every night. Friday, reading; Sunday, 4 p.m., lectures and discussions. (See *Liberty* for our activities.)

June Donations and Subscriptions.—Proceeds from the Social £2 5s. 10½d., School 11s. 3d., B. P. 3s., E. C. 1s., S. T. 1s., A. J. 6d., B. A. 2s., W. L. 1s., F. Bosazza 5s., M. S. 1s. 6d.

JIMMY DICK.

Ashburton House, Hertford Place, Globe Road, E.

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.

MONTHLY ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

(June 3—June 30.)

FREEDOM Guarantee Fund.—G. D. £1, J. L. Morgan 1s, A. Hazeland 3s 6d, W. H. Brown 1s, C. B. W. 6d, S. Corio 1s 6d, R. Gundersen 1s 6d, H. C. Cox 10d, "Vegetarian" £2 10s. Marsh House (socials and sale of refreshments), week ending May 29, 8s 10½d; June 5, 9s 9½d; June 12, 2s 11d; June 19, 18s 0½d.

FREEDOM Subscriptions.—W. M. S. 1s 6d, G. D. 3s, G. Teltsch 4s 2d, J. L. Morgan 2s 6d, R. Moore 2s, V. Whitty 1s 6d, A. Hazeland 1s 6d, A. H. Holt 1s 6d, Communist Library 1s 6d, W. H. Brown 1s 6d, E. E. Guerra 2s 9d, T. George 2s, A. Stretton 1s 6d.

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