

# Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

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DECEMBER, 1914.

MONTHLY: ONE PENNY.

## NOTES.

### Mrs. Grundy Snubbed.

The recent Government order sanctioning the payment of separation allowances to women who are not the legal wives of soldiers and sailors has caused a flutter in the dovescotes of respectability. A conference was held recently to discuss "Morals and Manners" (what a subject!), and this question of State recognition was raised, and brought forth the inevitable resolution. We are not told who constituted the conference, whether any soldiers or sailors or their unmarried dependents were present: but several deacons and other bulwarks of the Church, Mrs. Grundy's special delegates, figure in the speech list. It is a natural propensity of people like deacons and their wives and unmarried sisters to do silly things like this, minding everybody's business but their own. The speech by Archdeacon Escreet must have caused fearful misgivings to the ultra-respectable delegates. "While yielding to none in his desire to maintain the sanctity of the marriage vow," he said, "if a man had lived faithfully with a woman for years, but had not legalised that position—though he wished the man had—he saw no reason why the State should not respect his position." And that from a parson, too! Canon Deeds, however, said that "the new order appeared to place concubinage and marriage practically on a level in the eyes of the administrators of our public funds"; while the resolution expressed "regret that the State should sanction the administration of the soldiers and sailors' funds without safeguarding the distinction between married wives and unmarried dependents." But the Government, whose action was dictated possibly by the slump in recruiting, appear to have placed necessity before morals; and the dear kind folk who follow the Christ who defended the adulteress before her traducers, would reverse the order to subjugate all our needs to the moral factor. What perverted and horrible minds these people must have! The lesson must not be lost, however, that the State no longer recognises the necessity of legal bonds for a union of man and woman; and Archdeacon Escreet (while lamenting the loss of a fee to a brother of the cloth) recognises it also.

### The Real Patriotism.

From New Zealand comes particulars of the loyalty and patriotism of the shipping companies during the country's "hour of need." To quote a local paper: "A war has broken out, the Empire is faced with a crisis, all political differences are laid at rest, legislation is passed to prevent increases in the prices of commodities, and up go the freight charges 25 per cent.!" It is now the busy season for the shipping of wool, and, profiting by the absence of the competition of German shipping, the patriotic British companies are extorting what amounts to a toll of an additional £150,000 a year out of the pockets of the wool growers. Pretty rough when we have to depend upon German shipping for protection against the rapacity of patriotic Britons! But it also appears that these same wool growers who are shrieking against the wealthy shipowners now that their own pockets are touched, were the very people who assisted the companies to defeat the workers during the general strike at New Zealand ports last year, by doing the manual labour at the quayside. Then the men were "frothy agitators," and the poor ill-used companies the incarnation of injured innocence. Now the tables are reversed, and the farmers of New Zealand have an opportunity of realising how "grateful" the capitalist can be when there is a profit to be made. "By their deeds ye shall know them." Here, as there, this monster, the real enemy, is waxing fat on the people's need; and it is against him, and not against each other, that the workers should wage war.

### More Patriotism.

New Zealand cannot claim a monopoly of human vultures. The recent disclosures in the daily press of the concerted action of large manufacturers to force up prices of articles required for Government work is but the old, old story of profits first. We believe it is in the historical references to St. George, Britain's patron saint, that mention is first made of army contractors, which may account either for his adoption and adoration here, or for the recurring instances of this special brand of robbery. It is not only in the contract for boots where a picking is to be had for the favoured few, but also in materials for huts which are being built for the new army. The facts are doubtless known to most of our readers; but briefly, it appears that two price lists exists in the manufacturers' offices, one for materials for private work, the other—much inflated—for Government work. Small wonder that these people shout so loudly for war, and it should be no occasion for surprise to us who know the power of scent possessed by these patriots for discerning a probable source of profit. The only folk to whom the war brings no kudos are the workers, who often enough are working short time, if at all, and in some cases full time at three-quarter pay, and who pay for the war in increased food prices, which are raised out of all proportion to the increased tax. Patriotism, then, is a commercial virtue, and should be valued accordingly.

### "Who's to Look after the Kids?"

Whilst comment has been made upon the allowances granted to wives and children of soldiers and sailors, the hardships being endured by those womenfolk and children whose breadwinners have fallen victims to the modern Moloch is evident all around us, and by one glance at any daily paper. The fund inaugurated by the Prince of Wales has already paid out to these necessitous cases £900,000! A grim commentary upon the "generous" manner in which a grateful country rewards her victims, and these figures are more eloquent when we remember the parsimonious manner in which these funds are administered. Surely these helpless victims are entitled to the best in the land; adulation of brave deeds is cheap enough, and statues and memorials a mocking farce when the women and children are left to battle for existence on a pittance. In the *Standard* of December 2 four advertisements appear for sailors' widows, whose husbands were drowned, asking for work, charring, needlework, etc.; and the Naval Employment Agency appeals for work for a large number of widows. "Surely, surely, a grateful country can reward her 'heroes' for their sacrifices." And another case, headed "Soldiers' Worst Enemy," was recently disclosed at Glasgow. A soldier invalided from the front returned to his home to find that his wife and babies had been served with an ejectment order. The soldier stated his case, after the decree had been issued, in the court. The press report says:—

"When I went out to fight for my country," said the soldier, "it was to defend not only my house from the Germans, but other houses as well. I left my wife and children because I thought my country needed me, and on my return I find I am rewarded with an eviction notice. Who is my worst enemy, the Germans, who have not yet reached this country, or the house factor, who wants to drive my wife and two baby children on to the streets in the middle of winter? I tell you that German spies have been shot for less than this factor proposes to do to my wife and children—this factor whose patriotism has been lost in greed." When the soldier finished, the women in court cheered, while the officials smiled in a shamed sort of way. The home was saved, and as the court was cleared of impoverished and terrorised women against whom eviction orders had been given, a magistrate ordered it to be "perfumed and disinfected."

"Your King and country need you," but if you have any dependents, they may shift for themselves!

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## KROPOTKIN'S LETTER TO PROFESSOR STEFFEN.

(To the Editor of FREEDOM.)

DEAR COMRADE,—That there would be differences of opinion among Anarchists upon various subjects is only to be expected, and is good for us; but that there should be any differences as to the attitude of Anarchists on war is not or has not been so far thought possible. War!—we have always shuddered at the thought, knowing full well that wars, upon whatever pretext fought, are but the outcome of international rivalry for the power to exploit, and that the workers have always most to suffer, it being left to them to pay and die. Thus it is that our comrade Kropotkin's letter in your October issue comes as a double shock to many of us, firstly, because an Anarchist siding with and justifying State action, assisting, in fact, its efforts to strengthen itself anew, would indicate a throwing over of ideals and principles; and secondly, because many of us owe much to him for what he has written upon social and economic problems, thus helping us towards a clearer vision of the ideals we all hold dear.

Reading his letter side by side with the pamphlet "Wars and Capitalism" recently issued, written early in 1913, one is forced to ask: "What has happened in the past two years which can justify such a reversal of opinion which leads our comrade to contradict his own writings?" The anomalous position arises that here are we, Anarchists in thought, who have always regarded war as a damnable feature of capitalism, discussing the intricacies of international politics, and comparing one Government with another in an endeavour to prove that one Government, or one form of despotism, is to be preferred to another. Instead, we should be preaching and insisting upon the fact that, to quote "Wars and Capitalism": "The reason for modern war is always competition for the markets and the right to exploit.....In fact, all wars in Europe during the last 150 years were wars fought for industrial advantage." Are we to suppose that this war is any exception to the rule? Kropotkin's letter proves nothing upon this point, and gives no clue to the position of the workers in this upheaval, or their position afterwards. No mention, in fact, is made of the workers at all; and we are left to suppose that this is a war of liberation for them, and that their interests are identical with those of their masters and the State, that the German Government is solely to blame for this awful catastrophe, and that the Allied Powers are acting purely as knight-errants or defenders of their threatened liberty. It is tragic!

I am still of the opinion, supported by Kropotkin's pamphlet, that this war is but the culminating point of the foreign policy of the Governments of Europe, dictated always by commercial considerations, during the past ten years, and that not only Germany or Austria, but the whole of the Great Powers, are responsible; and we Anarchists, striving for a world set free, can take no part in their efforts to secure themselves more firmly in the world of commerce.

What is it to us that Germany seeks colonies, and has an eye on those of France or Britain, or on Finland? Is she not seeking to do what England has done in the past, and who now wishes to rest on her laurels, with her booty more or less secure? Are we to uphold the Powers entering upon a campaign of murder to prevent a powerful rival from transferring England's or Russia's dominions to herself? It seems to me that our attitude is not to say who shall dominate in certain areas, but to put an end to domination in every area. Are we to discriminate as to the varying degrees of tyranny? German militarism itself exists as a commercial necessity. And will England and Russia be free from tyranny when German militarism is wiped out by the triumphant militarism of the Allies?

Kropotkin speaks of Germany's culpability by virtue of her careful and deliberate preparations, all aimed at smashing France; and yet we are told in "Wars and Capitalism" that: "Jealous of keeping her supremacy on the sea, jealous above all of keeping her colonies for exploitation by her own monopolists, England is redoubling her efforts in order to have a fleet capable of infallibly crushing her German rival. England looks everywhere for allies to weaken the military power of Germany on land." (The italics are mine.)

In his letter, Kropotkin writes: "And the moment they began to feel themselves strong as a sea-power, the Germans took it into their heads to destroy the maritime power of Britain, to take a strong footing on the Southern shores of the Channel, and to menace England with an invasion." Contrast this with the following from "Wars and Capitalism":—"When the English press sow alarm and terror, pretending to fear a German invasion, they well know that danger does not lie in that quarter.....The English bourgeoisie of to-day wants to act towards Germany as she twice acted towards Russia in order to arrest for fifty years or more that country's sea-power..... That is why for the last two years we have been living on the alert, expecting a colossal European war to break out from one day to another."

Has the position altered since then? I fail to see that it has, and it still remains to me as an Anarchist, an Internationalist, that this war is but the struggle for commercial supremacy between two forces who have waited for years to fly at each other's throats.

As Romain Rolland says:—"You Socialists on both sides claim to be defending liberty against tyranny—French liberty against the Kaiser, German liberty against the Tsar. Would you defend one despotism against another? *Unité and make war on both.* There was no reason

for war between the Western nations; French, English, and German, we are all brothers, and do not hate one another.....Who has brought these plagues upon them? Brought them to the desperate alternative of overwhelming their adversary or dying? None other than their Governments, on whom in my opinion the guilt rests.....The worst enemy of each nation is not without, but within its frontiers, and none has the courage to fight against it."

This, in my opinion, should be the attitude of the Anarchists, and the niceties of diplomatic manoeuvring can be left for those whose dirty business it is. We have got to fight, not Prussian militarism or British militarism, but that of which these are but the tools—Capitalism, the State; and we can do it, not by heaping faggots on to the fire, but by exposing the unscrupulous methods of Governments in general, and showing to the worker in unmistakable language that not by fighting for the oppressors, but only by fighting against them can real freedom be won. This is the view of many Anarchists with whom I have discussed Kropotkin's letter, and it is the view dictated by the principles we hold that there is one enemy of the workers—Capitalism and the State.—Yours fraternally,

FRED W. DUNN.

## ANTI-MILITARISM: WAS IT PROPERLY UNDERSTOOD?

(To the Editor of FREEDOM.)

DEAR COMRADE,—Allow me to say a few words on Kropotkin's article on Anti-militarism, published in your last issue. In my opinion, anti-militarism is the doctrine which affirms that the military service is an abominable and murderous trade, and that a man ought never to consent to take arms at the command of the masters, and never to fight except for the Social Revolution.

Is this to misunderstand anti-militarism?

Kropotkin seems to have forgotten the antagonism of the classes, the necessity of economic emancipation, and all the Anarchist teachings; and says that an anti-militarist ought always to be ready, in case a war breaks out, to take arms in support of "the country that will be invaded"; which, considering the impossibility, at least for the ordinary workman, of verifying in time who is the real aggressor, practically means that Kropotkin's "anti-militarist" ought always to obey the orders of his Government. What remains after that of anti-militarism, and, indeed, of Anarchism too?

As a matter of fact, Kropotkin renounces anti-militarism because he thinks that the national questions must be solved before the social question. For us, national rivalries and hatreds are among the best means the masters have for perpetuating the slavery of the workers, and we must oppose them with all our strength. And as to the right of the small nationalities to preserve, if they like, their language and their customs, that is simply a question of liberty, and will have a real and final solution only when, the States being destroyed, every human group, nay, every individual, will have the right to associate with, and separate from, every other group.

It is very painful for me to oppose an old and beloved friend like Kropotkin, who has done so much for the cause of Anarchism. But for the very reason that Kropotkin is so much esteemed and loved by us all, it is necessary to make known that we do not follow him in his utterances on the war.

I know that this attitude of Kropotkin is not quite new, and that for more than ten years he has been preaching against the "German danger"; and I confess that we were in the wrong in not giving importance to his Franco-Russian patriotism, and in not foreseeing where his anti-German prejudices would land him. It was because we understood that he meant to invite the French workers to answer to a possible German invasion by making a Social Revolution—that is, by taking possession of the French soil, and trying to induce the German workers to fraternise with them in the struggle against French and German oppressors. Certainly we would never have dreamt that Kropotkin could invite the workers to make common cause with Governments and masters.

I hope he will see his error, and be again on the side of the workers against all the Governments and all the bourgeois: German, English, French, Russian, Belgian, etc.—Yours fraternally,

E. MALATESTA.

## INTERNATIONAL MODERN SCHOOL.

Be it known that the young rebels of the old School have taken up new quarters at 24 Green Street, Cambridge Road, E., where they will foregather every evening for conversation and merrymaking. On Tuesday evenings at 8 o'clock a comrade has volunteered his services to teach French. Thursday evenings at 8 o'clock, discussion and reading class. Sunday afternoons at 3.30, our usual meetings. Fred Dunn, of the *Voice of Labour*, opened our discussion with a chat on "Should Modern School Rebels be Boy Scouts?" The lads are anxious that their endeavour to look after themselves in the carrying on of the School will be responded to by the adults in the shape of monetary help. Subscriptions will be acknowledged in *Voice of Labour* or *FREEDOM*. Here's luck to the rebels!

JIMMY.

## VOICE OF LABOUR.

MONTHLY (15TH), ONE HALFPENNY.

## SIDELIGHTS ON SOCIAL SUBJECTS.

The war has produced the usual crop of Army contract scandals. The War Office has been charged about 100 per cent. too much for field glasses, has been fleeced over contracts for corrugated iron, has received boots made of rotten leather, and been supplied with "brown paper" khaki by those devoted patriots who, even though it involve their beloved country in national disaster, acknowledge but one god, the God of Profit. The whole scandal has been exposed, we are inclined to think, by those other patriots who find themselves somewhat ignored by the contractors—so naturally their high indignation knows no bounds. When will the British public see that the lust for profit will always lead to these price-raising combines in times of stress, and have the courage to apply the only remedy, Communism? But before that day dawns the War Office with its chequered history will have ceased to be the arbiter in the affairs of the nation, and will have become a defunct institution.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer has presented his "momentous Budget," and the little bill of cost to date for the war to be met by means of taxation confronts us. The sum of £80,500,000 is to be raised this and next year for this purpose. The man of the momentous Budget takes some pains to explain how small is taxation compared to that for other wars. We are told that the British taxpayers contributed £391,000,000 as their share of the Napoleonic wars which so providentially gave Britain the control of the world's market—the capitalists of that day probably considered it cheap at that price. Unanimity of opinion prevailed in the House when the Chancellor's masterpiece came on for discussion. The proposal to tax beer £1 2s. 8d. per barrel was received with delight when it was explained that really only 15s. 3d. per barrel was to be paid by the brewer, the 7s. 5d. difference being the amount he is to lift from the pocket of the beer drinker. The poor unfortunate brewer who has been so hard hit by the closing of licensed houses thus bags 7s. 5d. per barrel compensation. So the poor man, we suppose, will grumble like the proverbial fool, and patriotically pay the halfpenny per half-pint tax demanded of him, and his underfed wife will heroically dub up the additional 3d. per pound charged on tea, all for the glory of the Empire which is run by the patriotic sharks. The worker will, however, render unto Lloyd George his unspeakable gratitude for his decision not to impose a tax on wages—at present.

Despite the pains taken to ensure the correct utterance on matters concerning the war, a few individuals appear to be breaking bounds. After the declarations made by men of science and members of the Church that Britain is out to fight the "spiritual wickedness in high places," it is refreshing to find that Bernard Shaw has been disconcerting the Jingo-mongers by telling something of the truth. He speaks out boldly in the *New Statesman* on Britain's share of the guilt; and because his facts cannot be explained away, the Press go to much pains to show that he is writing in a mere spirit of levity, and exhibiting his usual perversity. But truth will out, and will eventually pierce that covering of hypocrisy which our Government knows so well how to use. Meanwhile it is interesting to note how usefully our scientists come to the assistance of the State. Sir Oliver Lodge, in a recent address, declared: "What was the doctrine opposed to us? That there was nothing higher than the State, that the State was the summit of everything, and that the State was entitled to do whatever it pleased if it conduced to this end. That was practical Atheism. That was what we were at war with. If the world ever came to live under such domination as that, life would not be worth living." Such is the wisdom of a scientist! Sir Oliver has only to open his eyes and observe the tyranny of the State apparent on every side to realise the utter stupidity of his very unscientific remarks. Though the domination of the State has been less apparent here than in Germany, the militarism the war has forced upon us is likely to leave little to choose between the two States in the future. Remarkable, is it not, how unanimous the men of science and the Church are in both Germany and England in demonstrating the "holy" character of the war now being waged?

Anton Pannekoek, a German revolutionary Socialist, has an interesting article on the cause of the war, contributed to the *International Socialist Review*. He writes:—

"Never before was it made so plain that mankind does not make history according to his own free-will, but is driven by external social forces more powerful than itself. . . . Human beings are all ignorant of the real world; they are now just learning that the essence of capitalist society is oppression, hate, world competition, enmity, and the rule of force. . . . The true type of an imperialistic war is to be recognised by this: It does not break out on account of a particular object, but arises from the general antagonisms of the States. These antagonisms are rooted in the competition to win world-power or to defend it, and this struggle for world-power is nothing else but the struggle of every country to win its capitalists colonies, contracts, spheres of influence, and favourable opportunities for investment in Asia and Africa. Every country has for a long time felt itself threatened by others because all of them make hostile preparations against one another. Hence every one of them believes itself attacked by the others. . . . All Germans believe with granite firmness that they are only waging a war of

defence against an impudent assault of Russia; in France and England the talk is about Germany's insatiable greed for dominion which would conquer Europe. At the same time every country believes it is protecting culture or some other holy object against foreign barbarians, though in reality they all stick equally deep in capitalist barbarism, which ruthlessly sacrifices wealth and human life for world-power and capitalist interests."

All this goes to prove how little truth there is in the capitalist report that the Socialists of Germany are unanimous in acclaiming the war a righteous one, though it appears that the very weakness Anarchists have always criticised in the Social Democratic movement has actually paralysed the German Socialists. News reaches us from Württemberg that this weakness is at last being realised, as an increasing number are beginning to understand the necessity for smashing "the bureaucratic authority that is in control of the party."

M. B. HOPE.

## INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

### HOLLAND.

The Social Democratic Deputy Van Kol, who from time to time kicks over the party traces, has personally gone to view the scenes of desolation and ruin in Belgium. He proposed afterwards to the German Social Democratic Party executive that they should send a few Deputies to make a tour in the devastated country, and thus see with their own eyes that the lying information of the Wolff Bureau cannot be relied upon. The German party executive, however, regrets that it cannot accept the proposal! They are much more likely to applaud Troelstra's idea to hold an inquiry *after* the war. The present ugly reality would be hard to explain away. Troelstra, the Dutch Social Democratic politician, a lawyer besides, has been making a journey through Europe trying to keep the International Socialist Bureau together and install it at the Hague. The French and Belgians are naturally rather sceptical of protestations of solidarity from Germany, which could be easier believed if the German soldiers, of whom every third man is a Social Democrat, first of all left French and Belgian soil.

Hervé, in his *Guerre Sociale*, pointedly asked Liebknecht to protest against the war, and to make a revolution against the Kaiser, if Social Democrats in Germany really are Republicans, and respect other nations' independence and neutrality. On the same journey Troelstra met the representatives of the Russian Social Democracy, who declared that they always had relied on their German comrades' help in the Russian revolutionary movement, but that no Russian revolutionist expected liberation by Prussian militarism fortified by German Social Democracy. The Finnish people have refused the offer of German Imperialism to bring them "freedom," nor has the Georgian Social Democracy any faith in Turkish promises—there is no belief in "liberating" German militarism, neither do they hope anything of the goodwill of their own Tsar. The Finns, the Jews, the Poles, the Georgians, and, last not least, the Russians, will have to conquer for themselves every bit of freedom. The only difference between them and their German brothers is this, that the latter proudly believe they are the possessors of a Constitution, "kultur," and class-consciousness, whilst the Russian peasant and worker humbly acknowledges that he has none of these, but is ready to fight for them at the cost of life and liberty.

### SWEDEN.

As our readers, perhaps, remember, three revolutionary Socialists, Nielsen, Rosberg, and Stern, in 1908 threw a bomb into the ship "Amalthea," which contained a number of English blacklegs who had been brought over to Sweden to break the dock strike at Malmo. Since then a committee has been at work to obtain the liberation of those three men, who were condemned to penal servitude for life. The movement was national and international; the latest action was a petition containing 135,000 signatures collected by the committee, to which also the lawyers Wilk, Hellberg, and Romanus belonged. The answer to this petition has been that the King is in favour of the liberation of the prisoners if legal reasons can be found for it. The Minister of Justice and the governor of the prison have also shown inclinations towards an amnesty, and it is hoped that the three young men will be freed from their living death, and be given back to friends and the Labour cause.

### NORWAY.

In our last number we mentioned that our comrade Albert Jensen was threatened by a trial which might end in several years' imprisonment. We are pleased to find that the judges decided to expel him from Norway, and as his own country, Sweden, evidently is at present not a desirable place for him, he hopes to come to England.

### DENMARK.

Of the twenty-two Socialists arrested at Arhuus for having distributed anti-militarist leaflets, three have been sentenced by a magistrate; one got four months, and the others one month each. The reactionary press tried by all means to bring these young fellows before a military tribunal, which, of course, would have meant heavy sentences. The two comrades sentenced to one month have appealed against their condemnation, so have the police, and it is therefore possible that they will be acquitted; but we fear it is still more likely that their sentences will be increased.

# Freedom

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## Government and the People.

The outstanding feature of the war is the helplessness of the people in the management of their own affairs. They have surrendered so much power into the hands of the State that even in a life-and-death matter like a war they have no voice in the decision as to whether the nation shall or shall not take part in the struggle. In the critical days before the war broke out all the negotiations were carried on in secret, the curtain being lifted just sufficiently to suit the purpose of our masters. The people were not given any idea of the position until Sir Edward Grey made his statement in the House on August 3, when it transpired that even Parliament had been hoodwinked as to Britain's international entanglements. But the people's "representatives," instead of strongly protesting against being treated like children, maintained a humble silence, and allowed the Government a free hand in everything—in money, men, and measures—and a Defence of the Realm Act was passed which practically put the country under martial law.

The secrecy of the Government's diplomatic intrigues, however, was almost their undoing, as few people had any idea what the war was about, and recruiting was very slow. Then it occurred to the Cabinet that it was necessary to tell the people why they had gone to war, and Ministers travelled up and down the country giving various reasons for their action. So here we have this so-called free and self-governing nation launched into a war without knowing why, at the behest of a small clique wielding the powers of the State. Of course, the same thing happened in every other country; whatever the form of government, the people had no voice in the matter. They have but to march at the word of command; they will have little to do with the terms of peace.

The truth is, that for some time now the "State" has become an object of slavish worship. The divine right of kings has been replaced by the divine right of Governments, and the sanctity previously attaching to priests is now assumed by politicians. In the older religions, secrecy was their great strength, the priests being credited with supernatural powers. Nowadays the State has acquired the same value in the eyes of the people, and by the same means. The inner circle of the Cabinet has its "holy of holies," into which only the high priests of government are admitted; and the people wait humbly outside for the holy message. If the priests say "Peace," it is peace; if they say "War," then war it is. To challenge their decisions is equivalent to doubting the gods of old, and is an unpardonable crime.

Of course, the power of the State is not the growth of a day, but has come into being gradually. The octopus-like tentacles are stretching out to grasp and control our lives in every direction. The "Labour" legislation of recent years, in the shape of health insurance and unemployment insurance, although it has been boomed by the politicians as a great blessing for the workers, is in reality only a subtle way of bringing the exploited more completely under the sway of the State. The worst feature of such legislation is the regimentation and shepherding of the workers, which in the long run will break up the organisations they had built up as a barrier against their exploiters. The new army of officials, of course, will be a bulwark of the State.

To the Collectivist or Social Democrat the State is an object of veneration; but the Anarchist can only regard it as the power which has to be fought. Ranged behind the State are all the forces of reaction—political, financial, and religious—and with them there can never be any truce. To destroy the belief in the holiness of the State is the first and greatest task of those who would be free.

## SHATTERING THE DUMB GODS.

The subject which at the present moment occupies the minds of revolutionists to the exclusion of all else is the war. The particular aspect of this subject which is in the forefront of all their discussions is as to whether they are morally justified in supporting the war, or whether an attitude of hostility, or at least of neutrality, is not one which is more consistent with Anarchist and Socialist principles. The present free expression of difference of opinion among Anarchists on this question is, I venture to assert, a good thing. It is an indication of vitality and of development, and there can be no doubt that the movement will be the stronger for it.

Beyond saying this, it is not my present intention to intervene in the important and interesting discussion which rightly occupies so much space in the columns of FREEDOM at the present time. Rather would I direct the attention of our readers to an even more fundamental aspect of the same problem. Namely, that whatever attitude one may personally take up on this question, the fact remains that we are quite powerless to hinder the progress of the struggle. The war is a fact. It is the most predominant fact in society to-day. The longer it lasts, the greater will be its influence as a factor in the social development of the whole world.

It may safely be said that Europe will in many ways be vastly different when the war is over to what it was before the war began. Indeed, it can hardly be questioned that we have now reached one of those great lines of demarcation which divide one period of history from another. We may, then, assume that the war will to some extent reshape Europe. Prophecy is always a thankless, and, in most cases, a worthless task, yet even at this stage of the proceedings it will not be altogether futile to speculate as to how this reshaping influence will operate in certain directions.

As Kropotkin has truly shown in many of his works, change makes for Anarchy. The future is ours. Therefore, when any vast social upheaval taking place—whether it be a revolution or a world-devastating war as at present—effects in a short space of time changes which it usually requires many decades to accomplish, we are justified in attempting to form some rough estimate of the progress humanity may thus quickly if painfully have achieved.

Prominent among the results of the world-war will be, I am bold enough to predict, a revolution in ideas. The extent of this mental revolution will, of course, vary according to individual temperaments. But it cannot be doubted that a great change of outlook will be effected in respect to three ideas of the greatest importance, which more than any other sway the minds of men to-day—God, the State, and militarism.

To say that conventional opinions relative to Religion, Government, and War are the most powerful bulwarks of reaction is but to repeat an oft-asserted truism. It is, therefore, of all the greater importance to attempt to estimate the effect of the war upon this triple line of defence of the established order of things. Exigences of space preclude the consideration of more than one of these subjects at the present time. We will, therefore, deal only with the first of them in this article.

Already indications are not lacking that, as the outcome of the war, the whole question of Theism is being seriously reconsidered. We have nothing to lose and everything to gain from such an examination. And this notwithstanding the fact that in certain quarters—notably in France—there is a temporary revival of superstition. "If God be a god of love and pity, why does he allow this terrible war to go on?" This is the question that is being raised on all sides. Nor are these doubts as to the divine love and omnipotence likely to be quieted by the desperate and conflicting apologetics which fill the pages of the religious press. The task of justifying the ways of God to man—never an easy one to the average divine—to-day presents such difficulties as will test his theological skill to the uttermost. Indeed his explanations do but make matters worse. For example, we are told that the war has been sent as a punishment to the English people for their sins. Whatever may be the national iniquities of the English, all are agreed as to the national innocence of the Belgians. Yet it would appear that in the case of England the divine justice is to be appeased by an increased income-tax and further impositions on tea and beer, whilst those of the innocent Belgians who do survive this manifestation of the wrath of God are to be witnesses of the desolation of their country, the destruction of their towns and homes, and the slaughter of their unhappy fellow countrymen! Moreover, if the Kaiser is thus to be understood to be the instrument of God's "justice," his "blasphemous" speeches are justified by his clerical enemies.

It is with reluctance that I refrain from giving further examples of clerical reasoning. Indeed the Anarchist can derive much amusement from an occasional perusal of the religious press. One choice argument, however, is deserving of brief mention. It is a theory which has been received with much favour by the devout, and one which is reported to be gaining many adherents. It is that the war and its attendant evils are due to the fact that "the Devil has been unchained." Space will not permit of an explanation of this remarkable hypothesis nor allow of an elaboration of the many difficulties to which it gives rise. It is only necessary to add that it will be of as much use in converting the unbelievers to orthodoxy as the "separation allowances" will be in convincing the average soldier or sailor of the beneficent intentions of the paternal State.

We may, then, confidently anticipate that one of the results of the war will be to render the idea of "God the Father Almighty" an impossible conception in the minds of the more intelligent of the working classes of Europe, and thereby render them more amenable to Anarchist teaching. For although experience proves that the fear of the Lord, far from being the beginning of wisdom, is the beginning of ignorance and superstition; yet it certainly is the basis of the worship of the fetish of the State and of servility to the capitalist class. It is, therefore, our duty to shatter this illusion, and thereby render the destruction of other illusions all the easier of accomplishment.

The war in all its phases is the most striking object-lesson for revolutionary propaganda that has presented itself in society during the past century. We can point to it as the strongest justification for our denunciation of religion, of the State, and of capitalist morality. The wildest nightmare ever conceived in the disordered imagination of one of our opponents as to the effects of "a bloody revolution" or of "the destruction of society by bloodthirsty Anarchists," of which we have heard so much in the past—but which we trust our opponents will have the decency not to mention in the future—pales into utter insignificance before the abominable realities of the hell of bloodshed, butchery, and bestiality into which the unhappy peoples of Europe have been hurled by their Christian capitalist governments.

Others, too, will not be slow to learn the lessons the war has to teach. With the realisation of the mockery of the idea of an omnipotent all-loving God, borne in upon their minds by this appalling slaughter, there will also come a recognition of the utter futility of trusting for help to the State or to "representative" government. Through learning what war means to the workers, a very different proletariat will emerge from beneath the shadow of this ghastly carnage to that which gaily sang "Tipperary" as their death-song in the summer of 1914. The mental foundations of capitalist society are being destroyed in this war. It is for revolutionists to realise this fact and to aid in this destruction by every means in their power. It is for us to lay the mental foundations of a higher and nobler form of society than that which is now staggering to its grave in the blood-soaked trenches of Europe.

For the ideal of God we will substitute the ideal of Humanity. For the State with its tyrannies we will give the Anarchist Commune with its liberty. For war with all its indescribable atrocities we offer the fraternity of the world's workers knit together in a true and lasting peace.

OTTO LEROY.

## THE QUESTION OF THE HOUR.

Ye senseless wage-slaves of the world  
Now cutting throats in ev'ry clime,  
Can ne'er ye see your foes entrench'd,  
The prompters to your present crime?  
The profit-takers of your toil,  
The renters of the earth ye own,  
For whom ye sweat in youth and age,  
By whom your wives and children groan,  
The pledgers of your public faith,  
Who make ye pay for what ye give:  
Will ne'er ye see the truth sublime?  
Will ne'er the honest life ye live?

LOTHROP WITHINGTON.

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*.

## LETTER ON CURRENT EVENTS.

[We give here a translation of the second letter which our comrade KROPOTKIN wrote for the Moscow paper *Russkiya Vedomosti*.]\*

DEAR FRIEND,—Of course, it must be very painful for you to live through the contradictions which besiege you. "There is one thought especially," you write, "which worries me. Is it possible that a war, especially of the present proportions, might be a *liberating* war? . . . If we knew beforehand that a war against Germany would be a liberating war, what for, then, all our anti-militarism and all our talk about the general strike and the like? Quite a series of questions which render life impossible."

I fully understand how perplexing such questions must be. However, are they not arising for the reason that at the root of all the propaganda of the anti-militarists there was an original mistake? They thought that by their propaganda against war they would be able to *prevent* war, although they *knew* that in our present society we have yet, in its full force, the very system which renders war *unavoidable*.

They said, quite correctly, that the origin of all wars of the present time lies in the capitalistic structure of society, with all its well-known consequences; that it cannot be changed in one day, and that the change would be accomplished only by a profound social disturbance. And on the other side they believed that "it would be sufficient to declare a general strike in all the countries ready to go to war [only that!] and war would become impossible." Owing to some miracle, the immense power of Capital and its obedient instruments in the State, which are the causes of wars, would be paralysed, they would disappear. And they were to disappear, not only in one country (let us say France), but also in that other country (Germany in this case) the population of which has been brought to believe that the conquest of a portion of France, the complete weakening of France, and the acquisition of her colonies are "a necessary step" for the full development of German capitalism.

The anti-militarist preaching thus contained an obvious contradiction. And I am now asking myself whether the great number of the anti-militarists fully realised the close connection that exists between war and the growth of the capitalist class? Did they not, after all, still give much importance in wars to the bad will of separate individuals?

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This is why during the last ten or twelve years, when the impossibility of avoiding an attack on France by the German Empire became more and more evident, I tried to persuade my French comrades that a propaganda against war is one thing, and the position which they will have to take at the moment of a declaration of war by Germany is quite another thing.

If I am living, let me say, in a society of twenty persons, and I see that one of us, a strong man, has a tendency to oppress one of us, I can, and I am bound to, use all my powers to prevent that, by creating among us an opinion against any oppression, and especially to convince the strong one. But if my words have no effect, and the strong begins to beat the weak one, have I the right to stand by with folded arms, continuing to preach that the fist is no argument? Precisely because I am opposed to the oppression of the weak, I throw myself into the fight to help the weaker of the two, although I know perfectly well from experience that the blow which was destined at that moment for the weak one will fall upon my head.

I understand that one may not avenge a *personal* offence. But to remain a bystander while a wicked and strong man gives blows to a weak one, is an unpardonable wickedness. *This is precisely what maintains all oppression.*

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The propaganda against war surely brings nearer the time when men will understand that the true cause of all wars is always the desire of the capitalists of one country to get hold of the labour of some other country, and the riches it has accumulated. Such a propaganda also shows that even what is described as a successful war makes in the long run more harm than good to the victorious nation.

But under the present conditions such a propaganda is powerless to *prevent* war so long as there are countries whose population, *including the working men*, is ready to help its capitalists to enrich themselves with another nation's labour, and even sees in conquest its own benefit.

The menace of a general strike may, for some time, keep

\* The publication of these letters does not imply agreement with the views expressed by our comrade Kropotkin.—ED. FREEDOM.

back the lust of conquest. But there is no reason to believe that the general strike should take place, and still more so prevent war, if the country which intends to attack its neighbour will make up its mind to do so. Its workers will not strike if they see in the war a way towards enrichment; and the workers of the attacked country cannot strike because they feel that a single day lost at the time of mobilisation means a gift to the enemy of a province or of a hundred thousand soldiers.

To these remarks my French friends replied:—"But it is precisely to open the eyes of the Germans that we make this propaganda. We want that they should refuse to aid their capitalists in the plundering of France." "Don't forget that they have already three and a half million of Socialists," ingeniously remarked my friends; "this mass of Socialists will be with us, they will prevent the invasion." And when I told them that this will *not* happen, and *cannot* happen, they boldly replied:—"Let it be so! But somebody must take the initiative. We take it, whatever the consequences may be."

What could be said in reply to such a generous declaration? So I said: "Let it be so, only remember that when Germany, with the consent of her Socialists, will begin to bring together her millions of soldiers to invade France, you will help the mobilisation and fight the invaders with a still greater energy, and with a still fuller conscience of your right, since you have done everything to prevent that terrible bloodshed. Only stop telling that nonsense about it being all the same for a French working man who is his master—a French or a German capitalist, a French *préfet* or a German general. You in France have not experienced it yourselves, and, not being great travellers, you do not know at all what it means to be under the rule of another nation. So better take the advice of those who know something about that." But on this account the Germans have already opened the eyes of all sorts of dreamers during the last two months.

This is what was really done by the majority of the French anti-militarists. A few days after the declaration of the war one of my nearest friends, a convinced anti-militarist, wrote me from Paris:—"You are right, we must defend ourselves. I imagined the nations would rise for their freedom; I thought that the three millions of German Socialists would oppose war. The only thing to do now, is to resist. Only resistance and attack will break down German militarism." Others write to me:—"I am in such a regiment; the older ones in the sanitary service, and the younger ones in the ranks, where they fight with the same energy, in order to drive away from France the strongly entrenched Germans."

The Belgians did the same. Down to the very last they were for peace. But when the hordes of the invaders began pouring into Belgium, they fought as heroes to defend their native fields and cities, their houses, their wives and sisters, their children.

You know, of course, by this time what induced the Germans to invade France and Belgium. You know that without any reason, or even a pretext, they entered Belgium, because they saw in it the easiest way to crush down that hateful France. You know *how* they conquer, and how they took revenge upon the population, when they were compelled to retreat from towns and villages which they considered already parts of Germany. You know *why* and *how* they fight. So tell me:—Do you wish success to the Belgians and the French in repulsing the invaders? Do you wish that the beast-like conquerors should be expelled from Belgium and France?

If so, what is there more to talk about?

I know that very many do not share this opinion. In Italy there are very many working men, especially Anarchists, Syndicalists, and partly also Social Democrats, who are absolutely against Italy taking any part in this war. They all express their full sympathy towards Belgium and France, and their hatred of militant Germany. But at the same time they are for complete neutrality, not only on behalf of their Government, but also against the sending to France volunteers (as it had been proposed at the last gathering of the Syndicalists by De Ambris). They evidently foresee that such a movement might be a pretext for the Government's interference, and such an interference would be disastrous to Italy under the present circumstances. In fact, when one has lived lately in Italy, one understands why all those

\* *Note added in proof*:—"Your letter, abstracts from which were given in the French papers," a friend writes to me from the battle line, meaning the first letter of this series, "has been read in the trenches, and has produced a profound impression." And he adds a few words to say how all of them, including the most convinced anti-militarists, fight with the hope that, after German militarism has been broken down, this will be the last European war. Last or not—it will, at any rate, approach the day when wars of conquest will no more be possible. The German Social Democrats are already ashamed of having played the part of Pinkerton men for their capitalists in the conquest of Belgium.

who love Italy must dread a new war. After the disorganisation of the army by the war in Africa, and the exhaustion of munitions, and especially of the treasury, a new war might end in a disaster.

The attitude taken by the Italians is, therefore, quite natural, although the consequences may be very undesirable for Italy. By her refusal to take sides with the Triple Alliance, Italy has already got a dangerous enemy in Germany; and if the defeat of the latter is not complete, she will take advantage of the first opportunity to accomplish the *long since prepared invasion of Northern Italy*.

As to those small groups of deeply convinced anti-militarists in France and Switzerland who are against war altogether, and among whom I have several personal friends, they make, I should say, a serious mistake. They acknowledge that their sympathies are with the French and the Belgian nations in their fight against German invasion. They hate the very fact of conquest and plundering of a nation by another nation. But war—they say—is an evil, and therefore they do not want war either for or against Germany. I, for my part, cannot understand that attitude of folded arms in the face of such a terrible injustice.

They forget, moreover, one thing. The present war opens a new page in history. It puts before all nations new problems of social reconstruction. And when this new reconstruction shall begin, life will roll on, paying no attention to those who refused to be men of action at a time when the future of the coming century was in the balance in the battlefields.

(To be concluded.)

## WHAT WE CAN DO.

The last number of FREEDOM contained several articles concerning the line of conduct followed by Anarchists as regards the war. The points of view expressed in these articles differed widely. Evidently no one is to blame for this, but the fact is none the less regrettable. Too weak numerically to prevent the war, shall the divergence of our ideas render us powerless to make our voices heard above the clamour of incitement to hatred, massacre, and destruction?

I agree with Malatesta that it were dangerous to cherish the delusion that the modern States will come out of the war regenerated; that the Russian hangman, flushed with victory, will cease to pursue his policy of crushing every idea of enfranchisement. But I am not with Malatesta in thinking it was possible for the Belgians to remain neutral, or the French, or even for the English to stand aside from the fight. As I said in my former article, in the last number of FREEDOM, the only plan of action consistent with our ideas was to proclaim the Revolution. But since we were powerless to create the revolutionary atmosphere which rendered 1792 possible, such action on our part would simply have helped the enemy, the aggressive party.

I do not think that the rôle of Anarchists consists in aiding the aggressors, and besides that, our action, had we opposed the mobilisation, would not have been understood by the public, whom we desire to enlighten. If a desperate act is undertaken, it is only to serve as an example. How shall it attain its end if it is misunderstood?

No doubt, theoretically we can separate ourselves from our masters and exploiters, but in point of fact we suffer like them the changes of the social conditions which imprison us all. Like them, and more than them, we shall have to suffer the consequences of this war, which we have not known how to prevent, whether we participate in it or no.

Is it true that we merely defend the property of our masters? The amputation of different countries resulting in a change of political name or political rule in no way affects individual property. The proprietor of a piece of land annexed may become German instead of being French, or *vice versa*, but he remains the owner of his piece of land, free to draw from it his rents and profits.

But consider the exactions of a conqueror, the requisitions, the contact with the insolent victors; we should have had our part in these things no less than the capitalists, nay, more than our share!

Take the war indemnity, the crushing war indemnity with which we are threatened by the Germans. The capitalists may have to advance it in the first place, but we may be sure that we—the workers—shall have to make it good to them eventually by means of taxation, augmentation of interest on moneys advanced by the banks, loans, and other arrangements whereby our masters may be consoled for the affliction of yielding up their beloved money.

I think, then, that by opposing the invader we are defending our own interests, from the economic point of view, even more than those of our masters. The only thing they would have to lose would be a diminution of political power; which transfer of political power would in no way diminish our political and economic servitude. On the contrary!

\* \*

On the other hand, it seems to me an error to say that our anti-militarist propaganda has failed of its end; that we were wrong in believing that a general strike could have prevented the war. It is as

if we were to say that the whole propaganda of the Anarchist ideal is harmful; that the revolution is powerless to realise our ideal!

Doubtless when one considers how few we are, and the mass of ignorance and errors opposed to us, it may seem absurd to dream of realising a social State based on free association, from which shall be banished all forms of coercion and all exchange values.

But I see no other way, as long as we are too few to attempt to realise our programme, than to proclaim it to all comers, so as to gather together at last a sufficient number of people who, having comprehended it, may *do* what we can only *say*.

Convinced that militarism is an evil, that the mania of armaments which has attacked the European nations can have no other result than the war which they are supposed to prevent, we have everywhere cried aloud that unless the people had sufficient intelligence to stop this madness they would be drawn into the wide-spread slaughter prepared by their diplomats. I think that events have justified us.

Evidently, we have not been able to prevent the war. The general strike has not prevented it, because the idea was understood by so few that it was impossible to carry it out. But, because we have been a feeble minority, because the German people, duped and deceived—and let us not forget that the diplomatic intrigues of Europe have powerfully aided the German Government in the work of blinding and deceiving the people—because they refuse to join themselves with us in opposing the war, must we therefore remain silent?

It would be comparable to the error of the German Social Democrats, who affirm that in order to bring about the end of Capitalism we must first contribute to its development, aid it to attain its utmost power.

Compelled to play the part of Cassandra, we have played it as we best knew how. So much the worse for those who have not understood us! So much the worse for ourselves, who are now involved in the catastrophe that we foretold, but from which we could not extricate ourselves.

And if numbers of our comrades are to-day engaged in a war which they condemn, fighting against an aggressor whose triumph would mean an impetus to exploitation and oppression, and the militarisation of Europe perhaps for centuries to come, we retain the right to protest against the recrudescence of militarism at home, where we are constantly incited to crush and annihilate Germany.

And so I return to my starting point and central idea, that when the time comes to treat of peace, we shall have to oppose ourselves to the appetites born of victory, to the upstart Talleyrands who affirm that the only way to have peace is to crush and humiliate and destroy the German people.

Those of our comrades who have squared their shoulders and plunged into the fight, hypnotised by the present danger, are perhaps tempted to disregard the future danger, forgetting that the victory of the Allies may mean the growth among ourselves of the very militarism that we would destroy in Germany.

Like the bourgeois writers, they have perhaps spoken too much of the German peril, the German invader, forgetting that if there be in Germany masters to be opposed, there are also the people who are not only the instruments but the victims of their own blindness, the people who have to be undeceived and enlightened; and the way to this is not by thinking of them or speaking of them as though they were ferocious beasts only fit to be destroyed. Our rôle as Anarchists is to try by all means to let the truth penetrate to them, to unseal their eyes.

Were there not at Rotterdam six German Social Democrats who had the courage to protest against the war? Could they not help us in this campaign to lead the German people to a clearer comprehension of its real enemies, and perhaps, circumstances aiding, to the revolution which should free them?

That would help us, when arms are laid down, to intervene and prevent the politicians from again shuffling the cards. Alone we can do very little, but these hopes, which so many comrades leave on one side, are very real and present to many enlightened spirits outside our ranks.

In France at the present moment only the reactionary party is allowed to speak, and the conflict is envenomed by appeals to massacre a whole people, while the basest passions in man are excited, those of fear and vengeance. Nevertheless, a few isolated voices have made themselves heard in protest. One of these, Anatole France, swept off his feet by the flood of invective that greeted his utterance, could do no better than to attempt to enlist as a soldier in order to prove that he was not in the pay of Germany. Since then, Appell, at the Institute, has dared to proclaim that behind the military oppressors there are in Germany human beings like ourselves who long for peace. And at Bordeaux, Ruyssen has expressed his conviction that when the moment comes to treat of peace there will be found pacifists who will proclaim the rights of the peoples—not forgetting those of the German people, opposing the spirit of conquest, and proclaiming the *entente internationale*.

In England public opinion is already active in this direction. Even Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Asquith have constantly and publicly affirmed that this war is waged not with the German people, but with those who incarnate German militarism, and they have expressed the hope that this war may be the end of wars and of militarism. Some well-known men, including E. Morel and Norman Angell, have formed a group who propose to prevent the politicians preparing new mines for future explosion. This group, the Union of Democratic Control, intends to carry on an international propaganda, and has already published four

extremely interesting pamphlets: "The Morrow of the War," "Shall this War end Militarism?" "War the Offspring of Fear," and "The Origins of the Great War."

Why should not we Anarchists join our efforts to theirs, or strive to form similar groups in different countries, so as to form an international public opinion which might oppose itself to the intrigues of those whose mission consists in complicating things, and bring about a real and enduring peace by a general disarmament?

JEAN GRAVE.

## THE MODERN WAR GOD.

Now Mammon struts in mailed fist night,  
And marshalled millions operate his scheme;  
Soon harvest lands drip blood, and martial blight  
Mildews the minds fulfilling his dread dream.  
Soon peaceful peasants from wrecked hovels teem,  
And once glad, smiling citizens grow sad,  
And murderous lights from flaming Louvains gleam—  
That Mammon's railways may run through Bagdad!

In Russian guise he blinded Persia's sight;  
Proud caliphs bent before his golden beam  
And sold their patriot sons to Russian spite—  
Their heaped-up bodies fill the bloody stream.  
By such a means, rude Christian rulers deem,  
Will serfs in savage countries soon be glad.  
Tsars crucify poor Persians, it will seem,  
That Mammon's railways may run through Bagdad.

Grim German Vulcans hammer day and night,  
And from their anvils rings a warlike theme;  
And mammoth cannon cities will affright  
That German commerce may be still supreme.  
At Essen soar great clouds of smoke and steam  
From ordnance that will send small nations mad;  
And servile savants lies make, ream by ream,  
That Mammon's railways may run through Bagdad.

So Murder stalks, whilst outraged women scream,  
And bloody Death grips many a blameless lad.  
The peoples groan—but Mammon gains esteem,  
And runs his blood-drenched railways through Bagdad.

NORMAN YOUNG.

## ON WAYS AND MEANS.

During the last few years the Anarchist movement appears merely to have marked time nearly everywhere. Several reasons for this partial standstill may be put forward. Amongst these the late labour unrest has been conspicuous. This unrest, culminating in the great strikes, brought matters to a head in the industrial world. Conciliation boards had been found out; agreements had proved one-sided; leaders too ready, nay eager, to temporise and compromise. Trade Union discipline broke down; the officials were flouted. In spite of a gradual rise in wages, food-prices lowered the purchasing power. A sullen, bewildered policy of despair held sway. Apparently there was no absolute remedy. Anarchism and Socialism were rejected as not being immediately practicable. But, shrinking as they did from the prospect of a revolution, Syndicalism with its crude simplicity was almost on the point of being welcomed with open arms. Then—the government stepped in; the situation was saved; Capitalism breathed again.

How could such a remarkable collapse occur when the workers were so evidently animated with a class-conscious solidarity? The answer lies in the brutal fact that the stomach bulks largely in working-class argument. They prefer the substantial crumb to the somewhat shadowy loaf in the distance. This is the reason Anarchism was—and will yet be—postponed for further consideration.

This is the one fault of our propaganda; this is the stumbling-block in the path of our progress. We are idealists, not materialists. On the one hand, the workers see the evil of Capitalism and all its works. On the other, they see the glimmer of the City of Light, as yet to them intangible and unattainable. They understand the contrasts. Their minds readily grasp the fact that however delusive the future may seem to be, it can at least be no worse than the desolation of the present. But between these two their minds cannot bridge the chasm.

This is our work, then. We must bridge that chasm. Our propagandist energies must be devoted to this. We must come down from the clouds and face the problem on solid ground. Anarchism must, at least initially, be explained in terms of bread and butter.

Let this be understood. I do not stand for mere Labourist compromise. I do not suggest the movement be side-tracked in favour of plaister and pilules. There is no danger whatever of the main idea being lost in a maze of palliatives. All that is wanted is a little plain-speaking.

Let us be frank. We have had enough of the economic cant. We have used the dictionary too often. Exploitation, surplus-value, proletariat, infantile mortality, bourgeoisie—all these are but meaningless catch-words to the man in the street. Shades of Marx and Engels!

what is a working man to know of the "materialistic conception of history"?

Let us be frank. We have had enough abuse of capitalists, rent-lords, and financiers. They, at least, do not misunderstand us. We have had enough abuse of the working class. Let us give Carlyle's "twenty-five millions—mostly fools," a decent burial—a good long rest. The working class do not understand us. They are not to be caught in the fine web of our verbiage. If we will persist in writing pamphlets and making pretty speeches in polysyllables, they will go on not understanding. Either we must descend to their plain brutality of words or we shall go on talking over their heads. They cannot see the argument for the wrapping of fine phrases. We must be curt, crisp, and to the point.

There are two sides only to whom we can make any appeal. The first and largest consists of the working class world. The second consists of those idealists—call them what you will—who are more or less of our kidney. For these latter our present pamphlets and fuller works will suffice. For the former a new literature must be brought into being—plain, large-typed, and cheap. Also let us have more pictures. The workers love pictures. They can see things better with the help of a simple illustration. A symbolic representation of Labour as an armed Don Quixote leaves them cold. A corduroy-breeched labourer is more to their understanding.

Finally, we must organise our propaganda. At present it is too scattered. There is no need to drill each group into distributing pamphlets with military precision. What I mean is that there must be some system in what we do. We have plenty of meetings, in sooth, but not enough distribution. The spoken word is readily understood—and as readily forgotten. The printed word lingers.

Let us make our pamphlets, our books, our leaflets as plain and as interesting as speech. Let us see to it that the working class is reached by these. Let our propaganda be constant. The movement has marked time too long. Now for the grand march. Forward!

L. A. MOTLER.

### PRIZE DRAW.

The date of the Draw has been postponed until December 22. Comrades who still have books and sold tickets are requested to return them as early as possible to A. E. L., 127 Ossulston Street, London, N.W.

### MONTHLY ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

(November 6—December 8.)

**FREEDOM Guarantee Fund.**—D. Wess 1s, R. Avis 10s, E. B. 3s, H. Glasse 3s, S. Corio 1s 6d, R. R. junr. 6d, W. G. O. 10s, R. Connel 2s 6d.  
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