

Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

VOL. XXX.—No. 328.

AUGUST, 1916.

MONTHLY: ONE PENNY.

NOTES.

Our Second Raid.

Not content with their outrage of May 5 last, the authorities made another gallant attack on our offices on Saturday, July 29. This time "FREEDOM" was already in process of printing, nearly the whole of this issue having been taken off the machine when the State burglars walked in. After placing in custody some four comrades who were on the premises, the enemy proceeded to consolidate their position. They took possession of the issues just printed, also posters; the total booty carted away to Scotland Yard included the forme, one case of type, some five hundred book lists, a thousand odd pamphlets, our account books, our stock of last month's "VOICE OF LABOUR," and various standing matter. They then dismantled the machine, taking with them the vital parts and a new set of inking rollers. Having done their "bit" for King and country, they left the offices with a mass of rubbish littered about the floor. Indeed a gallant victory for our freedom-loving and property-protecting State.

We should like all comrades to understand that this outrage is merely a vexatious delay, and that it cannot hold up our onward march. Ours is indeed a fight to the bitter end and "business as usual." Both "FREEDOM" and the "VOICE OF LABOUR" will continue to appear, and our Literature Department is still in full swing. We have had no notification of any charge against either paper; it is merely a specimen of the weird workings of the minds of our Prussianised rulers, who, what time they refuse a reprieve to Casement, are indignantly stirred at the fate of Captain Fryatt. In a time of reaction like this, we can only take these atavistic barbarisms with a smile—and just keep on keeping on. And we can only keep on if the movement backs us wholeheartedly with practical help in any shape and form.

Our Right to Our Own Bodies.

It is hardly necessary for us to point out that although a small point has been gained by the resister to the present military régime, his chief claim has been overlooked. The objection is to the taking any part at all in the hideous game of war. The conscientious objector who is also an Anarchist insists on his right to his own body. He refuses to acknowledge the right of the State to dispose of that body without his consent. He asserts with reason that in pre-war days he and millions of other workers were left to rot in festering slums by a paternal State only anxious to gather taxes in order to protect primarily commercial interests. He therefore refuses to allow the State to conscript him for any purpose whatsoever, be it military or industrial. He makes no pretence at loyalty to a Government that has always been hostile to him and questions its right or the right of any man to control his destinies. But the grim fact that Mr. Tennant was forced to admit in Parliament that thirty-four conscientious objectors had been sentenced to death in France is eloquent proof of what kind of power we are up against. We are hemmed in by walls of steel, refused permission to leave the country, and prevented from following our peaceful occupations. All because a handful of men have control of the means of life, and thereby possess the power to rob us of all freedom, economic and political.

Conscience Penalised Again.

News reaches us that another victim of injustice has been claimed in the person of the Hon. Bertrand Russell, who has been removed from his Lectureship in Logic and the Principles of Mathematics by the Council of Trinity College, Cambridge, in consequence of his conviction under the Defence of the Realm Act for having written a pamphlet against military despotism. It certainly does not pay to possess convictions or a conscience nowadays. The only person likely to keep out of prison is the bovine type of individual who obtains intellectual sustenance from the *Daily Mail* and such-like capitalist organs. The possession of principles are not calculated to lead one into pleasant places.

Patriotism at 20 per Cent.

The Controlled firms have been indulging in a little grumble on their own because they fear that the "free" firms are bagging the lion's share of the booty. They complain that they are only allowed the 20 per cent. excess over the standard pre-war profit. Endeavouring to pacify them the *Daily News* points out that they have received valuable concessions in regard to the dilution of labour and the removal of other restrictions, and "that Mr. McKenna has recognised that consideration must be given to such matters as the loss of goodwill, etc., and, finally, that it is in the power of the controlled firm to apply much of its excess profits, which normally would come under taxation, to the extension of the machinery of its business and the preparation for post-bellum activities." The fact is that these patriotic business men, whilst agreeing to the conscription of men, object to the conscription of their profits, even after 20 per cent. over the pre-war period has been allowed them. The result, we foresee, will be enormous preparation for post-war trade in order to evade to some extent the taxation of profit. It really is too bad of our friends the patriots not to appreciate the nice docile industrial slave provided them by the Munitions of War Act and the dilution of labour scheme. The State rushed forward to assist these business men just as it came to the assistance of the bankers in the early days of the war. But gratitude among thieves and knaves is now an unknown quantity.

More Patriotism on 13s. Weekly.

Now that women are being employed in industry in larger numbers than ever before it might be assured that the rate of pay would at least be commensurate with the skilled character of the work required of them. But the number of letters appearing in the daily press disprove this assumption. High wages appear to be the exception, and the Women's Trade Union League is actually forced to urge the Minister of Munitions to avail himself of the power conferred on him by Parliament in the matter of a minimum wage. The suggested minimum is 5d., which sum it is pointed out now possesses the purchasing power of 3-4 7d. in pre-war days. It is claimed that women are unable to maintain full physical efficiency on the wage that has been paid. A yet more vital matter for consideration is that women are engaged in occupations that seriously menace their life and health. The potential mothers of the nation are being sacrificed in order that the war of "liberation" may be prosecuted successfully, but patriotism (as the bosses of the Controlled firms have already discovered when they clamoured for more than 20 per cent. profit)—is not worth while at 13s. weekly, and we look to the women rebels to demonstrate their right to economic freedom, but this will not be possible until the full significance of the relation between 20 per cent. profit and over earned for the bosses, and that handsome sum of 13s. weekly is realised.

Militarism Supreme.

We learn from the daily press that the energies of the C.I.D. are being directed in a new channel. They are now busying themselves with examining the Registration Cards of those about to depart to Scotland by railway. Such of those who have not got them on their person are sent home for them. We also learn that passports are now necessary for certain areas in the Northern Highlands, where presumably the military have some secret operations afoot. The military, as is well known, are in full possession of the whole of Scotland: and Martial Law is still in force in Ireland. The police, military, or other "authorised persons" are in the whole of the Kingdom given powers to enter houses and demand Registration Cards, so that the chain that binds us is complete, and we are fully under the heel of militarism with a vengeance. We are, indeed, become more prussianised than the Prussians.

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More Governmental 'Concessions'

When the Government found it expedient to postpone the Whitsun holiday, it gave the specific promise to grant two Bank Holidays in August, but the news that the August Bank Holiday had also been "postponed" came as no surprise to those of us who have watched the rake's progress of the present Government. After the undertaking given when the Registration Act was passed, and the subsequent breaking of that pledge, we followed the thrilling exploits of the honourable men who compose the Cabinet and had no doubt at all of the issue—for the workers. Fraud, force, lies, hypocrisy have been the means used in order to prosecute this governmental war of so-called liberation. Any opposition in the Commons has been promptly beaten down, the more formidable opponents being bought over by selecting them for work on various committees. And now that bribery and intimidation have done their work, the Cabinet is able to carry things with a high hand and impose its will upon all and sundry. Even the Commons can no longer boast that it is a buffer between the tyranny of the exploiting few who control the Cabinet and the mass of the people. Day after day it has become more and more discredited in the eyes of those who fondly held up this legislative chamber as a proof of our democratic institutions. Parliament has time and again remained dumb while tragedy upon tragedy has been enacted. It has allowed the Defence of the Realm Act to suspend Magna Charta, it has permitted the Munitions of War Act to effectually leg-iron the industrial population, it has remained silent when the hellish exploits of the military against the conscientious objectors have been exposed, and it has refused to be roused from its comfortable attitude of smug patriotic acquiescence when the right of free speech has been assailed and men and women have gone to prison because of their convictions. Yet, this assembly of Rip Van Winkles has recently discovered to an astonished world the fact that even it could be aroused, that it can rise to sublime heights, can become impassioned in a great and holy cause. The moment of this great awakening was the introduction in Parliament of the War Land Bill by Dr. Addison. This Bill aims at the protection by the State of those properties acquired by the Government for war purposes. Without such a Bill, huge tracts of land with the expensive buildings erected by the Government will revert to the original owners. Naturally loud cries of protest against the State's attempt to retain control of these properties, came from members of all shades of political opinion. It was clearly a case of the State as representing the big financial interests against the landlord capitalist class. But the inevitable will happen, concessions to the big interests represented in the Commons will be made, and the Bill will pass in a modified form. The incident clearly proves how the rights of property cause the thin veneer of patriotism to drop away from our so-called defenders of the Realm. Human beings may be conscripted but property must remain inviolate, and even the State, powerful as it has become during the last decade, will pause before alienating big vested interests.

So the Parliamentary farce is enacted and re-enacted. Promises are given and deliberately broken, full-dress speeches are made by the principal actors. Asquith pretends to concede something to the conscientious objectors but only succeeds in dubbing them guilty of the double offence of cowardice and hypocrisy, a neat phrase that might well suit those who pretend to differentiate between the genuine and the ungentle conscientious objector.

The members of the House meet, yawn, and rise—majestic with the affairs of the State. They legislate away a few liberties

wrested from our oppressors of the past, and busy themselves talking about the war after the war, dine well, and discuss where they shall spend the vacation. But outside in the world of action and reality, a world-wide tragedy is being enacted—a nation is in the death throes of a terrible ordeal—is dying of cowardice and moral ineptitude. The gap between the people comprising the Nation and Parliament and the State widens, yet obedient to the decrees of those bodies they go forward to their destruction.

Military despotism and the tyranny of the civil authorities hem us in, rob us of the joy of life, and force us to become the tools of the powers we hate. All save those whose courage points the way we must follow, those comrades and lovers of liberty who are fighting the fight of right against might, of conscience against State-imposed authority. These are the few who, despite the enactments of the ruling and oppressing class, will rally the nation at last to make a last stand for liberty before we are hopelessly forced into a servitude, intolerable in its degradation. The power of the State must be opposed and broken, and because we Anarchists see the menace to our very existence, because we understand all the sinister influences operating against individual liberty, we must fight on, resisting the power opposed to us until our very moral force shall compel the people to understand our message and seek their own deliverance.

COMPULSION.

Special to FREEDOM!

Astonishing Revelations.

Of course I know I am running grave risks of all sorts of pains and penalties in revealing Cabinet secrets, but as there's not much more freedom out of than in quod—here goes.

The other day—by what means I dare not reveal—I was able to conceal myself behind the curtains in the Council Chamber in Downing Street shortly before a meeting of the Cabinet, was there all the time and heard all that was said. On most points it was agreed that they didn't quite know what to do about it and decided to leave it to Lloyd George, who undertook to tell 'em all about it at the next meeting.

But there were one or two momentous decisions upon which I must not keep silent, and of which the revelation will create a great sensation.

Cabinet Ministers as we know—but as apparently they do not know—are after all merely human. Naturally enough, therefore, the Council opened with a somewhat heated discussion of the weather. It was the general opinion that something ought to be done about it, something drastic, but none of the ministers present would admit that it had anything to do with his Department. Lloyd George complained bitterly that the continuous rain interfered sadly with his usefulness to the country and declared that he really must give up open-air preaching—I mean speaking, if things go on in this way. When everybody had said nothing at much length, Asquith declared with a smile, that it would be wisest to leave the weather in the hands of the Minister of War, who did not receive the suggestion joyously, and was understood to say something about "compulsion." Whether he meant that he would extend compulsion to the Clerk of the Weather or that it was being extended to himself I do not know.

Another question, a very thorny one, that was discussed was the increasing necessity for strict economy on all hands. Mr. Asquith announced that during his recent and most successful visit to Ireland he had succeeded in persuading all parties there to be more economical in future in the purchase of arms. The Chancellor of the Exchequer—I forget who he is now, they so often swop offices—informed the Rt. Hon. Gents present that he had decided to cut down Old Age Pensions from five bob to half-a-crown, as he had been informed that there was a great deal of extravagant expenditure among Old Age Pensioners, not many of whom had saved money and invested it in War Loans. This suggestion was unanimously applauded. One member, I forget who it was, drew attention to the gross ingratitude of some of the public, who were upset because Cabinet Ministers would not cut down their own salaries. Unanimous again was the expression of opinion that an Act should at once be passed making it a criminal offence, punishable with not less than a fine of £100 or three months' imprisonment, to criticise any of the doings or sayings of a member of the Government.

Another form of economy was broached—and carried *nem. con.*—that in future all workmen should be compelled to walk to their work, and to contribute their tram and railway fares to an Old Age Pension Fund for Decayed Cabinet Ministers, and it

was decided that the qualifying age should be forty. Also, that all persons in receipt of an income of less than one pound per week should be compelled in future to forego the luxuries of wine, cigars, grand pianos, stalls at the theatre, and any other trifles which might be declared improper by an Order in Council, and that all moneys so saved should be utilised for erection of internment camps for the use of Conscientious Objectors.

This last idea suggested a brilliant inspiration to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who proposed that in his—or his successor's—Rent Budget there should be included a Conscience Tax, to be levied on all who objected to anything done by the Government. It was admitted that this would bring in a very large and increasing contribution, and the proposal was hailed with ecstasy, especially as it was felt that no Cabinet Minister would ever be accused of having a conscientious objection to anything—except the reduction of his salary.

One Member made some remark about the War, but was immediately hushed down, the general feeling being that they were tired of the whole affair and did wish there could be some way of dropping it without seeming to eat their own words.

The mention of eating inspired a desire for luncheon and the Council broke up in haste.

And now for a confession!

I fear I have been a bad man. I have sometimes in my ignorance dared to question the wisdom of our rulers. As I know better, I see that everything they do is wise and inspired by the highest motives; never were there such good, unselfish, conscientious, high-minded men as our Ministers. May their shadows never grow less.

W.T.S.

[It is to be feared that our contributor is looking for a Government "job."—Ed.]

RUSSIA'S FOREIGN POLICY.

(The chief authorities for the following notes are: Alexinsky's "Modern Russia," published 1913, W. E. Walling's "Russia's Message," published 1909, and the files of "Free Russia.")

If the internal policy of Russia has long been a byword for reaction, its foreign policy has even a worse record. For the greater part of the last two centuries Russia has been at war—war mostly of an aggressive character, actuated solely by tyranny and territorial greed. It is sufficient to glance at a historical atlas to demonstrate the insatiable greed of Pan-Slavism. Finland, the Baltic Provinces, Poland, Ukraine, Rumania, Caucasia, Turkestan, Persia, and the Far East, have all paid heavy toll to Russian ambitions. The history of Russian Imperialism is one long and eloquent essay on the endless harm wrought by one nation attempting to dominate other smaller nations. The best thing that can be said of the Russian occupation of these vast territories is that the Russian people, who themselves suffer bitterly under the autocracy, are sympathetic and friendly to these conquered peoples whom they regard rather as fellow-sufferers, than as subject races.

The Tsars have invariably opposed nationalist and libertarian aspirations in all parts of Europe, whilst at home, whenever they have had reason to fear the revolutionary movement, they have not hesitated to plunge their country into some warlike adventure. The Turkish War of 1828, the Crimean War, the Oriental campaign of 1877, the Russo-Japanese War, were all undertaken as much to divert the revolutionary movement as for aggression; and who knows how far this motive is answerable for the present upheaval? Certainly, the war must be a decided relief to the reactionaries: growing unrest and economic instability were giving the rulers much cause for uneasiness.

We must now ask how Republican France and democratic England came to make an alliance with autocratic Russia? The answer is, that Russia affords a profitable outlet for British and French capital, an ally against German and Austrian ambitions, and in the case of England an understanding was necessary between the Empires to withstand the awakening of Asia, and the aspirations of the Asiatics for self-government. Russia has thus played a clever part, trading upon the jealousies of the antagonistic groups in Europe—the Teutons and the Anglo-French. Besides, the Tsars needed money for De Witte's state-capitalist schemes, and for the upkeep of a strong army to thwart the revolutionists; she also had her own ambitions to serve in the Balkans and Asia Minor. The Balkan War was largely the work of Russia, her object being to check German and Austrian influence in Asia Minor, to drive the Turks out of Constantinople a Pan-Slav port.

Guesde, Jaurès, and others denounced the Franco-Russian Alliance as being "pregnant with war,"; would that they had been listened to! Prominent Russians begged the French and English financiers not to lend their Government money, unless sanctioned by the people, but of no avail.

Since the war the English Press has endeavoured to persuade us that the Russian Government has become liberalised, but the facts all prove the contrary. The Finns, the Poles, the Jews and working-class organisations have been ruthlessly persecuted, whilst the condition of the Political prisoners in Siberia is beyond description. The following resolution passed by the Central Committee of the Russian Social-Democrats and other Labour organisations emphasises the strong anti-militarist spirit amongst the Russian workers:

"Should this war end in a victory for our present Government, it will become the centre and mainstay of international reaction in Europe. . . . We workers have constantly opposed the efforts of the propertied classes to drag our country into this war. We have ever felt ourselves at one with the workers of all lands, and have realised that fratricide cannot bring about the freedom of the proletariat. We deny the right of the propertied classes to call this a war for freedom. It is a war for the attainment of new power which will lead to the oppression of backward nations."

S. C. P.

The Defenders of the Realm.

"Hitch your wagon to a star."
—EMERSON.

Because the news was scattered far and wide
That, leagued together midst the Scottish Hills,
There dwelt a band of outlaws who defied
The State's decree that they should bend their wills
And merge them in a soulless, blind machine—
Such tool as crowned and uncrowned kings and knaves
(E'en those whose lips exalt the Nazarene)
In every land employ to crush their slaves,

Two comrades expiate in durance vile
The crime of spreading truth unauthorised,
Naked, not garbed in meet censorial style;
Whereby Great Britain's Realm was jeopardised.

Those whose defiance thuswise was proclaimed,
The fell machine has seized with iron jaws;
Thence is their ardour all the more inflamed
'Gainst Mammon-Muloch and his murderous laws,

Comrades, though dismal jail or barrack cell
Confine your bodies, yet your souls are free
And glow with hate of brutal tyranny
(A holy hatred that is born of love),
And joy is yours behind your prison bars,
Because your wain is harnessed to the stars;
While Mammon trembles in his gilded hell
And clanks the chains your spirits know not of—
You who defend the Realm of Liberty! T.S.

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 practice of modern Parliaments, with reporters sitting amongst them, and forty millions, mostly fools, listening to them, fills me with amazement. *Carlyle*.

They have discovered in their fine politics the art of causing those to die of hunger who, by cultivating the earth, give the means of life to others. *Voltaire*.

Hatred, Bitterness, Violence, and Force can only bring bad results—they leave an evil stain on everything they touch. No human soul can be rightly reached except through reasonableness, humanity, and love. *C. Darrow*.

State Recognition of Conscience.

The individual opposition to the Military Service Act offered by men of all shades of political and religious opinions has again demonstrated the usefulness of direct action. Throughout the country these men by their resistance have forced the Government to recognise the earnestness of their convictions and caused the War Office many anxious moments. And because this small minority possessed the necessary grit and courage, they have been able to clog the huge war machine and so rendered it less effective. This caused the Government to recognise the right to a possession of a conscience of certain individuals. Though anxious not to admit defeat, for faith in the absolute omnipotence of Government must be fostered in the common people at all costs, it makes the significant announcement that "men who hold genuine conscientious objections will be released from the civil prisons on their undertaking to perform work of national importance under civil control. They will be transferred *pro forma* to Section W. of the Army Reserve, and will cease to be subject to military discipline or the Army Act so long as they continue to carry out satisfactorily the duties imposed upon them." It is of interest to know that the Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Home Office, Brace, M.P., is one of those at present engaged in determining to what kind of work these victims of military despotism shall be put. This ready assistance rendered the Government by certain Labour leaders will no doubt meet with the recognition it deserves when the proper time arrives.

THE SOWER.

Le Semeur (No. 1 Edition of the Guerie, June, 1916. 8pp., no price stated) affords ample evidence that in France, as here and elsewhere, the "united nation" is merely a Governmental falsehood, fabricated for the purpose of deceiving the masses into the prolongation of an internecine struggle that can benefit none but the unscrupulous gang of international profiteers and their satellites, and maintained by the same brutal and cowardly methods of mutilating or suppressing (more or less successfully) the expression of all free and independent thought.

There is excellent reading in this little publication, which is devoted to anti-war propaganda from the only consistent standpoint—that of the Anarchist. The position is clearly and succinctly set forth in a passage which may be translated as follows:

"We are opposed to war because we desire that the individual should belong to himself instead of being immolated upon the altar of State necessities and sham collective interest. It matters little to us whether we are members of large or small nationalities, politically emancipated or enslaved, if *everywhere* the individual—the social unit, the foundation of every human grouping—is obliged to bow down before a forced Social Contract; to submit to militarism which he does not sanction, and to shameless exploitation. Being resolute opponents of all forced solidarity, we reject the patriotism which identifies the interest of the sheep with those of the shepherd and his dogs, and we consider that we are in a position of legitimate defence against all Governments and their representatives (those hideous octopods), which are a perpetual menace to our liberties and our lives.

"We are not interested in the revival of a *political International* with heads and leaders; nor in the resumption of conventional international relations, while the mass populations remain in mutual ignorance and hatred."

The following is a translation of a note on "Governmental Vindication":

"The fact is that armies have become national, they no longer consist of some thousands of mercenaries, but of millions of citizens. In order to produce enthusiasm for war, and resignation in the face of the most frightful evils, it is necessary that the spirits of the soldiers and civilians should be kept up. To that end, a ceaseless flood of lies is poured forth. Thus we see Germany, which has provided Tsarism with its most relentless opponents of progress, posing as the defender of Western civilisation against Russian barbarism; Serbia invoking the rights of nationalities after 'absorbing' Bulgarian Macedonia; Belgium 'defending Honour and Right' after staining the Congo with blood in the process of collecting rubber; England intervening in the name of the popular rights to which she has accorded so little recognition in India, the Transvaal, and elsewhere; France pleading her pretended desire for peace after providing Russia with her stock-holders' money on condition that a portion of these loans should be devoted to military purposes; Italy

entering the war in the name of the Irredentism which had for so long been reconciled to an alliance with Austria; Russia mobilising ostensibly for the defence of Serbia, which she then allowed to be crushed without making any attempt on her behalf.

"In short, all the belligerents are would-be incarnations of Right, Justice, and Progress. But they all recognise only one *ultima ratio*—Might; only one criterion—their own interests! And those interests are not identical with the mass-interests which require peace as early as possible, but with the individual interests of those who profit by the situation, who at the same time are the masters of the moment.

"Greater than ever is the triumph of secret diplomacy and organised lying, in the service of the money power."

The issue contains a design depicting a German soldier falling, pierced to the heart with a bayonet of a French "enemy," while his own weapon transfixes the latter's throat; underneath appears the significant legend: "Pour le Maître!" ("For the Master.")

Speed the sowing, comrades of *le Semeur*, and may the harvest be plenteous—and soon. T.S.

An Appeal for "Freedom."

We urgently appeal to comrades to support us at this moment, as we wish to make "FREEDOM" an eight-page paper again as soon as possible. We also have to replenish the stock of books and pamphlets taken away by the police. Some comrades have already come to the support of our Guarantee Fund, but we must have much more money for the above purposes. Let us have cash as soon and as often as possible, and thus show the authorities that their persecution will strengthen rather than weaken our propaganda. Money should be sent to the Manager of "FREEDOM."

MONTHLY ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

(June 27—July 26.)

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