

Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM

VOL. XXXI.—No. 338.

JULY, 1917.

MONTHLY: ONE PENNY.

NOTES.

Telling the Tale.

The recent visit to Petrograd of Mr. Arthur Henderson, M. Albert Thomas, and the redoubtable M. Vandervelde, ostensibly with the object of bringing the recalcitrant Russian Socialists to a reasonable frame of mind, has led to some historic utterings on their part. In a letter sent to the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates they express surprise at the desire for an International Socialist Conference, and declare: "We are in complete agreement with the Council in affirming the necessity of a rupture between Socialism and the Governments or classes whose war aims are tainted with Imperialism, but we have not ceased and we shall not cease to consider that a national union against aggressive Imperialism is a duty incumbent upon all classes, and one from which the Socialist proletariat could not hold aloof without abdicating and compromising the vital interests of democracy and Socialism."

In thus urging the delinquents back to the path of patriotism, these Ministers of their respective Governments attempt to differentiate between the Imperialism of one European power as against that of another, and thereby show themselves mere time-servers of the Capitalist Governments they represent. This more than proves our contention that one cannot hold office and at the same time remain faithful to the exploited proletariat. That these Governmental delegates should expect the Russian workers to believe that any Imperialism, whether it be French, British, German, or Russian, does not stand for exploitation and the limitation of freedom is an insult to the Russian intelligence, but it serves to show the arrogance, and conceit, and capacity for compromise exhibited by those Socialist and Labour leaders who have taken service with the real enemies of the workers—the Governments that rule them.

But No One Believed Them.

That the Russian people are actually capable of judging facts for themselves is realised in the trenchant articles in the Labour and Socialist papers. They suffer from no delusion as to Imperialist Governments. The *Labour Gazette* (Petrograd) says the British and French bourgeoisies are ready to change their flag, "but under the new flag they want to carry the old cargo." It is understood quite fully what the modern cry of "democracy" means, and again: "We want peace on an international scale. Military danger does not yet threaten the Russian Revolution from Allied Imperialists, but such a danger is threatened by German and Austrian Imperialists. For German Imperialism is essential to defeat the Imperialism of England and France." The Russians have shown a better understanding of the meaning of the word "International" than any other nation. It is they who have taken the initiative in endeavouring to secure a permanent peace by means of the solidarity of the workers in all countries. Unmoved by the oratorical displays of those that stand for the exploiting classes, they have declared that it "is most important for humanity that of all questions that of war and peace shall not be drowned in the waters of diplomatic eloquence." The clearness of vision thus displayed might well shame the abject British wage-slaves into action. Russia to-day is in the vanguard, while we are still dreaming that we are fighting for freedom. When will the awakening come?

Towards Peace.

Most significant of all is, however, the statement sent by the Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates to the Socialist Parties and Trade Unions of the world regarding the holding of a Conference at Stockholm and the principle adopted by the Council of "peace without annexations and without indemnities." It states:

"The Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates is of opinion that a speedy termination of the war and the restoration of international peace on the basis required by the general interests of labour as well as of mankind can only be achieved by Socialist and Labour Parties and the Trade Unions of all

countries, belligerent and neutral, uniting their efforts in a stubborn and energetic fight against this universal slaughter. The first important step in that direction is the summoning of an international conference, whose main object should be to arrive at an agreement in regard to a termination of the 'party truce' with the Imperialistic Governments and classes which renders nugatory a real struggle for peace, as well as to find out ways and means to carry this endeavour into practical effect."

A very vital grasp of the position is here shown, especially when it is declared that such a Conference "can only succeed if Socialists consider themselves not representatives of the two belligerent parties, but representatives of a single movement of the working classes towards the common aim of general peace." This appeal, which goes straight to the root of the whole matter, should do much to stimulate sane thought among the working classes of all those nations that have been indulging in a wild orgy of hate, and bring us a step nearer to a real and lasting peace—a peace that can only be obtained when Governments and the exploiters they represent are overthrown.

Amnesty to Irish Rebels.

The sudden and unexpected release of the Sinn Féin prisoners was caused by a combination of circumstances which may be very pithily summed up in the sentence "Needs must when the Devil drives"—used by Lord Mersey when recently speaking upon the Government's action in respect to Ireland. He stated that in the present crisis we could not afford to offend American democracy. But it is certain that far more important in the eyes of the Government was the fact that the constitutional Home Rule party were utterly discredited, and were fast losing all hold on even a remnant of the Irish people. The Sinn Féiners may take the flattering truth to themselves that they have driven the Government into a corner, from which the only hope of escape lay in the granting of a general amnesty to the Irish rebels. But the tardy act of justice has come too late. The ideals possessed by the men who laid down their lives in the hope of one day seeing Ireland a Republic have to-day taken possession of an ever-increasing body of people. The martyrdom of those men who fell before the avenging hand of military "justice" has been a mute appeal to the poor, starved workers in the Dublin and other Irish slums. For years past the economic position of the Irish wage-slaves has been deplorable, and now the thought that, freed from English dominion, all will be well with them, has helped to swell the ranks of the rebels and quicken their activities. The decision of the party not to send representatives to the Irish Convention is wise, but we hope that if and when the Sinn Féiners say good-bye to their English bosses they will not be unwise enough to substitute them with Irish ones.

Seamen and Peace Delegates.

The action of Havelock Wilson, Captain Tupper, and the tame seamen they have hoodwinked, in refusing to allow Messrs. MacDonald, Jowett, and Fairchild to proceed to Russia, comes strangely enough from people who have always been hostile to any form of Syndicalist action. We seem to have vivid memories of the industrial war waged a few years ago between these very seamen and the ship-owning fraternity. We do not remember that drastic action of this kind was ever deemed desirable or right. Yet it was common knowledge that in their desire for profits the shipowners had repeatedly underpaid and risked the lives of those in their employ. How very real were the grievances of the seamen was evidenced in the bitterness with which the war was waged—but underneath it all was the generous spirit which the average British working man is so prone to show to his exploiting boss. Ramsay MacDonald and his colleagues have committed the crime of keeping sane during a time when the lust for hate has been rampant, and so we have this delectable spectacle of aggression on the part of Trade Unionists. The matter is made even more sinister by the apparent connivance of the Government and the volume of praise heaped upon the heroes by the gutter press and people of the stamp of Lord Charles Beresford.

AMERICAN SEES THE RED LIGHT.

Two principles are at stake in the death-grapple of the European nations to-day, as Will Irwin describes the situation in an article in the *New York Saturday Evening Post*. They are, broadly speaking, oligarchy and democracy. Russia, it is true, clouds this generalisation; but she is not regarded as giving the tone or setting the pace for the conflict. Germany, it is sure, has repudiated democracy, and fights for aristocracy and the divine right of kings. "We do not know," Mr. Irwin says, "until we encounter the aristocratic school of thought in Europe, that these people have made a social religion, for which they will perform even the supreme sacrifice of death, out of the self-interest of a class. We do not realise that they consider democracy, as we know it, an experiment, bizarre, unsound, perhaps wicked, which ran its course like a disease in the nineteenth century, and which must fall before a more practical, sound, and moral form of society."

America, Mr. Irwin continues, is already feeling the reflex effect of the European struggle. The same division of principle is widening among us. We have not, it is true, the frank candour of the European aristocrat; but we have among our standpat politicians, Mr. Irwin insists, certain men exactly as distrustful of popular rule and popular right, exactly as certain of the sanctity in the "best people" idea as any aristocrat in Europe. He continues:

"Do they express this? Not in public! On the platform they ratify the Constitution and affirm the right of the people to rule. Whereas in Europe the cards are usually played above the table, here they are passed under the table."

"Yet in private conversation they often admit it; and I find that in the rich old centres of the East, where something like a hereditary upper class has entrenched itself, this oligarchical opinion has been crystallising since the European war and the temporary success of Germany. I have heard the aristocratic view in its extreme set forth as simply and frankly in New York as in Paris or Rome or London. The trouble with this country, they say, is that we ignore our best people. We have no governing class; therefore we are raw and unformed. We cannot be a great people until we take our place with the nations of the earth and arm—presumably for some kind of conquest."

"Our vice, our besetting national vice, is disobedience. At present the 'best people,' the 'representatives of solid interests,' must, if they rule at all, rule secretly."

The movement for military preparedness is interpreted by Mr. Irwin as a step that may help to strengthen the aristocratic spirit. We make a great mistake, he says, if we look upon conscription as a democratic principle. "Conscription normally works toward the oligarchic spirit." During two or three impressionable young years the conscript lives under a system that inculcates blind obedience to superiors. Those superiors, in the nature of things, are drawn characteristically from the upper classes.

The fear that haunts Mr. Irwin is that while preparing to fight our external foes we may lose in the spiritual conflict within our own borders. As he puts it:

"One who has watched the European game cannot overlook some pretty sinister signs of trouble ahead for us. One who has followed the new warfare knows what tissue paper our present defences are—yes, and even our present plans for defence. But we may so defend ourselves that, while preparing to fight the battle of democracy with powers outside our borders, we shall lose the fight within our borders."

"We may accept complacently from our American Bernhardis the mediæval notion that war in itself is good, a cleanser of nations; that we owe to the glory of the State—or to the 'old flag,' as we put it in our concrete American way—a duty higher than the welfare of every person in the State. We may seek our own 'place in the sun,' and use our army as an instrument not of defence but of conquest, so doing our part in maintaining the 'glorious' old institution of war."

"We may strengthen thereby the grip of our aristocracy and come finally to a state of society wherein the 'best people' assume the right of judging what is best for the mass. Or, keeping up the traditions of this new state, whose success has given such encouragement to all the liberal elements of Europe, we may remember that war is an evil in itself; that it is the destroyer, not the renewer, of nations; that it is excusable to-day only as a defence against a system whose end is the perpetuation of war; and that the true ideal of a State is not glory or mythical honour, but merely the highest average happiness of its individuals."

—Current Opinion (New York).

AMUSING INCIDENTS.

Such is the frailty of human nature. Even the noblest events in our life only have a passing interest for us. The most glorious occurrences soon tire us. Aye, even the glory and grandeur of war, that highest manifestation of human culture and progress, gets worn off in time, and people see in it nothing but gloom and sadness.

This state of mind, which just now displays itself here and there to an alarming extent, may have very tragic results. It may even lead to peace!

Fortunately, such a calamity may easily be averted. It does not require much. An unusual event, some amusing incident, is enough to revive the waning interest and heighten the spirit and enthusiasm of the people.

In this respect we owe the United States an eternal debt of gratitude. We shall not speak here of the characteristic American unselfishness with which they have thrown themselves into the European struggle; although for this alone they will, without doubt, be hailed by all posterity as the saviours of mankind. For nothing could more surely avert the imminent peril of peace with which we were threatened, or put off more indefinitely the prospect of a final settlement.

No, not by her mere entry into the war has America gained our eternal gratitude and unbounded admiration, but by the acuteness and deep insight with which she has recognised the special need of the moment. She understood that what Europe needed most was something to revive and excite her flagging spirits. So she promptly furnished us with the requisite amusing incidents, which cannot but have a stimulating and invigorating effect upon the exhausted and war-weary nations.

Here is one. A body of men, calling themselves "World Workers," parade before the prison gates and ask to be thrown into gaol rather than be forced to participate in the war! Can you imagine anything more amusing? And when it is pointed out to them that it is their bounden duty, as free Americans, to fight for the liberation of the world, their simple answer is that, although they are Americans, they are far from being free; and the daily war which they are obliged to carry on against their own enemies, there, in their very midst, is quite enough for them without going to look for them in other lands, and busy themselves with killing their brothers who are equally enslaved and oppressed as themselves.

Did you ever hear such logic? We hope our readers will not miss the laughable part of it.

Another "amusing incident," as described by the same correspondent, was furnished by the organised vegetarians. "We do not kill anything, much less human beings," they say. Consequently they claim exemption for all their members.

In our unimaginative land it is just possible that some of our readers may fail to discover much diversion in this incident. But it does not require any very great analysis to show the genuine amusement it affords.

In the first place, human beings cannot be compared with animals. We can easily understand the feelings engendered in some people at the thought of killing dumb, innocent creatures. And there are various reasons that may be advanced against it. There are moral reasons, humane reasons, hygienic reasons; or you may be able to prove that there is plenty of other and more wholesome food than the flesh of animals. But what justification is there in the refusal to kill human beings? Surely no man or woman, no member of any tolerably civilised community, will dream of applying the same arguments to his own species as to that of the lower beings. Nor is it here a question of food. Thank heavens, we have grown out of that primitive stage when men were killed only in cases of sheer necessity.

The comparison, therefore, is of a nature that cannot fail to have the desired effect.

The amusement to be derived from this particular incident becomes still greater when we consider that the claim against the slaughter of human beings is put forward, not by barbarians, not by savage, untutored people, but by men who are closely akin to ourselves, men who profess the same Christian religion, who stand on the same progressive level as we in Europe.

Indeed, how could America stand aloof and see herself outstripped in the march of civilisation? And can she be expected to look on with equanimity and unconcern when we in Europe have already arrived at the advanced stage of pouring upon each other boiling oil and throwing bombs upon school children?

No. America cannot permit herself to be left behind nor allow any of her citizens to indulge in the mad folly of refusing to kill their fellows, and thus revert to a state of savage barbarism.

S.

TOWARDS THE LAND.

My Dear Maurice,—This letter is mainly intended to deal with the land question you raised as a counter-attraction to the idea of working for a revolution in the economic sense. But as you have now sent me a further letter recapitulating your original arguments, I will deal briefly with these to begin with.

Your remark that "Anarchists have to take notice of this situation (i.e., the fact of the people not being ready for a full and complete state of Anarchism), and to study what would be their logical attitude if to-morrow a revolution breaks out," expresses precisely the reason why I wrote my original article. I wanted the subject thoroughly thrashed out, and I made some tentative suggestions (a few of which were censored by the printer). I have no cut-and-dried plan to submit to anybody, my main purpose being to raise a full discussion on all the means we might adopt to win such a revolution for our cause.

You assert that because the people are not ready for a state of full and complete Anarchism they will be dangerous in so far that they will want to set up a new kind of government. I assert, however, that the people as a whole do not care for government. Even now they have a saying that "politics is a dirty business." People naturally like to mind their own affairs and to live at peace with their neighbours. It is the upstart—bourgeois or democrat—who would want a new government "for the people's good." It is they who like to pose as the saviours of the people. Indeed, your own statement that you note with pleasure that the Russian peasants are taking the land from the landowner amply proves my contention. These peasants did not elect the Russian Government, but sent delegates to watch over it. That proves how they trust Government. And, mind you, the Russian moujik has always been classed as one of the most uneducated persons in our great civilised Europe.

You assert that unless these peasants have an ideal to guide their action, and if evolution has not destroyed the roots of competition amongst themselves, then the ancient system will soon be going on again. And from this you conclude that "the solution of the social problem cannot be entirely looked upon from a bread-and-butter point of view. Bread and butter without freedom cannot satisfy an Anarchist." But an Anarchist, I beg to submit, cannot have freedom without bread and butter. He cannot pay the rent or grow corn with his freedom. I have always asserted, here and in the "Voice of Labour," that the people cannot worry about freedom so long as they have to worry about their bread and butter. When these Russian peasants are assured of the land (which means bread and butter) then they can think of freedom. I do not agree that these peasants are likely to compete for the land. Surely Russia is big enough. Besides this there were village communities in Russia which were broken up by the Government for the purposes of controlling taxation. The ideal is not merely individual freedom, as you seem to suggest, but a communal life with absence of authority. I have admitted that the people are not, and most likely will not be, as advanced as an Anarchist on the morrow of a revolution; but I assert that all the advanced ideas of Anarchism are not necessary for their liberation from the present system.

You will note what I say. You cannot stand, as it were, pontifically and proclaim to the people that unless they are full-blown Anarchists, unless they have an ideal of freedom before them, they will lamentably fail with the potato crop and the pig-breeding and the hen-runs. I say the people are ready to enter into a communal life any time and now.

I say that the Anarchists who pretend to arrogate to themselves the wisdom of Communism, who set themselves apart from the people, who say to them, "You cannot be free unless you become such as we are"—these Anarchists may be right and logical; but when the day comes they must mix with the people, help the people, live with the people.

When I was young I was taken to learn to swim by a friend. My friend put on the proper costume, posed in the proper attitude, dived, back-stroked, trod water, arm-over-armed, and did various clever things, which astonished me beyond measure. After shivering at the far-end for half-an-hour, my friend was astonished that I continued to shiver and could not dive, back-stroke, or even tread water. When I dived I went to the bottom—and remained there. But not for too long, fortunately. Are you going to teach the people Anarchism in this way? Are you going to enclose yourself in colonies, as the monks and nuns enclose themselves, so that the people can look over the fence and admire—and be as wise as before?

Your colonies are quite right—they are logical, they are pretty; but there are also people who are not Anarchists who yet breed pigs and grow potatoes. We are not to show them

how to keep themselves on an acre and half a cow. We are to show the people of Mile End and Aldgate and the Stock Exchange that eggs don't grow on trees. You must think of all these people, all these lawyers and their clerks who will be out of work on revolution day, and who will do the most mischief unless they do some work that is work.

By all means get on with your colonies. Send us all the news. We will tell the people of Stepney, and Ancoats, and the Cowcaddens, how many potatoes you grow to the square inch. We will lead them gradually back to the land, so that you will see them looking over the fence with hungry eyes. And they will ask:

"Can we not do this also?"

"My dear people," I will say, "without a doubt you can. But first of all you must be full and complete Anarchists. Can I sell you any pamphlets on Anarchist Communism?"—Yours fraternally,
L. A. M.

DEATH OF LORENZO PORTET.

Through an oversight we omitted to announce in our last issue that our Spanish comrade, Lorenzo Portet, died in Paris on May 10, and was buried in the Pantin-Parisien Cemetery, numerous militants being present. His friend Malato, who was too ill to attend, sent a letter to be read at the graveside, in which he sketched Portet's career and paid a splendid tribute to his sterling qualities as an Anarchist and a propagandist.

Born of middle-class parents, said Malato, he was educated with a view to entering the Church, but instead he became an Anarchist. He went to the Argentine and became cashier in an important business, but this did not stop his work as a propagandist, and he took part in organising insurrectionary movements. He returned to Spain, where he joined the revolt against the tyrant Canovas, and as a result had to flee to France. But the Republic was not any more tolerant than the Monarchy, and he was expelled and came to England twenty years ago. He earned his living as a teacher of languages in Liverpool. As a very intimate friend of Ferrer he was appointed his executor, and took charge of the Modern School publishing house at Barcelona after Ferrer's murder by the Spanish Government. This work he continued until his death, although the work has been much impeded by legal obstacles raised by the clerical and capitalist enemies of education in that country.

ANTI-CONSCRIPTION IN HOLLAND.

A copy of the *Bulletin of "La Voco de l' Popolo"* has been sent to us, dated April this year. As it is mostly in Chinese, and does not contain as much Esperanto matter as the *Voco* itself, we are only able to take from it the following manifesto, which was published in Holland with the signatures of some 1,200 people:

"Fellow-men,—We who sign below wish to make public declaration that with our whole hearts we intend to oppose everything concerned with militarism, even in the form of the so-called 'Citizen Army.' In so far as any of us are liable to military service, we trust to maintain our strength to refuse all and any personal and direct participation, the strength to more willingly suffer incarceration, even to the risk of being shot, than be false to our convictions, our conscience, or what we consider the noblest laws of humanity. In so far as any of us—whether men or women—for various reasons are not amenable to service, we nevertheless give our whole-hearted support, by signing this manifesto, to those who for the above-mentioned motives refuse military service, and we desire to share fully in all their responsibilities and hardships. We frankly consider the refusal of military service as one of those remedies whose collective efficacy will nullify militarism, regarding it as of the greatest moral value, especially towards the realisation of collective opposition to conscription."

FEMALE MILITARISTS.

Under the heading "Soldier Women," the *Daily News* recently furnished particulars concerning the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps. We are informed that discipline is the one thing the women are required to learn during their training. So necessary is it to the maintenance of any servile body of men or women. The following from the above-mentioned authority suggests the sort of thing dearly beloved by the Jingo and upholders of Empire: "At first they may be inclined to lounge, and even remain seated whilst an officer has to stand. But within a week they learn to put their shoulders back, to stand at attention, and to address their officers as 'ma'am,' which is the officially approved counterpart of the 'sir' of the men's army."

Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

Monthly, One Penny; post-free, 1½d.; U.S.A., 3 Cents; France, 15 Centimes.

Annual Subscription, post-free, 1s. 6d.; U.S.A., 40c.; France, 2fr.
Foreign Subscriptions should be sent by International Money Order.

Wholesale price, 1s. 6d. per quire of 26 post-free in the United Kingdom.

All communications, exchanges, etc., to be addressed to

THE MANAGER, 127, Ossulston Street, N.W. 1.

 The Editors are not necessarily in agreement with signed articles

Notice to Subscribers.—If there is a blue mark against this notice, your subscription is due, and must be sent before next month to ensure receipt of paper.

Money and Postal Orders to be made payable to **FREEDOM Press.**

NEW PARTIES FOR OLD.

The *Herald* of June 23 contains a detailed programme around which it suggests "the democratic forces of this country might well rally," as a "People's Party." To tell the truth, it seems to differ very little but in degree from the programmes put forward by the Socialist parties in the past, except that control of industry will be jointly undertaken by the State and the workers—at least, the State is to "own" everything and the workers are to "manage" it. This is the initial blunder, and gives the keynote to the rest of the programme. The very first thing that revolutionists must do to make a successful Social Revolution is to abolish the wage system and the control of the lives of one section of the community by another section. This control—called government—is a continuation of the slavery of the past, which has gradually evolved into what is termed "democracy," or self-government, but which is not self-government at all. The workers have had a vote given to them by which they decide who shall govern them, and the votes registered for and against rival sections of the ruling class are accepted by them for the time being in the same way as they accepted the results of battles in the past. The "Wars of the Roses" have been replaced by the "Battles of the Ballot-boxes." In each case the working class have fought for their masters and not for themselves.

That is quite true, we shall be told, but cannot you Anarchists see that we Social Democrats now want the workers to elect a Government from amongst themselves and not from the ruling class? Yes, we know you do, we reply, but whatever class the Government is elected from the effect will be the same—a few men, comparatively speaking, will make decisions which will affect the lives of millions of men and women. The fact that at election time their promises may be good will not prevent them acting as other rulers when they get into power. In the same issue of the *Herald* in which the programme appears, George Lansbury writes: "Who amongst us can ever forget the high hopes which centred round the Labour Party in 1906, when forty direct representatives of the working class found themselves in the House of Commons? How disillusioned we all are now!" Yes, and it will always be the same with elected persons in the future as it has been in the past.

One of the principal points in the programme is "economic independence of all men and women." This is a point upon which we Anarchists can agree with those who drew up the programme; but as soon as we see their practical application of it we find there will be no "independence," for lower down we read of "a high minimum wage guaranteed by the State." If the State—that is, the Government—has the payment of this wage, it is quite certain it will wish to control the conditions under which you will earn it. Is that independence? Are we so much in love with our leading Socialist and Labour men that we would wish them to control our livelihood? Of course not. Therefore let us find a new method in which our bread and butter will be free from the dictates of those who may wish to legislate for us in the mass without thinking of us as individuals.

It is said that when Napoleon I. remarked to Laplace that in his "Exposition of the System of the Future" the name of God was nowhere to be found, Laplace answered: "I nowhere felt the need of that hypothesis." Similarly, when Anarchists think of a new system of society they never feel the need of a State hypothesis. The State is an instrument of oppression, was always an instrument of oppression, and of necessity must ever be an instrument of oppression. It is not a mere accident that those who guide the State machine have always used deceit and lying in their dealings with the people. Their position compels them to adopt such means so as to hide from the people its inner workings. Think for a moment of the mountains of lies that

have issued from all the Governments during this war! Read the report on the Dardanelles tragedy and the recently-issued report on the expedition to Mesopotamia—the lies that were published to bolster up those in power, and to serve the interests of the State. And then think of the abysmal ignorance of those reformers who wish the State to "own" everything!

Those who really wish to be free will have to confess that there is no escape from the Anarchist solution, which is that the land shall be free for the use of the producers, who shall decide the methods of production and distribution of the products by free agreement among themselves. They may and will make mistakes, but if they are really actuated by a desire for freedom they will have little difficulty in finding remedies for them. Surely this war has burned into our brains the evils of Capitalism and the State, therefore let us wipe them out for ever, and build up a new society in which the machine-gun and the policeman's baton will have no place.

KROPOTKIN'S FAREWELL.

In a long farewell letter addressed to the "Western Working Men," prior to his return to Russia, Peter Kropotkin writes:

"After having worked in your midst for forty years, I cannot leave Western Europe without sending you a few words of farewell. From the depths of my heart I thank you for the reception—more than fraternal—that I found in your midst. The International Working Men's Association was not for me a mere abstract word. Amidst the working men of Switzerland, France, Britain, Spain, Italy, the United States, I was in a society of brothers and friends. And in your struggles, each time I had the opportunity to take part in them, I lived the best moments of my life. I deeply felt that wave of human solidarity and oneness of men, disregarding all frontiers, which represents one of the greatest promises for man in the future."

In dealing with the war, he says that no International will be possible that does not oppose "every attempt of every nation to invade foreign territories." The brutality of the war has awakened mankind to the necessity of all men and women uniting their energies in social reconstruction, and he points out that it was the reconstruction work which had been going on all over Russia since the beginning of the war which rendered the Revolution possible. The main lines of reconstruction he states as follows:

"The production of all that is necessary for the nation, as well as the distribution of the produced wealth, must be organised in the direct interest of all. It is no more a matter of struggling for adding to the wages a few shillings, which usually are soon swallowed by all sorts of exploiting intermediaries. The workers, the producers, must become the managers of the producing concerns. They must settle the aims and the means of production, and society must recognise their right of disposing of the capital that is needed for that."

After insisting on the necessity of a great final military effort to beat the Germans, on whom he throws the whole blame for the war, Kropotkin tells the Western workers that as soon as the war is over they must "seriously study and resolutely take in hand the fundamental reconstruction on the lines of socialisation of the social wealth, socialised production, and socialised distribution of produced riches. . . . Russia will join you in the same work."

In bidding farewell to Kropotkin on his return to Russia, we can but hope that by contact with the Russian workers he may realise the errors of his attitude on the war, and with them work in the building up of that Anarchist society of which he was such an enthusiastic exponent prior to the war. His numerous Anarchist books and pamphlets will be read and remembered long after his patriotic backsliding in this war has been forgotten.

AN URGENT APPEAL.

With this month's issue of **FREEDOM** and **SATIRE** is enclosed a collecting sheet on behalf of the funds of both papers. Everyone knows the enormous increase in the cost of paper has put an end to many journals, and it is only by means of the voluntary and regular contributions to our Guarantee Funds that we manage to keep our own papers in existence. We hope that all our readers will do their best to collect money for **FREEDOM** and **SATIRE**, and thus enable us to carry on. Many inquiries for Anarchist literature have reached us lately, and the sales are steadily increasing. Let us strike while the iron is hot.

FRANKENSTEIN.

When, at the outbreak of war, the British Government announced its intention of crushing German militarism, it was pointed out in these columns that such a feat would only be possible by means of the creation of a greater militarism in Britain. Of course, very few believed us, for most of the inhabitants of this island held that, being people "cradled in liberty," it would not be possible for a really formidable military power to control our destinies. In arguing thus they failed to realise that once the right of the individual to control his own destiny is abrogated an enormous breach is made in the sea-wall of our liberties. They could not see that the real enemy is *any form of militarism*; in other words, the toleration of any tyranny founded upon discipline, obedience to authority, and the violation of human rights. If these fundamental facts had been grasped war would have been an impossibility, and the aggressive militarism under which the people are groaning to-day could not have cast its sinister spell around us. Having all this in mind, we can judge at its true worth the righteous indignation which has been stirring that body of blunt susceptibilities—the members of the House of Commons.

The debate upon the calling up of the medically rejected for re-examination, and the consequent attack upon the War Office, has made even some of the most obtuse among us realise just what we in this country are up against. Even the *Daily News* has been loud in its complaints that:

"The most unpleasant feature of the administration is the levity with which the guarantees have been ignored . . . even more serious is the loss of public confidence in the administration of a great department. . . . The cry of 'Everything for the Army,' with its accompanying 'funk-hole' imbecility, has resulted in the creation of a militarism as aggressive and stupid as anything on record. It has given to the War Office a blank cheque on the man-power of the nation, to the ruin of every other interest. . . . It is time that the civil authority of the nation over the lives of its own citizens was reasserted, and this debauch of militarism run mad was placed under restraint."

Writing later on this subject, the *Daily News* computes that in order to make a successful soldier the cost to the State is not less than £500 a year; and after referring to the broken pledges and the waste and inefficiency that the War Office has shown, finally sums up with the words:

"Out of this conspiracy against freedom at home there emerged a militarism which did not express the embattled pride of a nation at war for freedom, but the harsh, aggressive spirit of a caste imposing its iron will upon a reluctant people."

It has taken just three years of war and increasing military domination to make these facts penetrate the minds of a few people, but even yet there is no indication that the conscience of the nation has been roused in any way. We know quite well that the politician requires a stock-in-trade, and his defence of the medically unfit is easily understandable. But the people themselves remain apathetic; that is the most tragic fact of all. While the virile Russian people have dared to strike a blow for liberty, the echo is only faintly heard in this country. But here we are politically more mature. We have delegated our powers to the politicians and the Labour leaders, who have for a consideration sold us to the enemy. All the prancings of well-primed stage heroes in the House will avail the people nothing. The evil has become rooted through our own ignorance and folly, and can only be removed when the workers as a body demand it. There must be no confusion of issues, no desire for compromise, no vague notion that a small army, a modest form of militarism, is necessary to national well-being. It must be yea or nay. Either militarism in any shape or form is compatible with our safety and happiness or it is not, and if the latter, then we must root it out and destroy all its sinister ramifications.

But bound up with the whole question is that of the function of government, for we have seen very plainly that the two evil weeds flourish together, sapping the strength of the nation they thrive on. In attacking government we attack militarism, for without government there would be no military authority. If we are to finally emerge a free people from the horrible nightmare that has held all Europe, we must be prepared to attack. Apathy is criminal, and the recognition of constituted authority a fatal error. Liberty is only gained and held by resistance to authority and moral courage, a virtue that may yet win us back our lost freedom. Once let the desire for these things actuate us and we are a little nearer to the desired end, and we may even yet avoid the stigma of having quietly acquiesced in our own undoing.

HEART TO HEART CHATS,

No. 1.—J. P. MORGAN AND A. J. BALFOUR.

SCENE: *The private office of the former, "Somewhere in New York."* Mr. M. is seated at a roll-top desk, of the approved American pattern, impatiently puffing a fifty-guinea Havana. To him enters Mr. B., travel-stained and looking, if possible, more bored than usual.

J.P.M.: So you have arrived at last.

A.J.B.: Oh, I hate to be hurried for business, and particularly such business as yours.

J.P.M.: I began to think the U-boats had found you, and you were lost.

A.J.B.: The pestilent vermin! I haven't slept a wink since I left England.

J.P.M.: What! wide awake all that time? You'll have to keep so while you're on this side, and look slippy, too! No 3 o'clock breakfasts in bed here; we have too much business to do.

A.J.B.: No beastly business to-night. I've only come to report myself, your last wire was so peremptory.

J.P.M.: Well, your last wire was so despairing; it sounded like Britain's S.O.S. That's why I wished to surrender the agency; and I insisted on your coming because no one would connect you with business. The fact of the matter is our syndicate is getting thoroughly alarmed at the rate your country's debt is rushing up, and then your commitments for munitions are altogether above our calculations. The business must be placed on a different footing altogether.

A.J.B.: Yes, yes, of course, but not to-night. Have you heard of that new German theory on the cause of—?

J.P.M.: No! and I don't want to hear of it.

A.J.B.: Well, have you heard the reports from Petrograd?

J.P.M.: We haven't had a wire from Russia for days. Are they bad?

A.J.B.: As bad as can be. Ill-luck seems to have dogged our footsteps there from the beginning. First Kitchener, then Milner, and now this Revolution is dragging us into the maelstrom of Socialism.

J.P.M.: The fools! Thieves!

A.J.B.: They always were fools, from the Tsar down—idealists, visionaries, dreamers. Do you remember what Castlereagh said about Tsar Alexander I. in 1814? Alexander's "absurd mysticism and nonsense" in wishing to establish a united and independent Poland. Castlereagh soon crushed that plan. They want another Castlereagh now.

J.P.M.: Why don't you—? The Slavs and the Celts are both dreamers and visionaries. Twenty years of your "firm government" settled the Irish question, *n'est ce pas?* Why not the Russian?

A.J.B.: I thought we were talking business. The truth is we shall require every dollar and every man we can muster. This Russian fiasco and the depredations of the U-boats—

J.P.M.: You mustn't say too much against them. Without the U-boats we should never have "landed" Wilson on our side for war, and without war where would our millions have been? Who whispered "Repudiation"? The declaration of war against Germany is all right as far as it goes. But the bankers are fighting shy of the Two Billion Loan until they see which way the country jumps, and the country is very lukewarm. You see Germany hasn't declared war against us; the people need something to stir them up. Now if the Huns would sink a few boats on this side, or pitch a few bombs into Washington—

A.J.B.: It might be managed; a bomb or two might be found in the Capitol.

J.P.M.: M'yes! It's worth considering. The country hasn't made up its mind yet, and something must be done to make it up for it in the right way.

A.J.B.: Yes! and now that's all settled, what do you think of Professor Formio's new treatise on "The Influence of Art on Religion"?

J.P.M.: Damn the professors and all their treatises! I never read anything but the market reports and the depreciation of the mark. Here, I'll give you a toast. Let me fill your glass—(Touches a button and a tray projects from the side of the desk, with a tantalus and all etceteras)—and drink to the success of "WILSON'S WAR FOR MORGAN'S MILLIONS."

A.J.B.: You must change Independence Day from July 4 to June 5. (Tosses off his liquor and turns ghastly pale.)

J.P.M.: Hello! What's the matter? Is the drink or the toast too strong?

A.J.B. (sinking down on the sofa): That cigar is so—so fragrant! (Left fainting.)

F. S. HOLDER.

The receipt of a free copy of this paper is an invitation to subscribe—1s. 6d. per annum.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

France.

The following letter from Paris gives news that we look for in vain in our daily Press. Russia, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and now France show that the limits of oppression are being reached, and revolutionary outbursts possible ere long:

"May 28th.—You who are living peacefully in London cannot form any idea of the unrest which for the last three weeks has reigned in Paris, and still continues. Crowds of strikers march through the streets demanding 'La semaine Anglaise!' (the English week) and an indemnity for the high cost of living. The dressmakers began the strike, and were quickly followed by the milliners, feather dressers, artificial florists, embroideresses, corset makers, and bank clerks; and now the grocery shop assistants have joined the movement. The strike is still spreading, and becomes more and more important. There are thousands upon thousands of demonstrators marching through the city shouting, 'We want "La semaine Anglaise," and we are determined to have it!' Meetings are being held in the Bourse du Travail and at the headquarters of the C.G.T. A significant feature of the strike movement is the large number of soldiers on furlough who have joined in and encourage and help the strikers. Many of the big emporiums, like the 'Louvre,' 'Le Printemps,' and 'Le Galeries Lafayette,' have had their windows broken, and there have been many exciting street scenes. The two largest provision dealers in Paris—Potin and Damoy—have had to keep their doors closed during most of the day owing to fear of further raids and attacks on their windows. At the moment of writing I hear that the bank clerks have gone back to work, but there are still more than 15,000 workers out, whose numbers are being still further augmented by the soldiers on furlough. I can assure you that the 'flics' (policemen) are very badly received everywhere. The cost of living is terribly high, and the claims of the strikers are regarded by all as only just.

"May 31st.—To-day I continue my letter, and have to tell you that the strike is still spreading, and large crowds of strikers and soldiers are marching through the streets bearing red flags and singing revolutionary songs. You can see from this the spirit of the Parisian workers, and I cannot imagine that all this will end quietly or soon. Everyone here is wishing for peace."

In the press of July 1 we read that the offices of our Anarchist contemporary, *Le Libertaire*, in Paris, have been raided by the police, and the editors arrested. The paper had published anti-war articles.

United States.

Owing to the censorship, neither papers nor letters reach us from our Anarchist comrades in the States, but we learn from the Press that they are fighting conscription tooth and nail. Enormous demonstrations to protest against the vile thing have been held in many of the great cities, and the freedom-loving Wilson has seen that the police had a free hand in dealing with them. Even a peace meeting in Madison Square, New York, was patrolled by armed police in armoured cars. But the agitation has continued in spite of threats and even blows from police clubs. So successful has the agitation been that the Government has stepped in and made many arrests, and amongst others Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman have been charged with inducing men to resist conscription. The people generally, outside of a few Eastern States, are apathetic about the war, and the "Liberty Loan" of £400,000,000 was mainly subscribed by the big corporations which have been working for the Allies. Many of these companies hold bonds of the Allied Governments, which have much depreciated in value, but the U.S. Government allowed them to be paid at face value in exchange for the Loan. So the people have in this way been robbed of many millions of pounds at the very beginning of their "fight for freedom and civilisation." Wilson has already shed his halo.

Italy.

The following is translated from *Ce qu'il faut dire* (Paris), and shows how all-pervading is the censorship of news:

"Our excellent confrère, *Il Libertario*, of Spezia, has just been suspended by the Italian authorities for an indefinite period. The police have once more seized the propagandist literature of our undaunted comrades. . . (Censored by French Censor.) . . The International Anarchist Committee of Action has sent us

the following note: 'The Committee, associating itself with the growing libertarian development in Italy, sends greetings to the younger element who are taking and will take the places in our ranks left empty by the war, the expulsions, the internments, and the imprisonments. . . (Censored by Italian Censor.) . . With regard to international relations, the Committee hails the initiative of the Rome comrades towards the immediate realisation of an agreement to send representatives to the third Zimmerwaldian reunion at Stockholm, and to accept the invitation of the Committee of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates at Petrograd. Suggested as representatives: E. Malatesta, L. Molinari, P. Pinazzi, L. Bertoni, and V. Mazzoni. We appeal to comrades to contribute towards their expenses.'"

THE RIGHT WAY.

"Might is not Right!" the Moralist
Religiously intoned.
That's true; but Right must first have Might
Ere it can be enthroned.

For Right is that which *ought* to be;
But if of Might bereft,
It's just a minus quantity,
That is: your Right gets left.

So if you think you have a Right,
Don't vote, beseech, or pray,
But summon up some Might, and then
Just take it, right away;
For that is how all Rights are won,
"For ever and for aye."

WILLIAM J. ROBINS.

MORE "BLASPHEMY" PROSECUTIONS.

The Birmingham police have shown an extra lack of intelligence by prosecuting two Freethought lecturers for "blasphemy." J. W. Gott, the well-known Freethinker, who has already served four months' imprisonment for a similar offence, was arrested in the Bull Ring, Birmingham, on June 9, and charged with "unlawfully composing, printing, and publishing a certain scandalous, impious, blasphemous, and profane libel concerning the Scriptures and the Christian religion." He was remanded on bail. On June 17 J. J. Riley was also arrested in the Bull Ring and charged with the same offence, and remanded. These prosecutions seem particularly foolish just now, when nearly all the clergy are doing their utmost, by means of warlike and hate-breeding sermons, to bring Christianity into contempt.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS (not otherwise acknowledged).

(May 22—June 25.)

FREEDOM *Guarantee Fund*.—E. Voeltzel, 1s.; H. W. Journet, 2s.; J. Hall 1s.; T.D.C., 3s. 6d.; H. Hayter, 1s.; E. Humphreys, 6d.; E. Michaels, 1s.; R. Davey, 2s.; F. H. Baker, 6d.; Anonymous, £1; A. Smith, 2s. 6d.; Sympathisers (per G.W.T.), 4s. 6d.
FREEDOM *Subscriptions*.—A. Iverson, T. Prentis, T.H., L. Stormont, A. W. Brown, J. Wood, R. Stubbs, H. Gallo, R. Davey, V. Danchin, W. T. Davies, W. Reeves, E. Ridgway, H. P. Badon, C. G. Cole, J. Coe.
A.C.L.—T. Gunton, 5s.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

R. Selkirk.—Thanks. Will print next month. F.S.H.—Please send address.

BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS

(List sent post free on application.)

"SATIRE,"

AN ILLUSTRATED PAPER OF SOCIAL CRITICISM.

MONTHLY, 8pp. ONE PENNY.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION, 1/6 PER ANNUM.

Send cash with order to Manager, "Satire," 127, Ossulston St., London, N.W.1.

Printed by the BLACKFRIARS PRESS, LTD., 5, Parsonage Buildings, Blackfriars Street, Manchester, and Published by FREEDOM PRESS, 127, Ossulston Street, London, N.W.